

# BRAIN INJURY MATTERS NEWSLETTER

## MEET MANDA



**1. How long ago did you acquire your injury?**

In 2001, I was hit by a car as a pedestrian.

**2. What is your greatest achievement since your injury?**

Living life.

**3. What do you want to achieve in the near future?**

To live happily.

**4. What do you find your biggest challenge?**

Fitting in.

**5. What is your favourite food?**

Mexican.

**6. What is your favourite movie?**

Anything I can relate to.

## **7. What is your favourite hobby?**

Socialising.

## **8. What do you want to achieve through Brain Injury Matters?**

Making friends.

## **9. What advice would you give to someone with a new brain injury?**

Hang in there. It does improve.

## **10. What does Brain Injury Matters mean to you?**

A group of people who have brain injuries, who do things together.  
We're all in the same boat.

# **Table of Contents**

<b>Meet a BIM Member.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Regular things happening at BIM.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Committee of Management Report / Office Report.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ILC Project Report.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Peer Support Group Photos.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Women's PSG Ad for August.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Free Hearing Tests.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>VCAT Assistance.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Heads Together Youth Summit / DLO in Healthcare .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Chat n Chuckle.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Adrian's Blog .....</b>	<b>15</b>

# REGULAR THINGS HAPPENING AT BIM

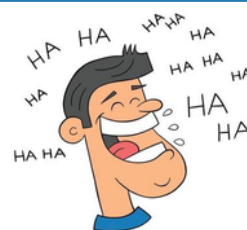
## ONLINE COFFEE MORNINGS

Mondays at 11am

Open to anyone with a brain injury.

A fun way to start the week includes jokes, quizzes, and conversation starters.

Contact [office@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:office@braininjurymatters.org) to receive the Zoom link.



## PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

- **Northcote** - Tuesdays, 10am
- **Frankston** - Tuesdays, 10am
- **Online only** - Wednesdays, 10am
- **Ringwood** - Thursdays, 10:30am
- **Footscray** - Thursdays at 10am
- **AWSABI (Albury-Wodonga Stroke & Brain Injury Inc)**  
- 4th Thursday of the month, 10:30am
- **Bendigo** - Fortnightly on Thursdays, 11:30am
- **Melbourne CBD Women's Support** - 1st Monday of the month, 11am




Contact [office@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:office@braininjurymatters.org) if you are interested in joining a group.

## CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE, ABI WISE APP, FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM

<https://www.braininjurymatters.org>

ABIWise App is free to download from GooglePlay and App Store



**Brain Injury Matters**  
737 likes • 853 followers

Message Like Search

Instagram

Search

Log In Sign Up

braininjurymatters Follow Message

183 posts 2,381 followers 2,301 following

Brain Injury Matters  
Self-advocacy and community education run by and for people with an acquired brain injury  
[braininjurymatters.org](https://braininjurymatters.org)

ABI Wise

Weekly Tips	ABI Info
Stories	Meditation
Resources	Contact Us

Terms of use

Proudly brought to you by Brain Injury Matters

# COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT REPORT

Giddyay Everyone,

This month, I have attended a number of events:

- Along with Nia, (our secretary,) I attended the VATT (Voice at the Table) celebration at The Wheeler Centre. It was an excellent event and we celebrated the end of the project with singing and dancing, lots of great food and banter.
- I attended the in-person SARU SMG (Self Advocacy Resource Unit Management Group) meeting after two years of zoom meetings. It was great to be able to speak face-to-face.
- Poppy and I visited the Bendigo Peer Support group and had a coffee and a chat. Another opportunity to put faces to names.
- I also did a couple of CyberABlility scam talks where I was able to mention BIM, our web site and the ABI Wise app

Finally, we are still unsure about the funding situation for Brain Injury Matters. We hope this will become clearer as we chat with Daniel White, Bill Shorten's advisor.

Cheers for now.  
Col Brokenshire  
President



## BIM OFFICE REPORT

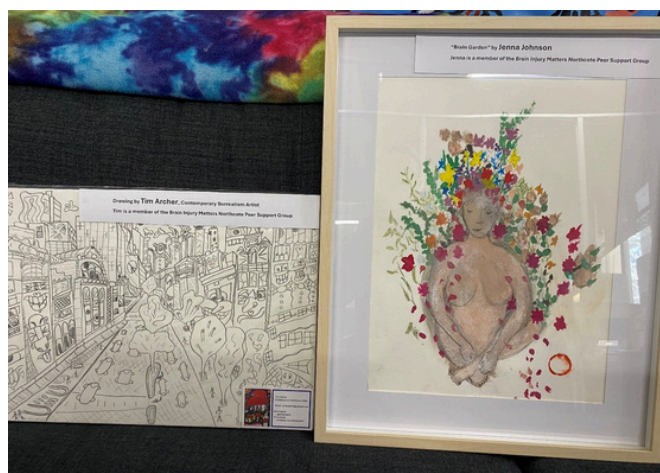
As I sit in the BIM head office at Ross House in Flinders Lane, I am surrounded by changes. Outside is the constant sound (and vibration) of major works being done for the new metro station at Town Hall. Within the building, a new restaurant is being installed on the ground floor so Ross House reception has relocated to the 3rd floor. In terms of BIM personnel, the fantastic Peter Persson, BIM's ILC Project Co-Manager, has recently retired from a long and distinguished career in the disability sector. I am sure many of you know Peter and join with me in thanking him wholeheartedly, not only for his tireless work in setting up the BIM peer support groups, but for being such a great supporter and friend to many of us. The wonderful Sally Helm has stepped up to take the role of Peer Program Manager and we've re-jigged the job titles of the other staff who now report to Sally.

## BIM OFFICE REPORT cont...

In other news, we have had a month-long rollercoaster of funding news – some disappointing and some positive. At this point, we are still somewhat “up in the air”. Coming out of Canberra, was welcome news that a new grant program targeting peer support and self-advocacy will soon be offered. We are eager to submit an application for this grant to help us expand our peer groups to more locations and develop new groups for a range of specialist ABI sub-groups. We have received notification of another four years basic funding from the State Government, but have so far been unable to clarify whether any increase will be coming to help us meet our core operating costs. We’ll keep everyone in the loop as more news comes to light.

We were delighted to receive a generous donation at the end of the financial year. On behalf of everyone at BIM, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Sarina Russo Foundation for supporting BIM’s important work.

Finally, a huge thank you to members of the Ringwood PSG for providing all their colourful quotes about what it means to be part of a peer support group. These have been used in our Ross House window display for the month of July. The display also includes fantastic artworks from Jenna Johnson and Tim Archer from the Northcote PSG. Thank you to everyone involved in helping to create an eye-catching display!



Keep warm and keep supporting each other!  
Cheers,  
Georgia





# PSG PROGRAM REPORT

Our peer support groups continue to be well attended. We are so grateful to all our facilitators for stepping up, as our staff team's hours are (hopefully only temporarily) reduced. Some of the recent activities have included get-togethers at cafes; visits to TwistED Science and the Yarra Valley Chocolaterie, making toasted sandwiches, conversations about friendship, and a BIM version of RockWiz, music trivia. We are also looking forward to having Villamanta do some presentations called *Respect at Work*.

Our Ringwood group recently reflected on **'Why are Peer Support Groups important?'** Here's some of their responses:

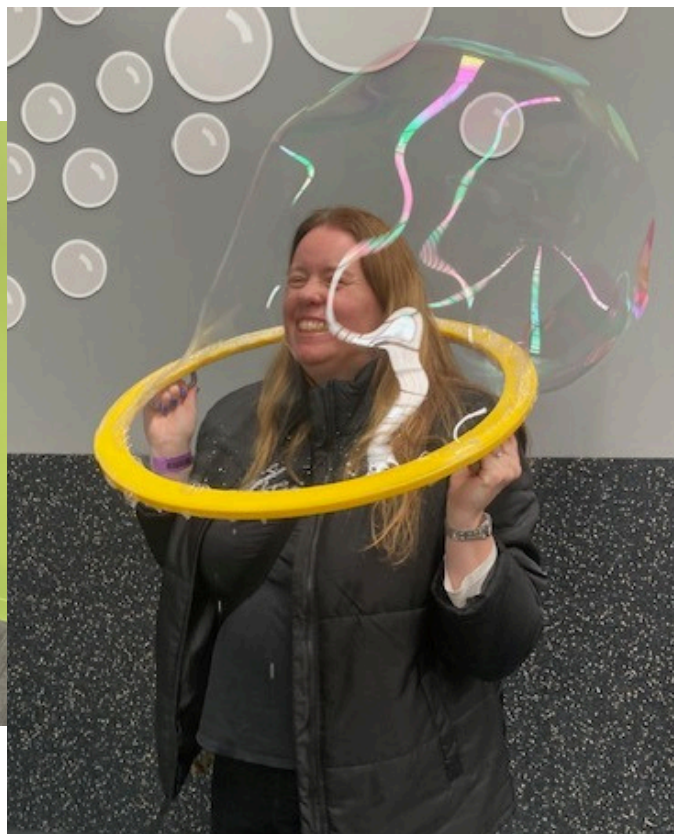
- I like the group because I am understood and with people (who) are similar. It's a place I feel "normal" and like my old self. I love the food. Helps with my mental health.
- I like meeting people who understand what I've been through.
- Brain Injury Matters Group is extremely important because it makes me feel good mentally, as I connect with other people with brain injuries.
- Friendships, snacks, relationships, laughter, belonging to something, not feeling alone.
- Being understood is what most people search for in life. Peer support groups offer this to vulnerable people.
- To have somewhere that I can make friends. To not feel alone.
- Something positive to look forward to; contact with community; mental health improved; be myself without judgement.
- Helps alleviate my severe anxiety. Talking to people, who have the same disability as me, increases my confidence and helps with laying to rest my suicidal thoughts.
- Peer support groups help you speak up by providing a(n) accepting space to be heard.

Till next month

Andrew, Fiona, Fraser, Nick, Peter L, Poppy, Ryan, Sally, Ross, Troy and Yannick

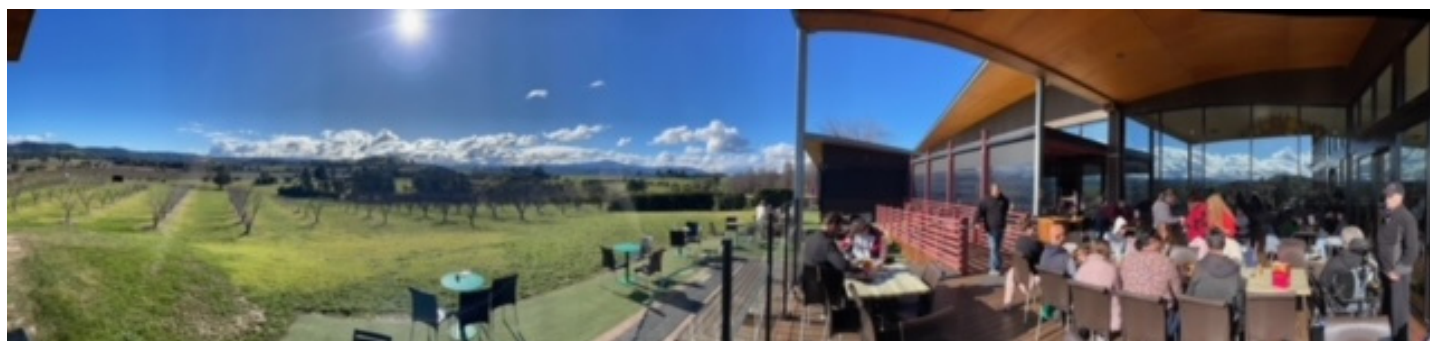
# PEER SUPPORT GROUPS PHOTOS

## ***SOUTH METRO PSG Visit to TwistED Science, Moorabbin***





## ***EAST METRO PSG Visit to Yarra Valley Chocolaterie***





# PEER SUPPORT GROUPS PHOTOS

## ***BENDIGO PSG***

***Col (BIM President) and Poppy (Peer Worker) visited the group to meet members***



The group meets at the Bendigo Neighbourhood Hub, fortnightly on Thursday at 11:30am

# WOMEN'S PEER SUPPORT GROUP

**When:** Monday 6 August

**Time:** 10.40am meeting in foyer of the library  
for 10.45am -11.45 am tour

**What:** Tour of State Library  
followed by coffee at Mr Tulk next door to library

**Where:** State Library of Victoria  
328 Swanston Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

**RSVP:** We have only 7 spaces left so please rsvp to  
[poppy.egan@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:poppy.egan@braininjurymatters.org)



# FREE HEARING TESTS

Hearing Australia are offering free hearing tests to members of  
Brain Injury Matters

**Where:** The Rainbow Room (4.2),  
Level 4, Ross House  
247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

**Date:** Wednesday 28th August 2024

**Time:** From 10am - 1pm  
(the hearing check will take between 5 -10 minutes)

Please book to secure your spot!

To find out more information, and to make a booking, please  
contact Electra Mook (Community Hearing Advisor) on 0461 458  
810 or [electra.Mook2@hearing.com.au](mailto:electra.Mook2@hearing.com.au).

For further information about Hearing Australia, please visit  
[www.hearing.com.au](http://www.hearing.com.au).







## SEEKING REFERRALS

# New pilot to support people with complex communication needs have their voice heard at VCAT guardianship and administration hearings

Do you have clients with upcoming VCAT hearings and complex communication needs?

## About the pilot

Eligible participants in the pilot will receive targeted support from an independent communication facilitator trained in speech therapy prior to and during the VCAT hearing.

## How to refer

Referrals can be made from any community service by contacting [miranda.l.bain@courts.vic.gov.au](mailto:miranda.l.bain@courts.vic.gov.au)

## Who we are

This pilot project, funded by TAC, is led by Court Services Victoria's Disability Advisory Committee working group, in collaboration with SCOPE, The University of Melbourne's Disability Institute and Thinkfully neuropsychology.



## Eligibility

### Inclusion Criteria

1. Upcoming VCAT Hearing on Guardianship/Administrator List
2. Complex Communication Difficulties with expressive speech/language due to any disability type, e.g:
  - Needs support to communicate
  - Requires a communication aid or device to express themselves (phone, board, book, eye-gaze)
  - Uses photos, symbols, signs, gestures, letters or written words to communicate
3. Has a reliable means of communicating yes/no
4. Aged 18 and older
5. Based in metropolitan Melbourne

### Exclusion Criteria

1. Moderate to severe dementia
2. Current severe unmanaged psychiatric or substance disorder
3. Current severe aggressive or other challenging behaviours
4. Requires an interpreter
5. Homeless or unable to be contacted

## Contact Us



[miranda.l.bain@courts.vic.gov.au](mailto:miranda.l.bain@courts.vic.gov.au)

# HEADS TOGETHER'S 1ST BRAIN INJURY YOUTH SUMMIT

SATURDAY 17TH AUGUST

## YOUTH BRAIN INJURY SUMMIT

### A Roadmap for the School Years

A unique professional development opportunity for parents, clinicians, educators and other key supports to learn together how to positively navigate the challenges that young people with brain injuries face throughout their education.

Learn from specialist youth brain injury experts both professional and lived experience, about how brain injury impacts students and families, and how to create school environments where these kids can thrive.



SATURDAY  
17 AUGUST 2024 9.30-3.30



LEVEL 2  
90 MARIBYRNONG ST, FOOTSCRAY



CONTACT  
[jane@headstogether.org.au](mailto:jane@headstogether.org.au)

[REGISTER NOW](#)



Powering lived experience, driving positive change

HEADS  
Together  
FOR BRAIN  
INJURY



## DISABILITY LIAISON OFFICER PROGRAM

Disability Liaison Officers provide support so that people with disability can access healthcare. They are based in health services across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

Check out the [better health channel](#) to find out more.

# CHAT n CHUCKLE ABI GROUP IN GLEN EIRA

Come along and join ...



GLEN EIRA  
CITY COUNCIL

## Chat n' Chuckle

A fortnightly discussion group for anyone with an acquired brain injury to meet others, share news and views, discuss ideas and have fun. You don't have to live in Glen Eira.

For further information or to register, contact Council's Service Centre on **9524 3333** or email [accessandinclusion@gleneira.vic.gov.au](mailto:accessandinclusion@gleneira.vic.gov.au)

### Location:

Online or Godfrey Street Community House, 9 Godfrey Street, Bentleigh

### When: 2024

Meetings are held on Fridays (during school term) from 11am to 12.30pm

- |                       |                  |            |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------|
| • 9 & 23 February     | 8 and 22 March   | 19 April   |
| • 3, 17 & 31 May      | 14 & 28 June     | 26 July    |
| • 9 & 23 August       | 6 & 20 September | 18 October |
| • 1, 15 & 29 November | 13 December      |            |

Do you enjoy  
discussions, books  
and movies?

Do you enjoy talking  
about news and  
current issues?

Keen to  
meet  
others  
who feel  
the same?

Interested  
in great  
conversations  
and friendships?





## *In My Opinion...*

It's now July, getting right into the swing (and chills!) of another Melbourne winter. It would be nice to warm my bones in front of an open fire (maybe with some marshmallows?), but this is neither practical, nor possible, at the moment, unfortunately! But what I have learned, over many cold winters, is that it's possible to regulate core body temperatures. Through taking some deep breaths, and opening up your lungs, it is possible to feel warmer. This does seem counterintuitive to the body's natural reaction of shivering to help generate warmth. It's healthier for the body, but there are limits to how much the body can keep warm by itself.

There is a book called 'The Wim Hof Method', which specifically deals with adapting to cold temperatures. One of the core beliefs is that purposeful deep breathing helps in the regulation of the body's core temperature. It also helps regulation of emotions. When I'm feeling overwhelmed and frustrated by something which I'm having difficulty with, I find that taking a few deep breaths helps...a lot! I have found that health is of the utmost importance in life and breathing is essential to health. And the best part is that breathing can be done anywhere- when you're moving, when you're still, you can do it where ever you are...matter of fact- you can do it now!

A.B.I. – Always Be Improving!!  
<http://www.alwaysbeimproving.net>

## **Newsletter Contributions Welcome**

Contributions by BIM members to our newsletter are always welcome. If you have any tips, stories or experiences that would be of interest to others, please contact [office@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:office@braininjurymatters.org)

Brain Injury Matters is a self-advocacy organisation and we welcome all members having a voice. However, please note that opinion pieces published in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the position of Brain Injury Matters.

**BRAIN INJURY MATTERS**  
**Ross House, Level 4/247 Flinders Lane**  
**Melbourne, Vic. 3000**  
**email: [office@braininjurymatters.org](mailto:office@braininjurymatters.org)**  
**[www.braininjurymatters.org](http://www.braininjurymatters.org) (03) 9639 7222**