

# get about

term 1  
issue 66



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# Editorial

## Dear CMSers,

### Welcome Back Alicia!

The CMS Team are delighted to welcome back Alicia from maternity leave. In Alicia's absence, Simon has done a fabulous job of and the Team would like to shout out a great big THANKS SIMON for his terrific leadership and great work over the last 12 months. Along with the fantastic changes in our team, we will also welcome some exciting changes to our group programs. You can read all about our programs in the camps and group programs article.

Jamie McKie's Guide Dog Joffa has written a very informative article! He gives some practical advice for people approaching a person with a Guide Dog, and I guess he knows from experience. Zoron is taking a break for this edition due to Joffa's article, but Zoz will be back in the next edition of Get About.

Darren has collated some excellent sporting information for children who are blind or have low vision.

When Darren isn't playing sport, he likes to use technology and he has put together a list of helpful smart phone apps that you can try out to assist with your mobility. Why don't you give them a try and then send us an email on which technology you use? We would love to hear from you.

This will be my last editorial as I am handing over the reigns to Alicia, but don't worry, Zoz and his adventures will continue to be a fun feature of upcoming newsletters.

Have fun reading the summer edition of Get About.

[paulaf@guidedogsvictoria.com.au](mailto:paulaf@guidedogsvictoria.com.au)

**Paula Foote** ●



## Contact Details

### Children's Mobility Service

Private Bag 13, KEW VIC 3101

### General Enquiries:

03 9854 4444

### Facsimile:

03 9854 4466

[www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au](http://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au)

## IMPORTANT CHANGE TO GETABOUT

In 2017, Get About will be moving to a digital format. Going digital means our newsletter will be accessible, timely and environmentally friendly. The content of Get About won't change: we will continue to let you know about our upcoming camps, group programs and information. Get About will also be available on our website.

If you wish to continue receiving Get About, please provide us with your email address to either [CSAdmin@guidedogsvictoria.com.au](mailto:CSAdmin@guidedogsvictoria.com.au) or via phone 9854 4467.

Alternative formats are still available in audio CD, large print and braille. Please contact us to request these formats.

## Hi Everyone,

I hope you have all had a great break over the summer holidays and are keeping cool as the warm weather continues into March. I am very excited to be back working in the Children's Mobility Service in my new role as Team Leader. I need to say a big thank you to Simon who did a fantastic job in the role while I was on maternity leave. I can report that my baby boy Maximillian is doing well, crawling and pulling up onto anything and everything. I love watching him learn and move through the world. I am looking forward to catching up with our many families and friends to hear all about the changes and growth that has occurred while I have been away. As mentioned in Paula's editorial, I will be taking over as editor of Get About, I am looking forward to hearing lots of great stories from our students and parents. Did you go on a fantastic holiday over the summer? Did you start primary or secondary school? I would love to hear some stories on these topics and how you used your O&M skills in these environments.

**Happy reading!**

**Alicia** ●



## FUN FACTS! The long cane

**Did you know ?** White canes are white because of George A. Bonham. In 1930, Bonham, president of the Peoria Lions Club (Illinois), watched a man who was blind attempting to cross a street. The man's cane was black and motorists couldn't see it, so Bonham proposed painting the cane white with a red stripe to make it more noticeable. The idea quickly caught on around the world.



A GDV client  
with her long cane.



# Jamie and Guide Dog Joffa

By Jamie McKie

Hi my name is Joffa and I'm Jamie's Guide Dog. I help Jamie to move around because she has a vision loss.

When I have my harness on that means I'm working and you shouldn't distract me because that could put Jamie's safety at risk. When I have my harness off, I'm off duty, so please ask Jamie if you can pat or talk to me. I am trained to be clean, quiet and well behaved. I am trained to toilet on command and when I need to go to the toilet Jamie puts a special toilet harness on me. I have learnt to walk in a straight line; ignore distractions like cats, food and other dogs; indicate a kerb by stopping, and the meaning of many commands such as "stop", "forward" and "straight to the kerb".

People do not have to be totally blind to enjoy the benefits, or be eligible to work with a Guide Dog. Most people have a small amount of vision.

I have had experience in guiding Jamie all around her home locality and I have been checked for traffic

safety. I can follow around thirty commands by word, hand or foot and sometimes I have to refuse to obey for safety reasons. I will be Jamie's companion and best friend for the next eight to ten years.

Things you can do to help keep Jamie and me safe:

- Stand aside: clear space for us, look around to check our path is not blocked.
- Approach: if you think we may need a hand, walk up, greet us and identify yourself.
- Ask: ask us if we'd like some help, but don't be offended if we don't need your assistance.

Thank you for not feeding, patting or talking to me in harness.

To learn more call 1800 804 805 or visit [www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au](http://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au)

A Guide Dog in harness



# Technology Corner

By Darren Moyle

Over the past five years we have seen the release of some fantastic smartphone applications that assist Orientation & Mobility. The ability to hear nearby street names as you pass, find places of interest near you at the touch of a button, plan a public transport route, be told when you have arrived at your station or ask your phone what is your current location are just some of the ways your trusty smartphone can help. Try out some of the apps listed below or contact us to find out more.

## Blind Square:

Enables you to find where you are and where you want to go. It has a range of features such as 'look around' that will announce the nearby food outlets, roads, transport, schools and more depending on your chosen setting by simply pointing your phone in different directions. This is fantastic for information gathering in unfamiliar environments and to ensure you are on the right track.

## Stop Here:

This app was created by Public Transport Victoria and simply sends you a notification when you are about to arrive and when you have arrived at your chosen train station. This is very useful especially when the train announcements are not working.

## Tap Tap See:

Have you ever wanted to know if you were buying a can of Coke or Coke Zero? Simply take a photo of an object and this app will speak aloud what it is. This can be helpful to read basic text such as product names or gather basic information about your environment. ●



A student using his phone

# Get Active

By Darren Moyle

Being active in sport is a great way to connect with others and increase your physical and emotional wellbeing. If you would like any O&M training to get to any of these venues, please speak to your O&M instructor or contact Guide Dogs Victoria.

## MILO CRICKET

**Where:** 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong  
(Back of Vision Australia)

**When:** Every Saturday from 28th January to 4th March

**Time:** 10:30am – 12pm

If you are interested in participating please contact Road Prichard on 0401 718 926 or email at [prichardrojo@bigblue.net.au](mailto:prichardrojo@bigblue.net.au)

## SOCCER

### Victorian B League

This exciting competition ran last year on Sundays during August to November for people who are aged 16 and up. The weekly competition is held in an indoor soccer venue and is open to participants who are blind or have low vision as well as family and friends who are willing to wear a blindfold. This is truly a fun experience for all!

Junior programs will begin during term 2 so please watch this space as well as checking out the Blind Sports newsletter for upcoming events and dates.

For further information, please visit the Football Federation Victoria (FFV) websites community page at [www.footballfedvic.com.au/access-all-abilities/blind-football/](http://www.footballfedvic.com.au/access-all-abilities/blind-football/)

## SWIMMING

### Junior Swimming Program in Kew

Offered to preschool and primary school children, who are blind or have low vision, individual

swimming lessons to establish a range of early skills to ensure they feel confident and safe around water.

**Where:** Ruyton Girls School, 1 Selbourne Road, Kew

**When:** Sunday 5th February to Sunday 26th March

For further information please email [info@blindsports.org.au](mailto:info@blindsports.org.au) or call 9822 8876

## JUDO

Judo is a Paralympic sport and a Japanese form of martial arts which involves grappling, holds and leverage to unbalance your opponent.

**Where:** Noblesoul Academy, 408 Gore Street, Fitzroy

For further information, please contact Ryosuke Miwa on 0458 226 865.



Student in a judo class





Two students boxing

## SWISH

**Swish is a fun modified form of table tennis for people who are blind or have low vision**

**Where:** 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong  
(Vision Australia Kooyong)

**When:** Every Thursday night and most Saturday afternoons

Swish is offered at a range of venues across Victoria such as Dandenong, Mornington, Shepparton, Mildura and Bendigo. Please visit the Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria's website [www.blindsports.org.au](http://www.blindsports.org.au) or contact Robyn on 0417 159 106.

## GOALBALL

An exciting and physical Paralympic sport, Goalball involves throwing an audible ball down a court in the aim to get it into the opponent's goal as they fearlessly defend it with their body.

Goalball will begin during term 2 and is held at Scotch College in Hawthorn on Saturday mornings.

**Please visit the Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria website for further information.**

**[www.blindsports.org.au](http://www.blindsports.org.au)** ●

# CMS Group Programs in 2017

By Darren Moyle

In 2017 the CMS Team are making some important changes to our camp and group programs. Based on valuable feedback we have received from parents and children accessing our service we are making a conscious decision to improve the learning opportunities for every child. Programs will:

- Have a greater focus on individual abilities and skill level.
- Aim to provide learning opportunities that are more meaningful to each student.

- Will not compromise social interactions that we understand are strongly valued. We hope that these changes will assist all students in reaching their O&M goals this year.

Current programs are outlined on the next page. Please note, other programs may also be added to this list during the year. If you have any questions regarding the suitability of each program for your child, please contact your O&M or Alicia San Martin (CMS Team Leader) on 9854 4510.





## OVERNIGHT PROGRAMS

### **Explore Melbourne (Secondary)** Monday 3 – Thursday 6 April

A focus on developing understanding of travelling on public transport, crossing a range of city streets safely and self-orienting to an environment. As students will be living with peers in an apartment, they will be required to manage their own belongings and independently prepare for the day's activities.

### **Explore it, map it, do it! (Primary)** Monday 10 – Wednesday 12 July

This program has a focus on exploring and interpreting new environments and their features. Students will complete tasks around self-orientation and exploration, audio mapping, self-advocacy and information gathering.

### **Around the bay (Secondary)** Monday 25 – Thursday 28 September

This program involves travelling to a different location around Port Phillip Bay to sleep each night. Students who are well organised, travel independently and who are flexible and work well in a group are encouraged to apply for this program.

## DAY PROGRAMS

### **On The Move:**

This is a program for primary school age students who would benefit from further development of their road concepts, safe crossing routine, understanding of intersections and traffic flow as well as visual and auditory scanning for traffic. This program will be a three part series offered in terms 2, 3 and 4 in different regions across Victoria. Dates for each program will vary depending on your region.

### **My Mobility:**

This program is for secondary school students who want to test out their mobility skills in a range of activities and challenges in the Melbourne CBD. Students will be encouraged to meet at Flinders Street Station and complete the route home at the most independent level possible. Topics covered will include self-advocacy, public transport use and use of technology to assist O&M.

On The Move and My Mobility will take the place of other groups you may have been part of in previous years such as My Mobility, Eastern Raiders and Gippy Travellers. The goal is to deliver a valuable curriculum to students in their regions in a productive and efficient manner.

If you are interested in attending On The Move or My Mobility and want to find out more information please contact Alicia San Martin on 9845 4510 to register your interest. ●

Students waiting at a tram stop





## Feedback?

If you have anything to contribute to this newsletter, please feel free to contact us with your piece.

We welcome all contributions from anyone.

Please either contact or email our referrals officer with your contributions as below:

referrals@guidedogsvictoria.com.au or  
phone: 03 9854 4467

If you wish to contact anyone from the CMS team or would like to ask questions regarding any of our programs, please ring the phone number of the instructor you wish to speak to or alternatively you can send an email to:  
cms@guidedogsvictoria.com.au ●

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Students travelling on the train





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ABN 68 004 621 461  
2-6 Chandler Highway, Kew 3101  
Telephone 03 9854 4444 Fax 03 9854 4500  
Email [info@guidedogsvictoria.com.au](mailto:info@guidedogsvictoria.com.au)  
[www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au](http://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au)