When you meet Kaley, she will tell you she works as a sidekick to superheroes.

Kaley is part of our wonderful team of Support Workers, who really help to make a difference to the lives of our clients each and every day.

“I love meeting and working with our extraordinary clients,” says Kaley. “Each with their own unique personalities, strengths and challenges. You can learn so much from each and every one of them.”

Kaley began working with Senses Australia three years ago and provides support to two individual clients each week. As part of Kaley’s role, she also covers shifts with other clients and provides support to clients living in Senses Australia’s group homes as needed.

Having worked in admin for 11 years prior to joining Senses Australia, Kaley says since becoming a Support Worker, she hasn’t looked back.

“There is nothing better than seeing a client proud or excited. I love supporting our clients in finding the right way for them as individuals in experiencing a fulfilling life.

“As a Support Worker, I enable our clients to exercise – we go swimming together or take long walks. I am also there to enable clients to take part in group activities such as Senses Australia’s yearly...
Debbie’s Column

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has enabled people with disability to have more choice when it comes to receiving specialist disability professional services. As a result many families and clients are choosing us as their provider of choice. Therefore, it is important that we are able to continue to meet this demand. Opening two new service centres means we can continue to meet local needs.

Our new service centre in Bassendean enables our clients to attend their therapy sessions in our dedicated individual therapy treatment rooms and our large sensory room, which is equipped with swings, scooter ramps and balance beams to support our clients therapy needs.

We now also have a service centre in Margaret River which was officially opened earlier this month by the Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Disability Services (stay tuned to find out more).

We are also fortunate to have a very skilled team that works closely together strengthening our services in the Lower South West.

We provide speech pathology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, psychology and social work services from both our Bassendean and Margaret River service centres. Our local teams works closely with clients, their families and carers so we can enable our clients to reach their goals.

We want to meet people’s needs but we also want to enrich people’s lives. It is important to Senses Australia that we support and encourage people with disability, no matter their age, to live a life as independently as possible and in a way that they choose.

We know we have an amazing team and we are calling on you to help us recognise them. Our 2017 Staff Excellence Awards are now open - please see page 3 to find out more.

The support Senses Australia continues to receive never ceases to amaze me. Donations, bequests and corporate relationships help make a real difference to the lives of people with disability. Together we can make a difference. To find out more see page pages 6 and 7.

Best wishes
Debbie Karasinski, CEO

SIBLINGS ARE SPECIAL

THE BOND SHARED BETWEEN SIBLINGS IS ONE THAT IS UNIQUE AND VERY SPECIAL.

Senses Australia supports this relationship.

“At Senses Australia, we understand brothers and sisters may have some concerns or questions which relate to being the sibling of a person with disability,” says Matthew Wittorff, Senses Australia’s General Manager Disability Professional Services.

“The support of our community, we were able to raise funds to continue our sibling support group – the SuperSibs Sibling Workshop.

“Held throughout the year, we recently ran a workshop in the July school holidays. This was very popular and very well received. Many children didn’t know there are other kids in the same situation as them. They had fun, played games, got to understand their sibling’s disability, shared their stories and their concerns and made new friends,” says Matthew.

Senses Australia’s SuperSibs Sibling Workshop provides a safe and supportive environment for siblings to share their feelings, concerns, questions and problems. It also helps to reduce a sibling’s sense of isolation and provides opportunities for new friendships to form. What’s more the group encourages the growth of positive attitudes.

“We’ll be running more workshops throughout the year, stay tuned to find out more,” says Matthew.

To find out more about our SuperSibs Sibling Workshops visit https://www.senses.org.au/-/want-to-know-about/a-break-and-support-for-me-and-my-family/support-for-my-brothers-and-sisters/

Nominate a staff member

Our 2017 Staff Excellence Awards are now open and we are calling on you to help us recognise our staff and the wonderful contributions they make each and everyday. Be sure to nominate an individual or team in one of the following categories:

- Individual – Health Professional Employee
- Individual – Support Worker
- Individual – Non Support Worker/Professional Team Award
- Safety Award

To find out more or to make a nomination visit http://www.senses.org.au/support-senses-australia-2/2017-service-excellence-awards/

Nominations close Friday, 15 September 2017.
Linda’s Journey

LINDA, ONE OF OUR CLIENTS, IS SET TO EMBARK ON AN OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME!

Next month Linda will travel to Denmark to present her paper ‘From dependence to independence, isolation and participation’ and her experiences living with deafblindness at the Deafblind International (DbI) European Conference on Deafblindness – ‘Touch of closeness – maintaining social connectedness’.

“I feel very fortunate to have this opportunity,” says Linda. “I am hoping I meet lots of people from across the world and inspire them with my presentation and I am sure I will learn a great deal from others presenting too,” says Linda.

Linda’s journey to Denmark started last year, after presenting on a similar topic at the 10th National Deafblind Conference, which was hosted by Senses Australia in Fremantle.

“The conference was a brand new experience for me, it taught me to be more confident in sharing my story, having received favourable comments,” says Linda. “Even though I thought it was a one in a million chance of my application being accepted to present at the DbI European Conference, I still gave it a go.

“When I received the acceptance email, I was extremely excited and wanted to share my good news with everyone. But then I realised that I needed to fund this trip and a crowdfunding page was created. Little by little the money was found and I can’t wait to jet set off to Denmark in September,” says Linda.

Linda will be accompanied by Angela, one of our Deafblind Consultants, who will be her communication guide while travelling to Denmark and attending the conference.

“I am lucky to have Angela from Senses Australia to support me on this great adventure. It will be a huge job as Angela will have to help me by being my ears and eyes through getting to and from Perth to Denmark, sightseeing and to the conference,” says Linda.

Matthew Wittorff, Senses Australia’s General Manager Disability Professional Services adds, “Senses Australia is very proud of Linda and her achievements. Linda has been working tirelessly on her paper for the conference and we wish her all the very best with her presentation. This is a wonderful achievement!”

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR DEAFBLIND SERVICES VISIT WWW.SENSES.ORG.AU/I-WANT -TO-KNOW-ABOUT/THERAPY/SUPPORT-FOR-PeOPLE-WHO-ARE-DEAFBLIND/ OR CALL 1300 111 881 (FOR NEW CLIENT ENQUIRIES) OR 08 9473 5400 (FOR GENERAL ENQUIRIES).

Our Services

PLAY SUPPORTS EMILY TO REACH HER GOALS

THERE IS NOTHING QUITE LIKE RECEIVING A HUG FROM A LOVED ONE. SHARON, MUM TO TWO AND A HALF YEAR OLD EMILY, KNOWS JUST HOW SPECIAL A HUG CAN BE.

Emily, who has Sotos Syndrome, began giving her mum a hug just a few months ago – one of Emily’s goals that she’s been working hard towards achieving with the help of Senses Australia’s therapy services team.

“We’ve seen a big change in Emily,” Sharon says. “Emily now makes eye contact to communicate and she points to things she wants and copies our sounds and words.

“Emily now enjoys bath time, a night time story and she’s sleeping soundly through the night. She loves to look at herself in the mirror, she giggles at animal sounds we make and the best bit – I now get lots of cuddles,” says Sharon.

Sotos Syndrome is a rare condition in which a person’s body grows very quickly, however communication and movement develop slowly and often people with Sotos Syndrome show traits and behaviours similar to people with Autism.

“Emily has been receiving Therapy services from Senses Australia since December 2015, including speech pathology, occupational therapy and physiotherapy,” says Anja, Emily’s Senses Australia Speech Pathologist.

“Our team works collaboratively with Emily’s family to support Emily to reach her goals in an inclusive and meaningful way. We are using a number of different activities to support Emily and her family;” says Anja.

With the help of Senses Australia’s therapists, Emily is achieving her goals particularly around communication and interaction with her family, supporting Emily to feel comfortable and aware of her daily routine, while also supporting Emily to explore activities of interest and enabling her mobility.

“Emily is a really quick learner, she’s learning key word sign language to express her wants such as ‘more’ or ‘walk’;” says Anja. “Emily loves to play games with her mum and now expresses her affection by cuddling her mum, smiling and laughing. Emily is now also walking and she enjoys exploring new and familiar environments.

“We know Emily really enjoys playing with play dough, reading books and doing puzzles and we are incorporating these activities into Emily’s therapy sessions as it is helping Emily develop vital skills including turn taking, fine motor skills, play skills and communication. These fun activities are key to enabling Emily to reach and achieve her goals,” says Anja.

Emily’s family also use visual cues including photographs of daily routines, to enable Emily to increase her understanding of what to expect.

“All of these activities are shared activities, so Emily and her mum not only get to spend quality time playing and learning together, but these strategies have been the most effective in creating a positive change in Emily and her family’s life,” says Anja.

To find out more about Senses Australia’s Therapy Services visit www.senses.org.au or call Senses Australia on 1300 111 881 (for new client enquiries) or 08 9473 5400 (for general enquiries).
IKEA Perth Makes Special Delivery

Senses Australia would like to especially thank IKEA Perth for supporting our Group Home services. Earlier this year, IKEA Perth kindly chose to support our services through their Small Actions Add up Program.

Last month, IKEA Perth donated more than $1300 which will be used to update worn out household items in our group homes. Also, making a special delivery, IKEA Perth donated a number of household items including kitchen and bathroom items, furniture, lights and artificial plants enabling us to makeover three of our group homes based in St James, Dianella and Gosnells.

THANK YOU BUNNINGS!

Thank you Bunnings!
–

Special thanks to the team at Bunnings Warehouse East Victoria Park who volunteered and helped us give our group home in St James a fresh coat of paint earlier this year.

Our clients also had the opportunity to lend a hand and enjoyed seeing their hard work pay off. The results were amazing, giving the group home a new lease of life!

Thank you

Senses Australia receives much support from our clients, donors, community groups, corporate organisations and as a beneficiary of family trusts and bequests for which we are very grateful. Thanks to this support, our community helps us to make a difference to the lives of our clients, their families, carers and ultimately the Western Australian community.

IKEA Perth has helped make a real difference to the lives of people with disability for which we are extremely grateful. The items have been a welcome addition to our group homes, helping to make our client’s living spaces comfortable and welcoming for their enjoyment and that too of their visitors.

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Ben’s a superstar

After completing the course last year with Melissa, one of our Occupational Therapists, Ben decided to again run 12kms in this year’s HBF Run for a Reason.

Helping to raise funds to support our services – services that supported his younger sister Emily - Ben raised nearly $3,000!

Thank you Ben and a big thank you to his family and everyone who supported him!

Ben inspired other siblings of children with disability to also take part in this year’s HBF Run for a Reason. Melissa and some of our therapists arranged for other brothers and sisters of children who receive our therapy services to also join in the fun!

Well done Ben and congratulations on your fundraising efforts!

HBF Run for a Reason

On Sunday, 28 May 2017 ‘Team Senses Australia’ dressed in our Senses Australia t-shirts and hit the ground running in this year’s HBF Run for a Reason. The day was perfect... the atmosphere euphoric.

We would like to especially thank the 71 registered team members, including clients, siblings of clients, staff, volunteers, family and friends who came together to help raise awareness about Senses Australia and also raise vital funds to support our services. What’s more, we were named the largest charity team and received the Woodside Challenge award with Woodside donating $1000 to support our services! This year more than $4,000 was raised. Funds will be used to support our Therapy Services, in particular our social skills groups which provide the opportunity for children to learn social skills in a safe and supportive environment.

Maybe last... but not least!

A group of our clients and staff were the last to cross the finish line at this year’s HBF Run for a Reason and they were warmly welcomed by HBF staff and followed through by an entourage of St John Ambulance officers on their push bikes, as well as members of the police force. Everyone cheered our clients and staff across the finish line, confetti was thrown and ‘Eye of the Tiger’ was playing over the speakers.

CRAIG VOLUNTEERS AS DARREN’S EYES

Special thanks to Craig, who kindly volunteered to support Darren, in this year’s HBF Run for a Reason. Craig guided Darren, one of our clients, along the 21km half marathon stretch.

Connected by an elastic rope around their wrists, enabled Craig to run beside Darren and ensure Darren ran straight. Darren has a vision and hearing impairment but he hasn’t let that stop him - conquering many challenges including the HBF Run for a Reason in 2016 and 2017 as well as an Ironman 3.8km swim, 180km bike ride and 42km marathon just last year.

Darren and Craig made a good team finishing the 2017 HBF Run for a Reason in 2:02:21!

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Darren and Craig made a good team finishing the 2017 HBF Run for a Reason in 2:02:21!
Nando’s makes a big impact

On Saturday, 29 July 2017 Nando’s Belmont and Nando’s Willetton held a local community fundraising day with all profits from their special $10 menu donated to Senses Australia. We’d also like to thank Lipton Tea who also supported this wonderful event, providing ice tea drinks to all patrons who purchased a special $10 meal.

More than $3250 was raised on the day! Both Nando’s Belmont and Nando’s Willetton are kindly displaying our donation tins in the restaurant until the end of August and helping to raise even more funds, which will be used to support our services. If you’re visiting one of these restaurants in the next couple of weeks, perhaps you too could drop your spare change in one of our donation tins - every little bit helps!

YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT TO US

There are a number of ways you can provide your feedback to us including:

**In person** - if you feel comfortable please talk directly to the people who are providing your service in the first instance.

**Online** - if you would prefer to fill in our online form, please visit [www.senses.org.au/contact-us/feedback-on-my-services](http://www.senses.org.au/contact-us/feedback-on-my-services). You can choose whether you would like us to contact you.

**Email** – please send your complaints, compliments or suggestions via email to feedback@senses.org.au.

**Telephone** – please call (08) 9473 5400.

**Survey** - please fill in the survey about our services, which is left with you at the time of the review of the individual plan.

**Post** – please send your complaints, compliments or suggestions in writing addressed to Senses Australia, PO Box 143, BURSWOOD WA 6100.


The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) welcomes feedback including complaints. If you are a national NDIS participant please direct your feedback to NDIA by contacting your local NDA office, send an email to feedback@ndis.gov.au or call 1800 800 110 or fill in an online complaint form by visiting [www.ndis.gov.au/about/contact-us/feedback-complaints/complaint-form.html](http://www.ndis.gov.au/about/contact-us/feedback-complaints/complaint-form.html) and to find out more.

Senses Australia reports all complaints to the HaDSCO. HaDSCO is an independent statutory authority providing an impartial resolution service for all complaints relating to health or disability services provided in Western Australia. All reports to HaDSCO do not include any contact information, therefore any feedback we provide to HaDSCO remains anonymous.