

25 November 2014

## **SENSES AUSTRALIA SUPPORTS KEVIN TO CONNECT WITH HIS COMMUNITY**

Busselton resident Kevin, who has been profoundly deaf since childhood, is now able to participate in and connect with his community thanks to the support he receives from Senses Australia, a leading disability service provider in Western Australia.

Kevin says thanks to the support he receives it has helped him to feel happier, he's met new people and made some new friends.

"They have helped me to find and go to community organisations and go to places and do activities that I enjoy. It is nice to have someone to chat to. I have been enjoying volunteering, my time gardening at Landcare, I like planting seedlings and watching them grow," says Kevin.

As part of the WA NDIS My Way trial, Kevin developed a My Way plan with the My Way Coordinator in Busselton which identified his goals and what was needed to be put in place to achieve them. Kevin was then made aware of service providers, including Senses Australia, which could be used to provide the services that Kevin needed to support him to achieve his goals.

Jodi Perkin, Senses Australia's Manager, Service Development says Kevin was involved in interviewing for his support worker, who supports him to live independently as well as connect him to activities that are of interest to him that he wasn't doing before.

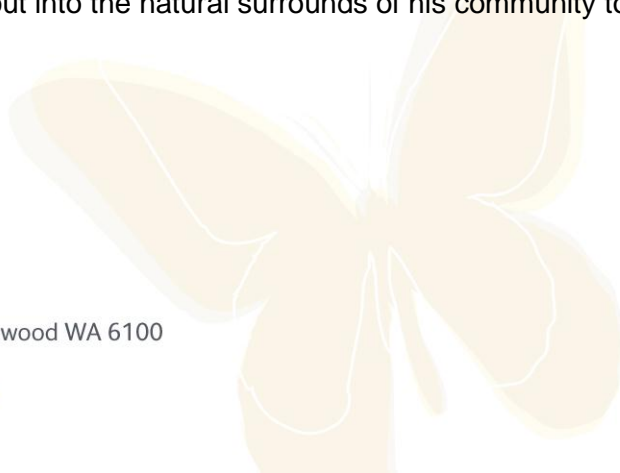
"Although Kevin was working part time before he began to receive support from Senses Australia, he was spending most of his days on his own at home. He was unsure how to connect to activities in his local community because he was unable to communicate with them verbally. Kevin's support worker assists Kevin to communicate with others using fingerspelling.

"The support Kevin receives is flexible so we can help him continue to meet his needs and the goals he has set.

"Kevin told us he chose Senses Australia because of our experience with working with people with vision and hearing loss, Kevin thought that Senses Australia would be a good fit for him. Our speech therapist is also assisting with potential communication devices which will enable Kevin to effectively communicate independently in the future rather than relying on someone else or avoiding it," says Jodi.

Kevin is now a regular at the Senior Citizens Centre in Busselton, where he participates independently in indoor bowls, table tennis and Tai Chi. Kevin has also been linked to the Busselton volunteers program and has commenced volunteering once a week. Kevin also goes fishing and he has a passion for photography. Senses Australia has supported Kevin to go out into the natural surrounds of his community to take photographs of wildlife.

**Cont.**



“Senses Australia’s head office is in Perth, but we have a base in Busselton, so we have been able to develop a service for Kevin that is very individualised and flexible and meets his needs within his community,” says Jodi.

“Kevin should be proud of his achievements over the past three months.”

Senses Australia is celebrating Social Inclusion Week 2014 from Saturday, 22 November 2014 to Sunday, 30 November 2014. The 2014 theme for this national week is ‘Collaborate, Connect and Celebrate’.

To find out more about how Senses Australia provides services to people of all ages with disability in the Lower South West visit [www.senses.org.au](http://www.senses.org.au) or call 9473 5400.

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