

## Warren's story

After spending many years in disability settings, Warren's family realised that their son needed a change and this could only happen with help from the community. Warren's mother attended a seminar organised by PLA in 2005, and with some assistance, Warren's family began to create a vision of life for Warren, living in the community and focused on his skills, abilities and passions.

Warren moved out of a group home and now lives in his own home with the natural support of housemates. Rather than attending a day service for people with a disability he enjoys a rich community lifestyle that includes volunteering at the Police Museum, St Vincent's Hospital, the Salvation Army cafe, membership of a gym, contributing to his church, and pursuing his interests in art.

## Being Warren's housemate

*by Darren Hammer*

I discovered the Wesley Home Share advertisement on the internet. After qualifying me and matching me I was introduced to Warren. I met with Warren alone with his Mum and Dad, Anita and Allan, and the meeting was facilitated by a representative from Wesley Mission Home Share.

I chose to be a housemate because it helps keep people like Warren live in their own home and not be institutionalised and it offers an at-home-support to them.

I help around the flat doing things that flat mates do and more. We'll go shopping, visit cafes, and even cook a BBQ together. Home Share provides, safety, companionship and someone to prompt little things Warren may need to remember. Visiting my friends

together is especially good socialising for Warren.

In exchange for these things I have free board, but pay for food and other expenses that come when sharing accommodation such as electricity bills, internet connection and so on. It gives me satisfaction to help another person, and learn how to interact, observe and assess situations I may not have had the chance to so closely participate in. It is definitely an eye opener to another person's personal difficulties, their strengths, their achievements and this gives me an appreciation of my own life. It is a great program to be involved in and certainly can help you to become more "other people centred" which is a trait not displayed enough in our time, yet is a powerful motivating trait to have.

