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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**30 AND STILL GROWING**

**30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2012**

This year, disability support service, Interchange Outer East (IOE) is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. That is 30 years of supporting young people with disabilities and their families and 30 years of providing volunteering opportunities for community members.

Interchange Outer East began in 1982 and was based on a program which had been successfully operating in the Melbourne's inner east. The program revolved around the idea of 'a community looking after its own', extending the care and support of children with disabilities to others outside the immediate family through a hosting scheme involving volunteers.

Starting off on a very small scale with just this Volunteer Host Program and a tiny budget, the non-profit organisation has continued to expand, responding to the needs of the community.

There has been a huge change since those early days. Today, IOE has an annual turnover of around \$8,000,000 and offers respite, social support, recreation programs, individualised services plus a diverse range of experiences and opportunities for all members of over 800 families, living in the Maroondah, Knox and Yarra Ranges.

Volunteers have always played an important role at IOE with volunteers being a part of most programs. Interchange has been at the forefront of many volunteering initiatives, particularly in regards to recruiting and appreciating teenage volunteers for recreation programs. Because of this, an enthusiastic volunteer team has ensured that IOE's programs have retained their goal of being fun, memorable and inclusive for all.

Interchange Outer East's CEO, Mr Fred Brumhead, has been at the helm of the organisation since 1989 and has been the driving force and guiding hand behind its phenomenal growth.

"Interchange may well be thirty years old but it still acts like a child! Plays in mud, runs around like a whirlwind, does silly things..." said Mr Brumhead "At times it seems more grown up, but it is nice to know the basic philosophy is still there. Interchange began as an agency of the community focused on connecting people and families to share and be involved in their lives. I like to think that is what is still most important about the service."

For more information about IOE's programs and services and the many different ways volunteers can be involved, please contact 03 9758 5522 or email [ioe@ioe.org.au](mailto:ioe@ioe.org.au) or visit [www.ioe.org.au](http://www.ioe.org.au)

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