

Disability book set to enlighten

by Ruby Manson

A book featuring Colac district people will help improve relationships between young people with cognitive disabilities and their support workers.

Colac Orway Disability Accommodation's Monica Provan said the launch of *Relationships and Recognition* – photos about working together, was successful with Colac participants travelling to Geelong for the event.

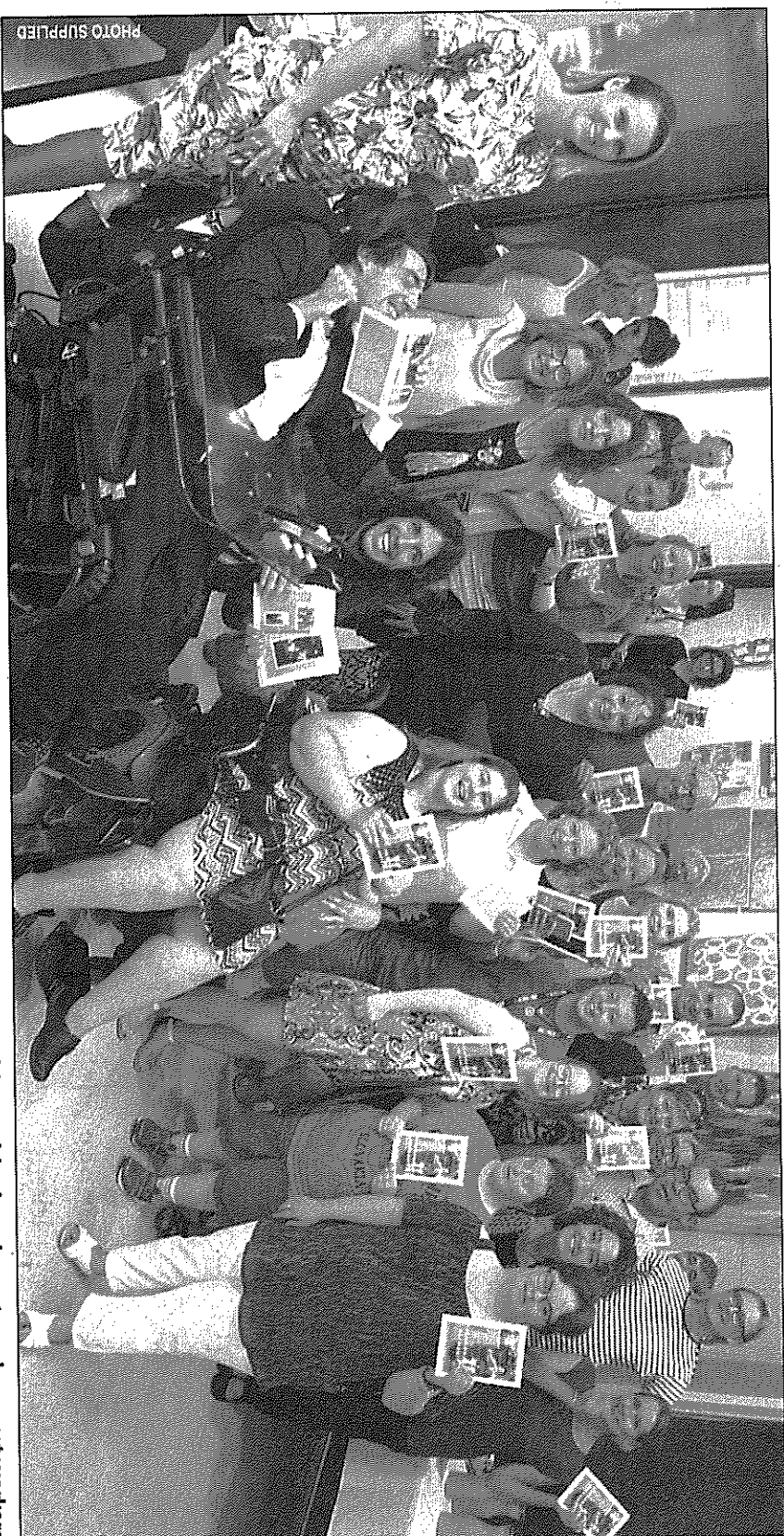
"The book is a part of a bigger research project," she said.

"It was a really interesting way for people to participate in research.

"It was quite interactive and focused on the clients as people rather than them as a subject."

Participants documented things they liked to do with their support workers, which will allow researchers to get a deeper understanding of the relationship between young people with cognitive disabilities and paid support workers.

"They used what is called social geography to draw out the importance of the relationship, so that was a really important aspect of the project in relation to



CONNECT: Colac and district people feature in a book about the relationship between young people with cognitive impairments and support workers.

working with people with a cognitive impairment," Ms Provan said.

"The thought processes and ability to express yourself is not as clear.

"With the client taking photos of things they

enjoyed doing with their support worker in a geographic context, the researchers were able to draw out what the client was thinking without them having to express it in explicit words."

She said the experience was something both the young people and their support workers enjoyed, and she thought the research would be valuable in improving the relationship between people with cogni-

tive impairments and those who support them.

"They certainly enjoyed the process, it really brought home to the support workers the importance of their relationship with the client in their paid

work as carers, particularly in relation to the clients and the outcomes they want to achieve," Ms Provan said.

"That relationship of trust and connection is so important between the two parties."