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ABILITY ADVOCATES: LAUNCHING A REVOLUTION FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES

SYDNEY, Australia, Sept 6, 2023 — A revolutionary social enterprise, Ability Advocates, officially launched today, pledging steadfast commitment to reshape the world for people living with disabilities and their families. This groundbreaking venture was founded by a mother, propelled by her personal journey and a burning desire to rewrite society's narrative for individuals with special needs. The primary goal of Ability Advocates is to cultivate a world that embraces acceptance, inclusivity, and empowerment.

Lorraine Salloum, the visionary behind Ability Advocates, emphasised, "Our ambition is audacious, our mission firm: to construct an environment where each individual, regardless of their abilities, can flourish and lead a fulfilling life."

Lorraine also unveiled her co-authored book, 'Shaken, Stirred but not Deterred', at the launch event, which within days achieved Number 1 Amazon bestseller status. The book serves as a rallying call, underscoring the collective commitment to build an inclusive society.

The book encapsulates her journey with her daughter, diagnosed with autism at the tender age of two to her launch of her social enterprise and charity foundation 13 years later. She recalls at diagnosis, "I remember a profound sadness that consumed me; an intense realisation of the uphill battle that lay before us. But as time moved on,

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it brought a subtle change in perspective. What Caitlin needed was acceptance, support, and opportunities to grow and thrive in her own, unique way."

Coupled with her book release, the launch of Ability Advocates Foundation signifies Lorraine's commitment to making this vision a reality. This multifaceted enterprise pledges to bridge the gaps in service and support that often afflict people with disabilities and their carers, with programmes such as information, referrals, non-legal advocacy, carer support and wellbeing programs. Lorraine highlights "Unlike popular belief, only 10% of the 4.4 million people with disabilities in Australia are currently supported by the NDIS".

Lorraine underscores her ambition, "Our mission is firm: to construct an environment where each individual and family, regardless of their abilities and difference, can flourish and lead a fulfilling life." This mission is embodied in Ability Advocates flagship innovative initiatives like the Employability Programme for Carers of Individuals with Disabilities, the Carer Community and Wellness App, and the Inclusive Communities Leadership Program for Government and Community Leaders. These programs aspire to transform the lives of those with disabilities and their families, inspiring inclusive leadership and empowering individuals to effect change in their workplaces, businesses, and communities.

"The launch of my book is merely a call to arms," the founder of Ability Advocates stated. "I am convinced that together, we hold the potential to reshape society and establish an environment where individuals with disabilities are not merely included but applauded for their unique capabilities."

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The launch event was a resounding success with numerous government, community, NFP and business leaders in attendance including Fairfield Council Deputy Mayor Reni Barkho, Canada Bay Councillor Anthony Bazouni, Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay, previous Government Minister and Chair of multiple NFP boards Barbara Perry. The event was replete with inspiring narratives including an address by Jo Abi, NineHoney journalist and autism advocate, shared stories from people with disabilities and their families, and impassioned attendees with a shared dedication to inclusivity. The organisation expresses deep gratitude for the heartfelt support and exuberance shown by the community.

Ability Advocates extends an invitation to everyone to join the mission to enhance lives, shatter barriers, and construct a world that enables every individual to thrive.

"Our journey is a testament to the fact that every challenge can be transformed into an opportunity, every setback into a steppingstone, every obstacle into a pathway to change. I invite you to join me, to advocate, to educate, to empower" Lorraine pleads. "Together, we can create a world where every person, regardless of their abilities, is valued, included, and given the opportunity to shine."

About Ability Advocates

Ability Advocates is a social enterprise committed to shifting the world for people with disabilities and their families. Founded on the principles of acceptance, inclusivity, and empowerment, Ability Advocates offers a range of services and initiatives aimed at fostering a world where everyone, regardless of ability, can thrive and live a fulfilling life.



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About the book 'Shaken, Stirred but Not Deterred'.

Published by Global Influencers, with all royalties going to charity Singapore Childrens Society, the book features 19 inspiring real-life stories from authors from across the world. Featuring Ability Advocates founder Lorraine Salloum's story as initially a career-driven public servant and mother whose child was diagnosed with autism at the age of 2, and the experiences and journey to become the founder of social enterprise Ability Advocates 13 years later.

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