



Children and Young People with Disability Australia Annual Report 2020-21

Thank you to all our funders



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

The Australian Government Department of Social Services who provides our core funding and NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity Building Projects



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- The Lynne Quayle Charitable Trust, managed by Equity Trustees
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Foundation for Young Australians

Acknowledgements

Children and Young People with Disability Australia would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on across Australia, whose cultures and customs have nurtured and continue to nurture this land since the Dreamtime. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. This is, was, and always will be Aboriginal land.



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About us



Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) is the national representative organisation for children and young people with disability aged 0 to 25 years. CYDA is a not-for-profit, community organisation that was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee in November 2009.

Vision

Children and young people with disability are valued and living empowered lives with equality of opportunity.

Purpose

To ensure governments, communities and families are empowering children and young people with disability to fully exercise their rights and aspirations.

Our Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Drive inclusion

- Ensure families, caregivers, communities and systems have high expectations and aspirations for children and young people
- Drive inclusion from the earliest age, focusing on early learning and school
- Create inclusive environments where children and young people are welcomed and valued

Goal 2: Create equitable life pathways and opportunities

- Increase pathways to post-school independence
- Place children and young people at the centre of policy and reform
- Leverage the flexibility of digital inclusion and entrepreneurship

Goal 3: Lead changes in community attitudes and aspirations

- Develop the voices of young leaders through co-design and paid opportunities

- Change community attitudes about children and young people with disability
- Build a network of allies to support social change

Goal 4: Support young people to take control

- Grow the confidence, leadership capability, and agency of young people
- Connect young people with change agents and networks, building an ecosystem
- Provide platforms and opportunities for young people to use their expertise to solve problems

Goal 5: Call out discrimination, abuse and neglect

- Highlight systemic injustices and drive reform
- Coordinate action to ensure rights are upheld
- Support and empower children and young people, and their families and caregivers, to hold those in power to account

Chair & CEO report



The 2020-21 year has been one of great impact for CYDA.

In December 2020 the Board launched its new four-year Strategic Plan which has provided CYDA with a blueprint for ensuring our vision is achieved and that children and young people with disability are valued and living empowered lives with equality of opportunity.

There were many firsts for CYDA in the year including, to name a few:

- The first National Youth Disability Summit completely co-designed by young people with disability
- The design and delivery of the first and second Young Leaders Program
- The appointment of 12 young people to CYDA's Youth Council
- Over 400 young people participating in CYDA events and programs

These achievements are alongside our systemic advocacy which saw 26 submissions to government consultations and inquiries, informed by deep consultation with young people and families of children with disability and four major reports published in partnership with the University of New South Wales and the University of Melbourne.

The impact of our systemic policy, advocacy and our research reports has seen major changes in policy and practice. This includes the scrapping of the controversial 'independent assessments' proposed for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the inclusion of specific actions for children and young people with disability in the next 10-year Australia's Disability Strategy launched in December 2021.

We have also made a significant contribution to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse and Neglect of People with Disability, with seven formal submissions and our CEO provided evidence to the commission on the COVID-19 impacts and discrimination in education. We anticipate the Royal Commission will make strong recommendations to prevent violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children and young people with disability as a result of the information provided by CYDA.

The organisation has been growing at the same time as the global COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact on the Australian community. Children and young people with disability and their families have been often missed in the pandemic planning and response, which has meant that CYDA has needed to strongly advocate about their needs across education, employment and vaccination discrimination.

Our staff have not skipped a beat in adapting to the COVID situation including long periods of remote working because of the restrictions. We are enormously proud of their work and their achievements in this difficult time. Their commitment to each other and to the impact we are trying to make for our community is spectacular.

Chair & CEO report



Following the development of the new Strategic Plan, the Board embarked on a governance review to conduct a review of CYDA's governance processes, policies and Constitution. In answering the question of whether CYDA have best practice governance processes, policies and compliance regimes in place, it was found overall CYDA demonstrates a very high standard of governance and is on par with much larger and better-resourced community service organisations. There were several recommendations for continuous improvement which will be implemented in the next year. New Board members have also been appointed to complement our existing strong Board, meaning CYDA is well positioned for the next financial year.

We were pleased to deliver a financial surplus, assisted in part by government COVID stimulus measures. This has meant that the Board and CYDA has had the ability to sustain employment of all roles and support the operations of CYDA in the 2021-22 financial year as the pandemic continued.

As the year closes we would like to thank all our members, our Board, staff and volunteers for the fantastic contribution you make to ensuring children and young people with disability are heard and included.

Matthew Hill
Chair

Mary Sayers
Chief Executive Officer



CYDA Board



Matthew Hill (VIC)

Chair (March 2021–Present)

Matthew is a senior executive with more than 10 years of experience in governance and board roles involving both the not-for-profit and private sectors. Matthew has a strong interest in providing value and support to communities and associations like CYDA.

Over Matthew's career he has developed skills in leadership, building relationships, seizing control of critical problems and delivering on customer commitments.

Matthew is a father of two children and has family experience of disability. Matthew is extremely committed to progressing the rights of children and young people with disability.



Timothy Lachlan (QLD)

(appointed December 2020)

Timothy is a young person and the first Australian to land a wheelchair backflip. He is neurodivergent and lives with Hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, Hypotonia and Spina Bifida Occulta. Timothy is a fourth-year Occupational Therapy (OT) student who is passionate about Wheelchair Moto-Cross (WCMX), fabrication and advocating for access and inclusion.

Tim's passion for helping others is what led him to become a member of the Co-design Committee for the 2020 National Youth Disability Summit and go on to start his own business fabricating affordable, high-quality disability equipment.



Lara Maia-Pike (QLD)

(appointed December 2020)

Lara is an equity practitioner and mother of two boys. She has worked in higher education for over 14 years and is passionate about education and social justice.

Lara is a PhD candidate in inclusive education with research focusing on transition planning for students on the autism spectrum in senior high school. She is an Associate Fellow for the Higher Education Academy and a HDR member of the Centre for inclusive education.



Julie Mavlian (NSW)

Julie is a mother of four children including a young person with disability.

Julie is currently a Learning and Support Teacher at a NSW public school. She has a Master's in special education and has worked with students in a variety of educational settings from preschool through to adult for more than 30 years.

Julie is a passionate advocate who has worked proactively for the rights and needs of children and young people with disability.

CYDA Board



Grace Mills (WA)

Deputy Chair

Grace is a young person with disability who has been involved with the disability sector in Western Australia since 2013.

Grace has experience in a range of community organisations, beginning with Youth Disability Advocacy Network (YDAN), Diverse Leadership WA and VisAbility before joining the City of Perth Access & Inclusion Advisory Group and volunteering to foster young people living with a disability to follow their passions and career goals.

Grace is involved with the Ministerial Advisory Council on Disability, Australian Inclusion Group, Inclusion Solutions, Telethon Kids Institute Youth Advisory Group, Department of health Disability Health network Executive Advisory Group, NDIA Independent Advisory Council Home & Living Terms of Reference Group and has a love of martial arts and music.

Grace believes that the inclusion of young people with disability in the community in all areas of life, from education to employment and building strong social networks is key to a thriving and welcoming society.



Jocelyn Neumueller (SA)

Secretary

Jocelyn is a young person that is passionate about sport and the opportunities it offers. She lives with disability and has been involved with committees and organisations in the disability and sporting sectors since 2014, at both a state and national level. As a Paralympian and world champion, she is passionate about being an active and engaging role model and advocate for people to live the life they love through committee and board participation, advocacy, mentoring and actively engaging in the community because she believes that everyone should get the chance to participate, perform and connect regardless of physical or intellectual ability.

Having a background and degree in medical science, Jocelyn is currently completing a law and legal practice degree alongside disability advocacy. Jocelyn has contributed to a number of community and government boards and committees over the years.



Alan Blackwood (VIC)

Chair (resigned December 2020)

Alan has family experience of disability and has also worked in the sector in a range of advocacy and governance roles with people with disability for over 30 years.

Alan has served on numerous state and national advisory bodies and has previously worked with CYDA on NDIS and education policy.

Alan is a strong supporter of inclusive education and the participation of people with disability in their organisations.



Bronwyn Morkham (VIC)

Secretary (resigned December 2020)

An experienced individual and systemic advocate, Dr. Bronwyn Morkham has worked with state and federal governments in systems policy and improvement. She is presently working with state and federal jurisdictions on the systemic and policy reforms needed to implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), particularly around the scheme's interactions with other service systems such as health and education.

Bronwyn has served on a number of state and federal advisory bodies and led development of innovative and collaborative practice solutions in systems working with younger people with disability.

Bronwyn is committed to the development of community based services that enable children and young people with disability to live safely and with confidence in the community.



Heather Renton (VIC)

(resigned December 2020)

Heather is the Chief Executive Officer and Founder of Syndromes Without a Name (SWAN) – Australia. SWAN provides information and support to families caring for a child with an undiagnosed or rare genetic condition. Heather is the mother of two children, one of whom has a rare genetic condition and disability. Heather is a passionate advocate for families who have children with undiagnosed and rare genetic conditions.

Heather is a member of the Melbourne Genomics Health Alliance Community Advisory Group, the Consumer and Community Advisory Group for the Discipline of Genetic Counselling, University of Technology Sydney, and a moderator for both the FOXP1 and Undiagnosed rareconnect.org communities.



Melanie Tran (NSW)

Chair (appointed December 2020 – resigned May 2021)

Named one of the Top 100 Women of Influence 2019 by the Australian Financial Review, Melanie is a designer, an innovator, an activist, a social entrepreneur. Melanie's work as a User Experience (UX) Designer and social entrepreneur has been recognised internationally, including being named the winner of the Laureate International Universities **Global Here for Good Award 2018**. Melanie's lived-experience, developed skills and knowledge allow for her work to span the disability, health and technology sectors. With over eight years' experience, and through her role as a UX Designer at **Hireup**, Melanie specialises in bringing together the worlds of business, design and social impact.

Following her success, Melanie has become a sought-after international public speaker, presenting at TEDxYouth@Sydney, TEDxSydney Pitch Night, Laureate Leadership Summit, World Usability Day at Commonwealth Bank Australia, and a keynote at Google, opening their first ever Asia Pacific UX Design Summit.



Committees

Finance and Risk Management Committee

Membership – Matthew Hill (Chair), Jocelyn Neumueller, Melanie Tran and Alan Blackwood.

Policy Committee

Membership – Grace Mills (Chair), Julie Mavlian, Bronwyn Morkham and Heather Renton

Meeting attendance

A total of eight Board Meetings were held during the reporting period.

Board Member	Eligible to attend	Attended
Alan Blackwood	3	2
Matthew Hill	8	6
Timothy Lachlan	5	4
Lara Maia-Pike	5	4
Julie Mavlian	8	6
Grace Mills	8	8
Bronwyn Morkham	3	2
Jocelyn Neumueller	8	7
Heather Renton	3	2
Melanie Tran	6	6

CYDA staff



Mary Sayers	Chief Executive Officer
Jay Carnell	Youth Trainee (until September 2021)
Madeleine Clarke	Project Coordinator – Disability Standards for Education* (from July 2021)
Kim Collinson	Inclusion Support Officer* (from October 2021)
Miranda Cross	Policy Officer
Alana Doyle	NDIS Capacity Building Coordinator (until October 2021)
Joanne Ellingworth	Business Manager*
Maeve Kennedy	Policy and Programs Manager (until October 2021)
Amy Marks	Youth Connection & Development Officer*
Jason McCurry	Youth Leadership & Development Officer*
Jess Mitchell	Youth Storytelling & Development Officer* (until August 2021)
Brendon Pinto	Youth Trainee* (from January 2021)
Sarah Priest	Communications and Media Adviser* (from January 2021)
Ewen Rawet	Policy Engagement Officer* (from August 2021)
Tasha Ritchie	Youth Programs Manager
Sue Tape	Project Coordinator – Inclusive Education*
Kelly Wilson	Acting Community Impact Manager*

*Part time/casual



CYDA 2020-21

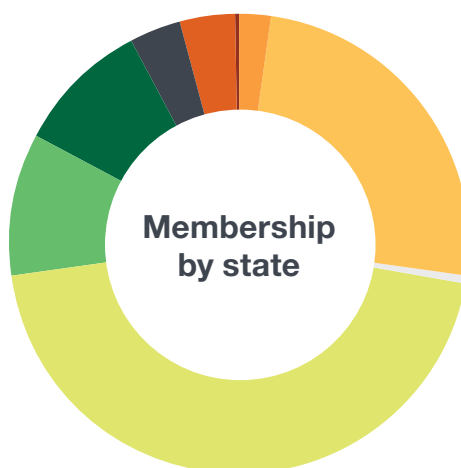
The year in review



Key stats and facts

Membership

 **4,986**
members



■	ACT 2.4%
■	NSW 24.9%
■	NT 0.6%
■	VIC 45%
■	QLD 10%
■	SA 9.5%
■	TAS 3.5%
■	WA 4%
■	INT 0.1%

Phone support

 **385**
calls

were received by
CYDA for its phone
information services

Policy and Advocacy

 **26**
submissions

to government
consultations and
inquiries

1,120 responses to
CYDA's policy and
advocacy surveys

3 appearances at
the Disability Royal
Commission

7 submissions to
the Disability Royal
Commission

3 appearances at
parliamentary hearings

Youth engagement and participation

 **424+**
young people

participating in CYDA's
programs and events

9 members of the
Australian Coalition for
Inclusive Education
Youth Working Group

19 participants in the
Young Leaders Program

19 participants in
National Youth Disability
Summit Co-Design
Committee

12 members of CYDA's
Youth Council

250 participants at the
National Youth Disability
Summit

115+ expressions of
interest in LivedX Youth
Advocacy consultations

CYDA 2020-21

The year in review



Communications



87,922
visits

yearly to the CYDA
home page



16

e-News

sent to members and
subscribers over the
year (a total of **51,989**
individual emails)



19

**Electronic Direct
Mailouts**

(a total of **27,926**
individual emails).



18,678

Facebook followers

as at June 2021
(**1,531** new followers)



5,600

**Facebook reactions
(new likes)**



444

Facebook posts



980,334

Facebook reach



5,505

Twitter followers

as at June 2021
(**474** new followers)



2,266

Twitter posts



1,789

Twitter mentions



1.3m

**Twitter
impressions**



700

**Instagram
followers**



240

**Instagram
posts**



451

**Instagram
video views**



22,510

**Instagram post
reach**



24,020

**Instagram post
impressions**



8.4%

**Instagram post
engagement rate**



12

Media releases



22

**Media
appearances
including TV,
news and radio**

Strategic Goal 1:

Drive inclusion



Key achievements

Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education

The Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education (ACIE) is a national coalition of organisations working together to advance inclusive education in Australia and across state and territory education systems. CYDA chairs and co-convenes ACIE with All Means All. In 2021, ACIE focused on providing submissions and evidence to the Disability Royal Commission (DRC) including the release of the *Driving change: A roadmap for achieving inclusive education in Australia* in October 2020. The roadmap is underpinned by six key pillars to help realise inclusive education in Australia and prevent the violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of students with disability.

Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education – Youth Working Group

In late 2020, a Youth Working Group (YWG) was formed to ensure youth voice to progress inclusive education in Australia. The YWG consists of nine young people between the ages of 15 to 25 years from across Australia.

The YWG formed three working groups based on the interests and experiences of the young people involved. A summary of the projects include:

- surveys for young people with disability across their experiences of inclusive education
- surveys for educators based on their experiences of inclusive education
- infographics and fact sheets about segregation
- youth-friendly plain language and Easy Read versions of the ACIE Roadmap for achieving inclusive education in Australia.

NDIS In Control Our Way project

CYDA's In Control our Way project supports families of children and young people with disability to take control of their child's NDIS through self-management. A range of resources were developed, and they have been highly downloaded from our website.

The resources developed include four fact sheets and six self-management resources which were downloaded from our website over 700 times.

NDIS advocacy

In late 2020 the Australian Government announced it was planning to introduce NDIS Independent Assessments to determine eligibility to the scheme and for planning. There was widespread concern from the disability community about these proposed changes, which were being introduced with little consultation with people with disability, families or disability representative organisations.

In order to understand the impact of this proposal, CYDA launched a national survey to hear from young people with disability and families of children with disability. The report *Avoiding simple solutions to complex problems: Independent Assessments are not the way to a fairer NDIS*, found that the NDIS is not working for many, and there are challenges with access, planning, funding and appeals. Many respondents had negative views on the introduction of independent assessments. This report formed the basis of our advocacy to seek the government to stop the proposed reforms, which was agreed to after significant advocacy from CYDA and other disability representative organisations.

In late 2021, members of CYDA's Youth Council NDIS Working Group prepared a report and presentation, and met with Minister Linda Reynolds to present young people's perspectives on the NDIS and propose solutions to better support young people taking control over their experiences with the NDIS. These conversations will continue into 2022.

Strategic Goal 1:

Drive inclusion



Ensuring Inclusive Education in Australia project

This project has been funded by a two-year Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grant with the vision that all children and young people with disability experience an inclusive education. While COVID has taken a toll on students and families, this project has taken a more behind-the-scenes approach than originally planned, as we recognise challenges for our community to take on new information and resources given other time pressures. CYDA is continuing to use existing partnerships and allies to facilitate updating of trusted sources of information for families and caregivers to include clear and consistent messages on inclusion of young children with disability.

Disability Standards for Education – resources for students and families/caregivers

CYDA was funded by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment to develop information products for the Disability Standards for Education, following the review of the standards in 2020. Highlights have been holding seven focus groups with 69 students and families/caregivers and four co-design sessions. After developing the first four information products in late 2021, in 2022 we will develop the final information products.

Digital Access and Inclusion: A Guide to Digitally Inclusive and Accessible Co-design, Consultations and Events

Our research shows young people with disability often face non-inclusive events, education and opportunities and barriers to participation because of inaccessible processes such as inadequate information delivery, meeting structures, interpreters, assistive technology, and other inclusive support. This project, funded by the Foundation for Young Australians, will enable CYDA to develop a resource for Digital Access and Inclusion for organisations wanting to work with young people with disability.

Policy submissions and reports

Submissions

Submission to the Senate Select Committee on Autism Inquiry

Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005

Responses to NDIS Support Coordination Discussion Paper

National Disability Strategy Beyond 2020

NDS & NDIS Outcomes Framework Introductory Paper

Drive inclusion and equity for children and young people with disability: 2021-22 Pre-Budget submission

Proposed changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme access, eligibility, and planning processes

Improving the NDIS for children with disability

Tasmania's Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme Inquiry into independent assessments under the NDIS

Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process Interim Report

Victorian State Disability Plan

Response to the Disability Royal Commission's Promoting Inclusion issues paper

Reports

Avoiding simple solutions to complex problems: Independent Assessments are not the way to a fairer NDIS, (May 2021)

Strategic Goal 2: Create equitable life pathways and opportunities

2

Key achievements

Lived X

CYDA's LivedX project is funded by the Youth Advocacy Support Grants through the Australian Government Department of Health.

At CYDA, LivedX means lived experience and also lived expertise – we champion this in all we do.

The LivedX project enabled CYDA to develop unique and impactful methodologies for consulting with young people with disability in virtual environments. Young people with disability selected topics, co-designed and co-facilitated nine consultations over the course of 2021:

- Safe services #1 (in partnership with the Australian Human Rights Commission)
- Safe Services #2 (in partnership with the Australian Human Rights Commission)
- Decision making
- Inclusion
- Tertiary education (TAFE/VET settings)
- Tertiary education (University settings)
- Employment
- LGBTQIA+ experiences: community
- LGBTQIA+ experiences: healthcare

The LivedX project has involved multiple young people with disability in the design and facilitation of the consultations, including six members of CYDA's Youth Council who make up the LivedX Working Group. Over 100 young people with disability from every state and territory around Australia expressed their interest in attending these consultations, ensuring that the perspectives, ideas and solutions gathered are diverse and representative.

Data from the LivedX consultations will inform CYDA's What Young People Said 2021 papers, to be released in early 2022. Insights gathered through the LivedX project have and will continue to contribute to national policy reforms, for example:

- Insights gathered from the Safe Services LivedX consultations held in partnership with the Australian Human Rights Commission contributed to the new National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children
- Insights gathered from the Employment LivedX consultation will contribute to the Disability Employment Services reform.

Strategic Goal 2: Create equitable life pathways and opportunities



Youth led policy

At last year's National Youth Disability Summit (Summit), the importance of securing quality employment and being financially independent was a common theme shared by young participants throughout the week. The consultation workshops held on the employment day were particularly powerful for our policy work, with young people sharing with CYDA their lived insights on the barriers and facilitators to securing good jobs, and how government and employers can better support young people.

These discussions have shaped CYDA's policy work and the opportunities we pursue. In the last 12 months, CYDA has produced submissions and provided evidence at inquiries on the topics of post-school transition and career supports, TAFE supports, employment and job security, and government income payments – all with direct quotes and insights from our young community members included throughout.

In 2021, CYDA held a series of LivedX focus groups – designed and delivered by young people – including three on the topics of employment services and supports and access in post school education (university and VET/ TAFE). The findings from these sessions will inform CYDA's federal election platform and our policy work into 2022.

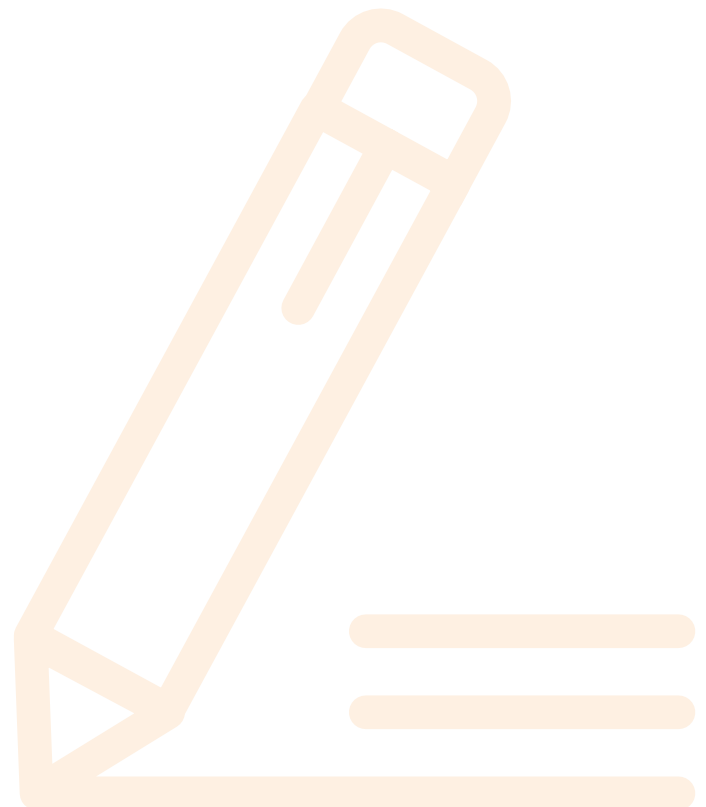
Policy submissions and reports

Submissions

Submission to the Senate Select Committee on Job Security Young people with disability and job insecurity

Disability Royal Commission response to Employment Issues Paper

National Disability Employment Strategy consultation



Strategic Goal 3: Lead changes in community attitudes and aspirations

3

Key achievements

Education Attitude Project

CYDA secured funding from Equity Trustees (to engage Essential Media) to examine how a social movement for change might shift the mindset for inclusive education for students with disability as a 'service issue' to a 'rights issue'. This work will continue to assist in identifying areas of focus for 2022 for ensuring inclusive education in Australia for all students.

National Youth Disability Summit

As reported in last year's Annual Report, CYDA held the inaugural National Youth Disability Summit designed by the National Summit Co-Design Committee. It was held over 5 days between 29 September – 3 October with over 250 young people and an additional 400 guests for the Open Day.

Conducted entirely online, the Summit was a first in Australia, providing a platform for young people with disability (under 30) to come together, connect, and talk about their lived experience and ideas in a safe and supported environment.

Planning has commenced for the 2022 National Youth Disability Summit, with a new Summit Co-design Committee formed to plan the next Summit.

What Young People Said

Following the National Youth Disability Summit 2020, CYDA analysed data collected during Summit sessions over the five days and wrote a series of papers called What Young People Said.

The What Young People Said papers covered the five key themes of the Summit:

- Education
- Employment
- Awareness, access and inclusion
- NDIS & housing
- Mental health & wellbeing

The papers included young people's voices directly and highlighted their perspectives and ideas around identity, barriers, enablers, solutions and social movement. Each paper highlighted several calls to action for governments, organisations and communities.

The papers were submitted to:

- Victorian Youth Strategy
- Tasmanian Youth Strategy
- Departments of Social Services (federal and states)
- Australian Government Department of Health
- Disability Royal Commission
- National Disability Strategy (DSS)
- National Disability Insurance Agency

Following the submissions, CYDA and young people were invited to present to multiple stakeholders to share What Young People Said and the calls to action, including the National Disability Insurance Agency senior leadership.

Strategic Goal 3: Lead changes in community attitudes and aspirations

3

CYDA Web

The 'CYDA Web' refers to CYDA's Youth Network and ecosystem of opportunities and support for young people with disability, and is linked to two of our strategic goals: lead changes in community attitudes and aspirations; and support young people to take control.

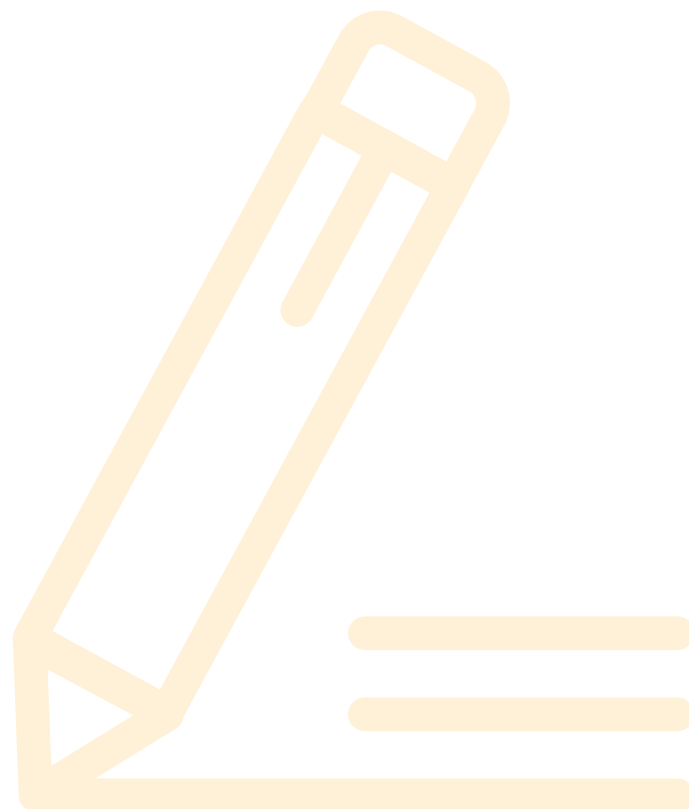
The CYDA Web enabled us to support young people with disability to speak at various external engagements (including panels, webinars, consultations) and connect young people to internal/external paid work opportunities (including research, youth advisory committees, facilitation opportunities). Over the year, CYDA has supported young people to engage in over 30 paid opportunities including:

- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment Disability Standards for Education Young People Advisory Group
- Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment Disability Employment Services Review Youth Working Group
- National Disability Research Project – decision-making research project
- Disability Royal Commission
- VicHealth Co-design Workshops
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations Disability Support Pension Submission
- Families Australia and CYDA Policy Forum
- Youth Law Australian Lawyers for Human Rights University of New South Wales webinar on child rights
- National Child Protection Week Webinar
- The Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS about Independent Assessments
- Meetings with senior political figures

Policy submissions and reports

Submissions

Disability Royal Commission response to Rights and Attitudes Issues Paper



Strategic Goal 4: Support young people to take control

4

Key achievements

CYDA Youth Council

In 2021, CYDA established its first ever national Youth Council comprising 12 young people with disability to ensure that CYDA's operations, governance, advocacy and delivery of our strategic plan is youth-led and relevant. The aim of the Youth Council is to build the leadership skills of each of our members through paid employment, training and development opportunities, and also develop CYDA's organisational capacity through providing a supported pathway for young people into leadership and governance roles.

This year, Youth Council members have participated in media spokesperson training delivered in partnership with the Foundation for Young Australians and have formed two Working Groups based around key projects.

The LivedX Working Group has focused largely on the LivedX Youth Advocacy project, with Youth Council members designing, facilitating and analysing nine consultations with young people. LivedX Working Group members have also contributed to the Disability Standards for Education project and represented CYDA in multiple external forums.

The NDIS Working Group was formed to steer the direction of CYDA's NDIS In Control My Way project. In Control My Way is a project designed to empower young people to take control of their NDIS. The NDIS Working Group also prepared a report and presentation, and met with NDIS Minister, Senator Linda Reynolds, to advise the Minister on how the NDIS can be improved for young people.

Young Leaders Program

In late 2020, CYDA co-designed and delivered the inaugural National Youth Disability Leadership Program (Young Leaders Program); the first national leadership program for young people

with disability in Australia. This long-format (6-12 month) program was designed following consultation and research with national leaders, organisations and young people with disability.

The Young Leaders Program is completely online and is designed for young people with disability anywhere in Australia, aged 18-25. The program includes a number of learning opportunities including Wisdom Weekends, Deep Dives, Structured Networking sessions and 1:1 Catch Ups. We cover a number of leadership topics including self, values-based goal setting, community, conflict, embracing failure and vulnerability, unconscious bias, systems and storytelling.

The Young Leaders Program offers Young Leaders the opportunity to discuss and engage with content focused around four core themes: self and values, community, systems and systems change, and future thinking. The program utilises three key delivery methods (experience, exposure and application) and provides Young Leaders with frameworks, access to guest speakers, access to a mentor and 1:1 coaching to develop, amplify and extend their leadership skills.

The inaugural (pilot) program was conducted over six months with nine young people with disability graduating. The pilot cohort of Young Leaders consisted of nine young people with a disability between the ages of 18-25 who are based in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia, and are very diverse in their learnings, experiences, backgrounds and access needs.

Following the success of the pilot program, CYDA launched the second Young Leaders Program in August 2021 with a new cohort of 11 Young Leaders. Based on feedback and iteration, this program will run for an 8-10 month period (until May 2022) and will include a number of additional co-designed Deep Dives. The current cohort is equally as diverse in their

Strategic Goal 4: Support young people to take control

4

learnings, experiences, backgrounds and access needs as our first cohort.

We will also run a third program in the back end of 2022–23.

National Youth Disability Network

Formed in 2020 and formally beginning in 2021, the National Youth Disability Network (NYDN) is a peer network for advocates and people with disability who work for or with youth-focused disability organisations. Chaired by CYDA, the NYDN convenes every two months to collaborate, connect and amplify each other's work.

The NYDN is currently comprised of representatives from:

- Youth Disability Advocacy Network (YDAN) in Western Australia
- Enabled Youth Disability Network (EYDN) in South Australia
- Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS) in Victoria
- Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) in Queensland
- Women with Disabilities Victoria (WDV) in Victoria
- Women with Disabilities Youth Australia (WWDA Youth), national
- National Union of Students (NUS), national

The NYDN has met to consider areas of strategic priority, including the Disability Royal Commission, share ideas and support development of disability leadership programs. NYDN members have also undertaken formal Easy Read and accessible web training.

Cre8 Space

Another pilot program for CYDA, in 2021 the Cre8 Space Grants were established to support young people with disability to design and deliver place-based events in their community with a focus on supporting young people with disability to connect into local networks.

After significant interest and response rate, CYDA selected eight recipients for the 2021 grant round.

The selected Creators (grant recipients) included young people with disability from rural and regional areas, LGBTIQ+ and/or gender-diverse, and from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Grants were distributed with location in mind, and were distributed across metropolitan/regional New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria.

To support Creators in bringing their events to life, CYDA developed and facilitated virtual ideation sessions to provide training for the young people involved. This training focused on event management, budgeting, event accessibility and idea consolidation.

Each Creator was given access to CYDA staff coaching and virtual tools such as Canva premium access, an interactive manual and funds to bring their events to life. Most Creators were also able to use some of their funding to purchase a Working with Children's Check or their state's equivalent – providing longer term qualifications and skills.

Due to the impact of ongoing COVID-19 disruptions and changing restrictions, several events were pivoted online and a total of four events were delivered in 2021 and further events will be delivered in 2022.

Events held as a result of the Cre8 Space Grants covered a wide variety of impact areas, including employment, LGBTIQ+ accessibility and a social event for U18s with disability in a rural area.

Policy submissions and reports

Submissions

Recognising rights children young people with disability forum

Strategic Goal 5: Call out discrimination, abuse and neglect



Key achievements

Disability Royal Commission

Since the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability commenced, CYDA was funded by the Department of Social Services to provide systemic advocacy and engage children and young people with disability and their families to engage with the Royal Commission.

In 2020-21 we had a focus on targeted engagement with young people. CYDA hosted an information session for young people about the Disability Royal Commission (DRC). The information session, 'CYDA x DRC: Your Questions Answered', was held with Commissioner Rhonda Galbally, Counsel Assisting and Your Story Disability Legal Support on 28 April 2021. This session was hosted and facilitated by a young person.

This led to three targeted engagement sessions with the Disability Royal Commission and young people who participated in CYDA's 2020-21 Young Leaders Program.

A youth-led submission will be submitted to the DRC, along with our What Young People Said 2021 papers.

CYDA supported nine young people to give evidence at DRC Public Hearings including:

- Hearing 5 – COVID pandemic (two young people and one parent)
- Hearing 7 – Education (one young person)
- Hearing 9 – Open Employment (one young person: sharing what young people say about employment from the National Youth Disability Summit)
- Hearing 18 – Human rights and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (supported five young people to provide pre-recorded evidence)

Since the start of the Royal Commission CYDA has provided seven submissions to the Disability Royal Commission on the following topics:

- Education
- Rights and attitudes
- Criminal justice systems
- Restrictive practices
- Employment
- COVID-19
- Inclusion

CYDA's CEO gave evidence at Hearing 5 – COVID Pandemic and Hearing 7 – Education.

Strategic Goal 5: Call out discrimination, abuse and neglect



National Redress Scheme

CYDA was funded by the Department of Social Services as a Redress Support Service. The National Redress Scheme provides support to people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse. CYDA has developed resources and undertaken outreach to raise awareness of the National Redress Scheme for children and young people with disability, their families and caregivers, and the services who support them.

In August, CYDA partnered with Child Wise to deliver a national webinar to service providers working with children and young people with disability. As well as delivering information about the National Redress Scheme, the webinar was also designed to improve service providers' knowledge and understanding about sexual abuse of children and young people, and how to respond when a child or young person discloses abuse. CYDA also delivered a further six presentations about the Scheme to disability services, child and youth service providers and networks, reaching approximately 190 people in total.

Although CYDA no longer operates as a Redress Support Service, we continue to provide information about the Scheme on our website, and have developed a series of three fact sheets about the Scheme for children and young people with disability, and their families and caregivers.

Policy submissions and reports

Submissions

Submission to the Inquiry into the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

Disability Royal Commission response to Criminal Justice Systems Issues paper

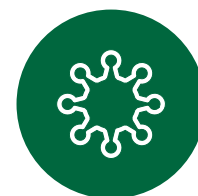
Disability Royal Commission response to Restrictive Practices Issues Paper

#End Segregation Campaign and Position Paper on Segregation

Response to the National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse Final Development Consultation Paper



Responding to the COVID pandemic



Responding to the crisis for children and young people with disability

The COVID pandemic has continued to provide many challenges for children and young people with disability and their families.

From the very start of the pandemic the needs and required responses for people with disability were clear. CYDA commenced flagging concerns from the very start with our first report: *More than isolated: The experience of children and young people with disability and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic* released in May 2020. This report was based on the findings from our national survey and was launched just five days after the World Health Organization declared the pandemic on 11 March 2020. The survey attracted just under 700 responses – predominantly from family members of children and young people with disability.

The report on the data by the University of New South Wales showed that children and young people with disability were missing from the pandemic response and planning.

Sadly, this continued as the pandemic progressed. We conducted an Education Survey with 700 responses, and the report, *Not even remotely fair: Experiences of students with disability during COVID-19* found widespread negative outcomes for students with disability during periods of lockdown. This included reasonable adjustments and support being withdrawn during periods of remote learning, having negative impacts on students.

Finally, in response to multiple enquires from families reporting difficulties in securing COVID vaccinations for children with disability aged over 12, we launched a Vaccination Survey with 150 responses. The report *Locked out: Vaccination discrimination for children and young people with disability*, found widespread lack of pandemic planning and response.

CYDA continued to advocate to government about the challenges for children and young people with disability during the pandemic at various committees. We also provided evidence at Hearing 5 of the Disability Royal Commission about COVID responses. CYDA has also contributed to the development of the proposed National Early Years COVID Plan. This plan was tabled with the Australian Senate and is intended to help better protect children aged under five, early educators and communities from the impacts of COVID.

All three reports have been submitted to the Disability Royal Commission as formal submissions.

Policy submissions and reports

Submissions

Victorian consultation on lessons from remote learning

DRC response to the COVID-19 hearing report

National Early Years COVID Plan

Reports

Locked out: Vaccination discrimination for children and young people with disability, (September 2021)

Not even remotely fair: Experiences of students with disability during COVID-19 (July 2020)

More than isolated: The experience of children and young people with disability and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic (May 2020)



Partnerships, collaboration and representation



Partnerships and collaboration

CYDA prides itself on partnerships with government and the broader disability and community sector to advance the inclusion and rights of children and young people with disability.

CYDA chairs a number of groups including:

- Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education (ACIE)

- Disability Representative Organisations Disability Royal Commission Working Group
- National Children and Young People with Disability Forum
- National Youth Disability Network.

Representation

We are also members of a wide range of government and other research and disability/ community sector advisory groups.

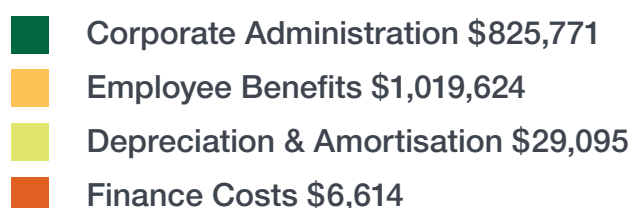
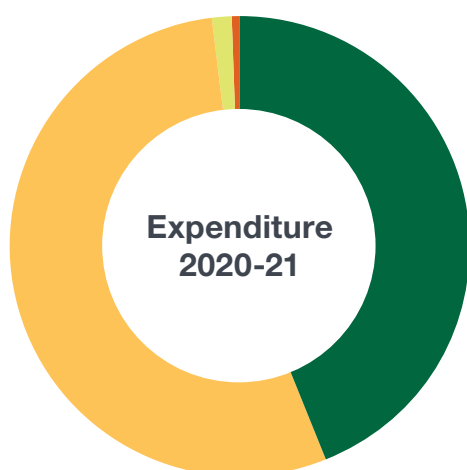
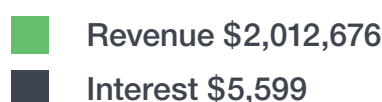
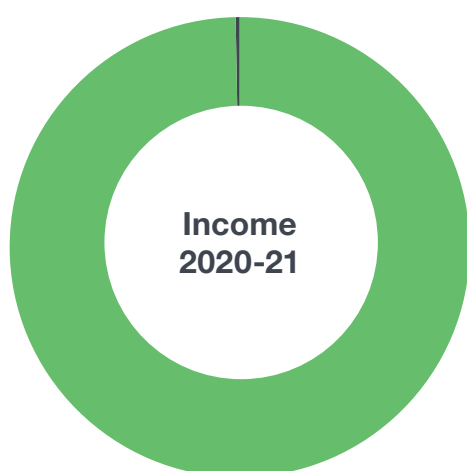
Area	Groups
NDIS	NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Consultative Group NDIS Quality and Safeguards Complaints Advisory Group NDIS CEO Forum NDIS Independent Advisory Council – Child Youth and Families Reference Group NDIA Co-design Advisory Group Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), NDIS Systemic Advocacy Working Group
Education	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, Students with Disability Working Group NSW Government Disability, Strategy Reference Group Victorian Government, Disability Inclusion and COVID-19 Working Group Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Disability Standards for Education Peaks Advisory Group National Disability Coordination Program, Enabling Career Pathways Advisory Group
Employment	Disability Employment Services Reform Reference Group Disability Employment Services Reform Youth Working Group (Co-chair)
Child safety/ prevention of violence against women	Child Safe Sectors Leadership Group Respectful Relationships Reference Panel Our Watch Advisory Group: developmental research and communications to prevent violence against women with disabilities Project Advisory Group – Young people with disability and violence at home project
Department of Social Services	National Disability Reform Council National Disability Data Asset Advisory Council Disability and Health Sector Consultation Committee (DHSCC)
Research/ Sector	Our Voices, Our Way, Our Lives Project Advisory Committee, National Ethnic Disability Alliance National Disability Research Partnership Project UNSW Supported Decision Making Project Charter of Human Rights Campaign Advisory Committee Thrive by Five Every Child ACOSS CEO Forum

Financial snapshot



2020-21 Results

Total Revenue	\$2,018,275 ¹
Total Expenditure	\$1,881,104
Result – Surplus	\$137,171
Total Members Equity – 2019-20	\$213,378
Total Members Equity – 2020-21	\$350,549



¹ CYDA received \$129,518 in state and federal government COVID measures. This funding contributed to the surplus, and enabled a deficit budget to be approved by the Board for the 2021-22 financial year. This has meant that the Board and CYDA has had the ability to sustain employment of all roles and support the operations of CYDA as the pandemic continued.

Thank you



We would like to thank our Board, members, partners, funders and supporters for your contribution to CYDA in 2020-21.

We would also like to thank:

Professor Helen Dickinson, Dr Sophie Yates, Professor Massimiliano Bertuol, Public Service Research Group, University of New South Wales, Canberra and Dr Catherine Smith, University of Melbourne for their support in analysing surveys and producing four independent reports for CYDA in 2020 and 2021.

Thrive by Five for their support to build a contemporary Australian library of images showcasing children and young people with disability and their families and friends.

Our volunteer, Adam Dickson for his work in collecting and delivering the mail to the CYDA office.



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