



SUMMIT OUTCOMES

TOPIC: EMPLOYMENT

nyds



National Youth
Disability Summit



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Hi there! 🎉

Welcome! Thanks for being here.

During the National Youth Disability Summit, young people with disability from all over Australia came together to discuss important topics, ideas and solutions for the future.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia

This is what they said.





The Summit

The National Youth Disability Summit was designed by and for young people with disability to come together and shape the future: **Our Voices. Our Visions.**

The Summit was the first event of its kind in Australia and took place online between September 29 and October 3, 2020. Over 250 young people with disability attended and shared their passions, ideas and insights.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





The Analysis

The Summit included online plenaries, workshops, consultations, panels and networking sessions.

The recordings and chats of these sessions were analysed for key themes.

These are the findings on Employment and Identity.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia

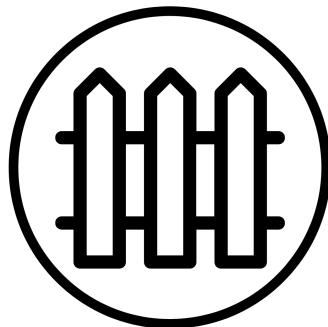


Summit Analysis Themes

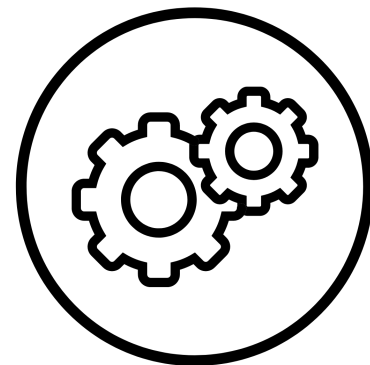
This information is about Employment and Identity



IDENTITY



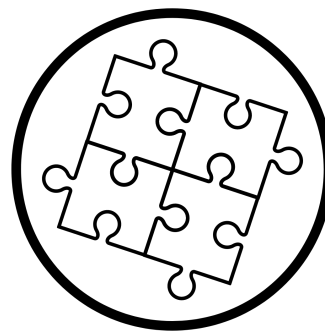
BARRIERS



**SOCIAL
MOVEMENT**



ENABLERS



SOLUTIONS



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





IDENTITY

Intersectional Identity

Young people need all elements of their identity to be respected in the workplace.

Young people also want their employment to reflect their interests, whether that be as disability advocate or outside of their disability.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Young People Said

“...The situation for women with disability is often quite different to that of men with disability because we’re not only coming against the systems of ableism, we’re coming against the systems of misogyny and gendered violence as well.”

“Working in teams with different skills has been a great way to feel like my vision, both my low vision and my creative vision, are being represented and fulfilled in like a really empowering and creative way.”



IDENTITY

Community Identity

Young people with disability described pride in being a member of the disability community.

Many described desires to give back to the disability community or to represent the disability community through their employment.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Young People Said

“I love the idea of having a ‘dream role’ within community rather than a ‘dream job’ in the community. And I think meaningful work really does involve us kind of embodying our values and acting on things we hold dear to ourselves as disabled people.”



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





IDENTITY

Emerging identity

Inaccessible employment was described as a key factor in shaping in some young people's discovering their identity as a person with disability.

Finding and sustaining employment was also central to developing an identity in emerging adulthood.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Young People Said

“Like I have a passion for the environments let’s create a business around that. Like there’s a lot of you out there with the opportunity out there to learn and unlock your opportunity to start your own business..”

“I was like ‘Do I just have a really bad work ethic? Why am I so tired compared to all of my colleagues?’ And that was around the same time I was reckoning that I actually am disabled, that I actually do have conditions that limit the way that I work and how long I can work for...”



IDENTITY

CONCLUSION

Employers must provide more opportunities for young people with disability to pursue their diverse interests and celebrate their diverse identities through work.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia

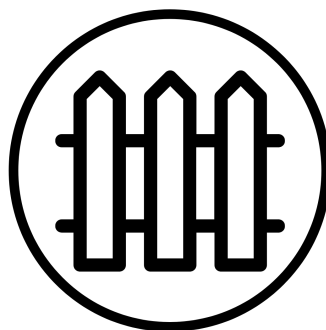


Summit Analysis Themes

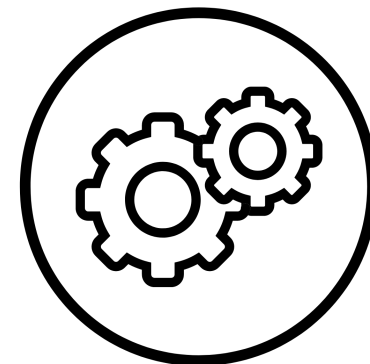
This information is about Employment and Enablers



IDENTITY



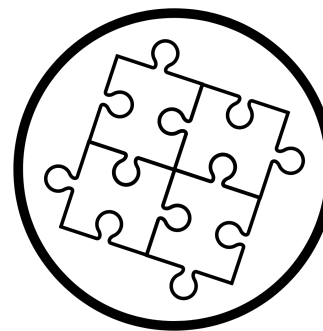
BARRIERS



**SOCIAL
MOVEMENT**



ENABLERS



SOLUTIONS



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





ENABLERS

Being included in decisions

Young people are able find work, keep and job and do their best work when they get to **make decisions** about **all aspects** of their employment.

Flexibility in the workplace is vital for young people with disability.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Young People Said

“I was originally only assessed as being able to work 15 hours and I thought that’s all I was ever going to be able to work. But it just goes to show that some reasonable adjustments, and understanding that it’s okay to struggle sometimes and need a bit of extra time to do things and small changes. And just being able to have that understanding has been fantastic. Like I’m able to work full time and I’m able to do things in a way that’s good for me and because of that, I feel really fulfilled. And it’s just great, it’s been life changing working in that.”



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





ENABLERS

Active Listening

Listening to **young people** is a key idea that came up during the Summit over and over.

Young people need **mentors and peer supports** who can provide guidance to overcome challenges in the workplace and help build confidence.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Young People Said

“I do have a belief that my career and employment journey are deeply enriched by my journey with disability. And that I’m succeeding because of my disability not in spite of it. And that some of the things that I bring to the work I do, to my employers; all the value that they get out of me is intricately linked with my disability...It’s the innate strengths that I get from my disability that brings some of my most important qualities.”

“Being able to talk to [a peer worker] who’s around the same age is really important. It can be quite intimidating speaking about some sensitive topics or an issue that’s really important to somebody who’s maybe never had those experiences before... it might be ‘I’ve had the same problem before and I know how I was able to overcome it’”



ENABLERS

Proactive Supports

Young people value employers being assertive in **asking about and supporting** young people's needs at work.

Young people need employers to **proactively ask** about accessibility, **encourage authentic discussion** about disability and support young people to do **their best**.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Young People Said

“I have really supportive employers who give me flexible work accommodations. And let me work from home which mean that you know, I have the time to do the things I need to do to sustain myself.

And yeah, thrive I guess.”

“Employers that are not just patient but wanting to make sure they have what they need so you can do your job in a healthy way. As opposed to you having to fight for it every step of the way, it’s them reaching their hand out first, I guess, and saying, ‘What do we need for you to make this work?’ ... as opposed to being scared of what might happen if you speak up.”



ENABLERS

Participation Pathways

It is hard to be what you can't see.

Employment agencies that **embrace young people's diverse, intersectional identities** provide the most meaningful support.

Pathways to participate in all parts of employment are key for young people with disability.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Young People Said

“I went for an interview last year... and the interview was really good...it wasn't about how well you can perform in a stressful situation, but how well do you know what you need to be able to do this job ... [H]aving an interview process like that and having an application process that is inclusive and supportive of people is very helpful, I think.”

“I found that working with a disability employment agency has been really life changing for me. I managed to find a really good one just at a fair here in Victoria. They're called *redacted* and they support people with disability who are also LGBTQIA+ so it's good having people that understand all parts of you and are able to support you in all those different aspects.”



ENABLERS

CONCLUSION

Employers need to actively include young people with disability in decisions about their employment.

Flexibility and pathways to participate in all aspects of employment are vital for young people with disability.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





Content Note

This is a note to let you know that this part of the report talks about the barriers that young people face, including ableism.

Make sure to look after yourself and engage with this content in the best way for you.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia



Summit Analysis Themes

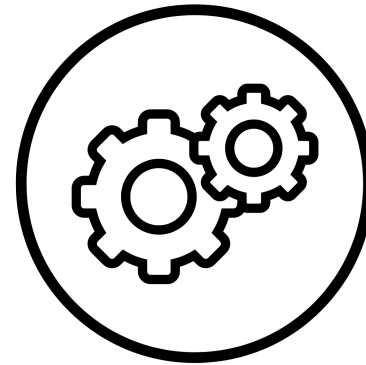
This information is about Employment and Barriers



IDENTITY



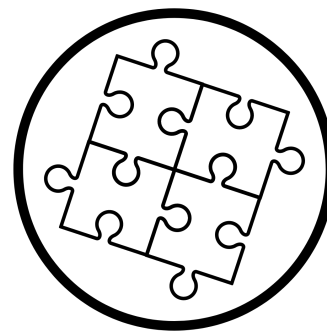
BARRIERS



**SOCIAL
MOVEMENT**



ENABLERS

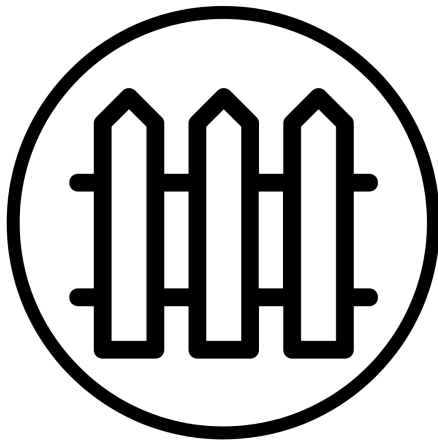


SOLUTIONS



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





BARRIERS

Making Assumptions

Young people reported that employers, recruiters and co-workers often made assumptions about what they were and were not capable of.

These assumptions are harmful and often resulted in poor outcomes.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia



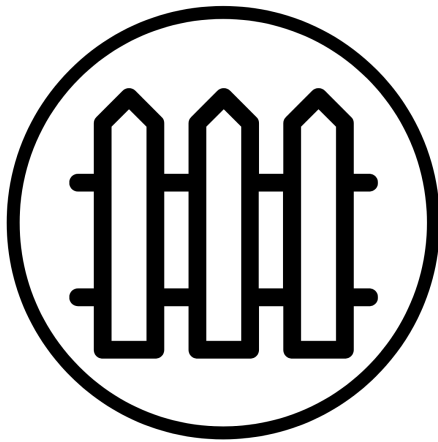


Young People Said

“It [the application process] feels like they’re trying to cross you off, rather than see what attributes you actually have.”

“If people stopped listening to the things that are not true about us, and just saw us as people that are different, but still like them, because we’re all different, wouldn’t that help?”





BARRIERS

Ableism

The attitude that productivity indicates a person's value as an employee negatively impacted young people's access to meaningful employment.

Discrimination around the "the d word [disability]" and inaccessible work were also major issues.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





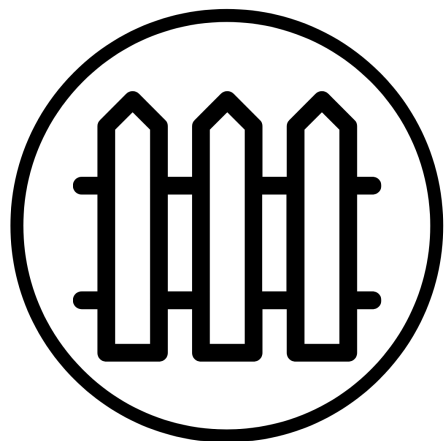
Young People Said

“It’s really important to view employment through the lens of social model of disability. ... [O]ur impairments have nothing to do with us lacking anything. It’s more to do with the ways our workplaces are structured and the way that employers accommodate us. So they’re the barrier. The barrier is not us.”



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





BARRIERS

Not being heard

Young people with disability describe not having their voices heard in employment spaces.

Not listening to young people with disability was linked to poorer access to meaningful employment.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia

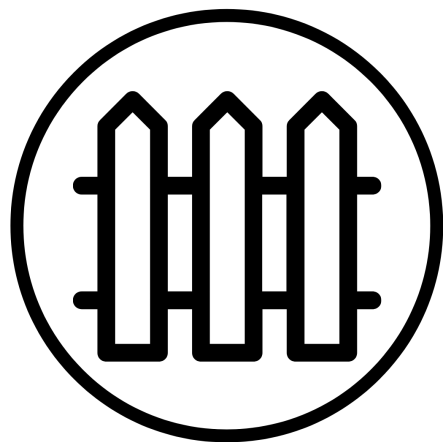




Young People Said

“I think it’s so important to advocate for ourselves because historically we haven’t been allowed to do that. And I think that our needs get met the best when we’re the ones that get to define what they are.”

“And if you exclude some people from being able to speak up and advocate about what they believe in then you’re obviously eliminating part of the world around us. And that doesn’t give you an accurate representation of how the whole community feels.”



BARRIERS

Lack of genuine and effective supports

Many young people highlighted that through false assumptions, not being heard and ableism they often did not receive the supports that they needed to thrive in employment.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





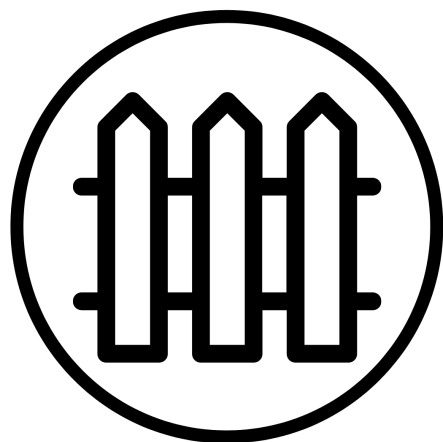
Young People Said

“It is quite hard to find flexible, slow work patterns and conditions when it seems really opposed to the dominant way that work is structured right now.”



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





BARRIERS

CONCLUSION

When employers don't listen to young people and make ableist assumptions young people do not receive supports that empower them for employment success.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia

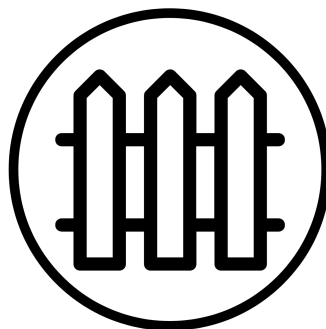


Summit Analysis Themes

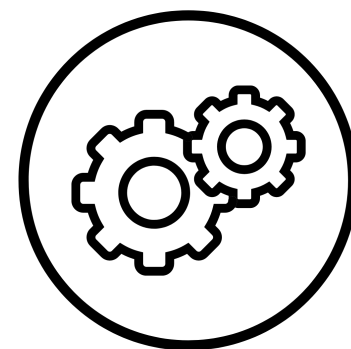
This information is about Employment and Solutions



IDENTITY



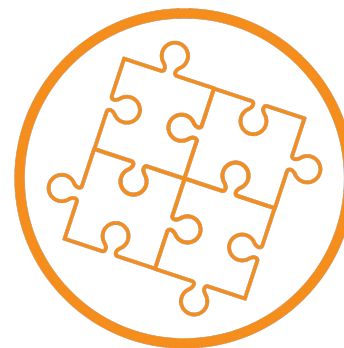
BARRIERS



MOVEMENT



ENABLERS

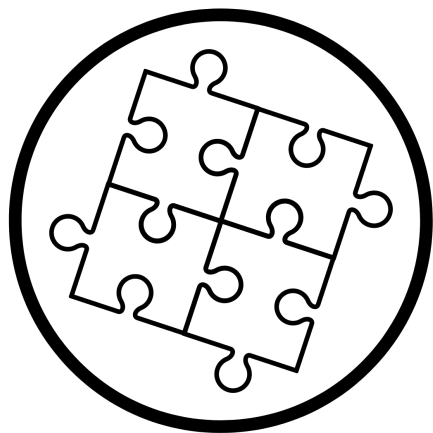


SOLUTIONS



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





SOLUTIONS

Listening turns to action

Young people see themselves as being a **core part of the solution** when it comes to **genuine systems change**.

Young people see **their generation** as being in the **best position to enact change** within their communities.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia



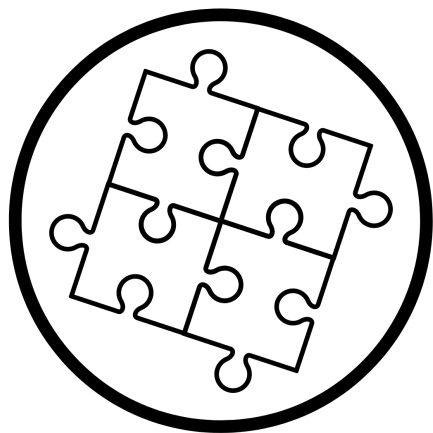


Young People Said

“Often you have to change the system to access it. So, through making it accessible for yourself, you’re making accessible for everyone that comes after you.”

“I feel like for everything to change in employment, it needs to come from the roots up.”





SOLUTIONS

Accessibility

Young people want employees and job services to **increase their awareness** of disability and employment rights.

Some young people think **employers need more education**, some young people think that **attitudes about employment** for young people with disability need to be discussed in **education settings**.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





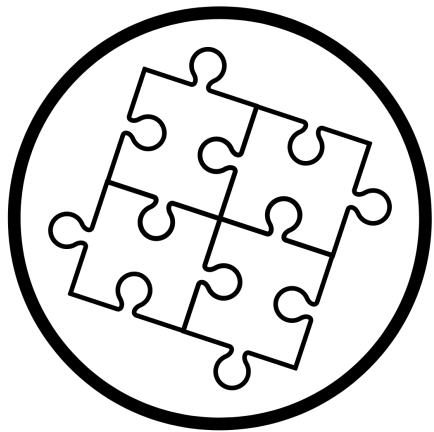
Young People Said

“Lots of systems were designed in a way that don’t reflect young people, and young people really want to shape these systems. And at the same time these systems are in crisis, and they really need to adapt to better meet the needs of young people. But also, young people within particular groups of lived experience.”



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





SOLUTIONS

Creation of space

Governments and organisations need to **invest in leadership and advocacy skills** for young people with disability.

This includes young people being supported to lead the way in **creating meaningful and inclusive employment opportunities.**



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





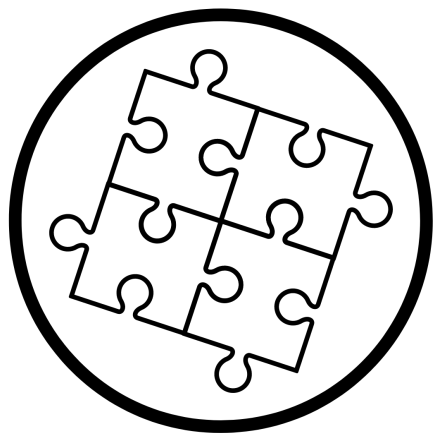
Young People Said

“That whole idea of ‘you can’t be what you can’t see’ is very true. I think it played out for me in just only knowing careers that were right in front of me. And that’s why I think it is so so important that we have lots of examples of people with disability and people with all different identities and walks of life in lots of different careers. Because it really gives us the opportunity to aspire; to believe that it’s possible for us.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





SOLUTIONS

Hosting events

COVID-19 required a lot of organisations to host online events which were more accessible for many young people with disability.

Young people want to see these lessons and the same spirit of innovation adopted by employers forever from this point forward.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia

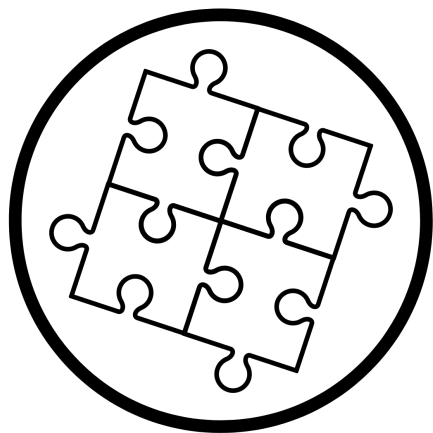




Young People Said

“And I think a silver-lining to the pandemic...is a lot of workplaces have actually shown that it is possible for us to work remotely from home. It is okay for us to work at a slower pace. And that we can get work done, we can get meaningful work done, we can help support our communities without this hyper focus on productivity. So I would love to see that continue.”

“I think accessibility in employment for me is getting able to do that meaningful work but also having time so I can fit in rest and fit in medical appointments.”



SOLUTIONS

CONCLUSION

Young people with disability want systemic change when it comes to employment, and they want to lead this change.

Employers need to provide inclusive and accessible pathways for young people.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia

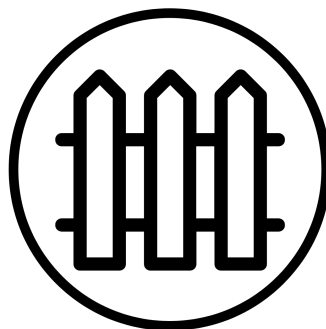


Summit Analysis Themes

This information is about Employment and Social Movement



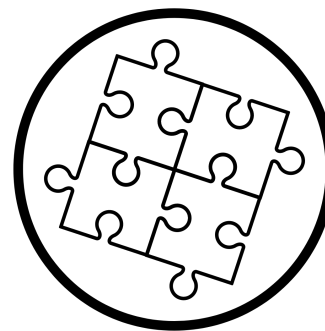
IDENTITY



BARRIERS



ENABLERS



SOLUTIONS

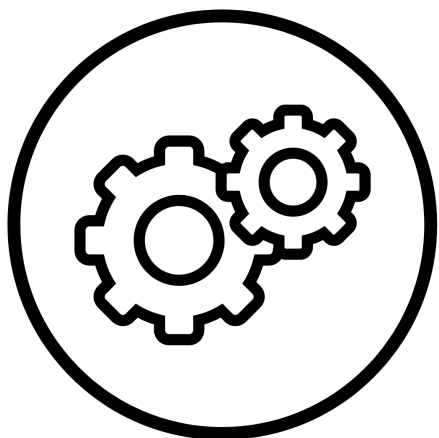


**SOCIAL
MOVEMENT**



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Power imbalance

Young people identified “levelling the playing field” as vital to making employment more accessible.

This included having young people with disability on employment panels and young people not being coerced at work.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





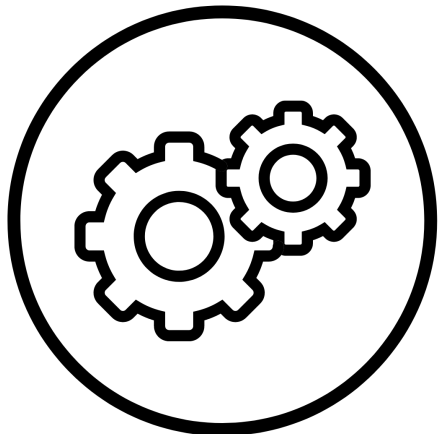
Young People Said

“I got to go for an interview... [O]n those interview panels there’s always a young person with disability. The type of people you will be working with....And being able to be onside that is I think good for the employer because they can see how you relate with your peers but also how they see you and how you work alongside other people too. And it’s also comforting too. Seeing other people like you in that environment and understanding.”



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Human Rights

Young people identified that employment is a human right and that disability rights are human rights.

Access to employment and livable disability support pensions were highlighted as a key need.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





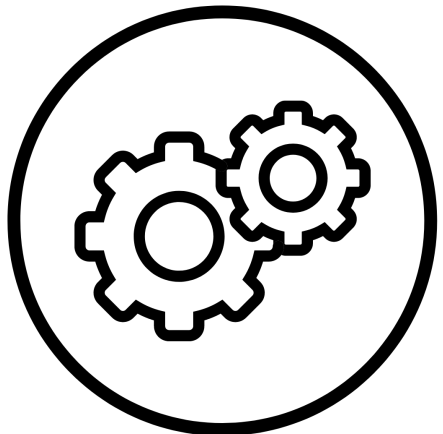
Young People Said

“... [M]aking sure that people with disabilities have access to meaningful work, but [also] making sure that there is a safety net for us when we can’t engage in that meaningful work. So that means that there are welfare ... payments, like the Disability Support Pension and like JobSeeker, that actually exist above the poverty line and give us a chance to have dignified lives when we can’t engage in work for whatever reason.”



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Collaboration

Young people with disability describe the need to collaborate within the disability community to advocate for more accessible employment.

Utilising people's different skills and different interests were identified as vital to social movement around employment.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





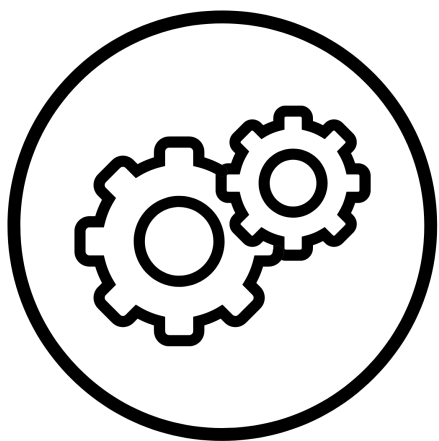
Young People Said

“...But if we can all work together then obviously you’ve got a youth lead voice for everyone, for all those different things, then it’s going to come out to be a holistic approach to advocacy and sticking up for yourself and making a change.”



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





SOCIAL MOVEMENT

CONCLUSION

Young people identified the need to collaborate to address power imbalances within employment and to take a human rights approach to employment.



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia





TAKE HOME MESSAGE

TOPIC: EMPLOYMENT

For employment to be inclusive employers, governments and organisations must:

- Recognise the insights, experiences, skills and value young people with disability bring
- Proactively ask about accessibility and involve young people in decisions about their employment
- Provide flexibility and support young people to do their best and thrive at work





STAY CONNECTED

If you're a young person with disability who attended the Summit, join the [Facebook Group](#)

Connect with CYDA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

Become a member of your national representative organisation CYDA - it's free! Go to:

www.cyda.org.au/get-involved/become-a-member



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia

