Post School Transition

The Experiences of
Students with Disability

Children with **Disability** AUSTRALIA

A bigger voice for kids

Children with Disability Australia (CDA) sincerely thanks the Pratt Foundation for its initiative in recognising the significant barriers confronting students with disability in post school transition. The encouragement and financial support of the Pratt Foundation has made this much needed report possible.

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Contents

Executive summary

The transition from school is an important period. All young people should be supported throughout this time to access options which allow them to meaningfully participate and contribute to our society as adults. Young people have a variety of post school options they can pursue including higher education, vocational studies, training, employment, apprenticeships, traineeships, internships and volunteering.

Many young people with disability however have extremely poor post school transition experiences. This is impacting negatively on life outcomes where there is low participation in employment and tertiary study and social exclusion remains high. While there are pockets of good post school transition practice, generally programs and preparation for this transition are fragmented with minimal coordination and guidance regarding what should occur during this time.

Australia is a signatory to the United Nations *Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* 2006 and *Convention on the Rights of the Child* 1989. These Conventions contain clear standards and obligations regarding the rights of children and people with disability to enjoy equal access to education and employment. A critical component of this is post school transition which accordingly must be reflected in relevant domestic laws, policies and programs.

This report is based on the direct experience of young people with disability. It highlights key issues from current research, legislation and consultation with key stakeholders. It concludes with recommendations for improving outcomes and options for post school transition of students with disability.

Definitions

Inclusive education

Inclusive education is a process which should ensure high quality education for every student, including students with disability. An inclusive education responds to the individual needs of students and recognises the right of every student to be included. This means adapting the teaching and educational setting to ensure that students with disability can participate, rather than requiring the student to change to fit the environment.

Post school transition

For the purpose of this report, post school transition refers to a time period and/or a process where a young person is able to access information and make choices about their future after leaving school. It is a milestone which often intersects with other monumental life changes such as an increase in independence.

Young people

Young people in this report refers to those aged from 18 to 25 years.

Introduction

Poor experiences of post school transition are occurring in a context that is particularly challenging for young Australians. The fast-paced digital world of the internet and social media presents its own obstacles not encountered by previous generations.

On leaving school, young people are facing a future filled with growing unemployment, mounting costs of living and increasingly unaffordable housing, education and healthcare. More jobs are requiring advanced levels of skills and youth unemployment has risen from 12.5 per cent to 13.8 per cent,[1] while young people aged 12 to 24 years count for just under 25 per cent of all homeless persons in Australia.[2]

For many young people with disability, post school transition is a variable and ad hoc process. This time is fraught with limited information about options and negative attitudes from schools, employment programs and further education providers.

They didn't know what to do with special needs kids. We got left out.

No one apart from my Mum and Dad will be able to help me.

I feel stranded. I don't think I have a future.

I was never encouraged to achieve and found that expectations were very low for me. It was therefore entirely up to me to achieve what I have.

Career planning in Years 10 and 11 was quite minimal and tokenistic. There was nothing in particular that prepared me as a student with disability.

I left school due to breaches of the Disability Discrimination Act. I had no access to career planning and was too distressed for years to be able to plan.

1 Statistics refer to increase between December 2013 and December 2014. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015.
2 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012a.

Background to the project

This project was undertaken by CDA in order to gain a more detailed understanding of what information and support is available for students with disability during post school transition. Poor experiences of post school transition of young people with disability have been frequently and consistently reported to CDA. There are strong calls from young people with disability and families for information, support and defined pathways into further education, employment and other opportunities.

Responsibility for post school transition is shared. Young people and their families, service programs, schools, tertiary education institutions, employment services and government departments all have key responsibilities in this area. However these responsibilities are not well defined. Further, it is common for gaps and shifting of this responsibility to other programs to occur. Generally programs do not have specific accountabilities for delivering transition outcomes for students with disability.

The key findings from this scoping project focus on:

- Present and post school transition practices;
- Educational, information and attitudinal barriers experienced by students with disability;
- System gaps and good practice; and
- Recommendations for reform.

This report includes a review of current transition policies, programs, existing processes of in-school preparation and available post school options. A comprehensive literature review has also been undertaken which draws on national and international research, and outlines some of the relevant international, national and state policies.

The findings from this report underscore the complex nature of various transition pathways which typically go across programs and sectors, and Commonwealth and state/territory boundaries. As such, the approach to this critical issue is fragmented and uncoordinated, as it sits across multiple government portfolios. Furthermore, many programs are not always utilised and are far from being accessible. It is also the situation that young people with disability and their families often are simply not aware that these programs exist. This report therefore underlines the critical need for targeted reform in this area.

As the results section of this report highlights, the direct cost of the systems failure to support students with disability with their post school transition is primarily borne by individual young people and their families by leaving them wholly responsible for investigating post school options for themselves, without access to funding, support or consistent information. The experience of young people with disability therefore continues to be reported as very poor, despite the number of transition programs and related initiatives which exist. It is perhaps not surprising that inadequate post school transition processes strongly correlate with poor life outcomes for people with disability.

Fundamental to the poor post school transition experience commonly experienced by young people with disability is a school education system which is failing to adequately meet the needs of students with disability. It is difficult to see how schools can develop the capacity needed as a key partner and driver of post school transition given the systemic failures of the current school education system for students with disability.

The results from the project's consultations with key people, programs and organisations across all sectors provide a great breadth of experience from which a set of recommendations has been formulated, as a way of progressing improvement of the post school transition process for students with disability and ultimately progressing better life opportunities and outcomes. Importantly, capturing the experiences and voices of young people with disability was central to this project and delivering its key messages.

The recommendations of this report include actions to address the fundamental issue of responsibility and accountability for provision and outcomes for post school transition. They also include actions regarding how the disparity within and between programs can be reduced. In summary these involve:

- Changes at a national level to funding, collaboration and accountability;

- Resource and training recommendations in education; and

- Increasing networks and identifying an actionable agenda across business groups and labour market programs to ensure access to employment for young people with disability.

Section I

The current state of play

Understanding issues in post secondary transition

LEGISLATION AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Australia has a strong commitment to the rights and entitlements of children and young people with disability as evidenced by a comprehensive legislative and policy framework, which includes references to post school transition.

Human rights

Australia is a signatory to the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* 2006 (CRPD) and *Convention on the Rights of the Child* 1989 (CRC). These Conventions contain clear standards and obligations regarding the rights of children and people with disability to enjoy equal access to education and employment.[3]

Articles of relevance from the CRC are as follows:

State Parties are to:

Article 23

Ensure that a child has *"effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development."*[4]

Article 28

"Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need; make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means; make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children."

Article 29

Ensure *"the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin."*

Articles of relevance from the CRPD are as follows.

Article 24

State Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to:

a. *The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental rights and human diversity;*

b. *The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential; and*

c. *Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.*[5]

Article 27

State Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation.

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3 UN, 1989.
4 UN, 1989 [emphasis added].
5 UN, 2006.

Legislation

The primary domestic means promoting the rights and entitlements of people with disability is the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) which includes the associated legislation of the *Disability Standards for Education* 2005 (DSE). Further state and territory legislation exists with similar objectives. Together the DDA and DSE make unlawful the discrimination of people with disability in education and employment.

The principle legislation for school education and school reforms is the *Australian Education Act 2013*. This Act outlines the provision of Australian Government education funding and in doing so outlines responsibilities in relation to the provision of education. This legislation does not have any specific references to post school transition.

Policy frameworks & governmental agreements

- *The National Disability Strategy* (also known as 'the Strategy') sets out a ten year national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers. One of the outcome areas of the Strategy is "learning and skills." This includes a focus on post school transition to "improve pathways for students with disability from school to further education, employment and lifelong learning."[6] Further it identifies that "specific attention needs to be focused on the transition between education settings and in moving from education to employment."[7]

- *Laying the Groundwork 2011–2014*, is the first implementation plan of the Strategy. Action 5.5 of the implementation plan is *"identify and establish best practice for transition planning and support through all stages of learning and from education to employment"* and sub-action 5.5.1 is *"improve school transitions."*[8]

- The *National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions* was identified as the means to fulfil this action. The National Partnership, discussed in the Post School Transition section in more detail, ended in 2014. Further initiatives to continue the Strategy's policy focus on transition are as yet unknown.

- Post school transition is included in the *National Education Reform Agreement* which contains the core outcome that "young people make a successful transition from school to work and/or further study."[9] The previous *National Education Agreement* included an almost identical outcome.[10] Performance indicators to assess the performance of the Commonwealth and states and territories are:

  - *The proportion of young people who have attained at least a Year 12 or equivalent or Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Certificate II/III or above*; and

  - *The proportion of young people participating in post school education, training or employment.*[11]

> **While it is significant that post school transition has been a mainstay in recent national agreements on education, it is more significant that the actual process of post school transition has remained ill-defined and practically unaddressed.**

The performance indicators used in these strategic documents measure outcomes, not the planning and preparation that is fundamental to an effective post school transition that can achieve these outcomes. Importantly, these outcomes are not inclusive of the experience of young people with disability.

The gaps in education reform regarding transition are also evident in recent education policy initiatives such as the *Students First* agenda. This agenda outlines the current focus areas of the Australian Government in education. Although this reform articulates four key areas to facilitate an effective education system (teacher quality, school autonomy, engaging parents in education and strengthening the curriculum),[12] post school transition has not been articulated as a focus areas for any of the associated reforms.

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6 Council of Australian Governments, 2011.
7 Council of Australian Governments, 2011.
8 Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2012.
9 Council of Australian Governments, 2013.
10 Council of Australian Governments, 2013.
11 Council of Australian Governments, 2013.
12 http://www.studentsfirst.gov.au/

Reform of the Federation

The Australian Government's White Paper on the Reform of the Federation seeks to clarify the roles and responsibilities of state, territory and Federal governments in order to streamline the interaction between the different levels of government and with the Australian public. This reform provides an opportunity to consider the subject of post school transition.

CDA welcomes the identification of post school transition as a significant issue in the *Roles and Responsibilities in Education Issues Paper*. The paper notes that:

"Despite increased investment, increased year twelve completion rates and more involvement by the Commonwealth in youth transitions in recent years, fewer students are making a successful transition from school than a decade ago."[13]

The paper also observes that:

"the current fragmented and disjointed mix, and the often times competitive pursuit of different policy solutions between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories, has not helped the pursuit of better educational outcomes."[14]

The White Paper provides an opportunity to better allocate and define government responsibility regarding post school transition. Presently, the lack of a designated jurisdiction or system responsible for overseeing post school transition policy and process is a fundamental barrier inhibiting successful post school transition for students with disability. The shared and shifting education responsibilities between states and the Commonwealth as part of Australia's Federation creates gaps in the support available for students with disability during transition. There is still a long way between having transition mentioned in the White Paper and having a range of effective pathways in place for young people with disability. CDA expects that significant work will be required to turn this brief reference into policy and in turn into services, and then into education outcomes and jobs for young people.

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13 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2014.
14 Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2014.

PREVIOUS INQUIRIES INTO POST SCHOOL TRANSITION

In 2005 the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (now the Australian Human Rights Commission) conducted a *National Inquiry into Employment and Disability*. During this inquiry, the "poor links between State-administered school and post-school programs and Commonwealth-administered disability employment services" were identified as contributors to the limited opportunities people with disability experience when seeking employment.[15] Resulting recommendations of the final report to improve transition to work schemes included:

- *Ongoing consultation and cooperation between Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to ensure more coordinated work placement support when students with disability are transiting from secondary, tertiary and vocational education and training institutions to the workplace*;

- *Provision of appropriate supports for work experience, traineeship and apprenticeship schemes…*; *and*

- *Clearer pathways from secondary, tertiary and vocational education and training institutions to government-funded employment service providers*.[16]

Poor post school transition and preparation was clearly identified in this Inquiry as a reason for the low employment rates of people with disability in Australia.

More recently, in 2011 the News South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues conducted an inquiry into *Transition support for students with additional or complex needs and their families* which reported on programs and support available to students and families during transitions between stages of education.[17]

The final report noted that school to post school transition is a particularly vulnerable point for young people with disability. It made a number of recommendations to improve the post school transition process for students with disability. Recognising the importance of early post school planning, the Committee recommended that this planning commence when a student is aged 14 years. The Committee's report identified concerns regarding:

- Late commencement of post school planning;

- The timing of eligibility assessments for the post school programs offered by the NSW Ageing, Disability and Home Care department;

- A lack of choice regarding post school program providers;

- Inadequate flexibility within and between the post school programs;

- The gap between the end of Year 12 and the commencement of post school programs; and

- The absence of an actual transition process.

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15 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2005.
16 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2005.
17 News South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2012.

The Council of Australian Government (COAG)'s National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transition had two relevant programs, *Youth Connections* and *School Business and Community Partnerships*. These programs aimed to increase the Year 12 completion rate of vulnerable students in Australia's schools and assist young people to learn through the support of community-wide, sustainable partnerships. Both programs ended in 2014.

Youth Connections focused on assisting young people who were at risk of or were disengaging from education. An evaluation of the usefulness of this program for the Australian Government Department of Education suggests that it was very effective in establishing a lasting connection for young people to education, training or employment; and indicates that the program has positive long-term outcomes in line with its goals. It is reported that a majority of young people were studying and/or working six months after completing this program.[18] An evaluation of these initiatives includes some of these programs. Deemed as successful it is unclear why a program such as *Youth Connections* was discontinued.

A *National Career Development Strategy* was also developed under the *National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transition* and is intended to provide strategic direction and consistency on career development in Australia. The Strategy is currently in operation and includes recognition for the need for career advice and support during key times of transition such as post school transition.

18 Dandolo Partners, 2014.

EDUCATION

A typical education experience for students with disability involves limited choice of school, discrimination, bullying, limited or no funding for support and resources, inadequately trained staff and a culture of low expectations. Poor school education experiences and outcomes are common. Additionally, CDA is increasingly being informed of incidents of restraint and seclusion which is seen to reflect an education system in crisis, grappling to adequately meet the needs of students with disability. This 'broken' system means that many students have limited opportunities to develop essential foundational work skills and knowledge.

The significant inadequacies of the education system for students with disability and the need for reform have been documented over a number of years. Various reports and inquiries commissioned by the Australian Government highlight the issue. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Making Progress;[19]

- Monash University, Investigating the Feasibility of Portable Funding for Students with Disabilities;[20]

- National People with Disabilities and Carers Council, Shut Out: The Experiences of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia;[21]

- PricewaterhouseCoopers, Disability Expectations: Investing in a Better Life, a Stronger Australia;[22]

- PricewaterhouseCoopers evaluation report, Trial of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability;[23]

- Productivity Commission, Childcare and Early Childhood Learning;[24]

- Productivity Commission, Schools Workforce;[25]

- Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005;[26]

- Review of Funding for Schooling;[27]

- Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee, Teaching and Learning;[28]

- Senate Inquiry into the Education of Students with Disabilities;[29]

- Senate Select Committee on School Funding, Equity and Excellence in Australian schools;[30]

- Victorian Auditor-General Inquiry into Education Transitions;[31] and

- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, Held Back: The Experiences of Students with Disabilities in Victorian schools.[32]

19 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2008.
20 Ferrier et al., 2007.
21 National People with Disabilities and Carers Council, 2009.
22 PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2012a.
23 PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2012b.
24 Productivity Commission, 2015.
25 Productivity Commission, 2012.

26 Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012.
27 Gonski et al., 2011.
28 Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee, 2013.
29 Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee, 2002.
30 Senate Select Committee on School Funding, 2014.
31 Victorian Auditor-General's Office, 2015.
32 Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012.

Available statistics regarding school completion, outcomes and life experiences demonstrate stark gaps in educational attainment, performance, access and outcomes. Without the foundation of a quality education, students with disability are unable to participate in a range of typical life options and opportunities.

- 30 per cent of people with a disability do not go beyond Year 10, compared to 20 per cent of people without a disability;[33]

- 36 per cent of people aged 15 to 64 years with reported disability had completed Year 12 compared to 60 per cent of people without a disability;[34]

- 15 per cent of people aged 15 to 64 years with disability had completed a bachelor degree or higher compared to 26 per cent of people without disability;[35]

- 38 per cent of young people aged 15 to 24 years with disability either work, study, or do a combination of both on a full time basis compared to 56 per cent of young people without disability;[36]

- 42 per cent of young people with disability neither work nor study (there is no comparative data available for young people without disability);[37]

- 20 per cent of young people with disability either work or study on a part time basis (there is no comparative data available for young people without disability);[38]

- People with disability in Australia are only half (50 per cent) as likely to be employed as people without disability;[39] and

- 45 per cent of people with disability in Australia live in or near poverty.[40]

The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* aim to ensure students with disability are able to access and participate in education on an equal basis to students without disability. The DDA makes it unlawful to contravene the Standards, and compliance with the Standards is taken to be compliance with the DDA.

Despite the decade long existence of the Standards it is common for students with disability to have experiences which would arguably contravene not only this legislation but also the educational rights afforded under the relevant United Nations conventions of which Australia is a signatory. CDA is of the view that the current education system is unable and at times unwilling to adequately meet the needs of students with disability. It is vital that the current review of the Standards critically examines why this occurs and clear action is undertaken to ensure the legislative framework provides the opportunities and protections which are its fundamental aims.

CDA is frequently aware of families pursuing legal action against education authorities to have the educational needs of their children recognised and met. In some instances families are taking their cases to the Australian Human Rights Commission to pursue legal action for breaches of human rights against their children. The present complaints process however fails to deliver a timely remedy for most students. Legal action takes many years and in the interim, and often in the long term, the students concerned are simply not afforded the education opportunities and rights crucial to their development and further life opportunities.

These typical poor educational experiences and outcomes of students with disability fundamentally undermine effective post school transition. It is difficult to see how an effective post school transition process can be established without the accompanied widespread education reform required for students with disability in Australia.

33 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013.
34 Ibid.
35 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012b.
36 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012c.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2012a.
40 Ibid.

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a significant social reform which introduces a new system of funding disability support focused on the needs and choices of people with disability. Underpinning the NDIS are principles that aim to increase the social and economic participation of people with disability in the Australian community.

The NDIS was introduced due to a national recognition that the present disability service system is grossly inadequate. The Productivity Commission Inquiry into Disability Care and Support found that the current disability service system "is underfunded, unfair, fragmented, and inefficient, and gives people with a disability little choice and no certainty of access to appropriate supports."[41]

The NDIS is a shift from block funding, where service providers are funded to provide disability supports, to portable and individualised funding. The overarching aim of the Scheme is to allow people with disability choice and control over the supports they receive and will involve 'rolling in' the many different disability funding programs that currently exist into a single scheme.[42]

Transition to further education, training and employment is identified as a responsibility of the NDIS under the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*. It refers to:

building the participant's capacity for independent living and self-care, development of social and communication skills, development of specialist behaviour management plans and enabling the participant to travel independently to their place of education.[43]

However, the *NDIS Rules 2013* make clear the Scheme will not be responsible for:

the funding or provision of employment services and programs, including both disability-targeted and open employment services, to provide advice and support to:

(i) people with disability to prepare for, find and maintain jobs;

or

(ii) employers to encourage and assist them to hire and be inclusive of people with disability in the workplace (i.e. support, training and resources, funding assistance to help employers make reasonable adjustments, and incentives for hiring people with disability, e.g. wage subsidies).[44]

Launched in July 2013, the NDIS continues to be established across the country. Trial sites are currently operating in every state and territory except Queensland, where the NDIS will launch in July 2016. Children and young people aged 0 to 14 years and 0 to 17 years are the specific focus of the trial sites in South Australia and the New South Wales Nepean Blue Mountains respectively. Young people aged 15 to 24 years are the focus of Tasmania's site which involves post school transition as an area of focus.

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41 Productivity Commission, 2011.
42 National Disability Insurance Agency, 2014a.
43 National Disability Insurance Agency, 2014b.
44 Australian Government, 2013.

POST SCHOOL OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Many young people with disability are leaving school with no plans for life post school and no links with any education, employment, or activities outside the home. This results in young people remaining isolated in their homes, often resulting in entrenched social exclusion, dependency and poverty.

The following is the range of options that exist at present. Some are rationed by funding availability or vacancies, while others, particularly education options, by cost.

Post school education

- University: tertiary education and research institutions funded by the federal government and providing academic degrees in a range of subjects;

- Technical and Further Education (TAFE): vocational tertiary education institutions funded by state and territory governments, providing qualifications in a range of industry areas;

- Vocational Education and Training (VET): taught by both TAFE and registered training organisations. VET provides qualifications and skills directly related to a particular type of work and/or industry. VET can be undertaken in schools. Some VET courses are specifically designed for people with disability, including Certificate I in Work Education and Transition Education;

- Registered training organisations: Training organisations registered with the Australian Skills Quality Authority to deliver VET programs; and

- Apprenticeships/Traineeships: qualifications acquired through practical on-the-job training with an employer, often accompanied by some classroom-based learning through an education institution such as TAFE. These can begin while a student is at school.

Open employment

Employment in the open labour market which can be acquired through:

- Independent job searches and applications to employers;

- Recruitment agencies which advertise available positions;

- Informal and personal networks: friends, family and other contacts made;

- Disability Employment Services (DES): non-profit and for-profit organisations funded by the Commonwealth to provide training and recruitment to people with disability who require both short and long term assistance in gaining employment; and

- Job Services Australia (JSA): non-profit and for-profit organisations funded by the Commonwealth to provide recruitment and training support for people looking for work.

Employees with disability can be paid full rates of pay but can also be subject to productivity-based wages assessed using the Supported Wage System (SWS). A productivity-based wage is determined by a tool that compares the productivity/competency of a person with disability to a person without disability. For example, if a person with disability is 90 per cent productive at their job compared to a person without disability, they will only be paid 90 per cent of the applicable award wage.

Supported employment

Employment where the individual has the assistance of a support worker and previously known as sheltered workshops. Supported employment opportunities are largely provided by Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs). ADEs are Commonwealth-funded non-profits with charitable status that provide supported employment opportunities to people with disability. Many ADEs operate commercial or industrial businesses where people with disability work in areas such as packaging, assembly line production or cleaning services with the supervision of a support worker. Employees in ADEs can be paid award wages, however productivity-based wages can also be used. Common tools used by ADEs include the Supported Wage System (SWS), Business Services Wage Assessment Tool (BSWAT),[45] Greenacres tool and Skillmaster tool.[46]

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45 In December 2012 BSWAT was found by the Federal Court to be discriminatory and contravened the DDA. The Australian Government requested a three year exemption from the DDA from the Australian Human Rights Commission in 2013 but in 2014 was only granted a one year exemption, to April 2015, to continue the use of BSWAT assessments pending the development of an alternative assessment tool. The Government introduced a Bill to Parliament in 2014, designed to establish an interim BSWAT Payment Scheme. The Bill was defeated in the Senate in November 2014 following a Senate inquiry that raised a number of concerns. The defeated Bill proposed an additional payment to people who had been unfairly assessed under BSWAT, on condition that those who accepted the payment would not participate in a class action to gain full compensation. There was concern that the additional payment from the Government would have been less than the full amount owed to the people affected by BSWAT. An amended version of the Bill was passed by both houses of Parliament in June 2015. The class action by the law firm Maurice Blackburn which is seeking full compensation for people with intellectual disability who were assessed using BSWAT is ongoing.

46 Department of Social Services, 2015.

Day programs

Day programs run by disability service providers or community organisations are largely programs with a recreational focus intended to help people with disability participate in the community, or with a focus on independent life skills such as cooking or using public transport. These can be based in a centre or enable people to access the broader community individually or in groups.

Community day centres

Centres run by community organisations and disability service providers for people with disability to participate in group activities such as music, cooking or crafts. Activities are often based solely at the centre.

Transition & employment programs

Programs exist to prepare people with disability for employment and others are specifically for young people to provide assistance to undertake further education or for those who are unsure of what to do after leaving school. These are often government funded and run by non-government organisations and disability service providers. These programs can include pre-employment training activities such as work experience, resume writing and interview skills, work health and safety training and mentoring. Examples of these programs include New South Wales' *Transition to Work* and Tasmania's *Transition to Work*.

Volunteering

Unpaid work for a non-profit or community organisation for a person to pursue an interest and connect with the local community, or with businesses to gain work experience.

Individual programs

Programs using individualised government funding to create an individually tailored program according to the persons interests and needs. This could include part time participation in a day program, accessing required therapies, community access/activities or completing a course or qualification.

Unemployment

People with disability continue to be overrepresented among the population of people who are unemployed. People with disability are only 50 per cent as likely to be employed as people without disability.[47]

47 Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2012a.

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES ADDRESSING POST SCHOOL TRANSITION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

National responses specific to students with disability have included the now ceased *More Support for Students with Disabilities (MSSD)* National Partnership Agreement which had post school transition as one of its twelve outputs. Post school transition initiatives on post school transition were undertaken in some schools in at least three states: Western Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales.[48] Limited information regarding these programs and their outcomes is publicly available. The final evaluation of this initiative is due to be released in coming months.

The National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) program provides strategic support to foster partnerships between schools, businesses, tertiary education providers and employment services. Each of the 31 NDCOs in Australia is based out of a university, TAFE or other education provider. The NDCOs are relied on by some regions for transition planning and support more than others.

Programs to improve the transition for students with disability generally run alongside programs to assist other students deemed vulnerable or at risk of not completing their final years of schooling or of transitioning successfully. Programs across the states and territories are disjointed, with some regions having more coordinated programs across both in-school transition planning and post school programs. As a result, post school transition and planning for students with disability is incredibly incoherent.

The Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia appear to have dedicated transition programs in place, with clearer government direction as opposed to Queensland and the Northern Territory who seem to have in-school programs but no clear post school policies or programs.

Listed below are the major state and territory in school, post school transition programs and initiatives identified during this project:

In school programs

STATE	PROGRAM	PURPOSE
South Australia	Better Pathways	Run by a non-government organisation. It can commence in Year 9 and offers up to four years targeted support to students with disability who are identified as at risk of not completing secondary education. This is a pilot program in three regions and has no funding beyond 2015
Queensland	My Future, My Life	Run by a non-government provider. It can begin in Year 10 and provides funding to students with disability to undertake activities and information regarding transition
Northern Territory	Transition from School	Starts from Year 8 and supports students with disability in both mainstream and special education settings
Tasmania	Guaranteeing Futures	Begins in Year 10 and has recently moved to an online module to support students with career and life counselling
Victoria	Managed Individual's Pathways Initiative	For students aged over 15 in government schools to complement careers programs with individual student plans and provides additional support for students identified as at risk of disengaging from their secondary education or not successfully transitioning to further education
New South Wales	School to Work	Operates in government schools and supports transition to secondary school and beyond and includes dedicated Transition Advisors
Australian Capital Territory	Transition Service	Run by a community organisation and continues up to three years after a young person leaves school
Western Australia	Individual Transition Plans	For students with disability and are intended to begin in schools by the time a student is 16 through providing information and exploring options for post school pathways

48 Phillips, 2013.

Post school programs

STATE	PROGRAM	PURPOSE
Australian Capital Territory	Transition to Work and Life Skills	Offered in the by a community organisation for people with disability
New South Wales	Transition to Work and Community Participation	Conducted through various providers and targeted at young people with disability
Tasmania	Transition to Work	Provided by community-based disability service providers, offering work-related and life skills
Victoria	Futures for Young Adults	Specifically for young people with disability up to three years after leaving school and is accessed through various providers
Western Australia	Post School Options Program	Offered by disability service providers and is aimed at young school leavers with disability

Many other minor initiatives also exist in addition to those listed above, mainly single school programs that try to coordinate resources to assist with transition. Some don't even have a name. There is no overall program guidance for these one-off initiatives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Post school transition is not without challenges for all young people. However a myriad of studies have found that young people with disability are particularly disadvantaged by ineffective, narrow and exclusionary post school transition policies and strategies. Compared with young people without disability, young people with disability are reported as experiencing more difficulties in tertiary education,[49] are underrepresented in both tertiary education and in the labour force[50] and find it difficult to maintain a job while already employed in the workforce.[51] Overall these issues have been attributed to a poorer quality of life faced by young people with disability and their families.[52] This literature review reports research findings regarding post school outcomes of young people with disability and their families. Research considering effective transition planning and programs and barriers faced by young people with disability during post school transition are considered.

Post school outcomes of young people with disability

Young people with disability transitioning into higher education and/or training

Historically, research identifies the considerable disadvantages faced by young people with disability transitioning from secondary school to higher education and training. Smith, Carroll and Elkins found that students labelled with a 'learning disability' engaging in Australian universities were "more likely to be studying part time, less likely to be studying for a higher degree, and less likely to be aged under 20 years."[53] Further, Meekosha, Jakubowicz and Rice indicated that Australian universities were unable to meet the needs of their students with disability due to limited resources, issues regarding funding, negative staff attitudes towards disability, limited awareness, an unaccommodating curriculum and further difficulties regarding recruitment and gaining employment post-graduation.[54]

Similar results obtained from more recent studies indicate that little has changed. Foreman, Dempsey, Robinson and Manning found that students with disability at an Australian university faced a higher level of stressors and "had a significantly lower grade point average, were more likely

to withdraw from subjects, and more likely to have failed subjects" than students without disability.[55] A literature review conducted by MacCaullagh analysing research regarding experiences of students with dyslexia found that this cohort was greatly underrepresented in higher education and faced a myriad of challenges while engaging in higher education.[56] These challenges included negative attitudes of university staff and an apparent failure to adopt inclusive teaching practices due to limited resources, knowledge and training and poor disability awareness. Institutional systems, policies, and procedures were also found to be inadequate for meeting the needs of students with disability.[57] These challenges included issues regarding inflexible and discriminatory standardised assessments,[58] which have been identified as a major contributor to negative outcomes for students with disability engaging in higher education.[59]

Perhaps not surprisingly, however, Cocks, Thoresen and Ai Lim Lee identify positive employment and economic outcomes of young people with disability after graduation from an apprenticeship/traineeship. This research found that the work hours, annual wages and opportunities to obtain full-time employment of graduates with a disability were not significantly different to the comparison group of graduates without disability after completion of an apprenticeship/traineeship.[60] Despite these positive outcomes, young people with disability are currently underrepresented in apprenticeships and traineeships. For example, young people with disability represent merely 1.6 per cent of all apprenticeships/traineeships commencers in 2011.[61]

On the basis of the research evidence, it is clear that young people with disability are currently underrepresented in higher education, apprenticeships and traineeships, and students with disability are still struggling to have their diverse needs met. In turn, these negative outcomes and disadvantages undoubtedly have major implications regarding employment opportunities.

Young people with disability transitioning into employment

Consistent with the findings regarding higher education and training, research provides evidence that young people with disability are under-represented and not reaching their full potential in the workforce compared to similar aged people without disability.[62] Inequitable employment outcomes of TAFE/University graduates with disability have been identified

49 Smith, et al., 1999.
50 Lamb & McKenzie, 2001.
51 Honey, et al., 2014.
52 Meadows, et al., 2006.
53 Smith, et al., 1999
54 Meekosha, et al., 1991.
55 Foreman, et al., 2001.
56 MacCullagh, 2014.

57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
59 Gosden & Hampton, 2001.
60 Cocks, et al., 2013.
61 Rothman, et al., 2013.
62 See: Lamb & McKenzie, 2001; Farthing & Glascodine, 2013; Winn & Hay, 2009; Davies & Beamish, 2009.

in the research, particularly in relation to hours of work available, the realisation of career potential, the type of work available and overall opportunities to obtain employment.[63] Further, "unmet potential"[64] was also indicated to be an issue due to the limited employment options available to young people with disability post school.[65] For example, a recent study found that the majority of the young people with Down Syndrome researched were employed in segregated 'sheltered employment'.[66] This is problematic, as families of young people with disability participating in open employment reported to have a better quality of life than those participating in sheltered employment.[67]

In addition to the apparent challenges faced by young people with disability attaining employment, research has also acknowledged the further struggle of maintaining employment once employed in the workforce. Longitudinal research identifies considerable issues for young people with disability in finding employment, particularly full-time employment.[68] Furthermore once employed, young people with disability were less likely to remain employed compared to young people without disability.[69]

Experience of families

Families have also reported negative outcomes stemming from ineffective transition programs, jeopardising family quality of life.[70] The loss of support provided in the school years is a major issue reported by parents, particularly in regards to the perception that support is abruptly "cut-off" after schooling.[71] Though parental experiences vary, many parents report needing to make major lifestyle changes and adjustments, which often impact on their ability to continue their own employment.[72] Some parents also report considerable personal sadness and distress due to their children not being able to reach their full potential and achieve post school goals.[73]

Overall, the research shows that young people with disability are underrepresented in the workforce, presented with limited choice and opportunity and struggle to maintain employment. This results in negative emotional and physical experiences for young people with disability and their families. On the basis of current research it is clear that significant change to the supports in place for the post school period of transition for young people with disability is needed.

Transition planning & programs

A number of studies have investigated programs to address the concerns raised by the considerable evidence of insufficient post school transition support and negative or inadequate post school opportunities and outcomes for young people with disability. In research in the United States of America Kohler developed a 'Taxonomy for Transition Programming.' This Taxonomy contains five key areas supporting 'best practice' in post school

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63 Farthing & Glascodine, 2013; Winn & Hay, 2009.
64 Dyke, et al., 2013.
65 Davies & Beamish, 2009.
66 Foley et al., 2013.
67 Foley, et al., 2014.
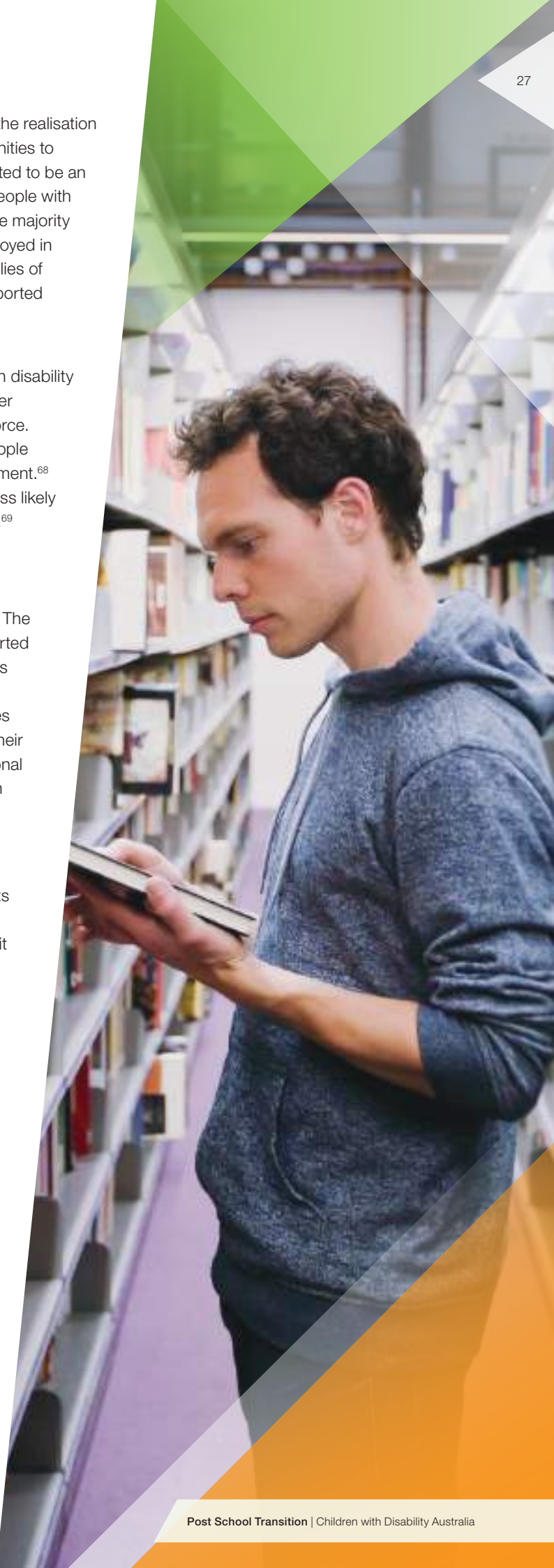68 Honey, et al., 2014.
69 Ibid.
70 Davies & Beamish, 2009; Dyke, et al., 2013; Meadows, 2009.
71 Meadows, et al., 2006.
72 Davies & Beamish, 2009; Meadows, 2009; Dyke, et al., 2013.
73 Davies & Beamish, 2009.

transition planning for young people with disability, and is intended to contribute to a greater quality of life for young people with disability.[74] These five key areas are:

1. Student-focused planning;

2. Student development;

3. Family involvement;

4. Program structure; and

5. Interagency collaboration.

More recent Australian studies have found these five key areas to be crucial in effectively planning post-school transitions for young people with disability,[75] though research has also found that some of these key areas have still yet to be adopted by relevant stakeholders.

Student-focused planning, student development and family involvement

The importance of individualised post school transition planning, which is both person-centred and family-centred, is clearly identified within research.[76] This approach has been found to be empowering, strengths-based and motivating, thus increasing self-determination.[77] Transition programs that include the active involvement of young people and their families have been found to achieve desired post school outcomes and to have overall positive outcomes related to quality of life.[78] Additionally, an association has been identified between students' participation in decision-making during the transition process and success in participating in open-employment and/or higher education.[79]

Research has also explored the limiting curricula decisions often implemented by secondary schools to teach to students with disability whereby academic learning is replaced with a life skills focus. Though aspects of life skills training are

linked to positive outcomes, parents have indicated that focusing solely on life skills training is insufficient in preparing young people for post school life.[80] It is therefore stressed that schools need to extend beyond existing life skills curricula[81] and allow for less limiting and more challenging and meaningful learning experiences through genuinely inclusive education, including experiential learning in work experience and/or vocational training.[82]

Program structure and interagency collaboration

Schools play a critical role in ensuring that transition programs are effective. Interagency and inter-departmental collaboration is essential.[83] School staff need to be engaged in constant collaboration with all stakeholders involved, including "students and their parents, transition workers, case managers, service agencies and employment offices".[84] Information needs to be clear and readily accessible for each of these stakeholders.[85] As such, it has been stressed in the literature that school staff be given adequate training, professional development, sufficient time and ongoing support in order to perform these complex and crucial tasks.[86] However such support and allowances are often not provided, resulting in fragmented and disjointed programs that create confusion for all stakeholders involved.[87]

All stakeholders involved in transition programs need to be provided with adequate information regarding their roles and responsibilities, and be experienced and committed to assisting students and their families during this crucial transition period.[88] Additionally, it is essential that policies and philosophies are clearly articulated to all stakeholders involved.[89] Further, programs must be constantly and critically evaluated to ensure the efficacy of their practices.[90]

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74 Kohler, 1996.
75 See Meadows, et al., 2006; Winn & Hay, 2009; Davies & Beamish, 2009; King, Baldwin, Currie & Evans, 2005.
76 See Meadows, et al., 2006; Winn & Hay, 2009; Davies & Beamish, 2009; King, Baldwin, Currie & Evans, 2005; Laragy, 2004.
77 King, et al., 2005; Morgan, 2012.
78 Laragy, 2004.
79 Foley, et al., 2013.
80 Meadows, et al., 2006.
81 Dowrick, 2004.
82 King, et al., 2005; Meadows, et al., 2006; Davies & Beamish, 2009; Morgan, 2012.
83 Meadows, et al., 2006.
84 Laragy, 2004.
85 Meadows, et al., 2006.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid; Beamish, et al., 2010.
88 Laragy, 2004; Beamish, et al., 2010.
89 Meadows, et al., 2006.
90 Ibid.; Beamish, et al., 2010.

Barriers faced

Despite the general challenges already faced by young people during post school transition, research has indicated a multitude of additional barriers experienced by young people with disability that may prevent access to the same opportunities as those without disability.[91]

Negative attitudes and misconceptions held by society

Studies have found that a major barrier reported by young people with disability is the negative attitudes and misconceptions regarding disability held by supervisors, co-workers and the wider community.[92] This has resulted in fear of discrimination and stigma, as well as feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem and diminished motivation.[93] A literature review conducted by Winn and Hay found this barrier to be associated with imbalances in employment participation rates and pay.[94]

Physical and educational barriers

Everyday physical and educational barriers are also reported. Physical barriers include issues with transportation and limited accessibility to built environments.[95] Unaccommodating educational curricula is also deemed a barrier,[96] which includes issues related to the inauthenticity of standardised assessments not adjusted to suit individual needs.[97] These barriers have led to high dropout rates, which Lawson and Shields argue prevents young people with disability from reaching their full potential.[98]

Limited resources and lack of information

Lastly, limited resources and a lack of readily accessible information for young people with disability, their families and all stakeholders involved in post school transition is a common barrier.[99] Thus, Winn argues that government and non-government services and organisations have a responsibility to "work together and share resources" in order to address this barrier.[100]

Summary

This literature on post school outcomes of young people with disability identifies frequent and common barriers, inadequate and inappropriate supports and significant consequent disadvantage for young people with disability. While there are a number of effective strategies identified in the research, there is also evidence that relevant stakeholders are yet to adopt these strategies and programs, which may explain the current poor outcomes and experiences faced by young people with disability and their families. Further, the multitude of barriers faced by young people with disability during post school transition adds to this disadvantage. There is a clear need for greater alignment between research and practice in order to address this disadvantage.

Additionally, due to the limited Australian research currently available regarding post school transition, further qualitative and longitudinal Australian research on the experiences of young people with disability and their families post school, the efficacy of current post school transition programs, and effective post school transition strategies and practices is needed to further inform policy and practice.

91 Morgan, 2012a; Winn & Hay, 2009; Lawson & Shields, 2014; King, et al. 2005; Laragy, 2004.
92 Morgan, 2012b; Winn & Hay, 2009; Lawson & Shields, 2014; Meadows, et al., 2006.
93 Morgan, 2012b; Lawson & Shields, 2014.
94 Winn & Hay, 2009.
95 Morgan, 2012a; King, et al., 2005.
96 King, et al., 2005.
97 Cumming, et al., 2013; Gosden & Hampton, 2001.
98 Lawson & Shields, 2014.
99 See Meadows, et al., 2006; Winn & Hay, 2009; Morgan, 2012a; Laragy, 2004.
100 Winn & Hay, 2009.

Section 2

Method

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

CDA undertook extensive consultation to explore post school transition for students with disability, the context and factors that influence transition and the specific barriers that students with disability are experiencing.

CDA met with the following key stakeholders, central to and involved with post school transition. Further details and a comprehensive, detailed list regarding these stakeholders can be found in Appendix C.

- Young people with disability;
- Families of young people with disability;
- Schools;
- Tertiary institutions;
- State and federally funded government programs;
- Non-government organisations that work in the area of youth transition and/or disability;
- Disability advocacy organisations;
- Advocates;
- Disability service providers;
- Universities and other research bodies;
- Open and supported employment providers;
- National disability employment associations; and
- National business associations.

WHAT WAS INVOLVED?

The direct lived experience of young people with disability is central to this report. **Individual consultations** were undertaken with young people who were currently undertaking or had previously experienced post school transition. CDA also sought feedback from young people with disability through organisational networks and membership. Their feedback clearly demonstrated the highly variable post school transition processes and generally unsatisfactory outcomes that many students and young people

experience. Post school transition experiences previously reported to CDA were also reviewed.

The young people with disability who participated in individual interviews were aged between 16 to 29 years. Participants attended a variety of schools: government and non-government in both mainstream and special settings. The level of support required by each young person varied. The majority still live at home with their families and two of the young people live independently. The young people consulted had parents who are or were key drivers of the post school transition process for their children, seeking opportunities, gathering information and supporting their children to follow a range of post school pathways. CDA conducted five **face to face interviews** with families.

Online surveys, both for young people and separately for families, were conducted with CDA members and broader constituents. These were promoted through existing consultation mechanisms which included membership communications and social media. The surveys[101] examined the post school transition planning process: in-school preparation, independent planning, and the opportunities and programs that were available to students. In total CDA consulted with 53 young people with disability and 50 family members or care givers, and received 44 responses to our online survey for families and/or caregivers.

A total of 45 **consultations with individuals and organisations** took place. These individuals and organisations undertake work related to post school transition and disability. Stakeholders were identified through an analysis of the current program and policy responses to post school transition, relevant providers and advocacy networks and other key disability advocates. Other suggestions for meetings emerged from consultations as they took place.

CDA spoke with Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs), Disability Employment Services (DES) and others working in the space of disability employment. ADEs met with in this project provided commercial services such as assembly line packaging or gardening, typical of ADEs.

CDA consulted with a number and range of schools including those from government and non-government sectors which were both from special and mainstream settings.

101 Available in the appendix.

Section 3 | **Results of the consultations**

"PEOPLE TREAT YOU LIKE YOU'RE DIRT AND TALK DOWN TO YOU. SOME ACT LIKE THEY MIGHT CATCH IT OFF YOU IF THEY STAND TOO CLOSE": NEGATIVE ATTITUDES AND MISCONCEPTIONS

The culture of low expectations that people with disability contend with on a daily basis continues to be a key source of discrimination and disadvantage. Discriminatory and negative attitudes regarding students and young people with disability are rife throughout the post school transition process and were consistently identified as the key barrier to effective post school transition in almost every single consultation during the course of this project.

Young people

Every young person consulted had experienced discrimination and poor experiences during their post school transition. Examples shared with CDA include:

- The denial of work experience opportunities;

- Work experience placements provided in the student's school or in supported employment;

- Denial of modified assessment for Year 12 qualification;

- Low expectations of individual capacity and future;

- Complete absence of future planning in school for students with higher support needs; and

- Employers dropping wages once the young person disclosed disability.

Systemic low expectations regarding the capability, value and individuality of each of the young people consulted impacted heavily upon their post school transition experiences.

The marginalisation experienced by young people is reflected by participants:

People treat you like you're dirt and talk down to you. Some act like they might catch it off you if they stand too close. They lie and dismiss you so they don't have to deal with you.

Discrimination at school and failure to provide supports I'm legally entitled to meant I lost access to supports and developed severe mental health issues. I'm still unemployed.

I tried the employment services but they could not help me as they said I was too disabled.

I wish my teachers had believed in me.

My teacher said I could not work with animals. I did a transition program working one day a week over two terms at the local pound.

Families

Comments reflecting negative attitudes and low expectations shared by families:

The school unconsciously sorted students according to perceived capability. This resulted in some students being provided with extra support to pursue employment, while other students were directed to supported employment and day programs.

To be a musician, poet and novelist — all [options were] brainwashed out of him by a service that could only ever tell him how 'sick' he was, so he gave up.

How could she have been teaching [my daughter] with no sense of expectations?!

Generally people hear the word disability and always focus on the negative, never looking at the ability side of the equation!!

Other consultations

Similarly, experiences of systemic low expectations and discrimination of young people with disability dominated much of the consultation with the sample of individuals, non-government organisations and government-funded programs working in areas related to post school transition and young people with disability. In particular, a lack of belief was identified amongst schools, businesses and families/care givers that young people with disability could pursue and gain work. One stakeholder described this as *"no vision, no preparation, no expectation"* while another described young people with disability as *"travelling on the back roads of our society."*

"I FEEL IT HAS BEEN A NIGHTMARE TRYING TO WEAVE MY WAY THROUGH IT ALL, EVEN THOUGH I DID IT FOR HIS BROTHER LAST YEAR": EDUCATIONAL AND INFORMATION BARRIERS

Careers education for young people generally in Australia was described as inadequate, broken and tokenistic with many students being inadequately prepared for life post school. The patchy nature in which post school planning was addressed was consistently raised and identified as a major reason for the poor post school outcomes of young people with disability and the underrepresentation of people with disability in the workforce. In addition, it was observed that the amount of information and planning occurring in schools differs not only within schools but more broadly across school sectors. Independent from school, young people prepared for the future through information obtained online, with assistance from parents, by accessing post school transition programs and through disability services provided in universities and TAFEs.

Post School Transition | Children with Disability Australia

Young people

The young people consulted spoke frequently of receiving minimal or no information, or very little formal support, such as career or transition planning and guidance.

The disjointed transition planning process is accompanied by an equally fragmented and inaccessible maze of information regarding:

- Transition programs;
- Government funding;
- Post school options and pathways;
- Supports during transition; and
- Available opportunities during transition.

This information maze is common in the disability sector and during post school transition serves to complicate an already complex experience.

Comments from the young people surveyed illustrate the nominal planning that was on offer:

They had a career interview one night.

Very minimal…the teachers had to fill out forms and had no idea.

A computer would have been better.

There's a lot of things you find out about once it's too late, if I had my time again I would ask what help is available for people with a disability.

Families

The responses and experiences shared with CDA through the survey from families also highlight a widespread and significant lack of formal support provided to young people with disability and a complete absence of coordination or direction.

Support was offered but it is limited to what services are available in your area and your child's ability level.

All the school offered was a couple of meetings with my daughter, us, and the support teacher, including one in which an application for Transition to Work was completed.

We need the whole picture of what is on offer in our town. A folder with all this information would be a great start.

The career teacher wouldn't have ever thought of [my son] and wouldn't have had ideas anyway.

Josh's story

Often families needed to take responsibility for locating and accessing supports and post school options for their child. This situation is illustrated by Josh's experience:

Josh is 20 years old and has finished school. He lives at home. Josh works as a volunteer and has casual employment. He is also completing a Certificate I in Transition Education and has an active social life. Josh is happy with what his life looks like at the moment, but it would not have been possible without the advocacy of his family.

Josh's mother, who works in the disability sector, started to research future options and pathways from when Josh was about 13 years of age. Josh's school held a number of information evenings and had connections with various local organisations and a range of post school transition options. Josh's mother observed that there was a lot of good information resources but the school didn't know how to use them. Josh knew he wanted to get a job after leaving school. His mother waded through the maze of information and talked with Josh about the type of work he'd like to do. Through extensive research and forming connections with organisations and local businesses that would provide Josh with open employment opportunities, Josh's mother facilitated some work experience opportunities.

Josh's mother is a vigilant advocate and relentlessly pursues typical life options for Josh. This coupled with her unique knowledge of the disability sector has enabled Josh to pursue options that his school would have thought unimaginable. This outcome is however not yet ideal. It takes significant family input and work to manage Josh's individual funding. This is a situation that will be difficult to sustain in the long term. Similarly, there is still much work to be done in order for Josh to achieve a more secure job.

Other reflections shared with CDA include:

Awareness of what's out there can be quite a big barrier.

You don't know what's out there until someone tells you.

Many parents still feel they are doing this alone and in the dark and struggle with finding relevant information on the internet.

I know of several parents who are in their final year and have no idea what is available to them.

I went to the disability expo. I rang a transition broker. I went and organised work experience. School had no idea.

I feel it has been a nightmare trying to weave my way through it all, even though I did it for his brother last year.

As a result, it can be overwhelmingly difficult for all people involved in the post school transition process to navigate the largely inaccessible and intricate web of information. For many families and caregivers it was clear that they responded to this hidden maze by relying upon their own informal networks and word of mouth to gather useful information and learn about opportunities to ascertain information about post school transition.

Other consultations

There is a great deal of information and resources available online and provided by various organisations. It can however be hidden amongst unnecessary or irrelevant material, and can require a great deal of time to wade through to find what is most appropriate and current. Changes in funding or program structure can also cause some programs or resources to be discontinued or unavailable. Some information is more readily available in some states and territories than others. Similarly, some information is easy to locate, once you know what you are looking for. One school careers counsellor highlighted this issue stating *"it can be difficult to know what to recommend with this constant fluctuation and to know what's out there."*

A number of concerns were also raised regarding the experience of students with disability in higher education. These include a lack of awareness among students regarding the support centres and supports available for students, such as scribing and note-taking. Relatedly, it was observed that students can be unwilling to disclose their disability and/ or ask for accommodations with their work, assessment or attendance. This can occur alongside a rigid system and lack of flexibility to accommodate diverse needs when it comes to core components of higher education: assessments and inclusive learning spaces.

Academics and researchers approached by CDA commonly noted how much work has been conducted on the difficulties and barriers faced by young people with disability during transition. Significantly, despite this work post school transition continues to be an ongoing issue.

"IT IS CRUCIAL TO BE GIVEN A CHANCE TO MAKE DECISIONS AND TO FIND RESOURCES TO CARRY OUT THOSE DECISIONS": LIMITED RESOURCES AND PLANNING

Schools are where much of the planning for the post school transition process occurs. The availability and quality of transition planning however is often significantly impacted by inadequately resourced schools. Opportunities such as work experience or visits to careers and further education exhibitions may not be offered to students as schools are unable to fund the number of staff required to attend.

Young people

For many students with disability, there is minimal or non-existent in-school preparation and post school transition planning. This is on top of what is an already fragmented process for many students across Australia. For students with disability many of the formal processes of transition planning — including career counselling, work experience and information about post school options — are often absent from the experience of many students with disability.

Some of the feedback from young people included:

It is crucial to be given a chance to make decisions and to find resources to carry out those decisions.

Career advisor didn't know what to do. I need help.

Families

It was reported that many teachers in schools are not appropriately trained in transition planning. Furthermore, from CDA's consultations it emerged that many teachers are not aware of the array of post school options for students with disability. Some reflections shared with CDA from family members include:

Schools do have some good resources but they don't know how to use them.

Most schools provide a transition coordinator but information is totally dependent on the knowledge base of the coordinator which varies considerably. Not all schools offer good transition plans.

Highly variable transition planning experiences were shared with us in our online surveys. Some positive experiences included:

We have a three year individual transition plan which sets out future goals and details relevant services and supports. The plan is developed collaboratively between school staff, student and parent.

Yes [the assistance and information available through the school was useful] — helped to create a resume, portfolio, interview skills etc.

Largely however, students and families reported inadequate transition planning or a complete absence of planning:

Only planning was a funding application.

Very minimal. Apparently the previous year a DHS [Department of Human Services] Planner was involved, however they stopped this and the teachers had to fill out forms and had no idea.

We had to organise everything ourselves. It was pathetic.

I don't think the school would have ever come to us and said 'what are you doing next year?'

[The planning was] nominally useful only — no real penetration to understand who he is.

Would have been much better if the transition was able to have begun a year prior to leaving (rather than just happening now in the final term).

Other consultations

Schools shared with CDA the difficulty experienced in delivering effective and flexible post school transition planning when operating within a confined and inflexible budget. This impacts upon the activities and opportunities that students can participate in, as well as restricting staff positions dedicated to post school transition.

Likewise, schools reported having inadequate information regarding the array of available post school options. Without a mandated approach to post school transition and sufficient resourcing, schools reported being largely left on their own to devise planning and source information. The professional development and training required to assist staff to support students during the transition process was noted as often unattainable or unavailable. Allowing sufficient time and ensuring effective teaching of foundational work skills,

such as punctuality, using public transport and workplace-related skills are also a critical part of the planning process. Stakeholders from disability person's organisations and employment services shared that many students coming out of schools do not have some of these skills, all necessary to gain work.

For many young people with disability, transition planning is therefore often inadequate.

The NDIS was frequently mentioned as an opportunity for post school transition to be overhauled. Most stakeholders however remained cautious in their optimism, identifying a lack of information regarding the role of the NDIS relating to post school transition. Others also stressed the importance of not viewing the NDIS as the 'silver bullet' without associated target reform to address the discrimination and disadvantage experienced through post school transition by young people with disability.

"NOTHING THROUGH THE SCHOOL, I DID EVERYTHING MYSELF": LACK OF COORDINATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The ineffective nature of post school transition and the current system in preparing young people with disability for life post school was consistently raised with CDA, with stakeholders identifying a number of key issues:

- Ad hoc nature in which the preparation occurs;

- Lack of preparation for many students with disability as schools are not equipped with the necessary knowledge;

- Minimal interaction and collaboration between the education system and post school options and services;

- Exclusion of families/caregivers from the transition process;

- Lack of knowledge of inclusion within the education and post school services; and

- Lack of coordinated national/regional direction regarding the post school transition process.

Stakeholders also identified the inadequate resourcing of schools as a key barrier in post school transition. Schools often lack the capacity to implement practices and enable opportunities to assist students to plan and transition.

Families

Families and caregivers of children with disability are often expected to take on the responsibility for their child's post school transition. Consultations with families revealed how they are often the ones required to do extensive research to identify the various post school options and supports available.

Found out more by word of mouth of other parents. Felt my child was 'pigeon-holed' by the school and we didn't find out about other things that were offered.

What process?

Nothing through the school, I did everything myself.

School staff were supportive but they failed to start transition in the second term when they said they would and transition has only just begun now in the final term.

They didn't care as long as you left school.

The immediate partnership in post school transition should be between the student, their family and the school. Some families and caregivers feel well-supported by the school during transition, as illustrated in the following reflections:

We were given a great deal of support to prepare for leaving school — we have been included in the process.

The school had a good transition coordinator and there were information sessions for students and families, with many TAFE coordinators in attendance.

CDA has however had experiences shared with us by parents who were unaware of what actions the school was taking when it came to preparing their child for life post school. For example, meetings about future planning for post school options were not communicated with parents and students, as reflected in the following comment shared with CDA:

I know the school and service providers are meeting but student and parents aren't involved with that.

Other consultations

The location of responsibility between programs and levels of government was identified as a key issue in post school transition. Various stakeholder organisations and individuals working directly with young people perceived major gaps in responsibility between state/territory and Federal governments regarding young people and regarding transition programs. A number of stakeholders made clear that they believe the role of governments should be to facilitate the process of post school transition.

Stakeholders also identified large businesses as often having the resources and capacity to invest in creating inclusive workplaces and being innovative employers. However, it was clear that many felt businesses were unaware of the reasonable adjustments funding available from the government. This lack of knowledge is thought to be contributing to the low employment levels of people with disability.

Disability Employment Services (DES) are the Commonwealth-funded program aimed at assisting people with disability to find and keep a job. A number of tensions emerged during our consultation regarding the role of DES, and their interaction with businesses and the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator Program.

Firstly, there was strong consensus that the DES system currently has too high a focus on compliance, consuming the work of DES instead of supporting people with disability to gain and keep work long term.

Secondly, it emerged from the consultations that strict guidelines around the DES inhibit the program from supporting students with disability and providing opportunities to gain work experience which is crucial in leading to that first job.

Thirdly, there appears to be tension between the roles of DES and the National Disability Recruitment Coordinator (NDRC) Program, and how they interact with businesses and employers. This relationship was changed in recent years, with the redirection of the NDRC's role from direct recruitment to a more awareness-raising focus.

Similarly, the concurrency issues surrounding DES and ADEs — where an individual cannot be accessing both — was highlighted. This situation can result in a lack of coordination between what should be two interacting services. ADEs and DES also sit within the Social Services portfolio and not the Department of Employment. This is believed by some to contribute to the siloing of disability employment, as it is seen to place ADEs and DESs as a form of welfare, rather than genuine employment opportunities for people with disability.

Organisations working with young people with disability also identified a number of concerns around the transitioning of students with disability into ADEs. Firstly, it was stated that students are being channelled into ADEs as opposed to open employment opportunities as a result of unfair job capacity assessments that are assessing young people who have never previously worked. Secondly, questions were raised regarding the role of ADEs with a number of stakeholders suggesting that they should not be the final job destination for people with disability, as they often are. Instead, it was suggested that ADEs should be a space for transition, where young people can gain workplace skills, training and self-confidence before transitioning to open employment. Various individuals and organisations consulted questioned the paternalistic culture that can exist among ADEs, a culture that can undermine the ability for individuals to explore their interests.

Section 4

Key messages

CRITICAL AND URGENT NEED FOR EDUCATION REFORM

It is hugely concerning that no meaningful reform regarding education provision for students with disability has occurred to date. The common education experience of students with disability is poor, at times harmful and definitely not providing these children and young people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to be able to contribute meaningfully to our community post school. The education system is unacceptable for students with disability.

CHANGING ATTITUDES AND MISCONCEPTIONS

Discrimination and a culture of low expectations are the mainstay of the post school transition experiences of students with disability. This culture does not recognise individual interests, strengths and capabilities and is present within the community, schools and businesses. It affects students' transition planning and the provision of essential opportunities such as work experience.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS

Post school transition is addressed in an exceedingly ad hoc manner and appears to be an optional extra for schools, and the wider support system for young people with disability. The differences between the pathways available to students with disability and other students are marked, with the latter group having a lot more options and information available. Young people, families, caregivers and others involved in providing support must contend with a disjointed and largely inaccessible system. Information, services, programs and resources to guide and assist young people during transition are fragmented across states/territories, schools and education sectors, regions and service providers.

Other related systemic issues include minimal collaboration between students and other stakeholders in post school transition; and a largely inflexible employment services system. These issues are further are compounded by an inadequate education system which largely fails to effectively support students with disability.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESOURCES AND PLANNING

The attitudinal, structural and systemic issues outlined in this report clearly demonstrate that the needs of students and young people with disability during post school transition are not being met. From CDA's consultation it was evident that many of these issues have long been recognised. While pockets of good practice may exist, it is clear that efforts to address these issues have been patchy.

Adequate time for planning needs to take place, in addition to considerations around appropriate, timely and meaningful professional development for teachers in supporting young people with disability through their post school transition. Teachers should also be able to provide relevant and tailored individual information, and help students to make sense of the vast amount of conflicting and often confusing information and options. Adequate resources and funding are also vital in ensuring smooth transition pathways.

STREAMLINING COORDINATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Post school transition occurs across sectors: education and training, employment and welfare. As such, a national strategy must involve a collaborative, cross-sectorial approach. Just as the NDIS was devised as a national program to respond to an identified problem, government programs across the country can work collaboratively to address the major gaps in transition from school to adult life. While the Commonwealth government is concerned about the growing numbers of people accessing the Disability Support Pension (DSP), there is a policy opportunity to address the factors that see people graduating from school to the DSP and low value programs.

Existing national frameworks may provide an opportunity to help articulate a national agenda on post school transition. Significant work however still needs to take place to expand upon these frameworks. Clear guidelines, responsibilities and actions to establish an inclusive system that offers the flexibility and support and meets the needs of young people with disability must be included in the current initiatives.

CONCLUSION

The importance of supporting all young Australians to participate and become active members of our society requires post school transition to be elevated to the forefront of reform. In particular, it is imperative that the post school experiences and outcomes of young people with disability are considerably and sustainably improved. It was identified that upon leaving school, young people with disability can experience high levels of social isolation. This stems from the loss of the traditional school networks and friendship groups that can occur when school finishes. It can be a particular problem when young people do not have any immediate plans or post school destinations and can result in a cycle of isolation. A key focus of education should be about preparing students for the future to become contributing adults in society.

Post school transition is multifaceted and dynamic. It is not just about a student's move from school to any single option be it further education, employment and/or a community day program. There are many simultaneous transitions including changes to eligibility for government funding and transitioning to a range of adult services. Moreover, during this time young people are experiencing their own individual and personal development. Planning therefore needs to be conscious of the myriad transitions that occur in a young person's life.

Section 5

Recommendations

The final section of this report therefore highlights CDA's recommendations in light of these findings.

NATIONAL

1. Call on Australian governments to legislate to ensure students with disability can access a quality post school transition process. Core requirements of post school transition must include:

   a. Transition planning to begin early, by Year 9;

   b. Planning to be person-centred;

   c. High expectations to be embedded throughout the process;

   d. Work experience opportunities and the facilitation of part time work — connections with local businesses and employers will be essential for this;

   e. Foundational skills to be addressed;

   f. Career development planning to take place; and

   g. Follow up with young people post school.

2. COAG to implement a National Partnership Agreement with all governments and education systems in Australia to develop a coordinated national response with defined responsibilities, objectives and outcomes.

3. Immediate funding through the National Disability Agreement to design, implement and evaluate concurrent trials of cross sector transition pathways for students with disability, with a focus on making existing effective transition programs for young people fully inclusive.

4. Establishment of a national clearing house on school transition information and resources, with co-funding from the departments of education, employment, the NDIS and state/territory disability.

5. Inclusion of post school transition within new Disability Employment Framework to be established by 2018. This includes a review of the existing employment system as it interacts with young people with disability:

   a. Review of the Eligible School Leaver Guidelines for Disability Employment Services to facilitate support for young people with disability to access work experience and part time employment opportunities *while still at school*.

   b. Reframing of the role of Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs). Supported employment does not need to mean segregated employment. ADEs could provide pre-employment and transition training opportunities for people with disability as a step towards participation in the open labour market.

   c. Define the interface between the NDIS and employment, recognising that not all people with disability will be participating in the NDIS.

6. Inclusion of post school transition in Australian Human Rights *Commission's Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination against Older Australians and Australians with Disability* and in Australian Government *White Paper on the Reform of the Federation*.

7. Expansion of the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) program. Increased numbers of NDCOs are required to address the gaps in the support of the current program.

EDUCATION

8. Development of a system for recording reported breaches of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 regarding: denial of enrolment and full time attendance; conditional enrolment; and discrimination regarding physical accessibility. There needs to be capacity within this notification system to monitor if multiple reports pertaining to particular schools or education authorities occurs.

9. Establishment of a new independent complaints mechanism which would allow more expedient review and resolution of alleged breaches and appropriate sanctions for proven instances of discrimination for both the school and education authority involved. The number and type of breaches, at the school, state/territory and national level should be clearly available to the public on school and educational authority websites and/or the MySchool website or the like. In some jurisdictions, there are concerns that many cases are settled in confidential mediation to avoid precedent being set or public knowledge of circumstance.

10. Clear accountability mechanisms are contained within relevant legislative instruments that provide transparent processes for monitoring and responsibility of learning outcomes for students with disability. These could mandate the development of individual education plans and establish a formal process to ensure progress in identified learning targets.

11. Collection of national data regarding post school outcomes for students with disability immediately and in the first three years following school.

12. The articulation of a clear strategy by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and/or the COAG Education Council, that details how the disability loading is designed, how it will be implemented and what specific outcomes it will achieve in education systems.

13. CDA manage the immediate development of a national resource on post school transition for schools. This resource is urgently needed for young people, families and caregivers and schools, as well as to inform providers and governments operating in the transition space. Particular areas for the resource to cover include work experience, collaboration with other sectors and engagement of young people and families. The NDCO *Get Ready for Study and Work* guides could provide a foundation for a national resource.

14. Introduction of mandatory professional development for school staff (particularly careers teachers) in post school transition for students with disability. Inclusion of transition training in the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) policies and resources. The Commonwealth *Students First* agenda on teacher quality should also be inclusive of post school transition training.

15. The COAG Education Council consider national policy on post school transition for students with disability across all education systems.

EMPLOYMENT

16. CDA to convene a national roundtable with peak business groups and labour market programs to identify actions to ensure young people with disability can access first jobs, training and careers, and to identify the required incentives and support for business to offer opportunities to young people with disability.

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Appendices

Appendix A

ABOUT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY AUSTRALIA

CDA is the national disability representative organisation for children and young people aged 0 to 25 years. CDA presently has a national membership of 5200 and a social media following of over 10,000 across the major platforms. CDA is primarily funded through the Department of Social Services.

CDA provides a link between the direct experiences of children and young people with disability and their families to federal government and other key stakeholders through:

- Participation and representation of children and young people with disability;
- Development and dissemination of expert advice;
- Implementation of high impact national advocacy campaigns to positively influence policy, practice and attitudes of the Australian Government, key stakeholders and the wider community;
- Delivery of strategic projects that support the Australian Government to reform its policy and practice; and
- Partnership approach with its membership, non-government, government and philanthropic partners.

Vision

CDA's vision is that children and young people with disability living in Australia are afforded every opportunity to thrive, achieve their potential and that their rights and interests as individuals, members of a family and their community are met.

Role

CDA's purpose is to advocate systemically at the national level for the rights and interests of all children and young people with disability living in Australia and it undertakes the following to achieve its purpose:

- **Listen and respond** to the voices and experiences of children and young people with disability.
- **Advocate** for children and young people with disability for equal opportunities, participation and inclusion in the Australian community.

- **Educate** national public policy-makers and the broader community about the experiences of children and young people with disability.
- **Inform** children and young people with disability, their families and care givers about their citizenship rights and entitlements.
- **Celebrate** the successes and achievements of children and young people with disability.

Guiding principles

The work of CDA is guided by the following principles:

- **Fundamental rights:** the rights and interests of children and young people with disability are CDA's highest priority consistent with Australia's obligations under the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- **Having a childhood:** children with disability are children first and foremost and have a right to all aspects of childhood that children without disability are afforded.
- **Participating in decision making:** children and young people with disability have the right to participate, in whatever capacity, in decisions that impact on their lives.
- **An inclusive approach:** children and young people with all types of disability, from all cultural and religious backgrounds, living with all types of families and in and all geographic locations are supported by the work of CDA.
- **Valuing families and care givers:** for the contributions made by families and care givers to support the rights and interests of children and young people with disability.
- **Working in partnerships:** CDA works collaboratively with relevant government, non-government, private sector agencies and the broader community to promote the rights and interests of children and young people with disability.
- **Being accountable:** CDA operates accountably, effectively and ethically as the national peak body charged with the mandate of advocating for children and young people with disability.

Further information about CDA is available at www.cda.org.au

Appendix B

CONSULTATION SURVEYS

Planning for life after school
Your experience

Survey for young people with disability – 18 to 25 years

CDA is the national peak body in Australia that represents children and young people with disability aged 0 to 25 years.

CDA wants to better understand the experiences of young people with disability, aged 18 to 25 years old, as they plan to leave school and begin post-school life. Many say it's an exciting time and some also report that it can be a time of change and anxiety. We are wanting to contact young people with disability to hear of your experiences. The information you share will inform a report we are completing around 'post school transition' and other advocacy work we undertake.

For further information, please contact CDA by phone on 03 9417 1025 or 1800 222 660 or via email at info@cda.org.au

Background information

- How old are you?
- Male/Female
- Which state are you from? ACT/NSW/NT/QLD/SA/TAS/VIC/WA
- Where do you live? Regional/Remote/Metropolitan Location
- Are you from a Non-English Speaking Background? YES/NO
- Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background? YES/NO
- Where do you currently live? Family home/Independently/Other
- Where did you go to school? Government/independent/disability-specific school? (Select as many as apply to you)

- When you were at school, what support and information was available to assist you to think about and plan for your future after school? This is sometimes called 'career planning' by schools.
- When did this process begin?
- Was the assistance and information available through school useful?
- If so, how was it useful?
- How could this process have been improved?
- Were any of the following available to you? Please tick relevant options.
  a. Career staff
  b. Work experience
  c. National Disability Coordination Officer
  d. Mentoring
  e. Assistance from organisations outside of your school (Such as community organisations or service providers)
  f. Other
- Did you access assistance or information other than what was available through school?
- If so, can you tell us about this?
- Did you have a part time job while you were at school?
- If so, can you tell us about this? (When did you get the job, how did you find out about it, how long did you work there?)
- Do you think you faced specific challenges throughout this part of your life because you have a disability?
- What do you do now?
- What are your ideas and dreams for the future?
- Do you have a plan about how you can achieve this?
- Do you currently use formal services and supports–such as disability services, youth programs, employment services, mentoring programs, government or organisation-run transition programs – which are available to assist young people after leaving school?
- Is there any other information or feedback you would like to provide about this time of your life?

Planning for life after school
Your child's experience

Survey for families

CDA is the national peak body in Australia that represents children and young people with disability aged 0 to 25 years.

CDA wants to better understand the experiences of young people with disability, aged 15 to 18 years old, as they plan to leave school and begin post-school life. Many say it's an exciting time and some also report that it can be a time of change and anxiety. We are wanting to contact the parents and families of young people with disability to hear of experiences regarding planning for young people's life after school. The information shared will inform a report we are completing around 'post school transition' and other advocacy work we undertake.

For further information please don't hesitate to contact CDA by phone on 03 9417 1025 or 1800 222 660 or via email at info@cda.org.au

Background information

- Are you: parent/other family member/carer/other

- How old is your child?

- Gender of your child: Male/Female

- What State or Territory do you live in? ACT/NSW/NT/QLD/SA/TAS/VIC/WA

- What type of area do you live in? Regional/Remote/Metropolitan Location

- Are you from a Non-English Speaking Background? YES/NO

- Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background? YES/NO

- Where does your child live?

- What type of school does or did your child attend? Government/independent/special school?

- What support or information has been offered by school to assist your child to think about and plan for their future after school? This is sometimes called 'career planning' by schools.

- At the school, who is involved in this process? (For example, student, school staff, family or others)

- Through the school, what opportunities are there for you to be involved in your child's planning for the future after school? (For example, student-parent-teacher meetings, careers evenings, school conferences)

- How useful is the information or support regarding 'career planning' being offered by the school?

- What type of information and support do you think would be useful for students and their families when thinking and planning for options after finishing school?

- When planning for the future, has your child used any of the following? Please tick relevant options.
    a. Career staff
    b. Work experience
    c. National Disability Coordination Officer
    d. Mentoring
    e. Assistance from organisations outside of your school (Such as community organisations, service providers or government agencies)
    f. Other

- If so, can you tell us about this?

- Has your child or you accessed information or support other than what is available through school? (For example through employment services, advocacy services, online info etc. etc.)

- If so, can you tell us about this?

- What does your child want to do after school?

- Do you and your child have a plan about how this can be achieved?

- Is there any other information or feedback you would like to provide about your experience of post school planning?

Appendix C

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS FROM SURVEY

Participation	44 young people
Age range	16 to 32 years
Gender	Female 49% Male 52%
Non-English Speaking Background	Yes 13% No 88%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	Yes 6% No 94%

State or Territory	
NSW	52%
QLD	12%
SA	6%
TAS	3%
VIC	21%
WA	6%

Area type	
Regional	49%
Remote	6%
Metropolitan	46%

Residing	
Family home	72%
Independently	14%
Other	14%[1]

Type of school attended	
Government	53%
Non-government	25%
Special	22%

1 When further details were provided for this option, residential care was the response.

Appendix D

INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANISATIONAL CONSULTATION

During the course of this project CDA met with a range of stakeholders from a number of areas, detailed below. Some cross-over exists amongst these lists. Various individuals with expertise in and around the area of transition were also consulted.

Disability advocacy organisations

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations

Julia Farr Youth

Young People in Nursing Homes Alliance

Youth Disability Advocacy Service

Non-government organisations

Beacon Foundation

Belonging Matters

Brotherhood of St Laurence

Advocates

Mark Bagshaw

Rhonda Galbally

Disability service providers

Autism West

Northern Support Services

Scope

Yooralla

Research bodies and academics

Australian Council for Educational Research

Dr Denis Meadows

University of New South Wales

University of Queensland

University of Sydney

Schools & school organisations

Ashwood School

Australian Council of State School Organisations

Croxton Special School

Ipswich West Special School

Parkdale Secondary College

St Michael's Grammar School

Sydney Road Community School

Thornbury High School

Employment services and providers

Australian Network on Disability

Disability Employment Australia

Fighting Chance

Job Support

Mambourin

National Employment Services Association

Outlook

Workfocus

Business peak organisations

Australian Human Resources Institute

Business Council of Australia

Career Industry Council of Australia

Council of Small Business Australia

Government departments, programs and agencies

Barkuma and subsidary organisaton of Better Pathways Program

Local Learning & Employment Network

National Disability Coordination Officer program

National Disability Insurance Agency

National Disability Recruitment Coordinator program

Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care, NSW Government

Children with Disability AUSTRALIA
A bigger voice for kids