CYDA Summit 2024 Zine   
(plain text version)

Table of contents

[Acknowledgement of Country 1](#_Toc178241452)

[About this version 1](#_Toc178241453)

[Letter from the editors 2](#_Toc178241454)

[What is NYDS 2024? 3](#_Toc178241455)

[Youth Council team 5](#_Toc178241456)

[CYDA Staff Members 11](#_Toc178241457)

[What is a Zine? 14](#_Toc178241458)

[Identity and Empowerment 15](#_Toc178241459)

[Community 25](#_Toc178241460)

[Creating Change 2](#_Toc178241461)

# Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which this zine, and the majority of its contributions, was created. We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. Always was, always will be, Aboriginal Land. We were privileged to have had a Welcome to Country delivered on the first day of the 2024 National Youth Disability Summit by Alex Kerr, a Wurundjeri Traditional Owner.

# About this version

This is a plain text version of the 2024 National Youth Disability Summit Zine. The PDF version of the zine features a lot of photographs and artwork. This document will describe the artworks but not display them. If you would rather view the artwork, [you can download the PDF here.](https://cyda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/cyda_summit_2024_zine.pdf)

# Letter from the editors

This zine is a collection of artwork and writing by young people with disability, for young people with disability, created at our 2024 National Youth Disability Summit. We were blown away by the sheer amount of amazing pieces submitted by participants for this zine!

We have had the immense privilege of working with this brilliant team of Youth Council members for the past 12 months. We have learnt so much from each and every one of them. It was a combination of their wisdom, lived expertise and creativity that pulled this Summit together.

We would also like to note that there are some slight changes to submissions. This has been done to remove backgrounds to reduce visual clutter, increase contrast for readability, or for copyright reasons.

We would love your feedback on these changes, and the zine overall, so please email us at [youthactionteam@cyda.org.au](mailto:youthactionteam@cyda.org.au) to let us know what we can do better next time!

Solidarity and spoons,

Georgia and Ezra

# What is NYDS 2024?

The National Youth Disability Summit (NYDS) 2024 was a two-day hybrid event for young people with disability from all over so-called Australia. This year was the 4th NYDS run by CYDA!

It was co-designed for and by young people with disability (our Youth Council) and it was a great opportunity to connect and talk about identity, community, empowerment, and creating change. Guest speakers this year included Senator Jordon Steele-John, AuDHD advocate Emily Unity, and Olivia Beasley from Deaf Youth Australia. We also had Q&A panels with CYDA’s Youth Council members and Youth Trainees, social activities, spaces for creativity, and time for discussions.

[Image description: The CYDA Youth Council and CYDA Staff sit and stand together at the Summit. They are laughing, smiling, and pulling silly faces. Everyone is wearing lanyards and there is a banner with the CYDA logo behind them.]

## We had three main themes at the NYDS this year…

* ‘Identity and Empowerment’
* ‘Community’
* ‘Creating Change’

[Image description: A collage of cut-out words from magazines. The three largest words are: Identity, Community, and Change. The smaller words are: support, meet, need, including, active, health, knowledge, adaptive, advice, play, family, dignity, local groups, a sense of belonging, friendships, safe, space, power, strong, community joy, diverse, understood, world, community, culture, together, mental health, interdependent, welcome, pride, authentic self, care, celebrate, online, meaningful, everyone, balance, experience, together, story, relationships, body, passion, angry, young, language, complex, committee, resting, tomorrow, action, services, create, recognition, improve access, freedom, opportunities, social media, burnout, impact, panel discussions, campaign, political, art, know your rights, little by little, differences exist, tired, in between worlds.]

# Youth Council team

## Thanh–Tuoc Autran (she/they)

Hi, Thanh here! I’m a lover of books, a chai enthusiast, and proudly disabled. Over the last year I’ve had the BEST time co designing this summit with the rest of CYDA’s Youth Council. It has been so extraordinary to see the tiny seeds of all our little ideas blossom into such a vibrant and inclusive event.

It’s safe to say that through this journey, I was able to make something that my past self craved: a place where people with disability could feel like they wholeheartedly belong.

My hidden talent is … the word association game connections.

[Image description: Thanh has long black hair and is grinning. She is wearing a pink dress and holding a white cane that has a matching pink grip.]

## Caitlin Blanch (she/her)

I’m Caitlin. I am an 18-year-old chai enthusiast who loves spending time with her animals, socialising, reading, binging Netflix series, and busting a groove!

My lived experience of dynamic disability has given me a unique insight into the systemic, social, and infrastructural norms that impact how I am able to interact with society. My passion for disability equity and justice has inspired my interest in policy reform, systemic and social advocacy, and public speaking.

My hidden talent is … I can dance the shuffle and sprinkler at the same time.

[Image Description: Caitlin has long, wavy brown hair. She is smiling and wearing a black shirt and a long necklace.]

## Ezra Burnett (he/they)

My name is Ez, I’m 22, and I’m a disabled, neurodivergent and trans peer support worker peer support worker and youth advocate living on beautiful Wurundjeri Country.

Working alongside the rest of the Youth Council members was an honour. They are all such amazing people I’m now lucky to call my friends! For me, a highlight of the Summit was listening to Senator Jordon Steele-John speak! I found his words so inspirational and relevant.

My hidden talent is … playing the harmonica.

[Image Description: Erza is taking a mirror selfie on his phone. They have shoulder length, wavy hair, wears glasses, and has many pieces of silver jewellery, including rings, chains, and earrings.]

## Isabella Choate (they/them)

My name is Isabella and I am an intersectional living experience advocate living on Whadjuk Noongar Boodja. I love community building and am hosting WA’s first Disability Pride Festival. Being on the 2024 CYDA Youth Council has been an absolute privilege!

I have learnt so much from advocates across the country, and seeing the summit come to fruition has been a wonderful process. My favourite part of the summit was Emily Unity’s speech about the different ways we can find community.

My hidden talent is … that I can paddle (up to) 12m waterfalls!

[Image description: A headshot of Isabella. They are smiling and have long, dark brown hair. They are wearing vibrant, red traditional dress with an embroidered collar shaded in dark greens and yellows.]

## Emily Sullivan (she/her)

My name is Em! I am a proud and passionate advocate, and I strive to use my lived experience and expertise to empower and uplift the disability community.

I feel so grateful to be part of CYDA’s Youth Council, and it has been a privilege to connect with so many incredible advocates from across the country at the National Youth Disability Summit!

My hidden talent is … doing the splits when the beat drops!

[Image description: Emily is smiling and wearing a stripey rainbow sweater. She has long brown hair with butterfly clips in it and is standing outside at night near the water.]

## G Treloar (any/all)

My name is G, and I am a young, disabled, queer person living on unceded Kaurna Country/Adelaide. My favourite part of Summit planning, and being on CYDA’s Youth Council, was getting to know and work with such a fabulous and creative group of people.

This was really my first time working in a role that was specific to disability, so it was excellent to hear different perspectives and learn from my fellow YC members!

My hidden talent is … that I’m pretty good at devil stick juggling!

[Image Description: G is sitting looking away from the camera and laughing. They have short, bright orange hair and are wearing a colourful Fresh Prince of Bel-Air button-up shirt.]

## Grace Garrahy (she/her)

My name is Grace, I’m 24 years old, and I’m studying occupational therapy at university! Due to my lived experience of disability, I am passionate about creating meaningful change in the disability advocacy space and empowering young people to be authentically themselves.

I absolutely loved planning for, and helping out with, the co-design process, and organising the activities for the identity and empowerment theme, as that is a topic I am very passionate about!

My hidden talent is … being accompanied by my assistance dog, Sebastian!

[Image description: Grace sitting in her wheelchair with Sebastian the assistance dog in her lap. She is surrounded by a tropical rainforest and is smiling!]

## Dureece Moyden (he/him)

Hello! I'm Dureece, a 26-year-old film student, living in Melbourne. Working with CYDA to co-design this year's Summit has been a rewarding experience of learning, connecting with community and working towards improving the wellbeing of everyone in the disabled community. I feel beyond privileged to have been part of this.

My hidden talent is … my knack for teaching English to ESL speakers.

[Image description: Dureece has shoulder-length, wavy, dark hair. He is wearing glasses. He has his hand on his chin. His hand has a heart drawn on it.]

## Louise Weekly (any/all)

Hey, I’m Louise, I’m 24, a young mum living with cerebral palsy and I identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community. I live on Kaurna Land and I’ve been really privileged to work alongside all the amazing individuals on the Youth Council to co-design the summit. My favourite part was the euphoria I felt listening to Senator Jordon Steele-John speak and connecting with so many like-minded youth.

My hidden talent is … that I know Auslan.

[Image description: Louise is smiling. They have cropped, short, brown hair and they are wearing a puffer jacket whilst standing in a park.]

## Brittney Wilson (she/her)

My name is Britt, I'm 23 and a full-time wheelchair user with severe ADHD. I think my favourite things about working on the Summit over the last year have been the incredible team I have been given the opportunity to work with, the bonds with my fellow Youth Council members and, of course, seeing it all come to life in Melbourne (Naarm) with the absolutely beautiful, accepting atmosphere that was created.

My hidden talent is … writing! I’m hoping to publish a book one day – it has been a dream since I was little.

[Image description: Britt is seated and smiling. She has long, blonde and ginger hair with a fringe. She has lip and nose piercings and is wearing a cozy cardigan.]

## Mac Zamani (he/him)

Hi, my name is Mac. I’m 20 and currently studying youth work and working within the youth advocacy sector here in Naarm. It’s been amazing to be back working with CYDA as part of the Youth Council.

I loved seeing CYDA grow over the years, and getting to be able to run the Summit in person! A highlight of the Summit would be seeing other young disabled people being able to connect and find community.

My hidden talent is … being able to pop a 360 wheelie.

[Image description: Mac is sitting in his bright blue wheelchair, smiling whilst patting a happy looking dog. Mac is wearing sunflower printed pants and a sweater with a picture of Judy Heumann on it.]

# CYDA Staff Members

Here are (some of) the amazing CYDA staff members that helped the Youth Council co-design and run this year’s NYDS. We couldn’t have done it without you all - thank you!

## Maddy Clarke (she/her)

Hello! My name is Maddy and I helped coordinate the Summit and Youth Council. Community and disability pride is so important to me as a disabled person, and I hope that the conversations you had, the friendships you made, and the community you helped build at the Summit stay with you into the future.

My hidden talent is … that I can move my eyebrows like that little girl in the Cadbury ad.

[Image description: Maddy is smiling. She has long, straight, brown hair and is wearing a knitted sweater.]

## Daniel Munter (he/him)

Summit Days were a blur! I helped make sure everything went smoothly, got young people involved, and had amazing chats with so many cool people. I really enjoyed connecting with people, hearing their stories, and seeing the Youth Councils’ plan come to life!

My hidden talent is … I am very good at staring at the sun for someone with sensory sensitivities.

[Image description: Daniel is smiling and has short brown hair, a moustache, and is wearing glasses. He is outside and there is a staircase behind him.]

## Georgia Ferrari (she/they)

I loved being involved in this year’s NYDS. I particularly enjoyed looking around and seeing what everyone was working on during the Connect & Create sessions!

My hidden talent is … making hauntingly accurate motorcycle noises.

[Image description: Georgia has short, brown hair with a fringe and is smiling whilst outside at night.]

## Dylan McBurney (they/them)

I was so fortunate to be involved in the co-design process and running of the Summit. I loved hearing about the positive impact of youth disability spaces that participants shared with me, and getting to apply my theatre/stage management experience to a huge, accessible event!

My hidden talent is … I’m way too excited to talk to people about things to hide any of my talents!

[Image description: Headshot of Dylan. They have light brown fluffy hair, stubble, and are smiling and wearing a knit shirt.]

## Laura Pettenuzzo (she/her)

My favourite part of organising the summit was getting to work with the Youth Council!

My hidden talent is … knowing all the words to the first Frozen film.

[Image description: Laura is sitting in her wheelchair wearing a flowing green floral dress and is looking away from the camera, smiling and laughing.]

## Naomi Chainey (she/her)

This was my third CYDA Summit, taking part online as a spoonie staff member. It’s been a pleasure to witness the next generation of disabled changemakers and advocates finding their voices and getting LOUD!

My hidden talent is … I can hold my hands behind my back and pull them over my head.

[Image description: Naomi has dark brown hair and bright blue eyes and is wearing glasses and slightly smiling.]

## David Kavanagh (he/him)

Hey! I’m David, and I supported Summit behind the scenes and on social media as part of CYDA’s Comms team. It was a blast working with Youth Council and the rest of the staff making this event a reality, and I hope you all had an incredible time.

My hidden talent is … being able to stress about not being stressed enough. It’s great …

[Image description: David is smiling. He has short, dark brown hair, dark brown eyes and a moustache. He is outside with an historical building behind him.]

# What is a Zine?

As a part of the NYDS 2024, participants were invited to contribute to a Summit Zine. A zine is just a little magazine! It is a small, self-published work of original text and images. Pronounced like “zeen”, zines can be made about anything and everything.

Within this particular zine, you’ll be able to find thoughts, feelings, and creative works from young people with disability about the themes and discussions that took place during the Summit this year.

Zine culture has historically been anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist and intersectional. Zines have provided a creative space for marginalised individuals through the ability to express and pursue common ideas and subjects. One of (if not the) first ever zines created was called Fire!! and made by Black creatives in 1926 during the Harlem Renaissance. Self-publishing played a key part in BIPOC creative resistance, so we need to acknowledge the original zinesters who paved the way for the rest of us!

During the 1930s, zines became really big within the sci-fi fandom space. During the 1960s to 1980s, DIY zines became deeply linked with punk scenes around the world. Zines went on to flourish in the 1990s within the feminist punk movement riot grrrl.

As disabled people, we are automatically more punk than the rest of the population, and that’s just a fact! So, we thought it would be appropriate to make a zine for this year’s NYDS!

Zine culture has many parallels to the 10 Principles of Disability Justice, as outlined by Sins Invalid. Making a zine encourages anti-capitalist politics, collective access, intersectionality, sustainability and more.

# Identity and Empowerment

Self-advocacy, setting boundaries, telling your story, overcoming internalised ableism, and different relationships with disability pride.

## ‘Identity’ a comic by Siena Bordignon

[Image description: A snail with a sunflower on its shell speaks on the phone to another snail. The sunflower snail says “I’m an odd snail”. The snail with a regular swirl on its shell says “Don’t say that! You’re a snail with an oddity”. The sunflower snail is speechless and stares blankly in frustration.]

## ‘Fragile, not Weak’ a multimedia artwork by Chase McIntosh

[Image description: A dark, black and grey butterfly in the centre of blue, pink, and red watercolour pencil puddles that bleed and mix together, surrounded by a black oval border.]

## ‘Disability Identity’ a pen drawing by Rosie Putland

[Image description: Text reads: “coming into disability identity as a birth and not death”. The words are surrounded by blooming flowers, the word “birth” looks like tree roots, and the word “death” has a little gravestone next to it.]

## ‘I am disabled’ a digital illustration by Isabella Choate

[Image description: Text states: “I am disabled and it’s wonderful (when it’s not hard), neurodivergent, psychiatric, chronic illness and undiagnosed, sensory. Inspired by @miccamoo”. Illustration depicts a person with colours highlighting where on their body their disabilities manifest. Neurodivergent is highlighted by a halo above the person’s head. Psychiatric is highlighted in blue at the person’s head. Sensory is highlighted in green and shown on the feet, hands, eyes, and ears. Chronic illness and undiagnosed is highlighted in white and represented on the body and major limbs. Surrounding the person are illustrations of a face mask, the disability pride flag, and a pink walking cane.]

## ‘Creativity takes courage’ a multimedia sculpture by Zoe Atterbury

[Image description 1: A photo of Zoe’s artwork; a vase with leaves in it. Around the vase are painted wooden flower shapes. They are painted in marbled colours of blue, purple, green, and pink. In the centre is a circular piece of wood with the quote ‘creativity takes courage’ printed on it.]

[Image description 2: A photo of another wooden art piece that includes flower shapes stacked together and painted in marbled colours of blue, purple, yellow, pink, and green. Another circular piece of wood has the quote “Take up space” printed on it.]

## ‘Unapologetically unpalatable’ a drawing

[Image description: A collage style illustration surrounding the words ‘unapologetically unpalatable’. The illustration includes imagery of clouds, space, stars, planets, sunflowers, and cartoon characters including Rick and Morty, and the Powerpuff Girls.]

## ‘Your Story Matters’ an illustration

[Image description: A pencil illustration of an open book with hills, trees and a waterfall growing out of it. There are also flowers and grass covering the hills. Handwritten beneath are the words ‘Your Story Matters’.]

## ‘Lost’ a digital illustration by Matt Gee

[Image description: Old English style red text on a black staticky background reads “Identity and Empowerment” at the top and “Feeling Lost” at the bottom. Between these is an illustration strip which repeats three times. The strip consists of three images. On the left, a distorted figure appears to be fighting itself. In the middle, the same figure is grinning with wide eyes and labelled “lost”. On the right, the figure is fragmented and dissociating. Simple, blue, red and black lines are used to create a 3D effect on the imagery.]

**Artist Statement:**

“I drew this picture 10 years ago when I was first diagnosed with my disability. At the time, I felt lost. I felt lost because my condition will get worse over time. I felt lost because I didn't know what my future would look like. I felt lost because I didn't have people in my life who could relate to what I was experiencing. I felt lost because I had internalised ableism I needed to acknowledge and fix. I felt lost because I was scared. I chose to include the theme of "lost" to this zine because I carry the memory of this feeling with me day to day, and within my work in the disability advocacy space. For me, it is important to remember how I felt at the time, and to continue to empower individuals, groups and organisations to support people with disabilities to feel safe, included and accepted.”

## Creative Piece by Poppy S

### Artist Statement:

“This poem was written on 22/5/24 for the Disability Youth Summit while listening to lo-fi hip hop (the best hack for helping my brain say what it needs because of the beautiful mix of the unexpected and rhythmic beat). It gives a glimpse into a neurodivergent brain, it can be read in your head, but if you're neurodivergent too, it might feel cathartic to read it out loud to yourself.”

### A poem about my brain (and maybe your brain too)

bring it back

to the present

“i am present”

just not with this,

just not in that way,

you want me to be everything

i am

distilled into one moment

and hold it like a freeze frame (deep breath)

i don't know how to sit with time

like that, be patient with the sublime,

like that,

can't even sit with myself long enough

to re-define it like that,

for the wounded parakeet?

for the newborn baby?

for the four year old with

messy short hair, and the cut on her knee, in the gold

sneakers, and home cut bangs, and pink tutu,

(yes) i can sit with her

till the sun

comes up.

waiting for her

to be ready

for this world

but this moment, this thing,

i can't quite

sit (still) with,

not because it's not important,

but because my brain thinks

oddities are more useful,

that no-one is noticing them,

and i've unofficially been handed this job

by some bizarre haphazard genetic lottery.

maybe

we could walk

under a canopy of trees

and if you don't mind

me noticing each ant

and the different direction of each bird's feathers,

and their flight patterns,

and the smell of rain coming,

and that i'm always waiting to see the moon in the daytime,

(i promise, i am listening)

while you try to tell me about it again then?

i can't explain it to you,

but i will still try

(trust me, and, sorry!)

"must stop apologising for that.”

‘what i mean to say is, thank you.’

for waiting, for your patience, for your understanding.

practicing, that.

they say some people with adhd have a

parenthesis addiction,

brackets too,

i have a habit of losing words like a lost dog,

when i need them,

and then they sort of pour out of me

when time and space is too slow,

too quiet, too serious,

(what does it mean? must ask, why!)

because, it feels like some words need to be contained in their own bubble,

to make sense

(do you know what i mean?)

## ‘Little Jerry-Man’ an illustration by Jade Wilson

[Image description: An illustration of a person who is smiling, wearing headphones and listening to music. They also have a lanyard on and a shirt with a picture of the dinosaur on it. Above his head are the handwritten words “Your normal, **IS** normal!” and an arrow to text that says “Pronouns: He/They”.]

## ‘Trans & Mentally Ill’ an illustration

[Image description: Large text reads “Trans and Mentally Ill” with an illustration of the Trans flag, a does not equal sign, and a brain. Text below states “I am trans and mentally ill. Not mentally ill because I am trans.”]

## ‘Inclusive Conversations’ digital artwork

[Image description: Text reads “Truly inclusive conversation must include the intersectionality of cultural identity” with a photo of many hands coming together to create a heart shape, and illustrations of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags.]

## ‘Disability Identity’ handwritten notes

* Disability Identity as a birth and not a death
* Relationship to identity and disability changing over time
* Intersectionality affects experience
* Community
* Needing ‘labels’/’identities’ to access information, support, understanding (NDIS, MH support, DSP)
* Individuality, including in same identities like being autistic

## ‘The Backend Spectrum’ a digital illustration by John Cima

[Image description: A purple lined grid with squares in various shades of black and grey with a few splashes of red, green, blue and yellow. Reminiscent of the no signal image that used to appear on analogue televisions.]

## ‘You Are Enough’ an illustration

[Image description: A pencil drawing that says in bold rainbow letters “You are Enough”. The words are surrounded with flowering vines. Within the vines are a red panda, a dolphin and a large red heart.]

## ‘You Deserve to feel Empowered’ an illustration by Faelan

[Image description: The words “You deserve to feel empowered. No one should make you feel any less!” drawn in large, bold text, with the word ‘empowered’ in rainbow colours, coming out of a megaphone. Surrounding the words are stars, sparkles, and a drawing of a happy duck. Other bits of text dotted about the illustration reads “Neurodivergent, Disabled, Intersectional, LGBTQ+, Unique, Authentic, “unpalatable”, Mental Illness, Multicultural, First Nations, Trans, Beautiful, Marginalised, Youth”.]

## ‘We are Powerful’ an illustration

[Image description: “We are Powerful” in strong block letters. Surrounding the words are drawings of a lightsabre, lightening bolts, The Avengers letter A logo, and the one ring from The Lord of the Rings.]

## ‘Jordan Steele-John’ a digital illustration by Chloe T. Rattray

[Image description: A photo of Jordan Steele-John, a young man in a khaki button-up shirt with olive skin, short, dark hair and beard, glasses and a big smile. He is outside using a manual wheelchair. Next to him is a speech bubble which says “Our role is **NOT** to be palatable.” Text above reads “CYDA #NYDS24”.]

# Community

How to find and build a community, get support, and make sure no one is left behind.

“I found that once I actually started being more open about my disability and being confident in who I was, it was a lot easier for me to find people around me that could connect with me.” - Thanh-Tuoc Autran (she/they) YC member

## ‘Disability Community Care’ notes by Chloe T. Rattray

* pride
  + affirmation
    - not neuronormativity
    - not Compulsory able-bodiedness
    - just **YOU**!
  + pride doesn’t equal toxic positivity
  + “good” and “bad” parts of disability
  + there is nuance in pride
* disability-led
  + people who “get it”
  + representation
  + intersectional
  + diversity
* connection
  + with people who are similar and different to you
* interdependence
  + giving and receiving support
* peer support
  + importance of having a team behind you
    - for support
    - to mitigate burnout
* accessibility
  + inclusive language
    - discussing preferences
    - nuance
  + expected rather than the exception
  + spoken about often
  + just ask!

## ‘Help’ an illustration

[Image description: An illustration of a large spiral and an arrowed line beneath measuring its width. Cursive handwriting below reads “Help shouldn’t require a downwards spiral”.]

## ‘Support System’ a digital illustration by Beth Beaver

[Image description: Words decorated with illustrations of clouds, leaves and pink squares read “It’s a support system **NOT** a marketing scheme”. Above the words “marketing scheme” is a jagged line and arrow representing a graph with growth.]

## ‘Community’ digital notes by Gee Anderson

* celebration
* exploration
* individuality
* understanding
* rage
* validation
* vulnerability
* learning
* expertise
* pride in identity
* joy
* belonging
* curiosity
* solidarity
* diversity
* connection
* advocacy
* challenging internalised ableism

## Words by Paris Ingham

“The disability community is so open and welcoming to everyone that are the same or different from you. I feel like there can be a bit of imposter syndrome but if you are willing to be yourself and open to different people, as well as being open to getting hurt it will lead you in the right direction to find your community.”

## ‘Feeling ‘not disabled enough’/ the label of disability’ handwritten notes

* working in disability and using lived experience in work
* connecting to disabled joy
* challenging internalised ableism
* exploration
  + ask curious questions
  + challenge people’s bias/assumptions
  + ‘what does disability look like to you?’
* community
  + belonging
  + people who understand your experiences
  + be vulnerable and try out ‘disclosing’ being disabled
  + validation from other disabled people
* seeing the expertise of disabled people and using your unique skills
* you don’t owe people explanations about your capacity
  + worrying about people judging what you’re doing
* building up pride in your identity

## ‘Norms in disability communities’ handwritten notes

[The word “the” in the heading is crossed out, indicating a singular disability community was corrected to say ‘disability communities’ plural.]

* lateral violence
* lateral ableism
  + ‘I’m not like them, I don’t have high support needs’
* neurodivergent vs. disabled
* stereotypes
* identity and relationship with disability isn’t fixed
* stick to rigid description and not give autonomy for self-description
* speaking on behalf of all disabled people

## ‘Port Jackson Shark’ an illustration by Grace

[Image Description: A Port Jackson Shark sketched and shaded in a ball point pen. The label “Port Jackson Shark” is written underneath.]

# Creating Change

Grassroots and systemic advocacy, challenging ableism, and how to make change in a way that works for you.

“I think that self-advocacy is such a powerful form of change-making in itself because it builds skills to then, in turn, do other advocacy.” - Grace Garrahy (she/her) YC member

[Image description: A photo of Grace, a young woman sitting in her wheelchair, smiling with her hands in her lap. She had long brown hair, wears glasses and has tattoos on her arms featuring black and grey butterflies. She is wearing a brown t-shirt with a long black and white patterned skirt.]

## ‘Creating Change’ a comic by Siena Bordignon

[Image description: A simple comic strip featuring line drawings of snails.

A snail with a sunflower on its shell and a snail with a necktie on its shell meet under a banner that says “snail inclusion day”.

Sunflower snail says “Hi. Snails like me need this. Here is the plan to do it.”

Necktie snail replies “Thank you for raising these concerns.”

They stare at each other.

Sunflower snails asks “So, will you do anything?”

Necktie snail replies “Oh … I need to make a call.”

Necktie snail calls another snail with dollar signs on its shell. Necktie snail asks “How much money in snail bank?”

Money snail replies “3 gazillion snail dollars.”

Necktie snail goes back to Sunflower snail and says “Unfortunately we do not have the resources at this time.”]

## ‘Change’ a word wall created by Freya Elliot with contributions from other Summit participants

[Image description: A large piece of paper on a wall with pink Post-its and handwritten notes all over it in coloured Texta. The word “change” is in large bubble letters, and inside each letter participants have written answers to the questions written on the Post-its below.]

### Letter C: Change you have made:

* YDAS and Department of Education Victoria learning profiles in High School.
* Increasing disability representation in the homelessness advocacy space.
* Helped teach uber drivers the rights of assistance dogs.
* Speaking up about things I want to see more of or want changed: NDIS, representation, etc …
* Mental health policy.
* More accessibility within my uni and more connection.
* Increasing diversity in the media.
* Helping students get accommodation for ATAR exams.

### Letter H: Change you want to make:

* Peer support / disability social groups in WA!
* Challenge isolation and create social spaces for young people with disability.
* Better support for high school student with disabilities.
* Peer support group in Queensland for young people with disability.
* Independent people with disabilities in their own homes.
* Increase support for disabilities across schools and education, particularly invisible and un/partially diagnosed.

### Letter A: Attendee names:

* Freya Elliot
* Charlie Kennedy
* Ezra Burnett
* Dylan McBurney
* Georgia Ferrari
* Paris Ingram
* Grace Garrahy
* Kirsten Busby
* Aimee Oliver

### Letter N: Change makers you admire:

* The youth council members
* Shae Graham
* Madeleine Stewart
* Dylan Alcott x2
* Jordan Steele-John x2
* Chloe Hayden
* Robyn Lambird

### Letter G: Ways to make change:

* writing
* social media
* protest
* TV news
* theatre
* self-advocacy
* politics
* speaking up against discrimination

### Letter E: Your values

* compassion
* community
* standing up for yourself
* honesty
* forgiveness
* humour
* authenticity
* supportive

## ‘Palatable’ an illustration by Rosie Putland

[Image description: Bold black letters read “Our advocacy does not need to be palatable to be listened to”. The word “palatable” is in thick black lettering with arrows at the ends of the letters. The affirmation is surrounded by black pointed stars.]

## ‘Believe that you can create change!’ a digital illustration by Tessa Deak

[Image description: An illustration of a woman with rainbow-coloured hair, eyes, lips, and hands. One hand is over her heart, one over her mid-section. Surrounding her is text that corresponds to each rainbow-coloured part. Hair: “**Think** beyond what you ‘know’ to be ‘true’.” Eyes: “**See** the diverse experience of those around you”. Lips: “**Speak** up for yourself and others.” Hand over heart: “**Feel** your heart guide you.” Hand over mid-section: “**Believe** that you can create **change**!”]

## ‘Loud’ a multimedia collage by SJ

[Image description: A large paper heart covered in many colourful paper origami hearts, with patters on them including swirls, checkers, flowers, polka dots, hearts, a drawing of a fox, and the quote ‘You are enough’. On one side of the heart is the writing “We don’t need to be palatable, we need to be loud”.]

**Artist Statement:**

“I made a big love heart with the wonderful people I met at my table at the National Youth Disability Summit. The heart came from the rage I felt when [one of the speakers] told over 100 disabled people that [paraphrasing] we need to be palatable, as well as the comment he shared about how easy it is to get funding for NDIS. I and so many other young disabled people have had to listen to people who think they know what is best for us, even though they have not experienced life in this country, in this world, or with a disability for our whole lives. And I’m sick of it. Disabled people have had to mask and become palatable their whole lives, so I think it’s time for us to be loud, share our wants and needs, and don’t take no for an answer.”

## Illustrations

[Image description 1: An illustration of many yellow daisies, all drawn to make the shape of a heart. Signed by “Em” with a smiley face.]

[Image description 2: A Post-it note with many dense patterns drawn with a ball point pen. The patterns include squiggles, zig zags, scales, dots, strawberries, hearts, and flowers.]

## ‘CYDA Frog’ a series of paper origami pieces

[Image description: A photo in the centre that shows a paper origami frog sitting on top of a glass with a post it note reading “CYDA frog”. The frog is green with blue and maroon stripes. Around the photo are scans of more origami frogs, some origami cats and flame emojis.

## Copyright

© Children and Young People with Disability Australia 2024

## Contact details

e. [info@cyda.org.au](mailto:info@cyda.org.au)

p. 03 9417 1025

w. [www.cyda.org.au](http://www.cyda.org.au)

Thanks and acknowledgement

Thank you to the young people who attended the 2024 National Youth Disability Summit, and to all those who contributed to this zine. Thank you to the 2024 CYDA Youth Council for their hard work co-designing of the Summit, and to Georgia and Ezra for their work editing the zine. The National Youth Disability Summit was supported by The Australian Government.