

Key Stats Snapshot 4: Social and Community Participation for Children and Young People with Disability



Children and young people with disability play an active role in Australian society. They contribute as students, family members, friends, employees, volunteers, advocates, leaders, caregivers, and community members.

Yet many also experience barriers to social and community participation.

People with disability make up a significant share of volunteers. In Australia, there are:



1.5 million
disabled volunteers

People with disability are more likely to volunteer informally in their communities (at a rate of 41%),

While the rates of volunteering for young people with disability specifically are unknown, the rates of volunteering in the general population are high, with **680,000 volunteers aged 18 to 24**.

Children and young people with disability are over three times more likely to take on caring roles.

Social and community participation

Most young people with disability aged 15 to 24 maintain strong social and community connections.



Seven in ten regularly see people outside of their household



75% leave home as often as they want



57.7% connect frequently without in-person contact (e.g. by phone or online)

However, many still want stronger social connection, with almost half (43.5%) wanting more contact with family or friends outside their household.

Among NDIS participants aged 15 to 64:



64% spend their free time doing activities that interest them



24% take part in sports, hobbies or community-based clubs

this is **6% less** than their non-disabled peers

Barriers to participation

Young people with disability report lower community satisfaction, and higher rates of loneliness and social isolation than their non-disabled peers, and older people with disability.

Of young people with disability aged 15 to 24:



44% are not satisfied with their community



34% experience loneliness



21% experience social isolation

Barriers to participation are widespread, with more than two-thirds (68.2%) in this age range reporting difficulties. Common barriers include:



Cost (66.2%)



Fear or anxiety (56.8%)



Their disability or condition (38.5%)

Data gaps remain

There are many data gaps when it comes to the social and community participation of children and young people with disability.

Nationally, Australia does not track:

- The number of disabled young people who are informal volunteers, caregivers, peer support workers, lived experienced workers, advocates, or leaders
- How and how often children and young people with disability participate in clubs, sports or other activities, and what supports they need to do so
- Accessibility, inclusion or participation in schools, youth centres, and other spaces
- Youth-specific information on transport, discrimination, and other barriers.



Find out more

Explore CYDA's full Key Statistics Report for more in-depth data, analysis, and sources..

<https://cyda.org.au/key-statistics/>