



PAVE THE WAY

vision to action through planning

Participation and Contribution through Work, Study and Valued Roles

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Ideas and
strategies

2013



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Information

Pave the Way works with families to clarify their vision for their family member with a disability and to plan to implement that vision. As part of our work, we aim to assist people with accurate, relevant and timely information to help with planning.

Information is an important part of the process of planning. Without information our dreams may take longer to take shape or may be limited by not knowing what is possible. Information is not the starting point, however. At Pave the Way we believe that planning must begin with a clear vision for the life we want. If this is clear then information can help to put that vision in place. If we are not clear about what we want then our dreams may be limited by any information we might find.

Information can help us translate our vision into reality. It cannot create or direct that vision.

This information sheet has been designed for quick reference to a number of options for people with disabilities to participate in work, study, and other valued roles. For detailed information you will need to follow the links to contact the relevant service, organization or Government department. If you are unable to download any of the information contact Pave the Way and we may be able to assist.

This document also includes a number of stories, with more to follow on Pave the Way's website later this year, to demonstrate the diversity of possibilities for people with disabilities to pursue valued roles. As each person has their own hopes, dreams, and life circumstances, we recommend that you read these stories for inspiration about what is possible rather than read them as a recipe for how you should pursue a particular role.

We would also like to encourage families to contact Pave the Way to talk about how this information fits with your own long-term vision and planning.

Printed information quickly becomes out of date so it is important to check details on any of Pave the Way's Information Sheets before any planning decisions are made.

Pave the Way welcomes feedback from families about this resource or about any of our other information resources. We would like to know if you found the information helpful or not, if anything important is missing, or if any of the information is incorrect or out of date. Also, if you have a story about valued roles that you would like to share with other families, please let us know.

What do we mean when we talk about valued roles?

The term '*valued roles*' is used in Social Role Valorisation (SRV) theory. While it is a rather awkward term, it is, nevertheless, a very important theory. SRV theorises that some groups in society, such as the homeless or people with disabilities, are devalued by others, either consciously or unconsciously, on the basis of their 'difference' to those members of society with valued status. When people are devalued they are treated differently and have different life outcomes to the more valued members of society. As a result of being devalued, people are more likely to be unemployed, homeless or institutionalised, and have fewer of the opportunities which seem to be the 'birthright' of people who have valued status.

Too often people with disabilities are not thought of as being contributing members of society. This perception needs to be challenged. At Pave the Way we believe that all people with disabilities have gifts and strengths which can be translated into valued roles. This belief is reflected in Pave the Way's information document, *Participation and contribution through work, study, and other valued roles*.

The aim of this document is twofold. Firstly, it aims to give individuals and their families a sense of **the importance of valued roles** and how these roles fit into the whole of a person's life planning and journey. Secondly, it aims to provide individuals and families with **information** about some of the options and services that are available to people with disabilities to pursue valued roles.

For more information about Social Role Valorisation refer to the SRV website at <http://www.socialrolevalorization.com>. If you do not have access to the web you can contact Pave the Way and we may be able to post some information to you.

Participation and contribution through work, study and other valued roles.

Where we carry out our **work**, studies and other **valued roles** are usually places where we spend a lot of our time. In these places, we have opportunities to meet new people who may become lifelong friends or partners. These are places where we also build our skills and confidence through having a valued role. Work, study, and other valued roles bring structure and meaning to our days, and sometimes the opportunity to earn a part or full income. In the context of a good life, valued roles can be seen as one of the most important ways to develop ourselves personally, professionally and financially.

Work is something that many people with disability do undertake and depending on the individual, they have relied on either **formal or informal support** or a combination of both to achieve this goal.

As some of the stories in this document demonstrate, some people have had to be very creative about employment; the ideal job can be many jobs away, or a person may carry out a number of roles during the week. This might include: study, volunteer and **paid work**.

But valued roles are never only paid roles. While paid work might be a role that brings us more status than unpaid roles, if you ask anyone what they value most in life, the answer is usually, friendship, family, music, belonging etc. So for those for whom paid employment may not be an option there are other ways that one can contribute and gain the benefits of meaningful and valued roles. The role of artist comes to mind here. There are many gifted people who find it difficult to find paid work for their particular skills but there is still a need for artists such as **painters, poets and musicians** to be present in the community. With or without pay it can prove to be a fulfilling way to contribute to one's community.

Joining a group, working as a volunteer and being a **good friend, son, daughter, or neighbour** are also extremely valuable roles. These roles enhance a person's inclusion and recognition as a member of their community.

Some people go onto **higher education**, and there is a lot more support for students with disabilities in the higher education sector these days. Some of this support might surprise you as it accommodates students with varying levels of disability. Students with severe mental health issues, autism spectrum disorder and physical and learning difficulties may be able to carry out studies with the particular support on offer. High school students might like to look into a **school based apprenticeship or traineeship**.

Self-employment can be a lot of work to set up and maintain, but once organised, it can provide job satisfaction for some.

Whatever path you choose it may present you with some challenges. The services that exist to assist people with disabilities are never perfect and you may come across some flawed work practices. It helps to have a **clear vision** of what you want so that you will be in a better position to ask for what you have the right to expect of those services.

OPPORTUNITIES





**TRANSITION
FROM SCHOOL**

TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL

Planning for what to do once secondary school finishes needs to begin as early as possible and students can take advantage of the number of options, resources and resource people available to them while still in high school.

Support

School Transition Officers and Heads of Special Education Services are based at most high schools and can provide students and their families with employment and further study related information.

Careers Advisors, Counselors and Guidance Officers are based in most high schools and can provide students with advice about their career options.

Talk with other parents and school leavers about their experiences and to source valuable information.

Vocational education and training (VET) in schools program. This program is open to secondary school students in years 11 and 12 and links vocational education and training with secondary school studies. VET is a means for students to gain practical work skills and qualifications as part of their school education. VET programs are usually undertaken at Registered Training Organisations (see the Further Education section on page 44). For information about VET and general information for students entering the workforce visit: <http://training.qld.gov.au/individuals/students/index.html>

Work experience is a good way to find out what is involved in a particular job. You might choose to **approach an employer yourself** to be considered for a work experience placement. For more information about work-placements talk with your school, Centrelink, approach an employer directly, or visit the JobAccess website:

http://jobaccess.gov.au/Jobseekers/Study_training_and_apprenticeships/Learning_through_work_experience/Pages/home.aspx

Stepping Stones, school-to-work transition is an online program for students who are at risk of not completing twelve years of schooling or students in rural and remote locations with limited access to careers guidance. Stepping Stones is managed by a Registered Training Organisation - the Brisbane School of Distance Education. For more information visit:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/students/placement/vet/docs/steppingstones.doc>

Disability Coordination Officers and Regional Disability Liaison Officers Programs. These programs assist with transitional arrangements between school, vocational and technical education, higher education and employment. Regional Disability Liaison Officers and Disability Coordination Officers can provide job seekers with **information** about post school options, supports and services, but they do not provide direct support.

http://jobaccess.gov.au/Jobseekers/Study_training_and_apprenticeships/Help_with_transition_from_work_to_study/Pages/home.aspx

Local Area Coordinator, Disability Services. In regional areas the Local Area Coordinator can provide students and their families with information about post school options.

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/support-and-services/our-services/local-area-coordination>

In Brisbane, a **Post School Information Expo** is held annually, usually in April, at the Brisbane Convention Centre, South Bank. Your school should alert you to when it is on.

In regional areas, transition officers in schools usually organise post school information events.

Other considerations

For students interested in **further study**, many higher education institutions organise information events and open days for prospective students. These include:

- UNITASTE Vacation School is a three-day program for Year 10 and 11 students with a disability at Queensland University of Technology: <http://www.qut.edu.au/about/>
- The Leo Howard Vacation School holds a five-day program in January each year for Year 12 students at The University of Queensland: <http://www.uq.edu.au/news/index.html?article=1397>
- James Cook University holds an annual open day where there is plenty of information and advice about courses: <http://www.jcu.edu.au/study/> and disability support services <http://www.jcu.edu.au/disability/>
- University of the Sunshine Coast has a number of programs to help you collect useful information, experience university life and make decisions about your future studies. Phone 07 5430 1234 or visit the website: <http://www.usc.edu.au/>
- For general information about disability support services in education settings visit: <http://www.innovation.gov.au/Skills/SkillsTrainingAndWorkforceDevelopment/NationalDisabilityCoordinationOfficerProgram/Pages/default.aspx>
- Check with the relevant university or college about dates for open days and career evenings.

If you are considering **an apprenticeship or traineeship**, it is best to start thinking about your options in grade 10-12 (see page 42 for more information about this). You can visit the website of the QLD Government Department of Education and Training for more information: <http://education.qld.gov.au/students/placement/work/>

For more information on **Work Experience Activities** contact your Job Services Australia provider or the Job Seeker Hotline **13 62 68**: <http://jobsearch.gov.au/provider/pages/whichprovider.aspx>

Gap Year: Some young people choose to take a 'gap' year after completing high school to consider their options and to recover from the stresses of school life.

Links

Queensland Parents for People with Disability (QPPD) booklet, ***Launch into Life- Planning great futures for people with disabilities*** provides a comprehensive timeline for planning while you are still at high school. This document and other articles of interest can be found on QPPD's Transition website at: <http://www.qppd.org/> or contact QPPD on 33683055 or 1800 805 184.

Getting Work. This government website has some useful information for the job seeker about how to go about preparing for, finding and maintaining a job: <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>.

'Families for Change' Winter 2009 Volume 3 Issue 8, Family Advocacy, NSW. Family Advocacy is a disability related organisation that produces informative articles and resources for families who have a family member with disability. This edition focuses on life after school and can be found at: <http://www.family-advocacy.com/> or Free call 1800 620 588

My Future: Australia's career and exploration service has a worksheet for school leavers to assist them to build a career profile, explore career options, and develop a career plan: www.myfuture.edu.au

Building a Career of Your Choice is an informative booklet which has been written for job seekers with serious **mental health issues** and gives practical advice and information about how to prepare for and keep a job. You can find a copy at: <http://www.qcmhr.uq.edu.au/contact.htm>

Making the Transition to Further Study: a booklet designed to ease the transition into further study for high school students with disability: <http://www.ndcoceagroup.com.au/uploads/NDCO-Files/TransitionResources/NDCO%20Transition%20to%20Further%20Study%20Workbook%20-%20April10.pdf>

Leaps and Bounds: A self help planning guide to Post-secondary Education and Training for prospective students with disabilities and chronic medical conditions: <http://www.ndcoceagroup.com.au/uploads/NDCO-Files/TransitionResources/NDCO%20Leaps%20&%20Bounds%20-%20April10.pdf>

Stories

WORK EXPERIENCE: Ben's work experience.

Ben lives in a regional town west of Brisbane and while still at school began work experience in three local businesses; none of these businesses had the slightest resemblance to the other. The work experience was arranged by Ben's school, as his teacher was keen for him to have other learning opportunities in addition to his schooling.

One of Ben's jobs was in the local video store where he worked for a couple of hours per week restacking videos as they were returned. He also assisted customers to find DVDs on the shelves. Ben learned valuable skills needed to gain paid employment such as how to dress appropriately, the need for time management, customer service skills and knowledge of workplace structure generally.

Ben also did work experience at a lawn mower shop for 3 hours per week, pulling engines apart and degreasing parts, and in a sports store, restacking goods, helping customers and assembling equipment.

One of the benefits of work experience while still at high school is that it has helped Ben to think about what work he might do once he finishes school. It has also been a good way for him to develop his skills, confidence and knowledge about the world of work generally. Ben is hoping that the work experience might lead into permanent paid work.

When people with disabilities are expected to help others they will- like the rest of us – rise to the occasion. They will feel needed, valued and important, just as other helpers do. But the benefits do not stop there. When we see what people with disabilities can do to help others, we also see abilities and strengths we didn't see before.

This is an excerpt from an article, “Everyone Needs to be Needed” by Kathie Snow, from Disability is Natural <http://www.disabilityisnatural.com/>



CREATIVE ROLES

ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, WRITERS AND POETS ~

Where would the world be without them?

Do you have a talent that could be marketable?

If so, consider the way your particular craft might lead to employment. While it is difficult for most creative people to secure full time employment from their craft, some do manage to derive some income from it. For some people they simply enjoy the opportunity to share their craft with others. It is a way of sharing their gifts.

If you paint or create something, could you sell it at the markets or develop a website to sell your product? Have you ever thought about street busking, belonging to a cooperative, or another club that is organised around your particular craft? Get on the Net and search widely to see what opportunities are out there.

Not all valued roles are work related.

Links

HANDMADE:

- ❖ A great website for all things handmade is Etsy: <http://www.etsy.com/>
- ❖ "Made it" is an Australian site similar to Etsy: <http://www.madeit.com.au/>
- ❖ Young designer markets: <http://www.southbankmarket.com.au/ydm.html>
- ❖ Indie Markets online: <http://www.indie.com.au/>

ART:

- ❖ Brisbane artist directory: <http://www.brisbaneartistsdirectory.com/>
- ❖ Start up your own gallery space / collective – see BoxCopy for ideas: <http://boxcopy.org/>
- ❖ Check out Travis Dewan's online gallery for artists to display their work online: <http://www.vegasspray.com/>

WRITING:

- ❖ Write / review poetry for magazine such as *Frankie Magazine*: <http://www.frankie.com.au/>
- ❖ Write/ review for music magazines such as *Time Off*: <http://www.timeoff.com.au/>
- ❖ Start a magazine or "Zine": <http://www.scribd.com/doc/31438884/Youth-Team-Project-Highlights>

OTHER:

Become a **photographer** – art, friends, weddings: <http://www.flyingarts.org.au/photography>

Organise a **theatre group**: <http://www.judithwrightcentre.com/>

Busk in Brisbane: http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/forms/cc2138_busking_licence_application.pdf

Direct / star in / film your own movie: <http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/>

Be on the **radio**; host your own radio show: <http://www.4zzzfm.org.au/>

RELATIONSHIP ROLES

While paid work might be a role that brings us more status than unpaid roles, most people value relationships and belonging over money. The role of son/daughter, brother/sister, friend and neighbour are extremely valued roles and roles that should be encouraged. These roles enhance a person's sense of value and recognition as a member of their family and community.

What roles can you carry out?

Can you assist an elderly neighbor with bringing in their mail, or picking up some milk for example?

Can you and your support worker pick your brother/sister up from the train station if needed?

Can you play host and cook a weekly meal for your family or invite friends over to join you for a meal occasionally?

Can you help someone in their home, or buy a present for someone who is feeling down or is having a birthday?

Valued roles are never only paid roles

CLUB/ASSOCIATION MEMBER

What are you interested in?

Being a member of a club or association is an extremely valuable role. Imagine if clubs did not exist! Clubs provide us with important opportunities to develop ourselves, to contribute our skills and to get to know other like minded people.

Think about the things you are interested in and search the net for information about clubs around your interest.

Rotary bushwalking book club **girl guides** scouts lobby group
movie groups photography club Dog lovers club Star Wars fan club
sport club advocacy group Library membership

Thinking about opportunities to contribute rather than activities to fill in time will lead to a more fulfilling life and increase our valued status.

If you are currently being supported by a service in your home or in the community and spend that time doing activities which might not be relevant or of interest to you, let the service know what your goals and interests are and discuss with them how the support they provide could be better matched to help you achieve your goals.

LETS ~ LOCAL EMPLOYMENT (OR EXCHANGE OR ENERGY) TRADING SYSTEM.

LETS is a means of non-monetary trading of goods and services at the local community level. The trading unit of LETS is the Unit. Units can be traded, saved and used by LETS members to purchase a wide range of goods and services.

First Steps

To become involved with your local LETS, think about some of the things you will be able to offer. There are probably skills and abilities you have that you don't even think about. Have you got a car? There are plenty of people who don't and would love to pay you Units to drive them to the shops and back. Can you cook? People love to buy meals for Units. Are you interested in being part of a working bee? It's a great way to get paid while you make new friends: <http://www.lets-linkup.com>

LETS members include: labourers, cooks, builders, child carers, **CAR OWNERS**, equipment sharing, computer experts, artists, music/singing tutors, gardeners, listeners, mechanics, pet carers and shop minders.

There is a one-off cost of \$20.00 to join a LETS group and you must fill in an application form which can be downloaded at:

<http://qldcommunities.org.au/fileadmin/qld/registrations/community/lewislama/docs/BLappForm.pdf>

Other considerations

LETS groups have regular trading days **across the state** where local traders can meet one another.

The **LETS** system helps you to meet like-minded community members and access a network of people who value trading locally in just about anything.

Links

To find the local LETS in your area visit the following website: <http://www.lets-linkup.com/314-Qld.htm>

There is a range of opportunities for people to trade things through the LETS system which might not usually be thought of as tradable. For example, there is a demand for people who own a car to provide transport or for van owners to assist with transporting furniture.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering can be an excellent way to develop one's skills, social networks and professional contacts.

Options

Many community services and organisations depend on volunteers to help keep them running. They include for example, child care centers, community gardens, help desks at Museums, or not for profit organizations which are sometimes run by volunteers. Think about what interests you and check out your local area for such opportunities. You could then approach some directly or a Volunteer Organisation.

The peak body for volunteering in Queensland is **Volunteering Queensland (VQ)**. You can register with Volunteers Queensland and access their database for a range of volunteering options. The database can be searched online at: <http://www.volqld.org.au/>

You could also consider approaching a family member or friend who has a business where you would be interested in doing volunteer work.

Other Supports

The mobility allowance may be available to the volunteer when the person is volunteering for 32 hours over a 4-week period of volunteer work for a charitable, welfare community organization. Phone Centrelink 13 2717 or visit their website at: <http://www.centrelink.gov.au/>.

Other considerations

- Volunteering can be a great stepping-stone towards realising other goals, gaining skills and confidence, and making new connections.
- Organise a resume of your relevant experience, skills and interests to give to volunteer agencies. The **JobAccess** website has a guide to putting a resume together: http://jobaccess.gov.au/jobseekers/Getting_work/How_to_apply_for_a_job/How_to_build_a_resume/Pages/home.aspx

Links

Australian Job Search has a range of voluntary positions. Visit their website: <http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/>

Australian Volunteer Hotline - The Volunteer hotline is for volunteer organisations and volunteers who may not have convenient access to the Internet. Call 1300 650 925.

Involving Volunteers with a Disability - Online Resource. This is a good reference to give to any prospective volunteer agencies and organisations. Aimed primarily at managers of volunteers and not-for-profit organisations, this guide contains online resources to help organisations involve people with a disability in their volunteering programs.

http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/html/s02_article/article_view.asp?id=2303&nav_cat_id=171&nav_top_id=61

See Appendix page 53 for the contact details of regional Volunteer Organisations.

Stories

VOLUNTEERING: Mark's volunteer work at a Community Radio Station

My son Mark is passionate about radio. He enjoys the banter between the DJ's as much as he enjoys the music. Mark listens to a number of programs on a number of stations religiously. In fact Mark is so keen for radio that he really wanted to work in radio. But because Mark has little communication options and no speech it seemed as though this dream and his ability were no match.

However, it is hard to shake the fact that radio is so important to Mark and so we needed to find a way to make his dream of being involved in radio happen. So I started talking to everyone I know about Mark's dream. I emailed people in our network and I discussed it with our circle members. Eventually I got a response from someone I have never met, but who I sometimes have contact with via an email support group for parents who have sons/daughters with cerebral palsy. This mother suggested that we get in contact with the Cerebral Palsy League as they host a small radio segment on a community radio station.

When I got in contact with them they were keen to meet Mark and to work out if there was a role for him in the studio. This resulted in him going there every Friday – initially the show went for one hour but it has since increased to 1 ½ hours. Mark shares this segment with a few other young people – who all have a part in presenting the program.

Mark presents local news items from the paper which might be of interest to listeners and sometimes he becomes an interviewer and interviews people who come onto the show.

We do this by programming the news items or the questions for the interview onto Mark's dynervox, which is a computerized communication device – a couple of days beforehand. He then practices finding the pages where there is a verbal account of the various news items or interviews.

While being involved with the community radio station has been wonderful for Mark, I still dream that one day he will have a small segment on one of the popular commercial radio stations.

'Paid work isn't the only way to be a contributing member of society. When paid work isn't available, doing volunteer work, pursuing a personal passion, or collaborating on a project with a friend or neighbour offers the chance to deepen relationships and gain the satisfaction that comes from a job well done.'

From 'Money Isn't Everything'



EMPLOYMENT

AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY ENTERPRISES (ADE)

Formerly known as sheltered workshops or business services

Australian Disability Enterprises are commercial businesses that provide supported employment opportunities for some people with disability.

Options

Centrelink or another agency can refer you to an ADE, or you can self-refer.

For information on Australian Disability Enterprises, contact your nearest Centrelink Customer Service Centre by phoning 13 28 50 or visit the ADE website:

<http://www.australiandisabilityenterprises.com.au/>

Supports

Work Based Personal Assistance (WBPA) is available to supported employment services to help meet the recurrent costs associated with the provision of personal care services to workers with very high support needs.

http://jobaccess.gov.au/ServiceProviders/Assisting_employers/Financial_help_and_wages/WBPA/Pages/homs.aspx

Other considerations

- A person must be registered with Centrelink and receiving the Disability Support Pension to be eligible to access an ADE.
- Most ADEs have lengthy waiting lists.
- An ADE may provide an opportunity for you to develop skills that can later be applied to open employment and other opportunities.
- ADE wages are below the minimum average as workers are paid the productivity based wage.
- The majority of ADEs are concentrated in metropolitan areas.

Story

AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY ENTERPRISE: Ben's job

Ben has been working for an Endeavour business service for many years. It is a lot of manual work, and carries a lot of responsibility, as he is required to work around heavy machinery. Ben works only in the mornings as he experiences fatigue, especially in summer when the afternoon heat overwhelms him. Endeavour has been happy to accommodate Ben's needs in this regard.

Ben really enjoys his work and he feels that he is a valued employee. But Ben's big dream is to work in the trucking industry some day. He'd like to help load the big trucks, and it would be a bonus if he could accompany the truck driver on some long hauls, listening to country music on the way. He hopes the work he is currently doing at Endeavour will help him to get the necessary skills to get his dream job.

Why employing people with disability makes good business sense

People with disability bring a range of skills, abilities and qualifications to the workplace. Many businesses already employ workers with disability because it makes good business sense:

- people with disability have fewer accidents at work—the workers' compensation costs for people with disability can be as low as four per cent of the workers' compensation costs of other employees (Graffam, Shinkfield and Polzin 2002)
- people with disability have lower absenteeism and often take less sick leave than other employees
- the costs of hiring people with disability can be significantly lower than hiring other employees—as low as 13 per cent of the cost of other employees (Graffam et al 2002)
- employing people with disability can build staff morale, raise management awareness of workplace practices and conditions, and increase customer and staff loyalty.

OPEN LABOUR MARKET

(employment with or without support)

Working in the retail sector, in an office, or a childcare centre are examples of jobs in the open labour market. There are a number of ways to find a job in the open labour market:

First Steps

It is worthwhile registering with a **Disability Employment Service (DES)** before you approach an employer yourself so that both you and your employer can be eligible for a range of assistance to support you to work in the open labour market (For more information about **DES** refer to page 27)

Personal Networks. A member of your family or a family friend may own or manage a business and be prepared to give you a job or allow you to trial work experience. If they agree to give you a job your DES can discuss with the employer what on the job assistance is available to them (read about **DES** on page 24 below and **Additional Supports** on pages 27-28 for more information about this option).

Approach an employer yourself. If there is a business in your local area where you would like to work, you could approach them yourself. If they agree to give you a job your DES can discuss with the employer what on the job assistance is available to them (see **DES** on page 27 and **Additional Supports** on page 27-28 for more information about this option).

Others ways to search for a job include online at:

- SEEK: <http://www.seek.com.au/>
- Job Services Australia: <http://jobsearch.gov.au/findajob/map/v11.aspx>
- My Career <http://www.mycareer.com.au/>
- Career one www.careerone.com.au
- For **Federal Government** jobs: <http://www.apsjobs.gov.au/>
- For **State Government** jobs: <http://www.jobs.qld.gov.au/>

Or you can check out the job section in your local or weekend newspaper.

Job Services Australia. Job Services Australia is a national network of organisations that assist job seekers to find and sustain employment. Job Services work with job seekers who require limited support: http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/services/job_network.htm

Many people with disability find work in the open labour market with the support of a specialist **Disability Employment Service (DES)**. DES provides support to job seekers to prepare for, find and keep a job. There are two categories of DES.

1. Disability Management Service for job seekers with disability, injury or a health condition who require the assistance of a disability employment service but are not expected to need long-term support in the workplace.

2. Employment Support Service for job seekers with permanent disability and with an assessed need for more long-term, regular support in the workplace.

First steps to access a Disability Employment Service (DES)

You do not need to be receiving a Centrelink benefit to be eligible for assistance from a DES. On the 1st of July 2011 a new and streamlined assessment process was introduced to help identify the most appropriate DES and level of support for jobseekers. This replaced the previous system, known as the Job Capacity Assessment (JCA).

All assessments are now conducted through Centrelink. Phone 13 28 50 or visit your nearest Centrelink Customer Service Centre to arrange an appointment.

After the assessment you will be referred to a DES but you still have the right to select the DES you work with. For a list of providers, visit the JobSearch website at:

<http://jobsearch.gov.au/provider/ProviderLocation.aspx?ProviderType=DES&>

Additional supports available to job seekers and employers

The Supported Wage System allows employers to pay a pro-rata wage by matching a person's productivity with a fair wage. For example, someone who is assessed to work at 50% capacity gets 50% of full wages. A job seeker may be required to undertake a Supported Wage Assessment to determine their productivity. For more information contact the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Supported Wage Management Unit on **1800 065 123** or visit the JobAccess website: http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/Services/A-Z list/pages/Supported_Wage_System.aspx

Wage subsidies can be available to eligible employers for the first 3 months of employing a person with disability to redress any additional demands in establishing an employee with disability into the workplace. For more information call the JobAccess Advisers on **1800 464 800** or contact your local **DES**:

http://jobaccess.gov.au/Employers/Financial_help_and_wages/Help_with_wages/Wage_subsidies/Pages/home.aspx

The Mobility Allowance is a non-means tested allowance for people with disability who are undertaking an approved activity such as employment, voluntary work, independent living or life skills training, job search or vocational training. Contact Centrelink on **13 27 17** or visit: <http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/payments/mobility.htm>

Employment Assistance Fund. Assistance can be provided to eligible employers and individuals through the Employment Assistance Fund to reimburse the cost of work related modifications and services including, but not limited to:

- **Workplace Modification Assessments.** Free workplace assessments are available to identify required modifications.
- **Workplace Modifications.** Some financial assistance is available for workplace and vehicle modification and adaptive equipment, including communication devices.
- The provision of Auslan interpreting services for interviews and in the workplace.
- **Specialist Services** for employees with specific learning disorders and mental health conditions, disability awareness training, deafness awareness training and mental health first-aid training.

For more information about the Employment Assistance Fund contact 1800 464 800 or visit the JobAccess website:

http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/Services/A-Z_list/pages/EmploymentAssistanceFund.aspx

Work Based Personal Assistance (WBPA) is available to help meet the recurrent costs associated with the provision of personal care services to workers with very high support needs. Discuss with your DES about this option or visit the JobAccess website for more information:

http://jobaccess.gov.au/ServiceProviders/Assisting_employers/Financial_help_and_wages/WBPA/Pages/homs.aspx

Jobs in Jeopardy assists employees who have found a job independent of a Disability Employment Service and whose job may be at risk due to their disability. You can contact a DES directly and advise that you need to access Job in Jeopardy program. To find a DES visit:

<http://jobsearch.gov.au/provider/ProviderLocation.aspx?ProviderType=DES&>

Other considerations

- A job seeker must be prepared to undertake at least 8 hours of work per week to qualify for the support of a Disability Employment Service.
- Not all Disability Employment Services (DES) are 'created equally' as Jessica's story demonstrates. Therefore, it is recommended that you prepare to interview potential DES to ascertain if they are the right service for you (refer to the article, *Not all Services are Created Equally*, on page 32 for more information about this).
- For job seekers in rural and remote areas, there may be only one DES to choose from. If this is the case, you may need to be very clear about what your work related goals are and the support you will need to be successfully placed in a job.

Disability support pension and employment

The rules governing employment for people receiving a Disability Support Pension (DSP) have changed over the years. The latest changes were announced in the 2011/12 Federal budget.

The following conditions will apply from 1 July 2012:

- ⤴ People who receive the DSP are eligible for Accelerated Restoration of payment: if your work makes you ineligible for the DSP, because you work too many hours or by earning too much money, your payment will be suspended for 2 years instead of cancelled. If you find during that time that you cannot sustain your job and need to go back to the DSP, it will be reinstated more quickly than if you had to apply from scratch again.
- ⤴ If you are assessed as not being able to work for at least 8 hours per week, you are under no obligation to work, study or find volunteer work.
- ⤴ If you are assessed as being able to work more than 8 hours per week, you will be required to attend regular Centrelink meetings to develop a participation plan. This plan may include study, volunteer work or part-time work. This will not apply if you already work in an Australian Disability Enterprise or if you are employed under the Supported Wage Scheme.
- ⤴ Subject to an income test, DSP recipients will now be able to work up to 30 hours per week at minimum wage and still remain eligible for a part pension for up to two years.

Currently, if an employee is paid on the **supported wage system** their earnings are unlikely to have any impact on their Centrelink benefits. For information on income and asset tests contact Centrelink on 132717, TTY users 1800 810 586. Or visit Centrelink's website:

http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/payments/pay_iat.htm

Links

Unlike Disability Employment Services, **Job Services Australia** does not offer ongoing employment support but they do have a range of useful information for job seekers and employees: http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/services/job_network.htm

To find out more about **Disability Employment Services** go to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (**DEEWR**) website: <http://deewr.gov.au/disability-employment-services>

JobAccess Australia has the most up to date information about what options and supports are available to job seekers with disability. Contact them on 1800 464 800 or visit their website: <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>

All **DES** are contracted by the **Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations**. If you experience any difficulties with your Disability Employment Service and the issue is unable to be resolved by you and management, you can contact the **DEEWR** Job Services complaint line on **1800 880 052**

Stories

The Job Access website has a number of case studies and stories that demonstrate how people with disabilities have been able to work successfully in the open employment market: <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>

OPEN EMPLOYMENT

David's story: Never Give Up

David and his family always had the expectation that he would work one day. Whether this was because of a strong family work ethic or an inherent desire for David to have the same opportunities as his brother and sister, his mother is not sure. It was an assumption and they have always worked towards this goal. This included ensuring David had opportunities to develop his skills and become job ready by attending TAFE courses, learning to read and by volunteering his time at some organisations.

David left school 23 years ago and during this time he has tried a number of jobs: Some have been in sheltered workshops and some in the open employment market. David has resigned from a job; he has been hired, fired, and laid off. He has been reinstated by an employer when demand for their product increased. Basically David has had a rather typical employment history.

David has been at his current job for about 8 years now. He is on the supported wage system whereby after he was assessed to be working at 50 % capacity it was agreed that he would be paid at 50% of the full wage. David receives support for approximately 1 hour each fortnight by a Disability Employment Service (DES) who meets with David and his supervisor to see how things are going. It is the role of DES' to not only help people to find a job but also to help people to keep it.

David's father, Paul found David his current job at a sports club that the family frequent regularly. Paul saw an opportunity for David to work there as it combined a lot of his interests, and his love of being in the outdoors. David is also a genuinely helpful person; he finds value in being given responsibility and likes caring for others. These interests, traits and skills translated well into his current job as a general assistant to a team of workers at the club including his main role as the assistant grounds man.

Although David's family found him the job, because David was registered with a DES, both he and the employer were still entitled to the supports available to job seekers with disability, including ongoing on the job support of the DES.

David feels he has found a job for life and he can be pretty certain about this as he has had some less than glamorous jobs in his life. At one point he had a job washing cars and after 2 years in this job he decided to resign. When his mother asked him why he had resigned, David replied 'because I do not want to still be washing cars when I'm 40'!

David's mother, Pam, said at times it has been difficult but she advises 'never give up'. David did not find his ideal job until he was 31 and if all continues to go well; he probably will have the job for life.

Wage subsidies can be available to eligible employers for the first three months of employing a person with disability to redress any additional demands in establishing an employee with disability into the workplace.

Kate's Story: 10 Years and counting

Kate has been employed at Coles for almost 10 years, which means she is about to take long service leave, much to the envy of many of her family and friends. Notching up 10 years is quite incredible for a young woman under the age of 30!

Initially Kate was supported by a Disability Employment Service to learn her job and over time, this support was pared back. Kate now works independently and as her productivity is assessed annually, her wages change accordingly. Thankfully for Kate this has meant that she is earning more as her productivity increases.

Soon after she started at Coles, Kate was asked to travel to Canberra to accept the Prime Minister's Access Award on behalf of Coles for being such a positive employer. The award was presented by the then Prime Minister, John Howard!

I asked Kate what the vision for her job was and she said that she would like to increase her hours and her responsibilities; Currently Kate works for 4 hours, 5 days a week but she would like the job to become full time. Some of her responsibilities include tidying up the shelves to make them more presentable, restocking items, and returning out of place items to their correct place. She sometimes shows customers where an item is if they ask for her assistance. While Kate really enjoys these responsibilities she hopes that one day she can work on the checkout.

Coles has a policy of employing people with disabilities. Darren, the manager of the store where Kate works, said he can think of nothing negative with employing people with disabilities. In fact, Darren believes that people with disabilities bring countless positives like; being reliable, approachable, dependable, friendly and helpful to name a few. Darren said customers often provide positive feedback about the assistance they receive from the employees and enjoy seeing people with disabilities working in the 'real world'.

Apart from the everyday advantages, there are financial incentives for employers to employ people with disability. These include the support wage scheme for employees who due to their particular disability may be unable to work at full capacity, the wage subsidy scheme and on- the job support from a Disability Employment Service who provide training and support to the person to maintain their job.

More and more of the bigger organizations are employing people with disabilities, including Bunnings and Target. In the case of Bunning's there is no overarching policy per se, but rather a case by case, store by store matter. Have a look in your local area to see what big businesses are there that might be potential places of employment.

Jessica's Story: Not all services are created equally.

Jessica had been looking for work for almost 2 years before she found a job, which for reasons that will be explained below, only lasted a few days.

Initially, Jessica was assessed by Centerlink about her work capacity and skills and was then referred to a local Disability Employment Service (DES). The DES seemed promising initially and talked with Jessica about the type of job she was interested in pursuing. However, the support seemed to miss the mark when it came to putting it into practice. At the job interviews Jessica attended the DES consultant spoke on her behalf rather than allowing her to represent herself. They did not factor in Jessica's need to rely on public transport to get to work and did not assist her to look locally for jobs which were relevant to her interests, skills and her goals.

Over the course of a year, Jessica's family arranged meeting after meeting with the service to discuss their concerns, hoping for better and more individualized support for her. Support workers changed, reassurances were delivered but in the end the service did not appropriately support her to find a job. She grew frustrated and disheartened and eventually withdrew from the service.

Jessica then approached another DES and had to start the whole process again, which they said would take approximately six to eight weeks. Six months later, still nothing was happening and she became disheartened once again. That is when her mother arranged for a meeting with the service. She brought her advocates with her, despite the service insisting that they do not include parents or carers in discussion about their clients. The meeting resulted in Jessica getting a new consultant, and her mother then worked closely with that consultant and soon after she finally got a job.

Within two days of starting the job however, the DES began to assess Jessica's productivity. Jessica was unaware that she was being assessed and her mother wondered why someone so new to the job would be assessed so soon after starting. Jessica deserved to be treated like all new workers, that is, to receive on the job training and to be assessed for productivity after the training period ends. To make matters worse the DES tried to coerce the family into signing a contract that would mean Jessica would be paid below the award wage. This was despite the fact that she could perform her duties competently, as she did a couple of years earlier when she had been in a similar job which paid her the award rate. Jessica's mother challenged this practice and what ensued was very disappointing for the family. The family withdrew from the DES and subsequently, Jessica lost her job, as the employer had aligned themselves with the DES rather than with their employee.

Currently, Jessica is unemployed, and is being assisted by another DES who once again, has made promises they cannot deliver. They have had a high level of staff turnover which only serves to frustrate the whole process for Jessica and her family. Consequently, her mother feels as though nothing will happen for Jessica unless she does everything herself.

The aim of this message is not to deter individuals from accessing a DES but rather to remind families of what they already know, which is, that not all services are created equally. Unfortunately, families may need to shop around for a quality DES, and there are many, and to be proactive in dealing with services, employers and anyone else who will play a role in their family member's pursuit of a job.

A message about the services which are established to support people into the Open Labour Market.

As many families know, not all services are created equally. For this reason it is imperative that before families approach a Disability Employment Service they have a clear vision for their family member which includes a vision for work which is likely to reflect their family member's skills, interests and where they live. These are all important factors that will bear on employment opportunities and the likelihood of success.

As many families know, they cannot rely on services to know the best possible path for their family member, indeed, how can they? Services have a limited place in their family member's life. While they may interview your family member to ascertain the kind of work they would like to do, and carry out a job capacity assessment, this constitutes a mere few hours in the life of your family member; your knowledge constitutes a lifetime. Even services that have a strong commitment to families and are dedicated to providing the best possible service, may have limited resources to do so; staff turnovers are a reality for many services, and some DES for instance, may feel pressure just to find a person a job regardless of where it is located or whether it actually meets the person's job goals.

Some families have had more success with approaching people from their own networks, or a local business themselves to see what opportunities exist. As David's story recounts, it was actually his father Paul who approached the club which became David's employer and the DES has provided the ongoing support to help him maintain his job.

Some DES' have better reputations than others, and have successfully assisted individuals to find and maintain work. Other families may have useful information to help you navigate that particular maze. But ultimately, all services are limited, and will only ever be able to complement, at best, what families set out to achieve for their family member.

It is recommended that families prepare a series of filter questions to take to the initial interview with a DES. This will help you to learn about their value base and work practices so that you are able to make the best choice of what is available to you. You may benefit from interviewing more than one service if you have that option in your area.

Some of the questions you might like to ask the DES could be:

- How do you provide support to the job seeker?
- Will the job seeker be able to work with the same person to prepare for and maintain work?
- What ongoing support will you offer the job seeker?
- Does the job seeker have a choice in what kind of work they will pursue?
- Do you encourage job seekers to represent themselves?
- How long does it take on average for your service to find an appropriate job for the job seeker?
- What type of jobs has your service successfully placed job seekers in?
- How long on average do the employees you support stay in the job?

Families do not have to stay with a Disability Employment Service. If you are unhappy speak with them, if this does not result in positive changes then consider changing to another service.

Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you're needed by someone." -- Martina Navratilova

“Think about the best use of your funding package- how can you apply it to your son or daughter to develop a good life and future?”

Pg.10 Launch into Life booklet, QPPD

SELF EMPLOYMENT OR BE YOUR OWN BOSS

Consider the option of running your own business from home or working for yourself. Both options can be flexible as you can work the hours of your choice and avoid the hassle of travel arrangements for example.

1. Develop a product to sell (jewellery, crafts for example)
2. Provide a service (to an office, a small businesses or an organisation in your local area or set up a delivery service or lawn mowing service for example)
3. Sell new or second hand items online, such as Ebay, Gumtree or Etsy (links are below)

First Steps

- Depending on the aims of your business you might benefit from doing some market research to see if there is demand for your product or service and good ways to sell it.
- Develop a business plan and work out what formal/informal supports are available to you to make it happen.
- Consider if a family member or friend would be interested in developing a product or service with you.

Supports

The New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) is an Australian Government initiative that helps eligible unemployed people, aged 18 and over, to start and run their own viable small business. Through the Scheme, you will get training, support and help to become self-supporting and independent in the first year of your business. Eligibility for this scheme is very strict.

If you receive the Disability Support Pension you can still participate in the NEIS however, you must provide a medical certificate indicating that you are able to work full time (minimum 20 hours per week) in the business.

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/JSA/EmploymentServices/Pages/NEIS.aspx>

For the person who is self employed:

The Employment Assistance Fund. Assistance can be provided to eligible individuals through the Employment Assistance Fund to reimburse the cost of work related modifications and services including, but not limited to:

- **Workplace Modification Assessments.** Free workplace assessments are available to identify required modifications.
- **Workplace Modifications.** Some financial assistance is available for workplace and vehicle modification and adaptive equipment, including communication devices.

For more information about the Employment Assistance Fund contact 1800 464 800 or visit the JobAccess website at:

http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/Services/A-Z_list/pages/EmploymentAssistanceFund.aspx.

Some **TAFE** Institutes have small business courses, Certificate 3 or Diploma in business. Contact a campus near you for more information.

Other considerations

- Garage sales and second hand shops are good ways to get out-and-about in your community and to source bargains to sell on Ebay or Oztion for a small profit.

Links

<http://www.business.gov.au/> provides essential information about planning, starting and running your own business. It includes 'how to' guides and templates for developing your business plan and more.

Ebay is an online auction site where people sell new and second hand goods. To learn more about how to sell on Ebay visit <http://pages.ebay.com.au/help/sell/questions/list-item.html>

To list free classified ads across Australia visit www.gumtree.com.au

ETSY is an online site where you can sell quality handmade items: <http://www.etsy.com/>

Your **local market** is a good place to sell wares.

Stories

- Read about Jackson West's initiative of starting up a successful city based courier service called 'Jackmail' <http://www.jacksonwest.org/jackmail>
- Listen to this inspiring story of a young Perth man, Cameron, and his family and how they developed a small service soon after he left school. You can listen to the audio story 'Cam Can' on Radio National's *360* program. <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/360/stories/2009/2695775.htm>

SELF-EMPLOYMENT - COMMISSION BASED

Sales work for an established commission based service may be another option worth considering for those who would prefer the option of self-employment.

Options

Telemarketing or fundraising for a charity, selling Avon or Tupperware, Telemarketing, or selling the Big Issue magazine are just a few examples of commission based self employment options.

Supports

Employment Assistance Fund. Assistance can be provided to eligible individuals through the Employment Assistance Fund to reimburse the cost of work related modifications and services including, but not limited to:

- **Workplace Modification Assessments.** Free workplace assessments are available to identify required modifications.
- **Workplace Modifications.** Some financial assistance is available for workplace and vehicle modification and adaptive equipment, including communication devices.

For more information about the Employment Assistance Fund contact **1800 464 800** or visit the JobAccess website at:

http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/Services/A-Z_list/pages/EmploymentAssistanceFund.aspx

Other considerations

- Be careful of the many advertisements offering work from home opportunities claiming huge salaries. Check out the credibility of these businesses before committing to them. Remember the adage *'if it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is'*.
- Consider teaming up with a family member or friend to become a Tupperware or Avon representative.
- Selling in one's local area is another way to get to know people in your neighbourhood.

Links

Commission Based jobs are advertised on a number of websites, which include **SEEK**: <http://www.seek.com.au/> and **MyCareer**: <http://www.mycareer.com.au/>
Local newspapers sometimes advertise work from home and commission based opportunities (again be sure to check for the credibility of such jobs).

As an **Avon** representative, you can work as little or as much as you choose, when you want, so you have complete flexibility. To learn more about becoming an Avon representative visit the Avon website: http://www.avon.com.au/PRSuite/your_dream_opportunity.page

To learn more about **Tupperware** free call **1800 805 396** or visit their website: <http://www.tupperware.com.au/wps/wcm/connect/aus/website/Opportunity/The+Perks+of+Party+ing/Free+Time/>

Some people find it hard to access employment for various reasons, but selling **The Big Issue** is an option where vendors can choose their own hours, days and periods of work. As a vendor of The Big Issue magazine, you buy magazines for \$2.50 each and sell them for \$5.00 each. The Big Issue has been described as one of the most successful street newspapers worldwide, selling over 300,000 copies a week and listed as the third-favourite newspaper of young British people (age 15 to 24) in 2001. Currently the Big Issue is sold in Brisbane, but will soon be sold in Ipswich and Toowoomba. Phone: **(07) 3036 4420** or visit the website at: <http://www.thebigissue.org.au/>

Work is something that many people with disability do undertake and depending on the individual, they have relied on either formal or informal support or a combination of both to achieve their work goals.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES/ COOPERATIVES

Social enterprises are generally businesses established to increase the participation of people who might otherwise be marginalized from civic, economic and social opportunities. A social enterprise might provide a person with an option to transition to the open labour market or be an alternative to the open labour market.

First Steps

Social enterprises typically involve a small group of like-minded people/families who develop an initiative, such as a service that will provide employment opportunities for their family member. Some families have been supported through a service to set up a cooperative. Others rely solely on themselves and volunteers to get the enterprise established.

As it is with all business enterprises, social enterprises need to develop a business plan and acquire resources to start up. Start up grants might be available through gaming funds or from one's local government.

Other considerations

- Start with own networks and create small ventures based on skills and interests and their marketability.
- Many cooperatives rely on volunteers, such as families and their allies to be members of a board and to oversee the everyday running of the venture.
- This option may not appeal to many as it does require a lot of energy to get set up but may provide individuals with a satisfying and flexible job

Links

The Australian Government has developed two initiatives to support social enterprises. These are the **Professional Partnership Project** - which matches corporate business assistance to social enterprises that aim to help disadvantaged Australians find training and jobs and the **Social Enterprise Development and Investment Fund** which is a specialised investment fund providing financial products and encouraging capacity building for social enterprises in Australia. For more information about these developments visit the Social Inclusion website at:

<http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/>

Social Traders:

<http://www.socialtraders.com.au/sites/www.socialtraders.com.au/files/Social%20Firms%20Info%20Brief.pdf>

Cooperatives Australia: <http://www.australia.coop/ca/>

Australian Cooperatives: <http://www.coopdevelopment.org.au/cselinks.html>

Community Living Project also has a number of publications about social enterprises at the cost of postage only. They can be ordered on line at: <http://www.communityliving.org.au/> or by phoning 3266 5633

Stories

Community Living Association Incorporated is affiliated with **Nundah Community Enterprises Co-operative (NCEC Pty Ltd)** - Established by fifteen people with intellectual disabilities, **NCEC** pioneered the concept and practice of 'social tendering' by negotiating with Brisbane City Council in 2000 for the maintenance contract on three council parks.

The Big Issue Magazine: <http://www.thebigissue.org.au/> and Jamie Oliver's Restaurant, "Fifteen" (now known as "The Kitchen Cat" are two 'famous' examples of social enterprises.

Village Life is a new social enterprise in Brisbane at Northey Street City Farm, Newmarket. It offers a space for artisans, craftspeople, healers and visual and performing artists to sell their wares and spruik their services. Village Life is open every Sunday from 8 am to 12 noon in conjunction with the Northey Street City Farm Organic Farmers' Markets. To find out more, phone the City Farm office on (07) 3857 8775 or visit the website at: <http://www.nscf.org.au/?p=867>

Social Firms Australia is a Victorian site but provides further information and downloads about social firms: <http://www.socialfirms.org.au/>

Social Enterprises in Australia: A Preliminary Snap Shot 2010, is a detailed report outlining the state of social enterprises in Australia currently. It can be found at:

<http://www.socialtraders.com.au/sites/www.socialtraders.com.au/files/FASES%20summary%20report%20June%202010.pdf>



**FURTHER
EDUCATION /
TRAINING**

AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIP ACCESS PROGRAM

Australian Apprenticeships are available to anyone of working age with or without a secondary school certificate or other qualification. You can be a school-leaver, re-entering the workforce or an adult worker simply wishing to change careers. Apprenticeships and traineeships can be taken on a part time or full time basis.

An **Australian school based apprenticeship and traineeship** is a mix of school studies, training and work together. Young people can get a senior secondary certificate and credits towards a vocational qualification. It gives them a head start on their career path and an important link to the world of work.

First Step

If you are in grade 11-12 and want to consider an **Australian school based apprenticeship or traineeship** you can talk with your teacher, school VET coordinator or guidance officer. For more information, you can also visit the Australian Apprenticeship website:

<http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/> +

If you have left school and are of any working age you will need to contact the Australian **Apprenticeship** referral line on 13 38 73 for details of your local Australian Apprenticeships Centre or for more information visit: <http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/>

Support

Assistance is available to support Australian apprentices with disability, including **Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support** which is paid to employers. This support may also include tutorial, interpreter and mentor services for apprentices. For more information, call the Australian Apprenticeships referral line on 13 38 73 or visit the Australian Apprenticeships website at: <http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au>

Assistance may also be available through the **Workplace Modifications Scheme**, which pays the cost of modifying workplaces or purchasing specialist equipment. Call 1800464800 or visit: <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>

The Australian Apprenticeships Access Program provides job seekers who experience barriers to skilled employment, with pre-vocational training, support and assistance to obtain and maintain an Australian Apprenticeship: <http://deewr.gov.au/>

Links

Call the **Australian Apprenticeships** referral line on 13 38 73 or visit the Australian Apprenticeships website at: <http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/> for more information.

For information about Government support for **Australian Apprentices with Disability** check out the fact sheet at:

http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/FAQ/Documents/FactSheet_SFAAWD.pdf

COMMUNITY COURSES

Community courses are an excellent way to develop ourselves further without the big commitment of formal study and exams. They can also be a stepping stone towards a particular goal or a great opportunity to meet like minded people. You can find information about courses on the web, in local newspapers, or on notice boards at your local shopping centre.

cooking

YOGA

first aid

Auslan

languages

dance

painting

Computer

basic mechanics

ART

Drama

photography

music

Most universities have a **Disability Support Officer** who coordinates the supports available to students with disability to enable a fair and accessible education.

UNIVERSITY AND REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS

Under the Australian Government's *Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992* all Universities and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) must ensure equal access to education for people with a disability.

First Steps

If you are considering study, you can speak to current or former students, about how they began the process of exploring further education.

If you are interested in attending university, visit the **Going to Uni – Where should I study** website: <http://www.goingtouni.gov.au/>

Careers counselors are usually based in secondary schools and offer students with further education information and advice when requested.

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are formally approved by Government to teach, assess and issue Vocational Education Training (VET) qualifications that are recognised all over Australia.

There are two types of RTOs:

TAFE Institutes deliver a range of short and long courses that result in a number of different qualifications. TAFE courses are designed to provide a range of training opportunities to assist people develop the skills and knowledge they will require to transition into further education or employment. Check with your regional Institute to find out about courses, enrolment and what supports are available to you.

Private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are training providers approved by Government to teach, assess and issue Vocational Education Training (VET) qualifications. RTOs offer a wide range of accredited and non-accredited VET courses ranging from Certificate I through to Diploma and higher-level qualifications. Check with your regional Organisation to find out about courses, enrolment and what supports are available to you.

Support

Most universities have a **Disability Support Officer** who coordinates available support to students with disability to enable a fair and accessible education. Support can, for instance, include the provision of assistive technology, mentoring and tutorial support, quiet spaces for students who can experience sensory overload, and field study assistance. The **Disability Support Officer** is also able to make students aware of information and resources that may assist them to undertake their studies. They liaise with other teaching and support staff to ensure there is co-ordination of services and shared understanding of the student's requirements. The type and level of support available to students with disabilities varies from campus to campus so you will need to check with the campus you intend to enroll in.

TAFE Institutes also have a **Disability Service Officer**. Check with your regional Institute to find out about courses, enrolment and what supports are available to you.

Post School Services, Transitional Support, may be available to school leavers for up to three years (but cannot replace an existing service) to a person who requires, for example: personal care support

while attending a university course; travel training to get to University or TAFE; support to learn to use a computer or to enhance communication skills while studying (refer to the Disability Services post school services fact sheet). For more information phone Disability Services on Free call: 1800 177 120 or TTY: 1800 010 222 or visit the website:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/student-services/learning/disability/parentguide/phases-of-learning/post-school-funding.html>

Other considerations

There may be some **Scholarships** available to students with disabilities undertaking further education. Check with the institution where you intend to enroll.

External study courses or **correspondence courses** are becoming more popular. For information about external study visit the **Open Universities** website: <http://www.open.edu.au/>

Anyone can attend university lectures for free, however, to attend tutorials you must enroll in the course and pay a lower level fee for un-assessed study or full fee for assessed study.

It is highly recommended that you contact a **Disability Support Officer** before beginning your study, preferably in the year before your intended enrolment. This will help you with your decision about whether a particular campus and course is the right one for you and it will enable the education provider to organise the services you need in plenty of time.

You can attend a university or RTO **open day** or **careers evening** to assess the suitability of the campus and courses. Check the relevant institution website for details about when they are held.

Check your local community centres and state schools to see if they offer **adult short courses**.

Links

The Australian Disability Clearing House on Education and Training (ACPET) is a great online resource for post-secondary education students. Their website is full of valuable information and resources: <http://www.adcet.edu.au>

The Australasian Network of Students with Disabilities (ANSWD) is a student organisation, advocating, promoting, lobbying and campaigning on disability issues. To join ANSWD, you need to join the discussion group: <http://www.answd.org/>

Creating Accessible Teaching and Support (CATS) is a web based information source that provides comprehensive information about inclusive teaching, learning and assessment strategies, accommodation and support services for people with disabilities in post secondary education and training: <http://www.adcet.edu.au/cats/>

Towards Success in Tertiary Study: This series of documents from The University of Melbourne is a useful resource to assist students with disabilities. The documents include study techniques and tips related to specific disabilities, which include-

- **Asperger's Syndrome**
 - **Blind and Low Vision**
 - **Acquired Brain Injury**
 - **Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
 - **Learning Disability**
-

- **Chronic Ongoing Medical Conditions**
- **Mental Health Conditions**

You can find these documents at:

<http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/studentequity/Publications/disability.html>

Stories

- **Grasp the Nettle** is a series of audio stories about students with learning difficulties produced by the Disability Liaison Unit at RMIT University:
<http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=mqgc561r5tgx1;STATUS=A?QRY=nettle&STYPE=ENTIRE#top>

‘Students can maximize their chances of success by developing a range of study strategies and by using the various services available’

Student Equity Service, the University of Melbourne

Study is something that we can do towards getting the job we want. For some people, study is a way of broadening knowledge and learning more about the world, rather than obtaining a degree or certificate for a vocational purpose.

Many in our society believe that it is only people with less significant disabilities who can pursue work, study, and other **valued roles**. Yet all people have something to learn and contribute and it is about working out what each person **CAN** do and what each person **WANTS** to do.

The question is not whether the person can make a contribution, but what contribution can the person make? The families we interviewed for the stories in this document often said that they started with thinking about who their family member is and what they wanted to do. Their interests, gifts and strengths and what resources they have were all important considerations.

Work is an important activity but not the only way people with disabilities can contribute to the communities in which they live. Joining a group, working as a volunteer and being a good friend, son, daughter, or neighbour are all extremely valuable, contributory roles.



**POST SCHOOL
Disability
Services**

POST SCHOOL SERVICES

A number of non-government agencies offer post school services which provide opportunities for young people to pursue leisure and learning, recreation activities and community access.

There are three types of support models:

1. **Individualised support** is available to eligible people with high and complex support needs or who do not live near a post school service
2. **Group support** is available for eligible people who would enjoy and are able to be supported in a group setting
3. **Transitional**, time-limited support is available to complement the informal supports that people have and can be used to meet the person's goals for further education, training or work related activities.

First Steps

From 2011 Post School Services will transition to a new Disability Services system: Growing Stronger. Under this new system young people will be required to go through a regional assessment and prioritization process.

To apply for Post School Services the young person, family or education provider need to contact their local Disability and Community Care Services office on 1800 177 120, TTY: 1800 010 222 or visit the website at:

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/contact-us/disability-services-regional-offices>

Supports

The Department of Transport, **Taxi Subsidy Scheme**, provides half price taxi fares for people with chronic disabilities. Eligibility for the subsidy is quite strict so you will need to check if you meet the criteria:

[http://www.support.transport.qld.gov.au/qt/formsdat.nsf/c6c94a7bb4957a0a4a256f710019a6ff/f814382fcebf1e14a2566d000029285/\\$FILE/F2330_ES.pdf](http://www.support.transport.qld.gov.au/qt/formsdat.nsf/c6c94a7bb4957a0a4a256f710019a6ff/f814382fcebf1e14a2566d000029285/$FILE/F2330_ES.pdf)

Other considerations

- Many Post School Services have lengthy waiting lists for block funded places.
- Attending a Post School Service can be a stepping stone to open employment or to other options of interest if there is opportunity for genuine skill development.

Links

To find the number of your local **Disability and Community Care Services**, Free call: 1800 177 120, TTY: 1800 010 222 or visit the website

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/contact-us/disability-services-regional-offices>

Think of the **bigger** picture.....

Can learning a new skill or participating in a relevant club get you closer to your bigger goal?

LINKS TO RELATED BOOKLETS

This document has been written to complement other planning information about employment, study and training.

Other useful resources include:

Queensland Parents for People with Disability (QPPD) ***Launch into Life*** booklet. This booklet is particularly helpful for families who have school aged children as it has a timeline for planning while your son/daughter is still in high school. This document and other articles of interest can be found on QPPD's Transition website at: <http://www.qppd.org/>. Or contact QPPD on 33683055 or 1800805184.

QCMHR's ***Building a Career of Your Choice***. This is a great resource for job seekers with serious **mental health issues** and gives practical advice and information about how to prepare for and keep a job. You can find a copy at: <http://www.qcmhr.uq.edu.au/contact.htm>

Making the Transition to Further Study: a booklet designed to ease the transition into further study for high school students with disability: <http://www.ndcoceagroup.com.au/uploads/NDCO-Files/TransitionResources/NDCO%20Transition%20to%20Further%20Study%20Workbook%20-%20April10.pdf>

LINKS TO WEBSITES

Government

Centrelink.

For information on benefits and income and asset tests contact Centrelink on 132717, TTY users 1800 810 586 or visit Centrelink's website:

http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/payments/pay_iat.htm

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

All Disability Employment Services are contracted to the DEEWR. You can contact them on 1300 363 079. Text Telephone for the hearing impaired (TTY): Free CALL TM 1800 554 609 or visit their website: <http://www.deewr.gov.au/>

Department of Communities, Disability and Community Care Services.

Free call: 1800177120, TTY: 1800 010 222 or visit their website:

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/>

JobAccess.

The JobAccess website is an informative resource for students, employees and employers relating to work: <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/>

Business Information

This government website has useful information and advice for those thinking of starting a small business: <http://www.business.gov.au/>

Job websites

- SEEK: <http://www.seek.com.au/>
- Job Services Australia: <http://jobsearch.gov.au/findajob/maplvl1.aspx>
- My Career <http://www.mycareer.com.au/>
- Career one <http://www.careerone.com.au/>
- For **Federal Government** jobs: <http://www.apsjobs.gov.au/>
- For **State Government** jobs: <http://www.jobs.qld.gov.au/>

Volunteer Agencies

Australian Volunteer Hotline Phone: 1300 650 925.

Far North Queensland Volunteers Inc Phone: (07) 4041 7400 <http://www.fnqvolunteers.org/>

Volunteering Gold Coast: Phone (07) 5526 2811 <http://www.volunteeringgc.com.au/contact-us.html>

Volunteering North Queensland Phone: 4725 5990 <http://www.volunteeringnthqld.org.au/>

Volunteers Queensland Phone: (07) 3002 7600 <http://www.volqld.org.au/>

Volunteering Sunshine Coast Phone: (07) 5443 8256 <http://volunteeringsunshinecoast.org.au/>

Wide Bay Volunteers Phone: (07) 4151 6644 or Regional 1300 301 018
<http://www.widebayvolunteers.org>