



All in a Life's Design

Planning Independent Living

A resource handbook for parents with a young adult with a disability moving out of home



making a difference

Acknowledgements

Thanks go to all the young men, women and families who have shared their lives to make this book as personal as it is.

Your input has been invaluable and demonstrates how varied the experience of moving out of home can be. It is hoped that it will provide inspiration and support to others thinking about creating an independent life.

Thanks also to those people within the community and Disability Services Commission who have assisted in putting this resource together.

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/. Introduction

Transition planning

- Create a vision of the future with your son or daughter.
 - Talk about the vision with your son or daughter, other family members and the high school.
 - Access person-centred planning tools such as PLAN, PATH, MAP and Circle of Friends.
 - Contact your Local Area Coordinator for planning tools and to discuss options.
 - Build self esteem, confidence and independence as a lifelong goal.
 - Maintain good communication with your son or daughter.
- 

Moving out of home is, for most of us, one of the biggest experiences of our lives, filled with excitement and some nervousness. For parents, it is often a mixture of delight at seeing a child develop into a young man or woman and anxiety about how it will all turn out. There are hurdles along the way but we generally overcome them.

This booklet has been developed in response to parents requesting help with:

- finding resources within the community;
- knowing which questions to ask; and
- planning for their child moving out of home.

What can I find in this booklet?

This booklet aims to provide a practical guide for parents who are exploring the possibility of their son or daughter moving out of home. It includes information on community resources, youth income support funding, accommodation options, safeguarding and independent living skills. Community contacts and websites are listed in the appendix.

Also covered are some questions parents might ask when they are thinking about their child leaving home.

There is also information about youth support payments and financial safeguards available once a young person leaves home. Accommodation options are discussed, as are the types of independent living skills a person may need in order to live in the community. Education, training and health issues are also addressed.

Safeguards for young people leaving home can help with the success of the move by providing strategies to manage new responsibilities and demands. Safeguards are discussed and examples provided. Also included are stories about the experiences of a number of young people and their families.

What can I expect?

A move out of home may not always be easy or smooth. This is often about the nature of moving to independence rather than as a consequence of disability.

For a young person who may find the move to independence challenging, extra time spent exploring the options and preparing may improve the outcome. This time will typically involve periods where it feels like things are 'cruising', but there may be an 'occasional crash landing'. There may also be several attempts before things work out. This is a very normal experience in the process of transition from home to independent living.

Where do I begin?

Planning can start at any point in a child's life and is usually an ongoing process. For parents with a child who has a disability, some of the concerns about independent living may be heightened and, depending on individual circumstances, the options more limited.

Many of the issues for a person with a disability will be the same as for any other person leaving home but the strategies may be different. For example:

- Access to transport is a given for all of us but, if you are reliant on public transport and can't walk far, location of housing, paving and the lighting in an area will be significant issues to consider. In areas where public transport is limited, access to a taxi service may be an important factor.

Safeguards are important for all young people moving out of home but may need to be combined with strong community support if a young person is socially vulnerable.

When do I start?

Thinking and planning about living away from home can start as early as you like. It may be helpful to include high school staff in discussions so that they are aware that this is a goal for the future. Friends, services and other key people in the life of your son or daughter could also be made aware that you are planning a transition from home so that you can garner their support.

What kind of life do I see for my son or daughter in the future?

Talking with your son or daughter about the life they see for themselves is one of the first steps. Dealing with daily practicalities consumes our thinking most of the time, but asking your son or daughter about their aspirations and dreams may open up other possibilities not previously considered. Talking between yourselves and involving other people in your extended family can provide input from people who know you well. You may also want to include friends involved in the life of your family. By talking you can start to develop and explore ideas about the future. There will be a lot of factors which affect how this is done, including your son or daughter's age, life experience, maturity and the nature and impact of his or her disability.

As parents we want to see our children safe, settled and happy with lives that allow them to develop to their full potential whatever that may be. It takes time to get there and this is a start.

Freya's Story

As she was leaving school, Freya and her family hosted a vision day with a group of friends to look at a vision for a good life. This was to become the basis for planning her future beyond school. Her mother had attended a conference prior to this which explored strategies for making a positive difference in a person's life. This was really helpful in providing a structure for thinking and a method to achieve outcomes. The process involved looking at a vision for the future, employment in particular, and how those ideas might be made a reality. It was and is extremely important to her family that Freya is engaged with the community and is not segregated for employment, leisure or study. They believe that a strong network of people around Freya will also be a safeguard into the future. Freya and her family also feel very strongly that she has a lot to offer the community she lives in.

Freya is establishing herself within her community and her family feel that she has a much better and healthier lifestyle with the planning that has taken place. They are looking at the long-term future for Freya, and all the experiences and relationships which are being developed now are part of creating a future where she is a valued member of the community and has a fulfilling life.

What is available to help you plan?

There are community resources which can help families develop a plan. An example is the Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) which is available on CD ROM. See Appendix 1 or ask your Local Area Coordinator.

Other planning approaches such as Person Centred Planning (PCP) involve facilitators working with you, your son or daughter and other key people to develop a clear picture of the life that your son or daughter may want to lead and the actions that are required to achieve that life. Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) and MAP (Making Action Plans) are two of the tools that are sometimes used in Person Centred Planning. See Appendix 1 for website information. Both these tools can help you think differently about future possibilities and options, and look at the person's desires and dreams rather than the restrictions of the disability as the starting point for discussion. Your Local Area Coordinator can provide information on these and other available resources. They can also help you source material and start the discussion with your family.

Remember that it is not always possible to cover all the bases before a move out of home. Often unpredicted situations arise or circumstances change. Flexibility is needed to respond to new situations. It is a natural part of leaving home to have to learn from experience. Sometimes a young person is expected to have difficulty with a particular skill, but manages very well once living away from home. Skills which were never needed at home may also become more obvious when the person moves out of home. It may also be the case that things which were considered achievable may in reality need a lot of practice to master.

Some things to consider before the move include:

- putting adequate safeguards in place;
- building good communication;
- allowing people to fail sometimes as part of growing up;
- recognising that the first move may not be the last; and
- acknowledging that parents who initiate the move may still find it hard to relinquish control.

Why bother looking at the big picture?

Looking at the big picture allows time for ideas to be explored. It begins the process of your son or daughter being able to think of themselves as an independent adult, while they are still living with the family. It allows both parties to explore how adult children can still be part of the family, even though they may have moved out. It also creates an opportunity to think about things beyond day-to-day practicalities.

Many young people have been directed by others all their lives with little experience of being asked for their opinions or ideas. Engaging in a discussion with your son or daughter can get them thinking about their future and help them start to form their longer-term goals and wishes. Parents dealing with issues as they arise often have little room for reflection, so planning the transition from home to the community can be a time to do this. It also provides a time when a young person can talk about their hopes and fears about moving out.

Kaleisha's Story

Kaleisha was very keen to move out of home with her boyfriend of four years before leaving school. Both she and her boyfriend were at school at an Education Support Unit and had received a lot of personal support from the principal and staff. After separate meetings with the families and the school it was decided that a meeting to plan the move would be beneficial. After a lot of discussion Kaleisha decided to stay at school for another year and focus on independent living skills, relationships and work experience. Both young people generated a list of skills that they thought they would need to live well by themselves. Kaleisha's Local Area Coordinator was then able to help her access a small amount of funding support from the Disability Services Commission for training in the skills she had identified.




Halfway through the year Kaleisha's boyfriend's circumstances changed and he had to move. He and Kaleisha decided to move together into a private rental flat. The planning and skills development that had gone into the previous nine months made a difference to what Kaleisha and her boyfriend were able to manage when they were living independently. There were still many things that they needed help with, but they felt confident with many tasks. Parental support during the move and in the early stages also made a difference.

2. Income Support and Assistance

The following section details income support payments available through Centrelink.

Types of Financial Assistance available:

- Disability Support Pension
 - Mobility Allowance
 - Pensioner Education Supplement – Education Entry Payment
 - Rent Assistance
 - Bond Assistance Loan
- 

Disability Support Pension (DSP)

Purpose

To ensure an adequate level of income for people with a physical, intellectual or psychiatric impairment which prevents them from working, or for people who are permanently blind.

Qualifications

To qualify for the DSP a person must be:

- aged 16 or over and under the Age Pension age; and
- assessed as not being able to work or be retrained for work for at least 15 hours per week within two years because of illness, injury or disability; or;
- permanently blind; or
- participating in the Supported Wage System; and
- have lived in Australia for a total of 10 years as an Australian resident, or your disability occurred while you were an Australian resident.

Factors which affect the person's Disability Support Pension payment rate are:

- the age of the pension recipient;
- whether they are living at home with parents or living independently;
- whether they are single or living as a couple;
- whether they own their own home (depending on the value of this asset); and
- whether they are renting accommodation.

It is recommended that you visit Centrelink and get the information which relates to your particular situation before planning a move out of home for your son or daughter so that you are clear about the payment they are entitled to.

Mobility Allowance

Purpose

To provide help to people with disabilities who are doing voluntary work, paid work, vocational training, or any combination of these and cannot use public transport without extra help. To qualify, there does not need to be public transport in the person's area. Mobility Allowance helps with the extra costs of travel.

Qualifications

A person aged 16 or over who cannot use public transport without extra support because of their disability may apply for Mobility Allowance if they:

- are doing at least 32 hours every four weeks of voluntary work*, paid work, vocational training or a combination of these; or
- have an agreement to look for work through a service provider funded by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations; or
- are getting Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance or Austudy and are required to satisfy the relevant activity test; and
- need to travel to and from their home as part of the above activities.

*Voluntary work must be for a charitable, welfare or community organisation and be on a continuing basis.



Pensioner Education Supplement (PES)

PES aims to provide assistance towards the ongoing costs associated with study for recipients of some Centrelink and Veterans' Affairs income support payments. PES is available to full-time students and in certain circumstances those approved to undertake part-time study of at least 25 per cent of a full study load.

Children attending high school who are in receipt of a pension are also eligible for PES. Education Entry Payment is available to customers who qualify for PES and assists with the upfront costs associated with return to or commencing study.

Rent Assistance

Purpose

Rent assistance is payable to eligible Centrelink and Family Assistance Office customers who rent accommodation in the private rental market and pay rent above a set threshold based on their family circumstances.

Qualifications for Rent Assistance are too numerous to list here but are available by contacting Centrelink directly or accessing its website. The Centrelink Information Handbook can be accessed through the Centrelink website at www.centrelink.gov.au The handbook is a comprehensive guide to Centrelink payments and services.

Bond Assistance Loan – contact Homeswest

The aim of a Bond Assistance Loan is to assist pension income eligible people with limited finance, who are homeless or likely to become homeless. The Bond Assistance Loan provides a loan for the rental bond in order to obtain private rental accommodation, if there is no suitable Homeswest rental accommodation available.

Carol's Story

Carol is still living at home but is in the process of planning a move to independent living. She currently receives the Disability Support Pension and is doing Textiles and Literacy and Numeracy courses at TAFE for a day and a half a week. She is entitled to the Mobility Allowance, the Pensioner Education Supplement and the Education Entry Payment. These benefits offset the costs of being involved in a course at TAFE and are not considered taxable income by Centrelink.

Notes

Please use this space to make any notes.

3. Financial Safeguards

Financial Safeguards include:

- Early education and practical experience in handling money.
- Financial agreements and contracts – take away and read or check with DoCEP before signing.
- Centrepay.
- Centrelink – Disability Officer.
- Anglicare – financial planning assistance.
- Banks – low or no fee accounts, dual signatures for withdrawals.
- WA No Interest Loans Network Inc (NILS).

How do I create financial safeguards?

There are a number of levels at which this can be done from daily, weekly, or monthly financial planning through to making a will. One way of minimising vulnerability around finances is to teach as much independence and understanding of money as possible prior to leaving home, and to then continue the focus on skills development after leaving home.

Most of us take time to understand the value of money. However, once we move out of home and have to live within a budget, our skills can improve with practice.

There are a number of training programs available to help people develop basic numeracy and money handling skills.

One example is the Clarke Road Money Program (see Appendix 1 for details). Practical experience is the most effective way to learn, but money management is often the hardest area for parents to let go. ACTIV Library has books on independent living which include sections on money handling and budgeting skills development. See Useful and Community Resources (Appendix 1) for website addresses.

Contracts and Financial Agreements

The Department of Consumer and Employment Protection (DoCEP) is able to provide Consumer Protection information. Before entering into any contractual agreement, DoCEP recommends that if there is anything in the contract that you are unsure of, take it home and phone them for assistance. They can also let you know how to remove your name from a large number of telemarketing businesses. The Do Not Mail, Do Not Call service is available through the Australian Direct Marketing Association 1800 646 664. DoCEP call centre 1300 304 054.

Centrepay

Centrelink has a service called Centrepay which is a free direct bill paying service offered to customers receiving Centrelink payments. Using Centrepay you can pay bills such as rent, electricity, gas and water, telephone, household goods, child care, home care services, medical services and equipment.

Disability Officer – Centrelink

The Disability Officer at Centrelink can provide information on eligibility for benefits and financial planning.

Banks

Some banks have low or no fees on certain types of accounts and this information is available online or can be discussed with a bank information officer.

Financial Planning

Anglicare provides a free financial planning and budgeting service in some regional areas.

WA No Interest Loans Network Inc (NILS)

NILS provides interest free loans for essential household items to families and individuals on low incomes. Through this scheme, loans from a minimum \$200 up to \$1,000 can be obtained if specific criteria are met. The eligibility for each application is determined in Perth. See Useful and Community Resources for contact details.

Dan's Story

Dan has been living in his own flat for several months. Before moving out of home, Dan's family employed a support worker using the Disability Services Commission's Post School Options funding to help him complete a money skills development program.

Dan is employed as a trolley collector and his wages and pension are deposited into a bank account which he can access with a bank card. Once a fortnight he direct debits a portion of the money into a savings account which he and his family have arranged can only be accessed with a dual signature with his mother. There is a blanket rule that Dan is not to give money to anyone. This was put in place because he is very generous, and would happily give his money away if someone asked for it. By having a budget every week, he can see what happens when he spends money impulsively, which he does on occasion. Dan now does all his own weekly grocery shopping without any assistance and, as a result, his understanding of value for money has greatly increased.

The biggest financial safeguard for Dan is his mother who checks his bank statements and weekly budget. Dan also pays his own bills and his rent is taken out through Centrelink's Centrepay.

Dan's mother has continued to look for opportunities for Dan to continue learning. She sought the services of the volunteer organisation Read Write Now (see Appendix 1 for details) which has allowed Dan to generalise his knowledge of numeracy to money and to maintain a realistic budget. He has a much better understanding now that he can apply his learning to managing his own finances. The fact that he is having to manage his own affairs and has an increased awareness of his own spending provides further financial safeguards for him.



4. Disability Services Commission Funding Programs

- The Disability Services Commission has a number of funding programs to assist people with a disability who are not able to work.

Post School Options (PSO) and Alternatives to Employment (ATE)

These programs help eligible people with disabilities, who are not able to work full-time, to participate in activities that will help them to develop new skills, meet other people and be part of the community.

These are the two pathways to access Alternatives to Employment Programs:

Post School Options (PSO)

School leavers (or their family) can apply through the Post School Options (PSO) program. This program assists school leavers with disabilities to access either employment assistance and/or Alternatives to Employment Assistance.

Detailed information about who is eligible for this program, how to apply and what will happen when you apply is available in the brochure *Pathways to the Future Post School Options Program*. All these details can be found on: www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Contact:

- **Post School Options Program** at the Disability Services Commission on telephone 9426 9273, TTY 426 9315 or freecall 1800 998 214;
- email: psop@dsc.wa.gov.au; or
- your Local Area Coordinator.

Alternatives to Employment (ATE)

Adults who left school more than two years ago may be eligible for the Alternatives to Employment program. Applications for the Alternatives to Employment funding are made through the **Combined Applications Process (CAP)**. More detailed information can be found on the Commission's website www.dsc.wa.gov.au in the section on the Combined Application Process.

Contact:

- **Alternatives to Employment Program** at the Disability Services Commission telephone 9426 9273, TTY 426 9315, freecall 1800 998 214; or
- Email: psop@dsc.wa.gov.au; or
- your Local Area Coordinator.

Notes

Please use this space to make any notes.

5. Employment

Employment Services include:

Centrelink – Disability Officer

- Discuss options for employment and agencies available to assist.
- Impact of hours worked and wages earned on eligibility for Disability Support Pension, the effect of Case Based Funding.
- Disability Employment Services

Disability Support Employment Services

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Disability Employment Network Services

Getting a job is often part of making our way independently in life. It can provide income, a social network, social status, a valued role as a worker and, with the additional income, increased life opportunities and options. There are a number of ways that your son or daughter can approach getting employment. A good starting point is to talk with a Disability Officer at your local Centrelink office. If your son or daughter is still at school, it would also be worthwhile talking to the vocational education and training coordinator.

It is important for people considering open employment to understand how weekly hours worked at award rates can affect eligibility for the Disability Support Pension. This information is available at Centrelink.

Disability Employment Services

Disability Employment Services fall broadly into three main categories:

- **Disability Supported Employment Services** (also known as Business Services);
- **Vocational Rehabilitation** through Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services (CRS); and
- **Disability Employment Network Services.**

Disability Employment Network services are offered by a network of service provider organisations contracted by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

These services generally provide:

- support while training for a particular job – the training may be provided by the service or subcontracted to another agency;
- help in finding a job and starting employment in the open labour market; and
- continuing support once you have started work.

You can get a referral from Centrelink or go directly to the service provider to receive assistance from a Disability Employment service. If you already have a current eligibility assessment recorded by Centrelink, the service provider may be able to check your eligibility with Centrelink automatically and organise the referral for you. Where no current assessment exists, the Disability Employment provider can refer you directly for an assessment.

Disability Supported Employment Services

Disability Supported Employment Services are provided through a network of organisations contracted by the Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. Disability Supported Employment Services employ and support people with disabilities, often in specialist working environments.

This type of service approach is aimed at people with disabilities who want to work but choose to do so in a supported employment environment or who, because they have higher support needs, normally find it hard to get and keep a job.

Wherever possible, employees in supported employment will be provided with the additional skills and support needs to make the transition into open employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) currently contracts Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services (CRS) Australia to provide vocational rehabilitation and injury management. Services are tailored to meet the individual's needs as well as the particular needs of each workplace.

Jennifer's Story

Jennifer (33) is working five and a half days a week in a florist shop. She previously worked full-time at Activ Industries in Perth for 10 years and in a large country town sewing hospital linen.

Jennifer's open employment was borne out of tragedy, following the deaths of two close family members within nine months of each other. Both funerals required flowers and the same florist was used each time. The family developed a relationship with the owners of the florist shop and months later they suggested that Jennifer work for them two mornings a week. Jennifer continued to work at Activ for the other three mornings a week, but six months later was offered and happily accepted full-time employment at the florist.

By earning the basic wage and working full-time Jennifer is no longer eligible to receive the Disability Support Pension. However, she and her mother feel it's the right decision, despite the insecurity this may pose in the future. Jennifer is gaining skills daily which will increase her marketability for open employment if she ever needs to look for employment elsewhere.

The most significant thing about this workplace for Jennifer is that she feels part of a team and an equal member. She is treated with total respect, is asked for her opinion on certain aspects of the job and has learned many components of the floral trade. Jennifer has become very organised and can work independently. Her speech is unclear at times, but her mother reports that answering the phone at work has made a difference to the clarity of her speech generally. Much of her job is dealing with the public with all the challenges that that can deliver, and she has managed it really well with the support of her employer and the development of her own skills. Jennifer was not supported by an agency in this transition, nevertheless her involvement in open employment has had an extremely positive impact on her personal and public life and continues to do so.



6. Education, Training and Informal Learning

- High School – indicate future direction
- TAFE – Certificate courses, Lifestyle courses, Work Readiness courses
- Community based – sport, recreation, arts and theatre activities
- Contact the local shire for resources within your region
- Volunteering
- Local Area Coordinator – knowledge of local resources and agencies



Learning is a lifelong occupation and there are many ways to do it. There are the things we learn by doing, and those that are more academic. Meaningful activity and occupation that is stimulating and satisfying are integral to our quality of life and, if paid work is not available, become even more important. It also means the opportunity to be involved in and to be able to contribute to the community. For young people who may not be able to access work, education in its broadest sense and training more specifically could be considered an ongoing need.

High School

Much of the discussion around moving out of home tends to occur as a young person is leaving school or after they have left school. It may be more helpful to begin talking about the future as your son or daughter is starting high school so that the skills needed for independent living can be developed during the following five years. Your son or daughter's teachers may not necessarily be focusing on this longer-term goal and the possibilities of independent living, so it will be important for you to start discussing this with them as soon as is possible. This could impact on the work experience placements or TAFE courses your son or daughter chooses later in their high school years. It may also provide more opportunities to have your son or daughter's specific skill development needs met by the education system.

TAFE

TAFE colleges have a range of services to help your son or daughter with a course of study. The types of services available may vary from region to region. Some examples are:

- orientation to the college;
- alternative formats for written material such as audiotapes or large print;
- alternative assessment and examination arrangements such as extra time or scribe support;
- modification of course materials and presentation; and
- individual supports such as an interpreter, note taker or tutor.

All TAFE Colleges have a Disability Liaison Officer who can be contacted to discuss individual requirements.

Certificate Courses

Some certificate courses have a higher level of support built into the learning environment, for example the Textiles course at Great Southern TAFE. Also, mainstream courses can be accessed with individual support to help with inclusion. By accessing mainstream courses there is more choice but it is important to know the pre-requisite qualification. For many courses, particularly those that have a vocational focus, prospective students may need to pass pre-requisite subjects before they will be accepted into a course. This is often a requirement to meet industry standards on completion of the course.

Trades Assistant Training

Albany TAFE College is in the process of developing courses to assist people with an intellectual disability gain access to employment as Trades Assistants in the construction, automotive and/or metal industries. This will be a nationally accredited course and is expected to be available in 2007. Check the availability of similar courses with your local TAFE.

Work/Training Preparation Course

Individual TAFE colleges design courses and it is worth checking out what is available locally. Gaining Access to Training and Education (Introductory) 7126 is a new course at one regional TAFE and courses are run to meet local need.

Lifestyle Courses

TAFE also runs lifestyle courses which cover a wide range of interests. They may run for a day or over several sessions and can cover everything from massage to photography to Mediterranean cooking.

Informal Learning

Within each community there are generally groups who pursue specific interests such as sport, ceramics, singing, aqua aerobics and amateur theatre.

There may also be leisure centres and leisure network groups organised through local government or community agencies. Local shire offices can put you in contact with organisations within your community. Your LAC may also be able to help.

The arts community is another avenue to pursue for creative outlets, such as painting, mosaic, pottery, sculpting and theatre.

Volunteering is a part of many people's lives and is a way of engaging with and contributing to the community. There are volunteer centres which have information about organisations who are looking for volunteers. Depending on the type of volunteering, this could also be a really good source of informal learning. For example, the Red Cross has an excellent volunteer training and support program.

Dan's Story

Dan is enrolled in a certificate course in Textiles at TAFE and has been for several years. He loves sewing and has purchased his own sewing machine so he can sew at home. He has started producing items to sell at a local market which runs every three months. His work has a creative dimension because he produces a variety of items for sale each time rather than the same thing. He is also working part-time and is involved with Read Write Now (see Appendix 1 for details) to increase his independence in numeracy and literacy. His love of cooking has seen him sign up for several cooking courses at the local TAFE which he attends with support. At present he has a mix of work, formal and informal learning in his life. These create different networks and promote his skill level and independence.



7. Accommodation

- Homeswest
- Community Housing
- Tenancy Advice Service
- Access Home Loan – Keystart Loans
- Considerations
 - affordability
 - eligibility for rent and bond assistance
 - waitlists for public housing
 - living alone or sharing
 - level of family and community support to maintain the move
 - location to friends, family, shops, community
 - access to transport
- Lease Agreements – individual or co-signed

Where do I start looking for housing and who can help?

Housing options include private rental, public housing through the Department of Housing and Works (Homeswest), community housing or private purchase of a home.

Homeswest

Information about Homeswest tenancy can be obtained online at www.dhw.wa.gov.au or through the Department of Housing and Works. Homeswest often has a waiting list, varying from area to area depending on supply and demand. If you are thinking about your child moving out of home and are looking to Homeswest accommodation, most areas have long waiting lists and it is probably a good idea to put your son or daughter's name on the wait list sooner rather than later. In some places the wait time is as long as four years. There have been situations where a person with a disability has been given priority for housing through Homeswest and it is worth discussing this possibility with your Local Area Coordinator or Homeswest.

Community Housing

There may be a community housing association in your area which can provide a supportive role to assist people with a disability to access accommodation. They do not, however, provide personal in-home living support like support workers. These associations are not in every town or city. Your Local Area Coordinator will be able to put you in touch with community associations. The eligibility criteria for these organisations are often similar to Homeswest.

The Tenancy Advice Service (TAS)

The Tenancy Advice Service has produced the booklet *A Guide to Renting in Western Australia for Young People*. It outlines issues to be aware of when renting. TAS is a non-government, non-profit community organisation which gives free advice to tenants about renting.

Access – Home Loan Scheme

If there is the potential to buy a home, the Access Home Loan Scheme for people with disabilities, which is provided through the Department of Housing and Works and Keystart Loans may be relevant to look at. Go to www.dhw.wa.gov.au

How do I decide what option is best?

Accommodation can be individual or shared. What you choose will depend on a number of factors such as:

- an individual preference for living alone or in shared accommodation;
- the ability to afford rent and living expenses;
- eligibility for rent assistance and/or bond assistance;
- the level of personal support required and the potential to meet this need;
- the support available from family and community; and
- the housing options available within the area you live.



Questions to ask about location include:

- Is there public transport close by?
- Is it in town or on the outskirts?
- Does it provide access to friends, community, work and recreational activities?
- Does it allow my son/daughter to reach frequently used destinations independently eg leisure centre, swimming pool, shops?
- Is it close enough to walk or cycle to places?
- Are there supportive neighbours or friends close by?

Gathering information from the sources who can best meet your needs will allow you to make an informed decision after considering all the options. Your Local Area Coordinator can also help you with this.

The type of accommodation you seek may be affected by a number of factors particularly in regional and rural centres. These might include:

- the availability of affordable housing;
- the length of waiting lists for public housing;
- whether the person is working or on government assistance; and
- the availability of people to share with.

Does my son/daughter sign the lease?

When a legal document such as a lease agreement is to be signed, it is essential that the person signing the agreement has all the information explained in language they understand. If they do not fully understand the detail, or it is not explained well enough, it would be advisable not to sign the document. The onus is on the person with the contract to do this but it is worthwhile having another person there to ensure that this occurs. If a person does sign a contract and it is obvious that they have not understood all the detail, it can be legally annulled. It should be noted, however, that this can be an extremely difficult process so it is better to put in safeguards before the event.

Some parents co-sign the lease but others prefer their son/daughter to sign independently. Both are possible depending on the level of understanding of the person moving into the accommodation.

How would I go about looking for people to share accommodation with my son/daughter?

If you do not know of any people who are wanting to share through your own networks, your Local Area Coordinator may be able to assist you with this.



Notes

Please use this space to make any notes.

8. Learning to Live Away from Home

- Practice skills before the move
- Learn from mistakes
- Skills to consider
 - Knowledge of community – transport, orientation, workplace, leisure
 - Maintaining relationships – individual and community
 - Personal care
 - Money management
 - Literacy
 - Time - management, understanding and use of
 - Household routines
 - Safety – physical and personal

Learning to live away from home is a life-changing, exciting experience but even people who are keen to leave can find it challenging, confronting and lonely at times. Allowing time to adapt to a huge change in lifestyle is really important. Each of us will handle the move differently based on our temperament, life experiences and ability to accommodate change. For parents, this time of transition may require a balancing act. Parents need to be supportive of their son or daughter's attempts at new skills and help out where needed, but also be able to let go to allow the young person to learn from their own mistakes. How we achieve this is highly individual. There is no manual. It demands sensitivity, trust and practical back-up where necessary. Celebrating successes, however small, is an opportunity to see the positive changes as they arise.

There are many areas to be considered, some of which are listed below.

Moving around the community independently

- Use of public transport
- Orientation to familiar places
- Getting a driver's licence

Friendships and community support

- Maintaining friendships
- Forming new relationships
- Connecting with community activities

Personal care

- Grooming and dressing
- Diet, nutrition, cooking
- Medications
- Physical exercise
- Healthy relationships

Money Management

- Numeracy
- Budgeting, shopping
- Payment of bills

Literacy

- Filling out forms and signing legal agreements eg mobile phone plans, tenancy agreements
- Read Write Now

Time

- Awareness of commitments – work, leisure, daily routines
- Ability to read the time – digital and analogue
- Able to spend time alone

Household Routines

- Cleaning, putting rubbish out, washing up, laundry
- Gardening

Safety

- Heat, fire, chemicals
- Unwelcome visitors, inappropriate peer and other social pressures



The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) has produced a program called One Step at a Time. This includes a set of 21 posters, together with an instruction book, showing step-by-step instructions for personal care, home care and the use of household appliances, designed to enhance independent living. This is just one of many such resources available through the Activ library. Local libraries will also have useful information. Local public health agencies also have good resource material on many general health topics including nutrition, smoking and exercise and on specific issues such as asthma and diabetes.

Many skills can be developed while still living at home, but there may be no real motivation to learn some of them until your son or daughter has left. Providing a supportive environment to learn these skills once the move is made is one way to develop them. It may be helpful to look at tasks that can be done independently, those that can be done with minimal assistance or those that require full support in order to determine where the focus needs to be. It may be that by moving into a new living situation, the young person can learn to do part of a task and gradually increase responsibility for and ownership of it. What works best may develop over time.

It may be that there are some things that your son or daughter will never be able to do independently. However, with support, they may still be able to live in the community successfully. It is not necessary to gain a prescribed number of skills before attempting transition. It is about targeting the support provided to allow for the ongoing development of skills. As with all of us we learn best once we need the skills and they have relevance.

9. Health

Health issues:

- Self-care
- Women's health
- Family doctor
- Diet and nutrition
- Dental care
- Allied health and specialist services
- Community Nursing and Home and Community Care (HACC)
- Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS)

For a young person leaving home it may be a very new thing to take on responsibility for keeping themselves healthy and for letting people know when they are unwell. Some health knowledge will have been gained at school, but as a parent it is important to know what level of understanding your son or daughter has about health and all its facets.

Self-care

Establishing positive self-care habits long before a young person moves out of home is the most effective way of teaching lifelong self-care. Some people may require assistance with aspects of self-care all their lives, but will be able to manage others independently. The need and desire for more independence will often increase motivation to reduce assistance from a parent or carer. For many of us an understanding of the need for self-care is also very closely linked to an awareness of healthy lifestyle and the benefits it provides.

Medication

If a young person requires medication there are a number of different methods of ensuring that the accurate dose is taken each day. This can be discussed with your pharmacist. For example, if medications are in pill form, a weekly pack can be made up with the time of day, day of the week and the allocated medication placed in separate sections. Medications can be packed in a Dossette Box at home or in a Webster pack made up by the pharmacist for a weekly fee.

Women's health care

The Centre for Social Health in Victoria has produced a booklet called *Janet's Got Her Period* which has an accompanying video. This is a resource to assist planning menstruation self-care for girls and young women with special learning needs. This is available through the Activ library along with many more such resources. Check the Activ library website (see Appendix 1). The Women on Wellness clinic at Royal Perth Hospital services specialises in holistic women's health care for women with disabilities. This clinic is free and self-referring. See Useful and Community Resources (Appendix 1).

Family doctor

Finding a doctor who knows your family and maintaining that relationship once the young person moves out of home allows for a continuation of medical history and knowledge of their particular situation. If there are significant changes in physical or mental health after the move, then there is the capacity to determine what those changes are. The young person may also have a relationship with the doctor which is helpful if they need someone to talk to outside the family.

Diet and nutrition

There are many resources within the community for health and diet information. The Activ library has practical resources which can be used by people in their home. These include step-by-step pictorial information on cooking and shopping for ingredients, housekeeping tasks and specific self-care activities. In some regional centres, the Health Department has a program called Healthy Bodies run over six sessions by dieticians. This looks at nutrition, healthy shopping, exercise and stress management.

Dental care

Establishing good oral hygiene habits early in life can reduce the need for extensive dental work later on. Wherever possible young adults should try to build a relationship with their local dentist. This is specially the case for people living in regional areas because the costs involved in commuting to Perth for dental treatment may be prohibitive. Large regional centres will also have public sector dental clinics which provide dental services to people who are eligible for certain Centrelink benefits.

If a general anaesthetic is required for dental treatment, it may be appropriate to seek treatment via the Department of Health's dental clinic at the Disability Services Commission's West Perth office. As there is a long waiting list for Department of Health dental services, people requiring a general anaesthetic who have private health insurance are encouraged to access services through their local dentist and hospital.

Allied health and specialist services

Occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy or dietician services can be accessed by self referral. In country regions, Health Department therapists are responsible for the allocation of equipment through the Community Aids and Equipment Program (CAEP). However, this may sometimes require a doctor's prescription. Specialist medical services also require a doctor's referral. What is available within your region will depend on location. Some regional centres have visiting specialist services, but for others there is the need to travel to Perth.

Community Nursing and Home and Community Care (HACC) Services

For people who meet particular criteria, there is the possibility of domestic support through HACC and in-home nursing through Community Nursing or Silver Chain.



Patient Assisted Travel Scheme – PATS

PATS provides assistance to people in the country who are required to travel more than 100kms (one way) to obtain the nearest available medical specialist treatment not available locally, via telehealth or from a visiting service. Patients needing to travel between 70 and 100kms (one way) to access regular oncology or dialysis treatment are also eligible for assistance. PATS provides a subsidy only – it does not cover all costs associated with travel to a specialist appointment. Application must be before a trip, as there is no reimbursement. The scheme can also provide assistance with accommodation costs available for people meeting specific criteria. The scheme is administered through country hospitals and information about this is available from the PATS clerk located in every public hospital in the state.

Mental Health

Mental Health Services are accessed through your general practitioner.

Notes

Please use this space to make any notes.

10. Safeguards

- Preventative safeguards
- Corrective safeguards
- Developmental safeguards
- Feel Safe
- People 1st Programme
- Sexuality Education Counselling and Consultancy Agency - SECCA

Safeguards to maximise the success of a move out of home

A safeguard protects against an adverse event or outcome. It may be preventative, corrective or developmental. Safeguards range from very practical strategies through to less tangible elements like relationships and networks. The level of safeguarding may also change over time as the person becomes more aware and independent and able to manage their own affairs.

Preventative safeguards

A preventative safeguard attempts to prevent problems from occurring. For example, if your son or daughter is learning to manage money but tends to spend money without thinking, having rent and utilities taken out by Centrepay would prevent non-payment of rent and bills. This will then avoid having to sort out a lot of hassles if non-payment occurs.

If your son or daughter finds it difficult to understand a lot of verbal information all at once, having a friend or advocate to help with asking the right questions and to understand the information delivered, can help them to make informed decisions. This could include meetings at Centrelink or Homeswest. There have also been instances where a young person has wanted to buy a mobile phone and a sales person has used high pressure sales tactics to sell a mobile phone plan which was too expensive. Understanding information is a very important safeguard, particularly if the young person is held legally or financially accountable for their decisions. By going through these processes with support, a young person learns about the importance of accurate information in decision-making and responsibility and accountability. Learning this process is potentially one of the most effective preventative safeguards that can be put in place.

If your son or daughter is living alone a preventative safeguard could be as simple as buying a mobile phone so that they can call you at any time if they are unsure of what to do. There is a balance in this but when they first move out it could be important for them to check their own decision-making.

What is put in place will be highly individual based on the resources, skills and previous experiences of the family and individual.

Corrective safeguards

A corrective safeguard is what is put in place as the back-up plan. If things do not work out, what are the alternatives?

Knowing what steps to take when a situation is difficult is part of a corrective safeguard. It is impossible to know what will happen all the time but putting strategies in place can help.

Jennifer's Story

A young woman living on her own had the experience of a prowler around her unit and became frightened of living there as a result. She knew that she was able to call her parents and let them know and they in turn informed the police who did extra patrols in the area. If these measures had not alleviated her anxiety she was always able to move back home until she regained her confidence. Another corrective safeguard might be to put in a sensor light if the lighting is poor at the house or unit.

If a young person is having visitors who don't go home readily, having verbal strategies to ask people to leave can allow the young person more control in their own place. This may never have been a skill they needed before they started living independently. A further safeguard would be the ability to phone another person who could assist them if the visitor did not take any notice.

Each situation which arises will present a unique set of circumstances that the young person will need to respond to and it is what we all do as we develop our skills in managing our lives.

Developmental safeguards

A developmental safeguard involves maximising a person's abilities so that they are able to be as independent as possible.

One of the best developmental safeguards for any of us is to have good self-esteem and confidence in our own abilities. It affects every dimension of our lives, such as the types of relationships we develop and our willingness to try new experiences. Independence has to be developed and learnt and is an ongoing process. It starts by attempting new tasks and being supported in that learning. The new skills may be using a phone to seek information, learning to express how we feel or asking for what we need. Each new skill requires practice.

Jennifer's Story

Jennifer, who had been working in open employment for several months, had a situation arise with co-workers that forced her to think about her own values. She had to decide between loyalty to her boss or keeping a confidence of unethical behaviour, stealing. She was asked by her co-worker not to tell her employer and it was a learning experience her mother felt she handled really well. She struggled with what to do for about a week and eventually told her employer. She had the confidence to live by her own standards and is still employed.

The safeguard is the ability to decide right from wrong and not be manipulated by other people. Her mother commented that Jennifer has matured more in the last 12 months than she has in the past 10 years. Each time Jennifer makes positive decisions for herself, it adds to her self-esteem and gives her confidence to continue doing this in other situations.

Social Vulnerability

Personal safety and social vulnerability are two things that parents mention often when discussing their son or daughter leaving home.

Parents can increase the awareness of the different types of relationships in their children's life and what is appropriate behaviour in each case. This may involve initial daily phone contact with home, use of a mobile phone, regular visits by family and friends and contact with neighbours. Personal friendships where people are involved in a life together will also be a safeguard. One of the biggest safeguards may be the level of involvement a person has within the community and through work where other people are aware of daily routines and form strong relationships during shared activities.

Each person has an individual ability to manage the demands in their life and the more experience they have before moving out of home the better equipped they are when they leave. It is not possible to safeguard against every eventuality and how situations are dealt with when things go wrong may also determine how the person responds in the future.

As parents, identifying people in your own networks who can offer support to you and your family is another way of safeguarding.

Feel Safe

Feel Safe is a program designed for young people with an intellectual disability. It teaches them to recognise situations which make them feel uncomfortable, and provides specific strategies to help deal with these. The program is available on an interactive CD ROM. You can talk with your Local Area Coordinator about accessing this program.

People 1st Programme

People 1st Programme is a service available to young people providing one-to-one counselling in protective education, human relationships and sexuality. This service will also visit schools. It has a lifelong focus in promoting safe and healthy relationships. At present it is not available in all regional centres – see Useful and Community Resources (Appendix 1).

SECCA

The Sexuality Education Counselling and Consultancy Agency (SECCA) has produced a booklet on Sexuality and Your Rights which provides local contact information for Western Australia. Their mission is to provide a tailored, flexible and responsive service to individuals with disabilities, their families, carers and anyone else dealing with the issues of sexuality, relationships and sexual health.

Kalparrin

A useful website looking at some of these issues around transition is www.kalparrin.org.au and go to Transitions. This is a website set up by parents of children with disabilities and has links to many resources within Western Australia. See Useful and Resources (Appendix 1) for other relevant websites.

Notes

Please use this space to make any notes.



//. Stories

Dan

Dan's story is an example of how a long-term discussion involving the Local Area Coordinator can lead to having a clear idea of independent living arrangements.



His safeguards included:

- developing independent living skills while still living at home;
- creating a community network through work, TAFE and recreational pursuits;
- having financial safeguards with banks and Centrepay; and
- a high level of parental support.

Dan is 23 years old, very outgoing and energetic. Until eight months ago, he was living at home with his mother. The idea that Dan would live independently was planted several years ago with a view that it would happen sometime in the future, but with no real time frame in mind. Dan is well connected to the community through work, recreational pursuits, volunteering, a youth group and TAFE. While Dan was still at home, developing skills in the practical aspects of independent living began in earnest. The family also worked very hard to help Dan establish relationships through the activities he is involved in within the community. This has had some success and the development of friendships is something Dan enjoys doing and is learning to do more safely.

The decision to move out of home was made quite quickly when Dan fell in love with a unit he had viewed. There was a sense of the life that Dan would lead, that each of his parents and Dan had, but there was not always agreement on how this would look. Things that seemed quite straightforward, such as living alone or with others, generated a lot of discussion which gave Dan the opportunity to think about what he really wanted and what he thought he could manage. It also raised a lot of practical issues such as location, style of housing (house or flat), access to transport and the safeguards which could be set in place during the transition period given his social vulnerability. The safeguards were mainly around access at all times to both his parents by mobile phone and regular contact with his family through the week with social evenings at his home a priority, to cement the idea that it was his home. He also had phone numbers of trusted friends that he could call and Dan and his mother introduced themselves to the next door neighbour.

Because Dan has a lot of activity in his week he decided to live alone initially with a view to sharing if he found it too lonely. He now rents a two-bedroom unit in a group of six. As it is a private rental he has inspections every three months which he passes with glowing reports from the property manager.

Living alone demands that Dan is self-sufficient for some evenings and at times during the day. His spare room is set up as a sewing room where he produces beautiful pot-holders, oven mitts and aprons. He also knits scarves. These items he sells periodically at a market. He has homework set by his Read Write Now tutor and is starting to learn how to use the computer he has just purchased.

Dan is managing his new living arrangement with nine hours' support a week to assist him to improve specific skills such as budgeting, meal planning and exploring recreational opportunities he hasn't tried before. Dan manages much of the day-to-day routine of cleaning the unit with a roster of tasks for the week and this has worked really well. He has just started doing his own grocery shopping, catching a taxi home with the goods.

As with anyone leaving home there have been times when Dan has made decisions that caused him difficulty. He still calls his mother several times a day for information, clarification or reassurance and this is working for him at present. Initially Dan needed a lot of time and attention from his mother to set up and manage the demands of this new living arrangement, but this has decreased over time. For the most part Dan has made a very smooth transition to independent living with the support of his family. The plan for the future is that he will eventually buy his own home.

Dan likes living on his own because he can choose what he wants to do, or wants to eat, or what he wants to watch on television. He has such a busy week that he enjoys the time that he spends alone at the flat. He says he doesn't get lonely. Some activities are at night, or he finishes work later in the day so there is not a lot of time that he is by himself in the evening. He always has things that he can do like his sewing, but he will often choose to watch television, particularly Dr Who his favourite show. If he is out or getting home late he will tape it to watch later. Having a meal with his family during the week is something he looks forward to, and this keeps him in touch with them. He is feeling good about managing more things for himself, like paying bills and shopping. He is hoping to entertain people other than family at his flat and is planning to do a TAFE cooking course to learn how to make curries.

Kaleisha

Kaleisha's story is an example of a self-initiated move out of home which was a planned transition with family and school support. She made a planned choice about accommodation.

Her safeguards included:

- close contact with family;
- community involvement in work trials, dancing and Activ;
- involvement of her Local Area Coordinator;
- Centrepay as a financial safeguard;
- learning about protective behaviours; and
- help from a support worker to increase independent living skills.



Kaleisha is an 18-year-old woman who has had a couple of attempts at moving out of home. The first time she left she was aged 16 and she moved into the home of her boyfriend and his mother. This lasted about four months. Relationships broke down over time, and Kaleisha eventually moved back home. Because of the circumstances of the move, Kaleisha's mother was unable to support her directly or have very much contact once she moved out and this was very distressing. The move out of home gave Kaleisha the chance to experience a different style of parenting, and relations with her own family improved as a result. It also created an awareness of some of the skills she would need to live well independently. At the time, a significant safeguard was her relationship with teachers at school who had known Kaleisha and her boyfriend for several years.

Kaleisha has now been in a relationship for four years. She is just finishing high school and has been living with her boyfriend in an apartment for about four months. She and her boyfriend indicated last year that they wanted to move in together and after much round table discussion between Kaleisha and her boyfriend, her parents, the school and the Local Area Coordinators, Kaleisha decided to finish her schooling before she moved out of home. It was agreed that the school would try and customise her program to focus more on the independent living skills which she was going to need very shortly.

Meetings were held every three months between both families, the school and the Local Area Coordinators for both young people, initially to get a sense of what skills they felt they needed to develop to live independently together. From the lists that they generated, with a small amount of funding, support workers assisted with these activities. During her final year at school circumstances changed for Kaleisha's boyfriend and he had to move out of his accommodation. They found a flat with the help of Kaleisha's family and Kaleisha moved in with him completing the final months at school during this time. Kaleisha's family provided a great deal of support in this move. They had always anticipated that Kaleisha would live independently, but not at such a young age.

There was a lot of discussion about the location of the flat regarding access to public transport, rent costs and management of household expenses. The family assisted with setting up Centrepay through Centrelink for payment of rent and methods for payment of other bills. The flat they live in is a private rental and is part of a complex. Moving into this situation quickly has thrown both young people back on their own resources.

It has highlighted a lot about their relationship which they were unaware of before. Kaleisha wants more connection to the community and has begun ballroom dancing which she loves. She is also looking at ways of bringing other people into their lives and individual interests into their relationship.

Some of the safeguards that have been put in place are financial or involve personal safety. Both Kaleisha and her boyfriend have been provided with strategies about dealing with unwanted visitors and family members. There has also been a lot of discussion and focus on what constitutes a healthy relationship. So far they have managed very well.

Kaleisha will now start to look for work through a supported work agency and is looking for full-time work in open employment.

Kaleisha says she likes living independently because she can do what she wants to do when she wants to do it. She finds living with someone is not always easy, and that she sometimes has to work hard in her relationship with her boyfriend. When things are not going well with her boyfriend, Kaleisha misses home a lot. She has three younger sisters and an older brother living at home, and she says it is busy with lots of activity and animals. She found the flat very quiet compared to home. Kaleisha would like to have more to do in the community now that she is away from home and just finished school. She wants to keep the friendships she has from school and is working out ways to do this. Recently Kaleisha and her boyfriend moved into a Homeswest unit where she is able to have pets and she is much happier with this arrangement.

Laurel

Laurel's story is an example of someone who has had more than one attempt at independent living with minimal family support.

Her safeguards included:

- a committed friend and her family;
- regular work;
- community connections through shared activities; and
- increased independent living skills.

Laurel (name changed on request) is 23 and lives independently in a Homewest unit in a large regional centre. This is her second attempt at living independently. Her first move out of home was as a result of family crisis. Growing up, Laurel spent a lot of time with her grandparents and lived with them as a teenager. Her mother was unable to care for her due to illness. Her primary safeguard at this time was her grandparents' support.

At the age of 18, Disability Services Commission staff helped Laurel find independent accommodation through Homeswest and she lived there for about six months. This move was as a result of her mother moving out of town and her grandparents being unable to continue to care for her. After six months, Laurel's mother came back to town and moved in with her. During this time, Laurel invited friends she had made at school to her home, and there were a lot of people at her unit behaving anti-socially. She did not have adequate safeguards in place at that time and she found the situation very difficult. In the end she moved out, in debt as a result of the openness of the living arrangement. Laurel then moved into the home of a support worker where she stayed for the next three years. This was not a formal arrangement through an agency and there was no remuneration.

Laurel's support worker has known her for years and provided a safe and stable environment enabling her to begin to develop independence skills and understand the demands of independent living.

Laurel's life has changed significantly since that time. She now works eight hours per week, has a leisure network, does craft activities and uses a small amount of Post School Options funding for skills development including budgeting and shopping. The area where she lives is safer than her previous address as she is in a complex of six units with older people. Public transport is very close, and she can use it independently. These are significant safeguard issues for Laurel. She has a system for paying her bills and is always in front with her utility payments. Financially she has better control than she had previously, but she still needs help with budgeting.

With three part-time jobs and as a member of a club which meets twice a week, Laurel has people and routine in her life and she is visible within the community. There would be concern if she did not attend these activities, and this is another safeguard.

The support worker Laurel lived with previously is still her main support, and Laurel sees her or talks to her everyday. She also spends some weekends at this person's family home. She has been in the new flat for about 10 months, and recently got a cat which she loves caring for. She goes out to the movies and has had people sleep over on occasion. The family she lived with previously are keen to stay in contact with Laurel but are also very conscious of her need to develop other relationships.

Her strongest ongoing safeguard will be the community she creates around herself through work, leisure and community involvement.

Laurel has decided not to have any involvement with her mother in this new living situation. Her support worker (the person she lived with previously) knows her situation well and continues to provide the support she needs to maintain her present lifestyle. Her goal is that Laurel learns to manage her affairs more independently over time but she will always need a measure of support.

Jennifer

Jennifer has had four attempts at independent living, each time developing skills before moving out of home.

Her safeguards included:

- a highly supportive family;
- a strong community network;
- high visibility due to community connections; and
- confidence in her own opinions.



Jennifer first thought about leaving home aged 15 and started putting a glory box together in preparation for the move. She is now 33 and has moved out of home four times, sometimes for up to a year. She is now living at home with her mother after a series of family tragedies. She was able to maintain her work, but living alone as well was not something she could manage. She is thinking about living independently again in the future, but not immediately.

Jennifer first left home aged 26 and moved into a Homeswest flat for which her mother co-signed. She is very comfortable with her own company and has always lived alone when she has left home. Jennifer is one of three children and each person in the family was expected to pull their weight and assist with the household chores. As a result she was very able to look after her own place when she left home and has not needed assistance with this. When she first left home Jennifer was working at Activ and was managing well but after a prowler came to the flat she started sleeping badly and became very anxious. She returned home, and the safeguard in this instance was her family's support and willingness to assist her. The move back home allowed Jennifer to rebuild her confidence enough to be able to live alone again in future.

Her next move from home was into a multi-storey block of flats near her family home. She lived there on her own for a year. Her family was able to support her in the aspects of independent living she could not manage, and she had regular visits home. A host of social problems in the flats impacted Jennifer very negatively and she returned home again. In each of these instances, situations beyond Jennifer's control and also beyond her capacity to cope were the catalyst for her returning home. Her family were there each time to support her.

Some time later Jennifer's mother retired and Jennifer moved into a flat opposite the family home. Her mother and father decided to move to a country town and Jennifer continued living in her city unit with two hours support per week. This was to help with budgeting and shopping, but Jennifer found two hours made activities too rushed. She requested more time, but when this was unavailable she asked for the support to stop. Jennifer is very capable and conscientious but finds being rushed difficult and stressful. She saw a lot of her brother after her parents moved and they were very close. At this time she was still working at Activ.

After a holiday visiting her parents Jennifer decided to join them. Her parents decided a small complex with elderly people rather than a younger crowd would work better for Jennifer. They found a place and she moved in, this time signing her own lease and tenancy agreement. This arrangement worked very well for Jennifer, as the other tenants were supportive and looked out for her. She was working at Activ and managing her independence well. The location of the unit and supportive neighbours provided her biggest safeguard.

Jennifer has had to come to terms with huge loss and grief over the past two years as a result of the unexpected deaths of her brother and father in close succession. Despite this she has managed to leave her sheltered employment and is now employed full-time at a florist's shop where she is learning the trade. Her mother says she has matured more in the past 12 months than the last 10 years.

These different moves have left Jennifer with a clear understanding that she is able to live independently and she anticipates doing this in the future, although her life experiences have overwhelmed her at times.

Her mother, who is very sensitive and supportive, recognises Jennifer's capacity to live independently and will give her all the assistance she needs. She has worked as a social trainer for many years and always felt that Jennifer could live on her own. She said when Jennifer first moved out she was feeling pressured for it to work, and many people were sceptical. With no funding, she and Jennifer have been reliant on their own resources. They have built a strong network of people around themselves, in part as a result of their efforts to support others bereaved by suicide, and they have supportive neighbours. During her open employment Jennifer increased her support network. She still has lots of ups and downs emotionally and this may continue for a while.

Joann

Joann is a young woman who has tried several different ways of living independently and is still finding her direction in life.

Her safeguards included:

- a high level of family support;
- a close relationship with her mother;
- a trusted person outside the family with whom Joann can discuss her problems ; and a
- partnership which helps her with the demands of daily living.

Joann is a 21-year-old woman who has been living away from home on and off since she was 18. Aged 13, Joann started talking to her parents about wanting to leave home in the future. The family talked about the skills that Joann would need and as she got a bit older, started getting her to do her own grocery shopping and cooking. This was not sustained, but it was an attempt to get Joann to think about the skills she would need to live independently. Joann's Local Area Coordinator talked with her about the safeguards she would need to put in place in order to be able to move out of home, and supported the family in discussing issues with Joann.

Joann's mother says Joann does not discuss the future or have a clear idea of what it will look like, so long-term planning has not begun. The family has tried to plan but has had minimal success.

Joann has tried a couple of different work options but did not sustain them and is currently unemployed. She is willing to have a go at many things but has difficulty maintaining her interest over the long haul. Since leaving home, she has been involved with people who used illicit drugs. Joann participated in this activity and she has had periods of depression. She has also been involved with the justice system. Her relationships with boyfriends have greatly influenced her decisions at times, and her family has found this very hard to deal with. Each time, the significant safeguard in her life has been the support of her family.

Joann has tried a number of ways of living independently. The first was to move into a caravan at the back of her parent's house, and for a short time she shared this with a friend. She has lived in a TAFE hostel, youth accommodation and has shared housing with boyfriends and friends. Joann has had a turbulent time emotionally and one of her safeguards has been to have a person outside the family whom she could talk to. In this case a hospital social worker was really helpful for all concerned. Joann could discuss with the social worker what was happening in her life, and the family knew she was being supported in a way that she would not accept from them.

Joann is very determined to live her own life but has gone home at times when things have spun out of control. Her family continue to be her mainstay support.

She has been in a relationship now for about 10 months. Joann's partner manages her money and her family provide ongoing support to her. Keeping Joann safe has been very difficult at times for Joann's family, however the most significant safeguard they have is their strong relationship. Joann knows she can always count on her family's support.

Joann loves people and enjoys their company, but is also easily influenced. She enjoys music, clothes and spending money. Up to now she has not decided on a definite direction in her life but is more settled than she has been for some time.

Her experiences are typical of many young people, and as she matures she may develop a better sense of who she is and where she wants to go. One of the things her mother feels made a significant difference in Joann's life was not having inclusion as an option during high school. Joann attended an Education Support Unit and her mother feels that her potential was not explored as much as it might have been if she had had mainstream education.

Freya

Freya is a young woman who achieved a highly planned move into her own Homeswest home, after exploring in depth her vision for the future with family, friends and community.

Her safeguards included:

- strong community links through her small business, TAFE and shared activities;
- sharing her home with her parents, who plan to move out in the future; and
- a close-knit supportive family and group of friends.

Freya is a young woman who is living in her own home with her parents.

As she was leaving school Freya hosted a vision day with a group of friends and family to look at a vision for a good life. This was to become the basis for planning her future beyond school. Her mother had attended a conference before this which looked at a framework to think about making a difference in a person's life. This was really helpful in providing a structure for thinking and a method to achieve outcomes. The process involved looking at a vision for the future, employment in particular, and how those ideas might be made reality. It was and is extremely important to her family that Freya be engaged with the community and not segregated for employment, leisure or study. They believe that a strong network of people around Freya will also be a safeguard into the future and that she has a lot to offer the community she lives in.

Freya has been out of school for five years and with her family has started a small business which operates seasonally. She attends TAFE and has done courses in art, computer and adult education. Freya has a small amount of Post School Options Funding and this is used to develop the skills she will need to be able to manage her business with minimal outside assistance.

Freya is learning the skills she needs to live independently, but her family see this as a long work in progress. She needs assistance with many aspects of her life. The plan is that when her parents feel she has the skills and the support required to live independently, they will move out and she can stay on in her own place. The house she lives in was obtained through Homeswest and is in Freya's name. It will be her parents transitioning out of home, not Freya. They envisage that Freya may have a co-resident in the house in future who could provide some support for her in her home.

Freya is establishing herself within her community and her family feels that she has a much better and healthier lifestyle with the planning that has taken place. They are looking long-term for Freya and all the experiences and relationships which are being developed now are part of creating a future where she is a valued member of the community and has a fulfilling life.

Denise

Denise and her family planned her move out of home and she had a staggered transition to independent living, involving confidence-building and Community Housing Association support.

Her safeguards included:

- ongoing close parental contact;
- protective behaviours input from the *People First Program*; and
- family meetings with the Local Area Coordinator and support workers as issues arose and strategies needed to be found.

Denise (26) started her move away from home three years ago. At the time she was living with her mother and father on a farm. She has four younger siblings.

Denise's parents had always thought that she would live away from home, but did not entertain any time frame for this to occur. Her parents put her name down with a Community Housing Program thinking that it would take some time for a place to become available. Within 12 months a place was offered, and they decided that it was suitable and took it. The transition to living independently was staggered with Denise initially spending a day at a time at the unit, then sleeping over with her mother, sleeping overnight alone during the week and then spending weekends at the unit as well. This gave an opportunity to build confidence and address any issues as they arose without the whole move being jeopardised.

Denise has a very busy week with volunteer work at Red Cross most days and two half days at the Chamber of Commerce. She also attends TAFE and does water aerobics one night a week. Her mother manages all her finances and as saving and over-expenditure now have relevance, Denise is learning about long-term saving with a yearly holiday as a goal. Household management is taken care of by Denise with some input from support workers. Before moving out Denise participated in family chores, always within the context of contribution, so that later she would be able to do things for herself.

Denise has experienced many of the same issues as other young people moving out of home for the first time such as difficulty organising money; impulsive decisions around food, people and spending; making herself vulnerable by inviting people she doesn't know well into her home; being easily influenced by others and having to deal with an incompatible flat-mate. Her parents have totally supported her move but at one time felt that she was too socially vulnerable to live alone. They told Denise they wanted her to return home with a view to trying again in the future, but by this time she had been in the unit 18 months and was adamant that she was staying in her own home.

The safeguards in place are Denise's relationship with her parents and their ability to sit with a lot of discomfort and trust in a process. They looked at strategies regarding people coming back to the unit and the situation has now greatly improved. They have also been able to address other problems as they have arisen.

Denise's parents were very anxious about their daughter's personal safety and they spent a lot of time talking about protective behaviours. Also, Denise attended the People 1st Program. Denise's mother is very aware that in order to learn, Denise has to have information presented many times and she also has to have experiences that make the information relevant.

However, finding the balance between safety and natural risk has been and continues to be a challenge for Denise's parents. Her mother talks about the difference in focus between Denise and her siblings leaving home. Denise's siblings initiated the move away, whereas with Denise it was her parents who organised accommodation and are slowly relinquishing support to allow Denise to conduct her own life. There have been times where she has not told her parents about things she considers her business and part of acting as an adult, for example relationships with young men. For Denise's parents, not being overprotective and potentially intrusive but keeping her safe is the hard part, and they will continue to address this issue into the future.

Denise has a lot of contact with people through the week but minimal contact on the weekends, and the focus now is for her to become more engaged with the community. Denise shared her unit with another person for about a year, but over time the compatibility broke down and she is now living alone again. This was a very stressful time for Denise and her family, as many issues which impacted them were not related to the living arrangement and this was quite confusing for Denise. She is very open to sharing again, and still sees her previous flatmate socially.

Encouraging Denise to initiate activities and her own social contacts is something that the family would like to have happen more often so that Denise is not always dependent on others for direction. They believe this would potentially increase her involvement in the community.



Denise manages well on her own with support, and her reliance on her parents is being slowly reduced. She loves living in her own home and is meeting new situations all the time which she would not otherwise have the opportunity to do. Her parents are still very involved with planning, strategies and practical support and this will be ongoing. Her mother reports that she at times "holds her breath" as things unfold but to date they are all willing to continue and manage each situation as it arises.

Terri

Terri's experience involves her family working between three agencies, having difficulty planning in a crisis and her experiences of risk-taking away from the family.

Her safeguards included:

- her family; and
- her visibility in a small town.

Terri (name changed on request) is 18 and living away from home in the home of a carer. She receives 28 hours accommodation support funding per week.

Terri lives in a country town where there are very limited accommodation options. She has had a very turbulent time emotionally over the past few years which has culminated in her parents looking for alternative care arrangements for her. Terri developed psychosis in her teens. This has meant that three different agencies, the Disability Services Commission, Mental Health Services and the Department of Community Development have all had a role in responding to Terri and her family's needs. Her parents report that no one agency has had a lead role in managing Terri's needs and they have found that this has made it difficult for them to coordinate a plan for the future, and to maintain each agency's level of commitment and involvement. This has been their biggest frustration in trying to find an outcome that keeps their daughter safe and provides the right level of support. Recently, Terri and her family have been involved in a Person Centred Planning process with a view to planning for the future. This gives the family the chance to explore the future while identifying strengths and weaknesses.

Terri wants to be independent, but is also very socially vulnerable and inexperienced. When her peer group is smoking and drinking she will do the same thing, but with little awareness of the consequences. On a number of occasions, she has put herself in potentially difficult situations with men. Terri's sister has a strong network of friends and a boyfriend, and Terri would like to have the same thing.

Currently Terri is boarding on a farm and returns home some weekends. Accommodation support funding from the Disability Services Commission supports this arrangement, and is also being used to improve Terri's independent living skills. Her parents feel that she is quite competent in many areas of household tasks but has little motivation to use them, particularly when she is living at home. A lack of housing in their area reduces the options for housing considerably. Terri is very impulsive and has difficulty with time, money, sequencing and initiating some activities. She needs help with most aspects of daily life. Because Terri's living situations have been quite fluid for a time, it has been difficult to put in long-term safeguards for her.

Terri was keen to leave home and tried living in supported accommodation in Perth for about four months, but the level of support there was inadequate for her needs. On several occasions after making decisions where she put herself at risk in the community, she returned home and funding was applied for.

She has also tried boarding in a regional centre while attending TAFE where she was learning independent living skills. Her living arrangement broke down and she returned home again. The main safeguard to date has been the support of her family.

The difficulty for Terri's parents is that she is able to get out into the community, but then cannot always deal with the situations she creates for herself. Terri's inability to deal with some situations results from the combination of her disability and her mental illness. Her mental illness creates uncertainty and is quite unpredictable.

Terri has tried a number of different ways of living away from home. Each time there have been behaviours on her part which she cannot manage, or there is an inability on the part of others to provide the level of support she requires.

Her parents have tried to engage many different types of youth agencies to assist them in accommodation support with Terri, mainly in Perth. However, the youth agencies have not been able to provide a suitable level of care, or have determined that they are not an appropriate agency to work with her. Involvement with three different government agencies for several years has been the greatest difficulty.

It has become clearer over time that no one agency will be able to provide everything that Terri requires. A collaborative approach is required, and her mental health often determines how well she copes with any situation. This is an ongoing issue. The living arrangement Terri has now is not long-term, and planning for the future is still important until a workable solution is found.

Jodi

Jodi planned a move into her own accommodation and now owns her own unit on family property.

Her safeguards included:

- a very close relationship with her family;
- seeing her family daily;
- engaging in work and community activities; and
- having a good understanding of money.



Jodi is a young woman who lives in her own unit at the back of her family's home. Since her teens it has been a family expectation that Jodi would have her own place, but be with the family as well. Jodi saved from the time she was given the Disability Support Pension, and with these savings and money from a property investment sale she was able to purchase an old relocatable chalet from the local caravan park. Her mother says that Jodi has always been good at saving money.

The family has done all the renovations themselves which has greatly reduced the cost of making it Jodi's home. The unit is attached to the house by a veranda. By doing the work themselves they been able to custom-make it to Jodi's needs, and they are still making changes that meet her needs better. Jodi has meals with the family every day, but she can have her own space as well. Jodi has lots of pets and she pays for all the pet food they require. She also pays for her own power.

Jodi is working at Activ out of town four days a week and uses the local gym. She can walk or ride her bike there. She has many trophies for bowling and goes bowling every second week. Transport is an issue in the town, so Jodi needs her family to help with transport when the weather is bad.

Jodi has had changes in her health over the past couple of years, and this is one reason that the family is very happy that she is close to home. Jodi says she feels good about this as well. The family has gone away for a few days at a time, and Jodi has had a close neighbour as a back up if she needed any help. Jodi is socially vulnerable but has the security of having her own place with her family, who are very aware of her routine and the people in her life. However, she can have friends over and entertain if she chooses, and does so.

The planning involved in this arrangement was about having the saved income to buy a place. It was never an arrangement where Jodi was not an integral part of the family. For the near future she is very happy to stay where she is and the family is not making any other plans. Jodi is financially secure. Having paid for her accommodation outright she has minimal overheads. Her parents help Jodi manage her finances, and she has a lot of options with the money she saves. Jodi has a good understanding of money and only spends what she needs to.

Kyle

Kyle's move out of home was initiated by family. He tried sharing and is now living alone with minimal community involvement.

His safeguards included:

- contact with family; and
- daily support.

Kyle (19) lives in a unit on his own in a large regional centre about 50km from his mother's home. He has been there for about 12 months, and has some accommodation support funding to help assist him with daily management. The level of support he has had in the past was a lot higher than it is now, but he still requires help with the daily and weekly routines.

Kyle has had a difficult time over the past couple of years with the death of his older brother with whom he was very close. He also lost his father when he was eight. His mother feels that he has started to settle into the unit over the past two or three months. Prior to that he would want to go home with his mother when she went to visit. Kyle's move out of home was due to his behaviour reaching a point that made living with his mother impossible.

It has been a big move for Kyle to leave home, and he finds many things difficult. He needs support to initiate many activities in his life such as getting ready for work, leisure pursuits and the care of his unit. He does not go outside the unit very readily and needs help with the garden. He is currently working two days a week in horticulture with an agency, and working is a goal for the future. Kyle finds it difficult to consistently attend work.

Kyle's mother reports that he is a very poor sleeper and this affects how he is during the day. He was sharing the unit for a short time, but it became an exploitive situation and did not work out. He is now living by himself again. Kyle does have some friends visit from the town where he grew up, but these relationships are loosening the longer he is away.

The agency supporting Kyle helps him with money management and shopping. Being able to manage more aspects of his life independently is a goal for Kyle, and he is working towards this slowly. His ability to manage the demands of his life fluctuates, and this has made it difficult for him. His mother continues to be the most constant relationship in his life and sees this continuing into the future.



/2. Appendices

Appendix 1

Useful Resources

Women on Wellness

- **Shenton Park Clinic, Royal Perth Hospital** - appointments – 9382 7141
This clinic is fully accessible with a height adjustable examination beds and equipment and staff to assist with transferring.
- **Wellington Street Campus** - appointments – 9224 2774

Community Resources

Activ Library - 9387 0555

www.activ.asn.au/library

Anglicare

Contact number within each region

Australian Direct Marketing Association - 1800 646 664

www.adma.com.au

Centrelink - 131 021

www.centrelink.gov.au

Department of Consumer and Employment Protection - 9282 0777

www.docep.wa.gov.au

Department of Housing and Works - Homeswest - 1800 093 325

Community Housing in the website

www.dhw.wa.gov.au

Disability Services Commission - 9426 9200 or 1800 998 214 (country)

<http://yourinfo.dsc.wa.gov.au>

www.dsc.wa.gov.au

Tenants Advice Service - 1800 621 888 or 9221 0088 (metro)

www.taswa.org

Financial

WA No Interest Loans Network Inc (NILS) - 9354 7611

www.wanils.asn.au

Health

Children, Youth and Women's Health Service

www.cyh.com

Office of Health Review - 1800 813 583 (country) or 9323 0600 (metro)

www.healthreview.wa.gov.au

Appendix 1

Health

Patient Assisted Travel Scheme - 1800 629 028

Consumer Information in the website
www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au

Sexuality Education Counselling and Consultancy Agency (secca) - 9420 7229

www.secca.org.au

Relationship Education

Kalparrin Centre - 1800 066 413

www.kalparrin.org.au

PIP - People 1st Programme - 9227 6414

www.people1stprogramme.com.au

Sexuality Education Counselling and Consultancy Agency (secca) 9420 7229

www.secca.org.au

Transition Planning

Kalparrin Centre - 1800 066 413

www.kalparrin.org.au

Inclusion.com

MAP, Circle of Friends, Person Centred Planning, PATH

<http://www.inclusion.com/planningtools.html>

Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN)

www.planinstitute.ca

Ties That Bind - National Film Board of Canada

One family's exploration and journey through transition

<http://www.nfb.ca/tiesthatbind/>

Numeracy, Literacy & Money Handling Skills Resources

Clarke Road Money Programme

Clarke Road School, Clarke Road, Hornsby South, NSW 2077

Ph: (02) 9487 2652

Fax: (02) 9489 2997

Read Write Now

Locked Bag 6, Northbridge WA 6865

Ph: 9427 1393 or 1800 018 802

email: readwritenow@central.wa.edu.au

website: www.read-write-now.org

Albany Community Resources

Arts

Unhiding

- A community arts programme designed to bridge the gap between artists and people with a disability.

Lower Great Southern Community Living Association

Phone: 9892 9431

Southern Edge Arts

Centennial Oval, Lockyer Ave, Albany 6330

Phone: 9841 6002

Alternatives to Employment

Activ Alternative to Employment Services

- Supports people with disability to participate in community and developmental activities which enhance their social participation and independence.

80 Stead Road, Albany 6330

PO Box 5558, Albany 6332

Supervisor - 9841 7806

Anglicare – see Family Support Services

Lower Great Southern Community Living Association – see Family Support Services

Carers

Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre

Freecall – 1800 059 059

Commonwealth Carelink Centres

- Information about community aged care, disability and other support services

Freecall: 1800 052 222

www.commcarelink.health.gov.au

Driver Training

Police and Citizens Youth Club (PCYC)

- Assistance with obtaining the Learners Permit for people with a disability

Phone: 9842 1716

Education/Training

TAFE

Disability Liaison Officer (DLO)

- DLO provides information and advice to students and prospective students, and coordinates individual learning support.

Freecall: 1800 675 781

Phone: 9892 8741

Fax : 9892 8896

Albany Community Resources

Employment/Training

Great Southern Personnel

- Assists people with disabilities to gain and maintain open employment.
15-21 Aberdeen Street, Albany 6330
Phone: 9842 1510

Activ Business Services

- Provides a range of employment opportunities for people with disability in a commercial environment.
36 Spencer Street
Phone: 9841 4411

TAFE

- Coordinates individual learning support and provides specific courses designed for students who require a higher level of support. Also provides places in Lifestyle courses for people requiring support eg short cooking courses. These are in conjunction with My Life, My Community.

Family Support Services

Anglicare

Phone: 9844 1831 Mobile: 0412 619 207

Lower Great Southern Community Living Association

Executive Officer
322-324 Princess Royal Drive, Albany 6330
Phone: 9892 9406
Email: lgscla@inet.net.au

Financial Counselling

Anglicare Financial Counselling

Unit 1, 87 Aberdeen St, Albany
Phone: 9841 2956

Health

**Patient Assisted Travel Scheme
Accommodation Assistance
PATS clerk - Albany Regional Hospital
98 922 222**

Health Infoline – Department of Health

1300 135 030

Albany Community Resources

Housing

Great Southern Community Housing Association

- Aims to provide and manage affordable and appropriate secure housing for special needs clients and people on low incomes.

178 Albany Highway, Albany 6330

Phone: 9842 8698

Department of Housing and Works (Homeswest) - 1800 093 325

see Government Departments

Government Departments

Centrelink

Disability Officer, Financial Information Service

51 – 61 Serpentine Road, Albany, WA 6330

Disability, Sickness and Carers - 13 2717

Department of Education

District Office

85 Serpentine Road, Albany 6330

Phone: 9841 0333

Department of Housing and Works (Homeswest)

131 Aberdeen Street, Albany 6330

Phone: 9842 0444

Department for Planning and Infrastructure

Chester Pass Road, Albany

Licensing - 13 1156 Taxis and Travel Subsidies - 9841 3200

Legal Services

Albany Community Legal Centre

77 Albany Highway, Albany 6330

9842 8566 Fax: 9842 8577

Sussex Street Community Law Service Inc

- Individual Disability Advocacy Service (IDAS)

Freecall: 1 800 642 791

Phone: 9470 2676

Loans

No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS)

- Loans up to \$1,000 if eligibility is met. Eligibility determined through Perth office.

1300 365 301

Albany Community Resources

Recreation

Police and Citizens Youth Club

Sandford Road, Albany
Phone: 9842 1716

Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre

Barker Road, Albany
Phone: 9841 2788

Activ Leisure Network

Leisure Network Coordinator
66b Aberdeen Street PO Box 5558, Albany 6332
98422161 Mobile: 0427 304 120
Email: albanyleisure network@activ.asn.au

Department of Sport and Recreation

Manager
Phone: 9841 6800

My Life My Community

Lower Great Southern Community Living Association
Coordinator
Phone: 9841 2835

Harness Driving

South Coast Harness Driving Group

5 Hope Street, Albany 6330
Phone: 9844 8257

Riding For the Disabled

Home and Community Care (HACC)

Horse Riding - Saturday 8-12 pm including pick-up. RDA accredited instructor.

Willowie Game Park – Two Peoples Bay
Phone: 9842 9828 Mobile: 0429 102 871

Willowie – Two Peoples Bay

- Group or private horse riding tuition
John and Lynn Boon – accredited RDA instructor
Phone: 98 464365

King River Pony Club

Friendship Group (HACC)

- Provides respite and social support for people with an intellectual disability helping them and their families to pursue a better life.

Phone: 9842 9828 Mobile: 0429 102 871

Albany Community Resources

Recreation

Friendship House

Albany East Rotary Club

- Holiday Accommodation, wheelchair accessible, \$50 per week per person, all bookings Saturday to Saturday

Wild Women's Group

- A group for local women who are socially isolated and have a disability. Recreational activities, crafts, guest speakers and social afternoons.

Phone: 9841 8797

Lower Great Southern Community Living Association – 9842 3855

Relationship Education

People 1st Programme

- One to one education on human relationships and sexuality. Has a visiting service to Albany two days a fortnight.

9227 6414

Email: pip@fpwa-health.org.au

www.people1stprogramme.com.au

Respite

Lower Great Southern Family Support Association (FSA)

- Supports people with disabilities and their families through the provision of funding with which to purchase respite support.

211-217 North Road, Albany 6330 PO Box 517, Albany 6331

Phone: 9842 3381

Region (Template) Community Resources

Arts

Alternatives to Employment

Carers

Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre

Freecall – 1800 059 059

Commonwealth Carelink Centres

Information about community aged care, disability and other support services

1800 052 222

www.commcarelink.health.gov.au

Driver Training

Education/Training

TAFE

Disability Liaison Officer (DLO)

- DLO provides information and advice to students and prospective students, and coordinates individual learning support.

Employment/Training

TAFE

Family Support Services

Financial Counselling

Health

Patient Assisted Travel Scheme

Accommodation Assistance

PATS clerk

Health Infoline – Department of Health

1300 135 030

Region (Template) Community Resources

Housing

Department of Housing and Works (Homeswest) - see Government Departments

Government Departments

Centrelink

Disability Officer, Financial Information Service

Department of Education

District Office

Department of Housing and Works (Homeswest)

Department for Planning and Infrastructure

Legal Services

Sussex Street Community Law Service Inc

- Individual Disability Advocacy Service (IDAS)
Freecall: 1 800 642 791
Phone: (08) 9470 2676

Loans

No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS)

- Loans up to \$1,000 if eligibility is met. Eligibility determined through Perth office.
1300 365 301

Recreation

Relationship Education

Respite

All in a Life's Design

Planning Independent Living

If you wish to find out more about Local Area Coordination or to contact a Local Area Coordinator in your area, phone the Disability Services Commission.

**Country Services Coordination Tel: 9426 9792 or
Freecall (Country): 1800 998 214**

**Metropolitan Services Coordination Tel: 9426 9371
Fax: 9226 2310
TTY: 9426 9315**

**Disability Services Commission
146-160 Colin Street
West Perth WA 6872**

www.dsc.wa.gov.au

