

New Disability Employment Services from 2018

Discussion Paper

**Children and Young People with Disability Australia
Submission – December 2016**

INTRODUCTION

It is frequently reported to Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) that there are major barriers to accessing employment. For young people, there are a range of typical activities which occur prior to obtaining sustained employment. These include work experience in school, obtaining a part time job and access to effective post school transition support. However, young people with disability often miss out on these valuable opportunities and frequently report extremely poor experiences in relation to employment. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for employers to state they 'don't have the capacity' to employ a young person with disability.

Navigating the complex and fragmented employment support system is often exasperating for young people. It can be extremely difficult to obtain information about the function and location of employment services. Further, CYDA is informed by members that supports provided by disability employment services are variable, with the experience being that many lack appropriate expertise or resources to adequately support young people.

Young people with disability typically face a culture of low expectations which manifests in most sections of the employment pathway. For example CYDA was recently informed of a young person being declared 'unemployable' by an employment service despite having completed several work experience placements with appropriate support.

The impact of these low expectations and constant diminishing on young people with disability is profound. Exclusion from participating within the community through employment is extremely demoralising and can take a huge toll on a young person's sense of self-worth and self-esteem. Young people often feel helpless and devalued by society.

This is reflected in the following comments:

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

(After my son finished school) we tried numerous educational options, but he now sits at home all day without a job, without an education and it's taken all my strength just to keep him on track and hold onto the hope there will be something out there that will help him feel worthwhile and like he has something to contribute.

These direct experiences are reflected in available statistics around employment of people with disability. Recent data shows that 46.6% of people with disability are not in the labour force, compared with 16.8% of people without disability.¹ People with disability are also significantly more likely to experience unemployment and underemployment than people without disability.²

Disability Employment Services (DES) have a vital role in addressing many barriers to employment experienced by people with disability. As a key program delivered by the Australian Government, it is critical to ensure that DES is achieving its intended outcomes to support people with disability to "find work and keep a job."³ However, a range of systemic issues impacting DES have been highlighted by people with disability and other stakeholders for a number of years and are captured

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, 'Disability,' *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, viewed 15 December 2016, <https://goo.gl/cXkD3a>.

² Ibid.

³ Australian Government Department of Social Services 2016, *Disability Employment Services*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, viewed 15 December 2016, <https://goo.gl/3t4Rsf>.

in the discussion paper.⁴ These include issues in relation to: compliance and regulatory requirements; market share arrangements; scope of the program; and outcome payments and incentive structures that limit the capacity of the program to appropriately assist people who require greater support in locating and maintaining employment.

Young people with disability aged under 24 years represent 15.5% (28 323) of total DES participants.⁵ It is crucial that the DES system can provide appropriate support to young job seekers with disability. This will require recognition of the specific challenges and barriers experienced by young people with disability in relation to employment, which are discussed in this submission.

It is also important to recognise that considerations around employment for young people differ significantly to those of older job seekers. Many young people, for example, will need to focus on skill development, access to entry level positions and support when considering future employment pathways.

CYDA therefore welcomes this consultation and the opportunity to contribute. This submission discusses key factors that impact employment outcomes for young people with disability and then provides comments on the discussion paper. Particular focus is given to the Eligible School Leaver aspect of DES.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY AUSTRALIA

CYDA is the national representative organisation for children and young people with disability, aged 0 to 25 years. The organisation is primarily funded through the Department of Social Services and is a not for profit organisation. CYDA has a national membership of 5500.

CYDA provides a link between the direct experiences of children and young people with disability to federal government and other key stakeholders. This link is essential for the creation of a true appreciation of the experiences and challenges faced by children and young people with disability.

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

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

- **Listen and respond** to the voices and experiences of children and young people with disability;
- **Advocate** for children and young people with disability for equal opportunities, participation and inclusion in the Australian community;
- **Educate** national public policy makers and the broader community about the experiences of children and young people with disability;

⁴ Australian Government Department of Social Services 2016, *New Disability Employment Services from 2018: Discussion Paper*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 7.

⁵ Australian Government Department of Social Services 2016, 'Table 3: DES Caseload by LMR/ESA and Age - Data as at 30 June 2016,' *DES Historical Commencements and Caseload Data (by ESA and Postcode) - 30 June 2016*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

- **Inform** children and young people with disability, their families and care givers about their citizenship rights and entitlements; and
- **Celebrate** the successes and achievements of children and young people with disability.

LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

Australia has demonstrated a commitment to upholding the human rights of people with disability to access and participate in employment through ratification of international human rights conventions and a strong focus on economic participation in domestic legislation and policy.

A key example is the *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020*, a major policy framework to guide reform for all Australian governments to address the barriers faced by Australians with disability. The Strategy includes 'economic security,' including access to employment opportunities for people with disability, as a critical area for policy action.⁶

Further, employment of people with disability is currently a significant focus of reform at the Commonwealth level, with the development of a new *National Disability Employment Framework* and the current review of DES.

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

The benefits of employment for people in terms of financial security, independence, physical and mental health and a basis for identity are well established in available evidence.⁷ Within the Australian community there is a strong value placed on employment, with a career or occupation frequently being a key part of a person's identity. However, young people with disability experience significant disadvantage in relation to employment. This is reflected in most recent statistics:*

- 38% of young people aged 15 to 24 years with disability either work, study, or do a combination of both on a full time basis compared to 56% of young people without disability;⁸
- 42% of young people with disability neither work nor study. There is no comparative data available for young people without disability;⁹
- 20% of young people with disability either work or study on a part time basis. There is no comparative data available for young people without disability;¹⁰
- The labour force participation rate for young people with disability aged 15 to 24 years is 56.6% compared to 70.8% for young people without disability;¹¹

* Please note that employment statistics from the 2015 Australian Bureau of Statistics *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers* that disaggregates according to age has not yet been released and CYDA has therefore included 2012 data.

⁶ Council of Australian Governments 2011, *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 42.

⁷ Foundation for Young Australians 2015, *The New Work Order: Ensuring Young Australians have Skills and Experience for the Jobs of the Future, Not the Past*, Melbourne, p. 5, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development 2015, *OECD Skills Outlook 2015: Youth, Skills and Employability*, OECD Publishing, Paris, p. 15.

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012, *Australian Social Trends*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, viewed 15 December 2016, <http://goo.gl/u0oAlp>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

- 24.2% of young people with disability aged 15 to 24 years are unemployed, compared to 11.4% of young people without disability;¹² and
- Young people aged 16 to 24 years represent 6.4% (49 918) of total recipients of the Disability Support Pension.¹³

KEY FACTORS THAT IMPACT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Education

A quality education should provide the necessary knowledge, skills and resources to support future meaningful community participation including further education and employment pathways. However, students with disability commonly report poor educational experiences and outcomes. It is the view of CYDA that the present education system does not adequately meet the needs of students with disability.

A typical education experience for students with disability involves discrimination, limited or no funding for support, inadequately trained staff, a systemic culture of low expectations, exclusion and bullying. Further, there is a lack of accountability for educational outcomes for students with disability. These issues mean that students with disability are frequently leaving school without the necessary knowledge and skills to participate in further education and employment.

These experiences are reflected in available statistics, which illustrate significant disparities in educational attainment and outcomes of students with disability in comparison to their peers without disability:

- 45.8% of people aged 15 to 64 years with disability's highest level of education was Year 10 or below, compared to 25.7% of people without disability;¹⁴
- 41% of people with disability have completed Year 12, compared to 62.8% of people without disability;¹⁵ and
- 17% of people with disability have completed a Bachelor Degree or higher compared to 30.1% of people without disability.¹⁶

Post School Transition

Young people with disability report highly variable post school transition experiences, with many informing of poor experiences. Post school transition refers the period in which young people informally or formally consider and prepare for post school life. It is an important time to support and guide young people to think about their post school plans and interests and assist the development of skills and knowledge to pursue these plans.

¹² Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015, 'Table 4: ALL PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS, Labour Force Status by Whether Have a Disability by Age,' *Disability and Labour Force Participation, 2012*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

¹³ Department of Social Services 2016, *DSS Demographics June 2016*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

¹⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, 'Table 7.3 Persons Aged 15 Years and Over, Living in Households, Disability Status, by Selected Social Characteristics–2015, Proportion of Persons,' *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

¹⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, viewed 23 November 2016, <https://goo.gl/cXkD3a>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

It is reported to CYDA that post school transition is typically a variable and ad hoc process for students with disability. This time is usually fraught with limited information and negative attitudes from schools, employment programs and further education providers. Valuable opportunities such as work experience or part time employment are also frequently denied.

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

(My son was) held back from work placement... We have had to fight for him to have transition for life after school.

Employment Context for Young People

It's also important to situate the employment experiences of young people with disability within the broader context for young people. Presently, young people in Australia face considerable challenges in finding, securing and maintaining employment.

In September 2016, unemployment among young people aged 15 to 25 years was over double the total unemployment rate (12.6% and 5.6% respectively).¹⁷ Over 30% of young people in Australia are either unemployed or underemployed.¹⁸ It takes young people on average 4.7 years from leaving full time education to entering full time employment (an increase from one year in 1987).¹⁹

Poor employment outcomes are also being experienced by young people with tertiary qualifications. 65% of university graduates and 58% of young people with a Certificate III are in full time work four months after graduating.²⁰ Further, 29% of newly employed graduates with bachelor degrees and 62% of newly employed Vocational Education and Training graduates have jobs that are not relevant to their course.²¹

In addition, a report by the Foundation for Young Australians found that young people are being adversely impacted by changes to the economy and labour markets.²² Critically, it found that young people are not being provided with skill sets that align with the labour markets of the future and recommends significant reform to the education, post school transition and employment systems to address this issue.

There has also been a trend in recent years towards casual, part time, temporary or short-term contracts for young people who are employed.²³ This creates a number of issues, including job insecurity, lack of access to work entitlements and fewer opportunities to develop skills in a stable work environment. A report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has highlighted that because "many young people enter the labour market on temporary contracts, it is important to ensure these temporary jobs are 'stepping stones' into more stable employment, rather than a series of precarious situations that raise the risks of young people being

¹⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Labour Force Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

¹⁸ Foundation for Young Australians 2016, *Renewing Australia's promise: Report Card 2016*, Melbourne, p. 5.

¹⁹ Foundation for Young Australians 2015, *Report Card 2015: How Are Young People Faring in the Transition from School to Work?*, Melbourne, p. 2.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 2.

²¹ Foundation for Young Australians 2016, *Renewing Australia's promise: Report Card 2016*, p. 3.

²² Foundation for Young Australians 2015, *The New Work Order: Ensuring Young Australians have Skills and Experience for the Jobs of the Future, Not the Past*.

²³ Foundation for Young Australians 2016, *Renewing Australia's promise: Report Card 2016*, p. 5, Foundation for Young Australians 2015, *Report Card 2015: How Are Young People Faring in the Transition from School to Work?*, p. 7.

unemployed.”²⁴ It recommends that member states examine taxes and social contributions to support employers to hire young people with minimal work experience.²⁵

Present economic and social conditions contribute to a highly uncertain and precarious situation for many young people in relation to employment and future prospects. In addition, young people with disability also contend with barriers in relation to their disability, including negative attitudes about disability among employers²⁶ and difficulties in establishing flexible workplace arrangements and negotiating reasonable adjustments.

The following employment experiences of young people with disability have been reported to CYDA:

I should be able to work in most jobs, with little changes (to support me). But really, getting a job in the first place is a nightmare! People judge my ability to work, based on an interview which I greatly struggle with.

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

While it is not the role of DES to address exclusion and discrimination against children and young people with disability in other sectors, it is critical that these experiences in relation to education, post school transition and employment are recognised within the DES system.

COMMENTS ON THE DISCUSSION PAPER

Eligible School Leavers

DES can be accessed presently by students in their final year of secondary school who meet the Eligible School Leaver (ESL) guidelines. To be eligible, students must either: access individualised funding through their relevant education authority; be enrolled in a special school or special unit within a mainstream school or; receive the Disability Support Pension (DSP).²⁷

The purpose of the ESL program is currently to support the transition of students into ongoing employment upon finishing school.²⁸ It is focused on “allowing DES providers to work in partnership with the school to develop the employment skills to support the transition at the end of Year 12 into sustainable employment with ongoing support as required.”²⁹ The ESL guidelines specifically discourage the registration of students with DES providers for the purpose of gaining part time after school work.³⁰

²⁴ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development 2015, *OECD Skills Outlook 2015: Youth, Skills and Employability*, p. 16.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 16.

²⁶ National People with Disabilities and Carer Council 2009, *Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 38, Australian Human Resources Institute 2011, *Recruiting People with Disability: An Employer Perspective*, Melbourne, Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2011, *Employer Perspectives on Recruiting People with Disability and the role of Disability Employment Services*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

²⁷ Australian Government 2015, *Disability Employment Services Eligible School Leaver Guidelines*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 10.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 5.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 5.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 5.

The discussion paper proposes changes to the ESL program to expand the eligibility to include more students with disability, particularly Year 12 students.³¹ It states that “this expanded cohort of students could be supported by a specific service fee and employment outcome payment.”³² The discussion paper reiterates the guidelines in stating the ESL program is not intended to provide assistance in locating part time work “as any new outcome payment would only be payable when students remained in employment for a specified period of time after they have finished Year 12.”³³

CYDA supports the expansion of the ESL program to include more students with disability and the development of a specific service fee and outcome payment in recognition of the significant barriers to employment experienced by young people with disability. However, it is also the view of CYDA that revising the ESL program to include support for students in locating employment opportunities while at school would result in significant benefits.

Available research highlights the positive outcomes of part time work for students. Having a part time job has been found to support young people to develop employability skills including work organisation, time management and appropriate workplace behaviour as well as facilitating financial independence.³⁴ Part time employment also allows young people to gain an understanding of the labour market and support the transition between education and employment.³⁵ Volunteering and work experience placements have also been found to provide similar benefits in terms of developing the skills of young people to support future employment.³⁶

These activities are generally seen as typical to the post school transition experiences of students without disability, however are frequently denied to students with disability. Young people with disability therefore often cannot access opportunities to develop foundational employment skills and gain valuable work experience.

This is not to suggest that DES providers cease to facilitate support for longer term career development for young people for whom this is appropriate. However, the present reform process provides a valuable opportunity to reframe the ESL provisions to meet the needs of a broader range of young people. This could potentially include:

- Redefining the purpose of DES regarding access for secondary students with disability to facilitate the development of foundational employment skills, including through part time employment, volunteering and work experience;
- Expansion of the eligibility to include students who are at the legal working age, rather than just ‘school leavers’ in Year 12;
- Expansion of the eligibility to include students with disability who are enrolled in mainstream classes and do not receive individual education funding or the DSP. CYDA is aware that there are many young people who do not meet the current criteria but would none the less greatly benefit from additional support in accessing employment; and

³¹ Australian Government Department of Social Services 2016, *New Disability Employment Services from 2018: Discussion Paper*, p. 44.

³² Ibid, p. 45.

³³ Ibid, p. 45.

³⁴ J Abhayaratna et al. 2008, *Part Time Employment: The Australian Experience*, Productivity Commission Staff Working Paper, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, pp. 94-95, W Patton et al. 2009, ‘Part-Time Work of School Students: Impact on Employability, Employment Outcomes and Career Development,’ *Journal of Career Development*, p. 4.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 4, 5.

³⁶ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development 2015, *How’s Life? Measuring Wellbeing*, OECD Publishing, Paris, p. 18, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development 2009, *Learning for Jobs: OECD Policy Review of Vocational Education and Training*, Initial Report, OECD Publishing, Paris, p. 62.

- Changing the title of the ESL program to reflect that support is not solely intended for school leavers.

It is also important to consider appropriate linkages and collaboration with relevant education, post school transition and employment systems and supports. This will involve significant challenges as these areas each sit within different jurisdictions and portfolios.

CYDA notes the issue raised in the discussion paper that: “given that the education of people with disability is fundamentally the responsibility of the education system, it is important to ensure that DES does not duplicate supports that should be provided by schools.”³⁷ However, support in accessing part time employment is not generally the role of schools.

Further, provision of post school transition support for students with disability is typically non-existent or extremely poor. While CYDA is not suggesting DES adopt the responsibilities of schools, it is crucial to ensure appropriate collaboration and coordination across the different systems in a young person’s life to ensure provision of appropriate support.

For example, students with disability are often denied access to work experience facilitated through schools. A common scenario is students with disability being required to undertake work experience within the school, such as in the library or not participate at all. In these cases, consideration should be given to how DES could provide assistance in locating work experience placements to ensure students with disability do not miss out on this valuable experience. This would require close collaboration with schools and provision of information to ensure schools are aware of supports available through DES.

In addition, appropriate connections with other relevant post school transition supports or services are also important. This may include the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for students who are participants or the National Disability Coordination Officer program.

The discussion paper also notes the availability of youth specialist DES providers.³⁸ Examination and review of the outcomes and expertise of these organisations could also be of significant value in ensuring the DES system can meet the needs of young people with disability.

Recommendation 1: Review of the Eligible School Leaver Guidelines for DES to facilitate support for young people with disability to access work experience, part time employment and volunteering opportunities while still at school.

Recommendation 2: Expansion of the eligibility criteria for DES to include secondary students of legal working age, who are enrolled in mainstream classes and do not receive individual education funding or the DSP.

Recommendations 3: Consideration of mechanisms to ensure adequate linkages and collaboration between DES, schools, tertiary education providers, the NDIS, post school transition programs for students with disability and employers with the aim of providing coordinated support for young people with disability to access employment.

³⁷ Australian Government Department of Social Services 2016, *New Disability Employment Services from 2018: Discussion Paper*, p. 44.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 30.

Recommendation 4: Examination and review of available expertise and outcomes facilitated through youth specialist DES providers.

Support for Young People with Disability Post School

It is also important to ensure there is consideration of the circumstances of young people who have finished secondary school or are in tertiary education in relation to supports provided through DES. It is common for young people to seek employment in term or semester breaks, after completing school or after commencing in tertiary study. This may include part time or temporary employment.

CYDA understands that support provided by DES during this time depends on Employment Benchmark hours determined through required assessments or any Mutual Obligation or Participation requirements through Centrelink. However, it may be useful to consider how DES can provide more flexible support for young people, including in locating part time or temporary work, in addition to a focus on longer term employment outcomes.

DES Providers

CYDA has heard varied feedback in relation to the quality of service accessed through DES. While some positive experiences have been reported, concerns have been raised with CYDA around support provided and available expertise. An example is a lack of responsiveness from DES following participant or family queries or suggestions regarding useful supports and job placement options.

CYDA notes that the discussion paper includes proposals that aim to ensure successful DES providers are able to expand their market share. It is the view of CYDA that also important is consideration of participant experiences in examining the 'success' of services.

Recommendation 5: Consideration of mechanisms to ensure participant experiences and reported satisfaction is able to inform evaluation of DES provider performance.

Linkages with Broader Employment Initiatives

There are presently a range of services, initiatives and programs that aim to improve employment outcomes, including those targeted at people with disability and the broader population. It is important to ensure appropriate linkages and collaboration occurs to coordinate service delivery. However, because DES sits within the Department of Social Services, CYDA is concerned that provision of employment support for people with disability remains siloed and segregated from broader reform around employment.

One particular current employment initiative CYDA would like to highlight is the *Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare, Trial Hire)* program. The program aims to maximise "the chance of young job seekers obtaining a job and moving off income support."³⁹ The three components of the initiative are employability skills training, subsidised internship placements and a youth wage subsidy.⁴⁰

To be eligible, young people must be aged between 17 and 24 years, have been in jobactive, Transition to Work or Disability Employment Services for at least six months and be currently accessing income support payments.⁴¹ The *Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy* will be available to employers who hire a job seeker aged under 25 years who has been accessing employment services for at least

³⁹ House of Representatives 2016, *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs PaTH: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016 Explanatory Memorandum*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 1.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 1.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 4.

six months.⁴² Legislation to give effect to the internship and wage subsidy components of the program is yet to be passed by Parliament.

It is important to consider how these concurrent areas of reform will be connected to provide assistance to young people with disability and ultimately improve outcomes. For example, DES providers will need to be informed about *Youth Jobs PaTH* to provide information and support around accessing the program for young DES participants if relevant.

Recommendation 6: Ensure appropriate linkages between DES and the broader employment system and the Department of Employment.

Recommendation 7: Department of Social Services collaborate with the Department of Employment in relation to the *Youth Jobs PaTH* initiative to ensure young DES participants can access the program if relevant.

Availability of Information for Young People

CYDA frequently hears from young people with disability and families about the significant challenges associated with accessing clear information about post school transition and employment supports. These challenges are compounded by the fact that programs and supports are provided by different agencies and organisations and in different jurisdictions. This is reflected in the following comment made to CYDA in relation to DES:

EVERY bit of information I receive is through advocacy groups like (CYDA), networking with other parents or trolling through mazes of paperwork and websites to find things by chance.

It is critical that clear and accessible information about reform to DES and the broader disability employment system is developed and provided to young people and families. Further, this should include information about pathways to independent information and advocacy.

CONCLUSION

Employment is highly valued within the Australian community, with widely recognised benefits to individuals, the economy and society. However, due to a multitude of complex barriers, young people with disability are being denied opportunities to access employment.

As a key government initiative to support employment of people with disability, it is critical that DES are able to meet the specific needs of young people with disability. It is the view of CYDA that there is scope to expand the role and eligibility criteria for DES to better support young people who are beginning to pursue further education and employment pathways. It is vital that appropriate support is provided at this crucial transition point in a young person's life.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this consultation and please do not hesitate to contact CYDA if you wish to discuss further any of the matters raised in this submission.

⁴² House of Representatives 2016, *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs PaTH: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016 Explanatory Memorandum*, p. 6.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Review of the Eligible School Leaver Guidelines for DES to facilitate support for young people with disability to access work experience, part time employment and volunteering opportunities while still at school.

Recommendation 2: Expansion of the eligibility criteria for DES to include secondary students of legal working age, who are enrolled in mainstream classes and do not receive individual education funding or the DSP.

Recommendations 3: Consideration of mechanisms to ensure adequate linkages and collaboration between DES, schools, tertiary education providers, the NDIS, post school transition programs for students with disability and employers with the aim of providing coordinated support for young people with disability to access employment.

Recommendation 4: Examination and review of available expertise and outcomes facilitated through youth specialist DES providers.

Recommendation 5: Consideration of mechanisms to ensure participant experiences and reported satisfaction is able to inform evaluation of DES provider performance.

Recommendation 6: Ensure appropriate linkages between DES and the broader employment system and the Department of Employment.

Recommendation 7: Department of Social Services collaborate with the Department of Employment in relation to the *Youth Jobs PaTH* initiative to ensure young DES participants can access the program if relevant.

CONTACT

Stephanie Gotlib
Chief Executive Officer
20 Derby Street, Collingwood VIC 3066
03 9417 1025
stephanieg@cda.org.au
www.cda.org.au