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Address poverty for young people with disability and create a youth jobs plan

Nearly half of young people with disability (15-24 years) are being forced to live on inadequate income support payments as their main source of income.

Children and Young People with Disability (CYDA), the national representative organisation for children and young people with disability is calling on the Australian government to urgently address the poverty and disadvantage young people with disability face.

In CYDA's Pre-Budget Submission to the Australian Government released today new data shows:

- Nearly half of young people with disability aged 15 to 24 years (49 per cent) rely on income support payments as their main source of income compared to 14 per cent of those without a disability.
- The number of young people with disability on Jobseeker (known as Newstart prior to 2020) has increased by 372.8 per cent in the decade from 2009
- The number of young people with disability on Youth Allowance aged between 20 and 25 years has increased by 970.3 per cent and for those under 19 years old there has been an increase by 174.9 per cent since 2009

Mary Sayers, CEO CYDA said that while many young people with disability rely on income support, more have been diverted from receiving the higher payments by being ineligible for the Disability Support Pension. This is despite the fact young people with disability are more than twice as likely to be unemployed than older adults.

“Australia has a wicked problem where young people with disability face well known disadvantage in securing a meaningful job because of systemic discrimination in their education and post-school transition, yet we punish them by forcing them to live below the poverty line,” says Ms Sayers.

“That’s why we are calling on the Australian Government to increase Youth Allowance and JobSeeker for those with partial capacity to work and develop and implement a targeted National Youth Disability Employment Strategy plus COVID-19 youth recovery responses.”

These recommendations are among 10 key recommendations outlined in CYDA's Pre-Budget Submission to drive inclusion and equity for children and young people with disability.

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