



Children and Young People
with Disability Australia



Strategic Plan

2017–2020

July 2017

Children and Young People with Disability Australia

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. It is a not for profit organisation that was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee in November 2009.

CYDA provides a link between the direct experiences of children and young people with disability to the Australian Government and other key stakeholders through:

- Participation and representation of children and young people with disability;
- Development and dissemination of expert advice;
- Implementation of high impact national advocacy activities to positively influence policy, practice and attitudes of the Australian Government, key stakeholders and the wider community;
- Delivery of strategic projects that support the Australian Government to reform its policy and practice; and
- Partnership approach with its membership, non-government, government and philanthropic partners.

CYDA acknowledges the critical role that families play in providing care, support and developmental opportunities to children and young people with disability and works alongside families in this context.

CYDA receives its core funding through the Department of Social Services (DSS) through the national disability peaks program for representation and engagement with children and young people with disability and families around a range of issues.

In addition, CYDA has received funding from DSS regarding the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Through this work CYDA has provided information, referral and systemic advocacy regarding the experiences of children with disability and abuse.

CYDA is a driving force for change and inclusion of children and young people with disability. This is demonstrated by the constantly increasing demand for input from constituents, governments, media and other stakeholders.

To obtain more information about the work of CYDA visit www.cyda.org.au

PO Box 172, Clifton Hill VIC 3068



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Vision

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.

Purpose

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 as individuals, members of a family and their community.

Role

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

Guiding Principles

The work of CYDA is guided by the following principles:

- *Fundamental rights*: the rights and interests of children and young people with disability are CYDA's highest priority consistent with Australia's obligations under the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- *Having a childhood*: children with disability are children first and foremost and have a right to all aspects of childhood that children without disability are afforded.
- *Participating in decision making*: children and young people with disability have the right to participate, in whatever capacity, in decisions that impact on their lives.
- *An inclusive approach*: The work of CYDA supports children and young people with all types of ability, from all cultural and religious backgrounds, living with all types of families and in all geographic locations, and irrespective of their gender identity, sexual orientation or intersex status.
- *Valuing families and care givers*: for the contributions made by families and care givers to support the rights and interests of children and young people with disability.
- *Working in partnerships*: CYDA works collaboratively with relevant government, non-government, private sector agencies and the broader community to promote the rights and interests of children and young people with disability.
- *Being accountable*: CYDA operates accountably, effectively and ethically as the national peak body charged with the mandate of advocating for children and young people with disability.

Our members' priorities

To inform the Strategic Plan, CYDA sought advice from its most important stakeholders – its membership.

Consultation with members is fundamental to the work of CYDA which has a clear and public commitment to ensure that the lived experiences of children and young people with disability are embedded in all of the organisation's activities. In preparing this Plan, CYDA undertook direct consultation with its members, staff and Board. It also has been influenced by the learnings that have emerged from delivering previous Strategic Plans.

The key priority issues identified by CYDA members are listed below:

- Valuing the contribution children and young people with disability make to our society.
- Ensuring that educational settings are inclusive and free from restrictive practices and bullying.
- Enabling developmental and age appropriate decision making of children and young people with disability.
- Addressing the needs of children and young people in the development and roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- Inclusive services that support transition to adulthood including moving out of home, meaningful employment and further education.
- The prevention of abuse and violence of children and young people with disability.

Goals

- 1 The direct experience of children and young people with disability continues to inform public policy in Australia.
- 2 Participation and inclusion of children and young people with disability is promoted and advanced by their national body.
- 3 Recognition that children and young people with disability strengthen and enrich families and the community.
- 4 Students with disability are active participants and valued learners in an inclusive education system.
- 5 The specific needs and context of children and young people with disability are embedded within the ongoing development of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- 6 Children and young people with disability do not experience abuse and violence in any context.
- 7 CYDA's governance and operational resources reflect the value it brings in representing the rights and interests of children and young people with disability.

Strategy

Goal 1

The direct experience of children and young people with disability continues to inform public policy in Australia

Increased participation and ongoing consultation with children and young people with disability and families

Continual development and provision of expertise of the direct experiences of children and young people with disability to the Australian Government and other stakeholders

Work with the Australian Government to promote and progress the National Disability Strategy and key outcome areas identified in this policy

Maintain representation on Government committees, working groups and advisory bodies

Develop and maintain key relationships with Ministerial Offices and Australian Government departments

CYDA's knowledge and expertise is informed by the best available evidence

Outcomes

Public policy in Australia reflect the views of children and young people with disability

CYDA is positioned as a respected centre of knowledge and expertise

Strategy

Goal 2

Participation and inclusion of children and young people with disability is promoted and advanced by their national body

Enable children and young people with disability to meaningfully participate in systemic advocacy, within CYDA and in a range of other relevant contexts

Disseminate information about government policy, programs, services and entitlements relevant to children and young people with disability

The advocacy environment is informed by the experience of CYDA and available evidence of participation of young people with disability in systemic advocacy

Work collaboratively with youth advocacy organisations

Respond to relevant international reviews, inquiries undertaken by the United Nations, and other relevant international bodies

Work collaboratively with national, state and territory disability peak bodies and organisations

Develop and maintain networks with other non-government organisations and others who promote the work of CYDA

Outcomes

Children and young people with disability participate in the activities of CYDA

CYDA is perceived and experienced as a constructive collaborator

Strategy

Goal 3

Recognition that children and young people with disability strengthen and enrich families and the community

Provision of information regarding rights, initiatives, services, supports, inquiries and other related information

Maintenance of high profile and informative social media

Use of the media (where and when appropriate) to promote disability as a positive aspect of a diverse community

Systemic advocacy and targeted campaigns to address ableism

Promote, host and celebrate relevant community events including those related to United Nations International Day of People with Disability

Outcomes

CYDA is a leader in changing the conversation about children and young people with disability

CYDA is recognised and respected as the leading voice of and for children and young people with disability

Strategy

Goal 4

Students with disability are active participants and valued learners in an inclusive education system

Ongoing advocacy regarding the direct experience of students with disability

Ongoing provision of high level input to reform, policy and service delivery in relation to education and students with disability

Continued advocacy of rights and best practice of inclusive education for children and young people with disability

Collaboration with organisations, collectives and social media forums to progress the right to an inclusive education for students with disability

Outcomes

Children and young people with disability receive a quality and inclusive education

Development of a well-articulated strategy for education reform for students with disability

Goal 5

The specific needs and context of children and young people with disability is embedded within the ongoing development of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Ongoing consultation with children and young people with disability and families regarding the NDIS

Provision of information and resources regarding the NDIS

Ongoing engagement and consultation with the National Disability Insurance Agency

Ongoing advocacy and representation to the Australian Government, state and territory governments, relevant inquiries and other stakeholders regarding specific issues of relevance to children and young people

Strengthen the interface between the NDIS and education

Outcomes

CYDA is a constant partner in co-design and stakeholder engagement regarding the continual establishment and provision of the NDIS

The implementation of the NDIS is informed by the best available evidence of the day

Strategy

Goal 6

Children and young people with disability do not experience abuse and violence in any context

CYDA's knowledge and expertise in the response and prevention of abuse and violence experienced by children and young people with disability is informed by the direct experience

Continued provision of systemic advocacy to promote greater awareness of increased vulnerability and experience of abuse and violence of children and young people with disability

Completion of project work regarding the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Provision of advocacy and support for a Royal Commission into abuse and violence of people with disability

Outcomes

Children and young people are valued, participate and feel connection and belonging within inclusive communities

The prevention of abuse and violence of children and young people with disability

Improved availability of data regarding the experience of abuse and violence of children and young people with disability

Strategy

Goal 7

CYDA's governance and operational resources reflect the value it brings in representing the rights and interests of children and young people with disability

Secure ongoing funding via the Department of Social Services as the national representative persons organisation for children and young people with disability

Set long term operational and policy direction for the organisation

Maintain rigorous policies and practice regarding quality corporate governance of CYDA

Maintain high quality operational practice, policies and procedures

Develop business plan for CYDA to secure funding and strategic opportunities from multiple sources – government, community, philanthropic and private

Outcomes

CYDA budget position is sustainable

CYDA members are confident that their organisation is well governed



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