



# '09 Response to School Leavers with a Disability

## Information Pack for 2009 School Leavers

### Introduction

All young people have a unique and integral role to play in their families, social networks and as a contributing member of the social, cultural, and economic life of the ACT community.

People with a disability leaving school should have the same access to activities and lifestyle opportunities that are available to any young person.

The ACT Government provides support to assist young people with a disability who are leaving school and cannot presently participate in full time employment or full time education, or may not be able to do so in the future.

### Types of Formal Support Available

Disability ACT funds two formal support models:

#### 1) Transition

Transition assists young people who are looking for a sustainable vocation, but who are not yet ready to participate in full time employment. Transition assists young people to set goals, build skills, and gain experience and confidence.

Transition provides individually tailored information and advice for young people and their families for up to three years after the young person has left school. A coordinator from the Transition service will be appointed to assist you to:

- Figure out your vocational goals after you leave school
- Develop a plan
- Work with you, your family and community networks to progress your plan

If needed, your transition coordinator can also link you to short term assistance provided by a support worker to progress your goals.





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### 2) Community Access

Community access assists people with disabilities with high support needs, who require an alternative to paid employment, to have access to a range of opportunities to develop skills and participate within their community.

Community access services focus on building independence and community inclusion through

- Developing opportunities to engage in life long learning
- Utilise existing skills and develop new skills in sporting, artistic, voluntary, recreational, or leisure activities
- Building relationships socially with members of their communities
- Developing skills that support independent living
- Develop personal and vocational skills to increase opportunities to participate in paid work.; and
- Accessing community facilities and to participate in community events

Community access services are provided on an ongoing basis. This means that you will have access to these services each year. You do not need to reapply.

You may be supported either through placement in an existing community access service, a new service might be established, or through an Individual Support Package may be allocated:

Existing services: Most community access services are provided during business hours, they may be provided in the home, at community venues or from a service base. Most community access services offer a menu of activities that you can choose from, but individualised activities are also available. Community access services are either centre based, or provided in community locations.

The level of allocated formal support Disability ACT can contribute will vary depending on the individual's circumstances and needs. However the maximum level of formal support an individual with high support needs will be allocated in 2009 will be approximately 12 hours of per week. The hours will depend on whether programs include individualised (1:1) or group activities. A list of community access services is available in the " *2009 Future Pathways Guide*". Contact your school for more information or a copy of the guide.

Individual Support Packages: Individual Support Packages (ISP) are funds allocated to an agency which holds the funds on your behalf. You can use the funds flexibly to buy services, or to pay for things that will assist you to achieve the post school goals in your futures plan.

The level of funding allocated by Disability ACT to an individual will vary depending on the individual's support needs. However the maximum level of support an individual with high support needs may be allocated in 2009 is approximately \$15,000.

More information about Disability ACT's Individual Support Packages is available at: [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability\\_act/policies](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/disability_act/policies)





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## Roles and Responsibilities

### Individual

Each individual has a unique and integral role in their family and social networks, and as contributing member of the social, cultural and economic life of the ACT community.

Each individual is responsible for their own transition from school into adult life. Families, guardians, and carers can assist to minimise the effects of the individuals disability and maximise independence through planning.

Funded services add value when they work to compliment and strengthen the families existing networks, including community and cultural relationships, rather than replace them.

### Schools

Schools have a commitment to deliver educational outcomes to develop successful learners, confident individuals and active and informed citizens (National Declaration on *Educational Goals for Young Australians, 2008*).

Schools prepare all young people for the transition to adult life within an educational framework and this is reflected within each student's Individual Learning Plan.

### Disability ACT

Disability ACT assist young people with a disability to determine the direction they wish to head after school, and to identify the personal, community, and disability specific resources that might assist them to establish and implement their plans.

## What is the process

1. Complete a referral form with your school teacher or career adviser
2. Forward the completed referral form to Disability ACT before **30 July 2009**
3. Your school will contact you set up a meeting with a representative from Disability ACT.

This meeting is to:

- assess your eligibility for support; and
- review your Individual Learning Plan and your aspirations for the future.
- start the process to develop a **Futures Plan** which covers:
  - your vocational goals
  - life long learning,
  - increased independence,
  - social participation and
  - enhanced support networks.





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4. You will then have some time to begin to develop your plan
5. Additional meetings with a representative from Disability ACT may be organised if required to verify areas of ongoing need and appropriate responses
6. Disability ACT will advise the Executive Director Disability ACT of your circumstances and the support you require achieve / begin to implement your post school plan.
7. The Executive Director determines who is allocated formal support amongst those in priority need as well as the level of resources allocated.

While every effort is made by Disability ACT to accommodate those eligible for support, we are not able to respond to all requests for formal resources. Wherever possible, information about and referral to alternate options will be given.

### Futures Planning

To receive assistance in the form of formal support **individuals / families need to develop a plan**. This plan will outline your goals and current ideas/strategies to achieve them. Obviously everyone's goals and strategies will be different and there is not a prescribed or preferred format for the plan. However there are some key elements to building a good life after school that any young person and their family might be thinking of. Disability ACT encourages families, seeking formal support services post schooling, to plan for their son/daughter with a disability, in terms of their whole of life opportunities and aspirations.

### Assistance with, and information about, Planning

Please refer to the Information Sheet on "*Planning*" or contact Disability ACT Information Service on 6207 1086 or email [DisabilityACT@act.gov.au](mailto:DisabilityACT@act.gov.au).

### Who is eligible for formal support?

To be eligible for formal support you must :

1. have a disability as defined under the *ACT Disability Services Act 1991* and the relevant Commonwealth, State/ Territory funding agreement:

*The person must have a disability that is attributable to an intellectual, cognitive, neurological, sensory, psychiatric or physical impairment, or a combination of these impairments. The person with a disability will need support due to a substantive reduction of their capacity for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility. The disability is permanent or likely to be permanent and may be of a chronic episodic nature, and*

2. be a current resident of the ACT, **and**
3. have completed school with no option to return, **and**
4. is not and will not be undertaking full time study or full time training, **and**
5. cannot realistically pursue full time employment.





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### Who is in the priority target group?

Within the eligibility criteria, priority consideration will be given to school leavers who:

- who **have a primary disability** that is not solely attributed to a mental illness, and;
- where the support would make a **substantial difference to the quality of life** of the person, and/or;
- where the support would substantially **reduce risk** of current support arrangements breaking down.

### Timelines

July 2009	Disability ACT conducts information sessions
July 2009	Schools refer students to Disability ACT requesting support..
<b>30 July</b>	<b>Closing date referrals from Schools</b>
August	Disability ACT meets with school leaver and their family, and school representative (ie teacher, careers advisor, counsellor)
August–September	Individuals have time to develop plan with assistance.
September – October	Follow up meetings if required with family
November 2009	Individuals receive advice from the Executive Director Disability ACT about formal supports DACT is able to contribute toward their plan.





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### Privacy

#### Protecting your Privacy:

Disability ACT is collecting information to identify if you are eligible for formal assistance. Access to this information will be strictly limited to those people who have a need for the information. This includes the executive and senior managers responsible for the service and funding allocation processes and the project officer responsible for managing the process of collating information for the Executive Director.

Disability ACT respects the right to privacy and the personal nature of the information requested of families, carers and individuals. Disability ACT will not release your details outside the department unless you agree by signing the specific section included in the application form.

Consent provides Disability ACT with the option to link you with appropriate supports or to retain the information to assist in future planning to address identified unmet need. Additionally your information will form part of Disability ACT's National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) which is data that informs Federal government of the numbers of individuals accessing Disability ACT.

