



'11 response to school leavers with a disability

Planning

I want to contribute to the community
(Future Directions: Towards Challenge 2014)

Introduction

Disability ACT has offered practical support to school leavers since 2000. During this time we have met with many young people and their families. Our experience has shown that positive outcomes for students with disabilities can be enhanced when planning has occurred prior to the end of the young persons' last year in school.

The end of formal education brings opportunities, challenges, and stressors for all young people. Planning can help individuals and families to take stock, prepare for what lies ahead, and start actively shaping their future.

Disability ACT encourages all students leaving school to start planning for adult lives early.

A simple Planning processes

Some of the things people have found useful when planning:

- develop a vision for the future: what will that look like in 5 years
- what strengths and skills and assets do you already have
- Identify what other skills and resources you might need.
- who can assist you
- what are the first steps you need to take
- how will you measure your success

Planning resources

Futures Planning Framework-Planning for a Good Life:

All people with a disability should be able to obtain assistance to plan in advance for life transitions, like leaving school, starting employment, beginning a relationship, leaving home, maturing and growing old (page 12, Challenge 2014). Disability ACT has developed a Futures Planning Framework to support this process and assist individuals and their families in planning for a Good life. It is a practical guide to encourage and assist people to undertake formal planning and contains information on current planning supports, research on best practice, barriers to planning as well as new initiatives. A copy of the Framework can be downloaded at www.dhcs.act.au/disability_act/sgg or alternatively you can contact Disability ACT's Information Service.





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Good Life Planning Grants

Disability ACT has introduced Good Life Planning Grants to assist people to develop and implement their plans for a good life now and into the future.

The grants are targeted to people who are not already supported by a government funded agency which is able to assist them with their planning. For more information please visit Disability ACT website on www.dhcs.act.au/disability_act/sgg

Negotiating the Maze: These case studies were developed by the Ministry of Education, British Columbia, Canada. They illustrate how Individual Learning Plans (called Individual Education Plans in British Columbia) have been developed to meet the needs of two very different students. This document can be downloaded from the Disability Coordination Office website at www.disabilitycoordinationoffice.com.au

Other useful resources for young people with disabilities and families are the books written by Al Etmanski and others from Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN). These books are:

- *A Good Life*
- *Safe and Secure*

Each book provides a step-by-step guide to planning for the future. Further information about these books can be found on the PLAN website www.plan.ca. They are also available through Planned Individual Networks (PIN), a Western Australian organisation developed along similar lines to PLAN. PIN is currently producing a West Australian edition of *Safe and Secure* and this will be available in the near future. PIN also provides [program and services](#) to families of people with disabilities. PIN's website is www.pin.org.au.

Other resources that provide practical information on planning the transition to independent living, particularly for young people moving out of home for the first time, are: *All in a Life's Design and Spread Your Wings*. Both of these books can be located through the [Disability Services Commission's website www.disability.wa.gov.au](http://www.disability.wa.gov.au).

The book, *The Homes West Experience. Steps to Independent Living for Adults with a Disability*, is a resource that describes the journey of a small group of Queensland families who joined together to create a non-traditional independent living service for their family members. This book available from the Curriculum Resource Unit (CRU) website www.cru.org.au or can be obtained from [CRU publications](#) in Queensland.

Planning Advice

- Planning tools and services can assist you but they can't plan for you
- Services and funding can provide effective assistance, but only if you are clear what you want from them





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- Disability ACT cannot make the plan on behalf of the school leaver or their family
- Funding or *a place in a service* is not a plan
- Planning will alleviate some of the anxiety that arises during this important transition
- PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) is one available planning process available to individuals with a disability and their families. It assists to identify their goals and aspirations and what steps are needed to achieve these goals. You can obtain more information on PATH from bcs_path@yahoo.com.au or contact 0488 376 467.

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