

Disability and Young People

Young people with disabilities have unique skills and experiences and have a lot to offer and contribute to the community. Young people with disabilities can be fully engaged with employment, education and other activities. While there have been improvements to anti discrimination legislation and policy in Tasmania, young people with disabilities are still far less likely than those without disabilities to be engaged in employment and education.

Employment is extremely important for young people with disabilities as employment can provide individuals with increased confidence, allow them to expand their social networks, gain financial stability and the opportunity to develop a career by gaining important work skills and knowledge. Data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics states that 38% of young people (15-24 years) with a disability were fully engaged (defined as being either studying full time; working full time; or studying part time and working part time). In comparison, 56% of young people without a disability were fully engaged. Young people, Australia wide, with a disability who were not fully engaged were either working part time (25%), studying part time (7%) or not engaged in either (68%).

Young people with a disability are at an increased risk of social isolation, not being accepted by their peers, have limited support and often do not have access to opportunities to become engaged with education, employment or community participation. It is unfortunate that society can make the assumption that young people with a disability have little to offer, which is absolutely not the case. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge many young people living with a disability do so without any additional support and do not view themselves as having a disability. As Australia is a signatory to the *United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* the response to young people with disabilities must reflect this convention. In accordance to the *United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* Tasmania must acknowledge that people with different disabilities, life stages and backgrounds will have differing care and support needs. It is vital that young people with disabilities are supported and acknowledged and given the opportunity to have a say in their own needs. Enabling independent living wherever possible and assisting those unable to live independently to have as much independence



as possible is important in creating opportunities to participate for young people with disabilities in Tasmania.

YNOT is committed to:

- Supporting the expansion of social and recreational activities for young people living with disabilities.
- Advocating for the inclusion of young people with disabilities to be represented in local and state government consultation with young people, and be supported in doing so.
- Advocating for sustained initiatives to support young people living with disabilities to engage (and remain in) employment and education.
- Advocating for the inclusion of information and education programs in schools regarding young people living with disabilities.
- Advocating for businesses to employ young people with disabilities to utilise the skills they have.

Future Vision

A Tasmania where all young people with disabilities are accepted into the community and are given the opportunities and support to be fully engaged in either education, employment or both.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012), *Australian Social Trends* retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features40March+Quarter+2012#pwd>

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012), *Australian Social Trends* retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features40March+Quarter+2012#pwd>

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012), *Australian Social Trends* retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features40March+Quarter+2012#pwd>

Australian Human Rights Commission (2013) retrieved from <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/faq-convention-rights-persons-disabilities>