



**BEYOND THE  
SCHOOL GATE**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This resource was developed through a partnership between Tascare Society for Children and the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program in Tasmania. The resource project was provided with input and feedback from a committee consisting of parents of people with disability and representatives from TasTAFE, Tasmanian Education Department, Life Without Barriers and Colony 47.

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or NDCO Tasmania  
[www.ndcotas.com.au](http://www.ndcotas.com.au)



# C O N T E N T S

The transition from school to adult life can present young people with disability and their families with a whole range of opportunities and challenges.

This guide *Beyond the School Gate* aims to provide some insight into the types of options that are available. It aims to help young people, their parents/guardians and support persons to work out the puzzle of government-funded programs and services.

This resource uses stories from individuals to give an idea of what a typical day may be like in a range of post-school settings, such as further education, training, employment and community access services. It also provides useful tips, space to jot down your notes on the journey and lots of relevant web links.

The stories will point you in the right direction, but to find out more detail, as well as the contact details for local providers, you will need to access the key websites or to follow up with the services directly.

For more stories refer to [www.ndcotas.com.au](http://www.ndcotas.com.au)

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# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

## Part 1 Planning

This section provides some background information and advice on planning for the successful transition from school to post-school options. It highlights some important points about setting goals and making sure you get relevant information. You will find some examples of questions that might help you in the planning process, as well as information on where to get assistance with this.

## Part 2 Post-school options

This section sets out information to assist in making sense of the various options available:

- Further study and training
- Employment
- Community-based options

## Part 3 Profile Stories

In this section, young people tell their real life experiences of further study, training, employment and community-based options. This section aims to give insight into what the options involve from the perspective of the young people and what they enjoy about their chosen option. It also provides stories from parents of young people with disability, explaining why they chose or supported an option, the process involved in deciding and advice they would like to share with other parents.

For more stories refer to [www.ndcotas.com.au](http://www.ndcotas.com.au)



PART 1 - PLANNING

## PLANNING >>> Help with planning

**It is never too early to start planning for the future. A good starting point is with the young person exploring their strengths and capabilities, interests, needs and support requirements.**

Some questions to ask the young person when planning together could be:

- What do you do well?
- What do you enjoy doing?
- What support do you need?

When planning for life after school, some of the questions the young person may consider are:

- What work might I like to do?
- Where might I like to live?
- How will I stay healthy and happy?
- What might I do in my leisure time?
- What will I study?

It is important that the young person's goals are written down, along with the steps to reach those goals.

Then it may be useful to consider:

- Which activities – through school, at home or in the community – could help in developing some useful skills and understandings for the future?
- What information do we still need to find out?
- Who or what else can assist in the planning and transition process?
- What is the timeline for what needs to be done?

One very useful planning resource that you may wish to download is: *Get Ready for Study and Work: Top tips for young people who have a disability or chronic medical condition*. This booklet assists with planning for the transition to work, study at Uni or TAFE, or getting an apprenticeship or traineeship. [www.westernsydney.edu.au/getreadyforstudyandwork](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/getreadyforstudyandwork)

Depending on individual needs and circumstances, a number of people may be involved with the young person during the planning and transition processes, including school staff, career advisers, a National Disability Coordination Officer, NDIS, disability employment service providers, advocacy groups, parent organisations and Centrelink. These people can be invited to participate as the need arises. An independent advocate may also be involved to act on behalf of the young person.

Some useful information on these services and programs follows, with websites and contact numbers, if you would like to follow up and find out more.

## PLANNING >>> Services and Programs

### My Education

My Education is a supportive and inclusive approach to career education that will inspire and guide all students from Kindergarten to Year 12. It supports students to identify their personal interests, values, strengths and aspirations and teaches them how to use this knowledge to make decisions about their future learning, work and life opportunities.

My Education is a coordinated whole-school approach to career and life planning. It is a partnership between the student, parents and carers, the school and the community and also aims to engage with business and industry in Tasmania by linking education with a student's future employment options.

### College Work Skills Program

The College Work Skills Program refers to programs within Senior Secondary Colleges (Years 11 and 12) that can offer work readiness skills, work familiarisation, work skills training and work experience. Each college within Tasmania offers different options and ways of delivering these programs. Contact your nearest college to obtain a Course Handbook or to discuss their courses.

Some high schools throughout Tasmania are now delivering Years 11 and 12. Check with your local high school regarding the Work Skills Program.

[www.education.tas.gov.au](http://www.education.tas.gov.au)

### National Disability Coordination Officers

National Disability Coordination Officers (NDCOs) provide information, advice and support to people with disability who are considering further education or training options. Their Tasmanian website contains information, fact sheets and work sheets for people with disability considering further study.

Hobart: Phone 03 6225 8217

North and North-West: Phone 03 6324 3758

[www.ndcotas.com.au](http://www.ndcotas.com.au)

### Open Days/Expos

The University of Tasmania and TasTAFE have open days. These are a great way to understand what courses are available.

[www.utas.edu.au](http://www.utas.edu.au)

[www.tastafe.tas.edu.au](http://www.tastafe.tas.edu.au)

### Beyond the School Gate Forums

Highlighting post-school options in education, training and employment, these mini-expos are an opportunity for students, families and carers to talk with a range of service providers directly.

These two-hour sessions are facilitated by the National Disability Coordination Officers Program. Sessions are promoted through schools and on the NDCO website:

[www.ndcotas.com.au/events/frontpage-events/beyond-the-school-gate-sessions](http://www.ndcotas.com.au/events/frontpage-events/beyond-the-school-gate-sessions)

## PLANNING >>> Services and Programs

### National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (the Scheme) is a new way of providing support to meet the reasonable and necessary support needs of people with permanent and significant disability, their families and carers.

If you are a person with disability and you meet the access requirements, you can become a participant in the Scheme.

The Scheme will work with participants and their families to:

- discuss the person's goals and the reasonable and necessary support needs
- develop an individual plan that will help the person achieve their goals (which may include employment readiness support)
- consider the supports needed to strengthen family and informal caring arrangements
- connect people to mainstream services and community supports.

As a participant, you will have an individualised funding package based on your level of need. The person with disability, together with their family and carers, will be able to choose where they spend their entitlement. To get an idea about whether you meet the access requirements, refer to the access requirements on the NDIS website, along with a range of other useful information about the Scheme.

To become a participant in the Scheme, you need to complete an Access Request Form as provided to you by the National Disability Insurance Agency (the Agency).

Even if you aren't eligible for individualised funding, you may still be able to get information and support to link with relevant government and

community services in your area from a Local Area Coordinator.

NDIS website: [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

Access requirements:

[www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/access-requirements](http://www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/access-requirements)

### Department of Human Services Centrelink

Centrelink provides Australian Government income support and can also provide assessment and referral to Employment Service providers.

A young person aged 16 years or over with disability may be entitled to income support even if they are still at school.

Visit the link below to review the payment finder option where you can apply online or print off the required documents. You can also apply at any Centrelink Customer Service Centre or discuss your circumstances with Centrelink by telephoning 132 717.

[www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au)

## PLANNING >>> Services and Programs

### Knowme

Knowme is a FREE online profile sharing software. If you're caring for or supporting a young person living with a disability, Knowme is a safe, secure and reliable way to access and share information on their conditions and needs.

You can record a person's care and support needs, upload PDF's, photos and other documentation and invite guests such as teachers, doctors or support workers to view information securely and privately, anywhere, anytime.

Register at [knowme.net.au](http://knowme.net.au)

Each profile includes templates such as:

- Introducing Me
- Medical and Health information
- My emotions
- My family
- My World
- Skills and Abilities
- Staying Safe
- This is what you need to support me.

### Finding Your Way

Finding Your Way is a guide through the maze of services for parents of children with disability. It has been written by the Association for Children with Disability (Tas) Inc. with the help of parents who have a child with disability and therefore have some understanding of the problems that parents in similar circumstances face every day.

[www.findingyourway.com.au](http://www.findingyourway.com.au)

Phone 1800 244 742

[www.acdtas.com.au](http://www.acdtas.com.au)

Tascare Society for Children

[www.tascare.org.au](http://www.tascare.org.au)

## PLANNING >>> Advocacy groups

**Advocacy is speaking, acting, and/or writing to promote and defend the rights, needs and interests of people. The primary aim is to promote advocacy by assisting people to speak for themselves, but if they are unable to do so, an advocate speaks on their behalf. Advocates present things from the person's perspective.**

### Advocacy Tasmania

Advocacy Tasmania is an independent, non-government organisation that works to protect and promote the rights and interests of people with disability. It provides a free and confidential advocacy service for individuals, their carers and relatives.

Phone 1800 005 131

Email [intake@advocacytasmania.org.au](mailto:intake@advocacytasmania.org.au)

[www.advocacytasmania.org.au](http://www.advocacytasmania.org.au)

### Speak Out

Speak Out offers advocacy and self-advocacy support for people with intellectual disability.

Southern Tasmania: Phone 6231 2344

Email [admin@speakoutadvocacy.org](mailto:admin@speakoutadvocacy.org)

[www.speakoutadvocacy.org](http://www.speakoutadvocacy.org)

### The School Liaison and Family Disability Liaison Service

This is a liaison and mediation service that aims to support families and schools to resolve issues concerning students with disability. The service is provided statewide through Life Without Barriers.

Phone 03 6232 8750

[www.lwb.org.au](http://www.lwb.org.au)

### The Association for Children with Disability (Tas) Inc.

Family advocates assist parents/carers to develop skills and knowledge so they can make informed decisions, exercise their rights and advocate on their own behalf in order to gain positive outcomes for young people with disability in their care.

Phone 1800 244 742

[www.acdtas.com.au](http://www.acdtas.com.au)

## PLANNING >>> Parent organisations

### Tascare Society for Children

Tascare Society for Children is a service that provides support and assistance to families of children and young people with disability in Tasmania.

Phone 03 6272 8265

[www.tascare.org.au](http://www.tascare.org.au)

### The Association for Children with Disability (Tas) Inc.

The Association for Children with Disability (Tas) Inc. is a non-profit organisation that provides information, advocacy and support for Tasmanian families of children with disability.

Phone 1800 244 742

[www.acdtas.com.au](http://www.acdtas.com.au)

### Carers Tasmania

Carers Tasmania provides statewide access to emotional support for family carers. This support can be particularly relevant at times of transition.

Phone 1800 242 636

[www.carerstas.org](http://www.carerstas.org)

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PART 2 - POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS

## POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS >>> Further study and training

**A broad range of opportunities is available to young people with disability leaving school after Year 12. Though it can be an exciting time, the complexity of the system may become overwhelming.**

To assist in making sense of the various options, this section presents information about the three major options:

- Further study and training
- Employment
- Community options.

### Education Standards

All education and training providers are required under the Disability Discrimination Act Education Standards to provide assistance to students with disability. The main aim of the Education Standards is to give students with disability the right to participate in educational programs on the same basis as students without disability. This means having access to the same educational opportunities and choices as all other students. This covers enrolment, course delivery and completion of a course. The Education Standards also cover the right to study free from harassment from others.

[www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education](http://www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education)  
[www.ddaedustandards.info](http://www.ddaedustandards.info)  
<http://dse.theeducationinstitute.edu.au>

### NDCO program

National Disability Coordination Officers (NDCOs) provide information, advice and support to people with disability who are considering further education or training. They work with all post-secondary education and training providers and are happy to meet and talk with individuals or families about options.

Hobart: Phone 03 6225 8217

North and North-West: Phone 03 6324 3758

[www.ndcotas.com.au](http://www.ndcotas.com.au)

### University

The University of Tasmania has a number of study options including full degrees, associate degrees or preparation programs to prepare for University courses. Disability Advisers support students with disability to develop a Learning Access Plan that outlines the adjustments and support they require to succeed in their study.

Phone 1800 817 675

Email [Disability.Services@utas.edu.au](mailto:Disability.Services@utas.edu.au)

[www.utas.edu.au](http://www.utas.edu.au)

[www.utas.edu.au/students/whs/disability](http://www.utas.edu.au/students/whs/disability)

## POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS >>> Further study and training

### TasTAFE – General Courses

TasTAFE provides real and practical learning and takes an approach to education that meets the needs of all students and the expectations of employers. The course choice is wide and varied and includes general education, Certificate I to IV courses and Diplomas. Assessment is based on practical demonstrations of skills and knowledge. Disability Liaison Officers support students with disability to develop a Learning Access Plan that outlines the accommodations and support they may require to succeed in their study.

Phone 1300 655 307

[www.tastafe.tas.edu.au/current/disability-support](http://www.tastafe.tas.edu.au/current/disability-support)

### TasTAFE – Foundation Programs

The Work Pathways program delivers training focused on basic employability skills for students with disability who have additional learning needs. In addition to work skills the training includes community skills, social and personal skills, and independent living skills. Students need to be motivated job-seekers and be prepared to participate in work placements.

Phone 1300 655 307

[www.tastafe.tas.edu.au](http://www.tastafe.tas.edu.au)

### TasTAFE – Vocational Preparation Courses

TasTAFE Vocational Preparation and English Language Service programs are designed to help people with a wide range of needs, including those wanting to improve basic skills to prepare for a vocational pathway, people returning to study or experiencing learning barriers and people in work wanting to improve skills or change jobs.

Phone 1300 655 307

[www.tastafe.tas.edu.au](http://www.tastafe.tas.edu.au)

## POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS >>> Employment

**Employment is important to many people. It provides an opportunity to earn their own income, interact with others and participate in meaningful activity.**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against someone on the grounds of disability. Employers must offer equal employment opportunities to everyone. This means that if a person with disability can do the essential activities or 'inherent requirements' of a job, he or she should have just as much chance to do that job as anyone else.

[www.humanrights.gov.au/dda-guide-earning-living](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/dda-guide-earning-living)

### Supported Wage System

The Supported Wage System increases employment opportunities for people with disability through giving employers the opportunity to pay a productivity-based wage to people with disability. If a disability affects a person's capacity to work at full productivity within employment, they can be assessed for the Supported Wage System. The Australian Government funds qualified assessors to determine a worker's productivity, with the resultant wage being paid by the employer. This allows eligible people with disability to have a reliable process of productivity-based wage assessment to determine fair pay for fair work.

[www.employment.gov.au/supported-wage-system](http://www.employment.gov.au/supported-wage-system)

### Job Access

The Job Access website is funded by the Australian Government to provide advice on every stage of the employment process – preparing to look for work, how to look for jobs and if people need it, support in the workplace once they have found a job. It offers online information, case studies and a free and confidential telephone advice service.

Phone 1800 464 800  
[www.jobaccess.gov.au](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au)

### Open Employment

There are two national networks that can assist a person with disability with finding a job or becoming self-employed:

#### Disability Employment Services

Disability Employment Services is a network of organisations contracted by the Australian Government to provide specialist assistance to job seekers with disability who require support to find and maintain employment in the open employment market or to become self-employed. They can start working with a young person to prepare for employment before they leave school.

[www.employment.gov.au/disability-employment-services](http://www.employment.gov.au/disability-employment-services)  
[www.ndcotas.com.au/employment/disability-employment-services](http://www.ndcotas.com.au/employment/disability-employment-services)

## POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS >>> Employment

### Job Active

Job Active Services is a national network of organisations that helps job seekers to find and maintain employment or to become self-employed. They can assist with applying for work and matching people to any job vacancies.

[www.jobsearch.gov.au](http://www.jobsearch.gov.au)

### Apprenticeships

Australian Apprenticeships are a great way to get a head start in a chosen career. They combine time at work with training and can be full-time or school-based to give a nationally recognised qualification and experience. It is even possible to start an Australian Apprenticeship while still at school, thereby combining gaining a qualification with school studies. Many Australian Apprenticeships are available through Group Training Organisations. There is additional assistance to eligible employers who recruit an Australian Apprentice with disability. This includes:

- Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support
- Assistance for Tutorial Interpreter
- Mentor Services.

They can help Australian Apprentices with disability reach their full potential.

[www.skills.tas.gov.au/apprenticeshipstraineeships](http://www.skills.tas.gov.au/apprenticeshipstraineeships)  
[www.ndcotas.com.au/employment/apprenticeships](http://www.ndcotas.com.au/employment/apprenticeships)

### Supported Employment

Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) employ and support people with disability, often in specialist working environments. They are funded by the Australian Government to provide additional employment to people with disability within a commercial business setting. This type of service approach is aimed at people with disability who want to work but choose to do so in a supported employment environment. There is a range of ADEs in Tasmania offering a variety of employment experiences.

[www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers](http://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers)  
[www.ndcotas.com.au/employment/australian-disability-enterprises](http://www.ndcotas.com.au/employment/australian-disability-enterprises)

## POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS >>> Community Options

### Community Access Services

Community Access Services comprise lifestyle choices and life skills. These choices provide an alternative if a person is not yet ready for employment. It incorporates many opportunities for life-long learning, to develop skills and independence, and to participate in community life. In Tasmania, a range of providers offers a variety of experiences such as art, photography, drama, gardening and social skills development. These services may form part of the plan a person has with NDIS.

Phone 1300 135 513

[www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service\\_information](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service_information)

[www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

### Volunteer Work

Volunteering can be a great way to learn new skills, meet new people and participate in the community. Volunteering Tasmania runs regular informal information sessions for people considering volunteering. These cover volunteer rights, current vacancies and the benefits of volunteering.

Phone 1800 677 895

[www.volunteeringtas.org.au](http://www.volunteeringtas.org.au)

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**PART 3 - STORIES**

## HANNAH >>>

I am Hannah and I am 19 years of age. I am currently working at Mosaic Support Services (Mosaic), which is a disability support service. I first started working with Mosaic when I was in Year 12. Claremont College offered me the opportunity to be part of the Ticket to Work Program which is a program that looks at school based trainees/apprenticeships. Mosaic had decided to take on a trainee in Business and I was selected. I am continuing to study my Certificate II in Business. Work and Training is assisting me with this. From July this year I will be employed on a permanent part-time basis with Mosaic. I really love working here. Working has helped me develop my self-confidence and independence.

When I am not working, I volunteer one day a week at the Cats Home. I love animals and have two cats and one puppy of my own. On the weekends I go and watch my brother play football. I enjoy AFL and my team is North Melbourne. Last year Mosaic had a fundraising quiz night and I was very surprised on the night as I was presented with a big bunch of flowers but also one of the Managers had arranged for Brent Harvey (North Melbourne player) to send me a special message via video link. It was amazing.

I have enjoyed everything about doing my Certificate II in Business. I have been very well supported by everyone and the employees at Mosaic are just great. I was very worried at first and did not think I would be able to do it. But now I would tell everyone to just give it a try. I wasn't sure what I would do when I left school but being able to do the traineeship when still at school was just great and I know now that working in an office is something that I want to do.

### Parents' Story

Initially Hannah was selected by Claremont College with two other girls to spend time at Mosaic to experience what the traineeship would involve. After Hannah was chosen as the successful applicant, we had a meeting with Mosaic, Work and Training and Claremont College, to discuss with Hannah if she was happy to participate in the program.

Spending time with the employees at Mosaic Support Services where Hannah was placed for her traineeship was what helped me decide that this was right for Hannah. Hannah's supervisors at Mosaic had nothing but Hannah's best interests at heart. Megan, Michelle and Rosie are incredibly supportive and patient, letting Hannah proceed at her own pace and encouraging her at every opportunity. Mosaic has embraced Hannah, focusing on her strengths.

### Tips for other parents

Encourage your children to work towards their goals and consider options that highlight their strengths to give them confidence. Accept any help and advice from the people involved in these programs as there are wonderful people who are willing to support you and your child.



## STEVEN >>>

Hi I am Steven and I am 20 years old. Since I left Year 12 I have been very busy. When I first left school I went to TasTAFE and participated in the Work Pathways Program. This program was great, I really enjoyed it and I made some new friends. Towards the end of the year I enrolled in a course with MEGT, Certificate I in Retail and I completed this at the beginning of the year.

When I was studying with MEGT I had the opportunity to do a lot of different work experience. This included working in a hardware store, a men's clothing store and a fishing shop. The men's clothing store was the one I enjoyed the most.

This year I am back at TasTAFE, one day a week doing a Literacy class. I keep myself busy the other days as I volunteer at an Aged Care Facility four days per week. I enjoy doing this, listening to the stories that the people tell you, helping them get around to the different activities and being a waiter for them on coffee mornings. In my spare time, I like to ride my scooter, go to Youth Group, do some artwork and love growing flowers in summer. I now have my own unit, which I share with one other person. I am learning to cook and travel around independently on buses.

I am registered with a Disability Employment Service, as I want to be able to get a job. This is my next step.

I would tell everyone to give anything ago. It's great to do things that are different. TasTAFE is good to go to and if you have a chance to do some work experience, do it, as it teaches you lots of things, you meet new people and learn new skills.

### Parent's Story

When Steven was about to leave Year 12, it was a time of some anxiety. I felt Steven needed to stay in the education system. I didn't feel he was ready, maturity-wise, to go on to employment. TasTAFE was really good for Steven. He gained the maturity he needed and is now doing a fantastic job at volunteering. He is ready for the next step now of getting paid employment.

### Tips for other parents

It is hard when trying to work out the best path for your child but you need to talk to a lot of people. You cannot sit back. You need to be proactive and go and knock on doors. There are many services out there that are able to support what you may need but you have to keep digging around until you find the right one and the right support for your child.



## LACHLAN >>>

Hi, I am Lachlan and I am 20 years of age. When I left Launceston College in 2014 I went to study at TasTAFE and have been studying there for 2 years. Last year I completed my Certificate II in Horticulture and this year I am working towards my Certificate III in Horticulture.

The best part of 2015 was helping in the gardens at Entally House. We assisted around the grounds, including setting up a heritage vegetable garden. This year we have been studying soils and how they affect plants. I am also learning about the different species of plants and the best conditions for growing them.

Other areas of learning have been pruning and growing plants from seeds. We also have to press (dry out) plants and research them for a presentation at the end of the year. I have to do a lot of researching. In the next couple of months we will also be regenerating areas of the Northern Midlands with native vegetation in conjunction with Natural Resource Management (NRM North).

I am so interested in plants that I have my own mini-greenhouse where I self-seed native plants. I have sold some and also given them away to our neighbours.

One of the best things about the TasTAFE course has been the great people I have met. As well as studying last year, I volunteered at the museum and helped photograph mounted insects for their records using ultraviolet light.

I keep myself busy as I also work part-time at Woolworths. It is awesome.

### Parents' Story

We were happy when Lachlan talked about going on to TasTAFE after Year 12. We weren't really sure what path he was going to take but it is all working out well. Lachlan is very committed to his TAFE course and he now has a passion for collecting seeds and propagating native plants. He has become motivated to do a lot of extra learning and TasTAFE has been a very supportive environment.

He loves what he is doing but it is the regular interaction with other people that is the best part. His part-time job at Woolworths is also wonderful as he enjoys the social connection with a different group of people. They have been fantastic as an employer. This connection was made through a Disability Employment Service.

### Tips for other parents

Seek help and use the services and agencies available. Appreciate the special people who go out of their way to support.



## HAYLEY L >>>

I am Hayley and I am 24 years of age. For over a year now I have been working three days per week at Little Tackers Child Care Centre, which I really love. As well as going to work, I attend Oak's Youth Pathways Program two days per week so I am very busy. At Oak I am learning life skills, doing the Work Skills for Life course. I have been going to Oak for two-and-a-half years. This has really helped me to become ready for work. Oak has given me skills, such as learning to catch public transport, which means I am more independent.

One of the Disability Employment Services, Ability, helped me to find my job in Child Care and they give me support at work if I need it. Working is great. I enjoy playing with the children in care and my main jobs are helping with the laundry, cleaning the rooms and toys and washing up. I am learning more about children and getting to know more people. I have also been saving so I can buy my own things.

When I am not at work or at Oak I enjoy playing with my dog, watching TV and hanging out with friends. I still live at home so I also help around the house and help with some meals. I also do some volunteering at Foodbank among other places.

I want to show others that with a bit of support and a positive, friendly environment to learn in, you can overcome most barriers to achieve your goal. My confidence has increased a lot and now I am happy to try new and exciting things, even though they may be a bit scary at first. In the future I hope to do some more study or training.

### Parents' Story

We wanted Hayley to trial many different environments with the aim of getting a job, either voluntary or paid. We looked at a number of different service providers and, in the end, enrolled Hayley in Oak, Mosaic and Ability. The reason we chose the three is that they were all offering different things and had very different environments.

After College, Hayley attended TasTAFE. Both TasTAFE and Rosny College were able to offer Hayley some valuable work experience and it was these experiences that helped us decide that Hayley was more than capable of doing some paid work.

### Tips for other parents

If you are uncertain as to what your child's pathway may be, speak to as many people as possible. There is a lot of support out there, but you need to talk to the range of providers – TasTAFE, Employment Services, Community Access providers – and get as many people involved as you can.



Hi, I am Ella. I am 22 years of age and currently doing my Honours in International Relations at the University of Tasmania.

I have an absolute passion for learning; that's why I have gone on to do Honours. My days are spent pretty much studying. Doing Honours means I do not have much in the way of actual campus time, so it means I need to be more disciplined in my study. I usually do some study in the morning and then have a break, going to the restaurant my Mum owns for lunch. I return home and do some more hours of study. I now have an internship at the Department of Social Services.

When I am not studying, I enjoy going out with friends, reading and watching movies. I also do some part-time work for my Mum.

Going to Uni has been a great experience for me. I have met and made many new friends.

If you have a goal set and that is University, then go for it. The support that you get is wonderful and makes it easier for you to concentrate on your studies.

## Parent's Story

Ella wanted to attend University from an early age and her father and I didn't see a reason why she couldn't. She was always very determined and managed most things, if she put her mind to them and she seemed to think it was the most logical option. She wasn't going to let any differences get in the way of that. Consequently, it was an easy decision for us in regard to which direction we encouraged her to go in. We presented her with possibilities and let her make her own decisions.

## Tips for other parents

My advice to other parents would be to encourage and support your children in whatever capacity you can. Try not to say no – let them experiment and figure things out for themselves and provide them with as many opportunities as you can. If they stumble, offer them a guiding hand. Following this, if they are unable to seek out other forms of support, perhaps do some research yourself, in order to figure out what's available. Then pursue those avenues yourself if your child is unable to. There are lots of services out there to support students and their parents.



## SAMUEL >>>

My name is Samuel and I am 22 years of age. I am currently employed for 25 hours per week as a delivery driver for the best butcher on the North West Coast. It's great, I love my job. I enjoy doing the deliveries because every day is busy and different. I am out and about meeting people in the community. I feel I am the 'face' of the best butcher on the North West Coast.

This wasn't my first choice though. I went to TasTAFE and completed my Certificate III in Horticulture, but I was unable to find employment in that area. I came across my job at the butcher because I was recommended. However, I absolutely love my job and I would not go back to Horticulture now.

Although I only work part-time, it is enough, as I keep myself very busy. Apart from work each day, I go to a personal trainer twice a week, as well as training for basketball and acting as team manager for our local senior men's team. I also love AFL, which I have played.

My advice to other people is to strive for what you want to do. Give it a go. Focus on what you can do, not what you can't do.

### Parents' Story

We have always supported and encouraged Sam to make his own decisions. It has been important that Sam has the same opportunities as everyone else and this includes paid employment. Employment is a way for all of us to be involved in our community and to feel included.

It's not always easy to make things happen. You do need to push where you can, attend every meeting, meet everyone that has resources and tap into their networks. Keep an eye out for everything that is available.

### Tips for other parents

Most of all, make the most of what is out there and believe that your child is entitled to the same opportunities as everyone else in the community.



## JUSTIN >>>

I am Justin and I am 20 years of age. In 2015, I completed my course at TasTAFE which was Certificate III in Aged Care. Last year I attended classes at TasTAFE two days a week and on the other days I went to TAFE to study and completed assignments. I was interested in Aged Care because for around three years I have volunteered at an aged care facility. This helped me to decide that a career in the aged care sector was what I wanted.

What I love about aged care is interacting with the residents and being able to assist them with some of their daily needs. I love history; listening to first-hand accounts of a person's experience is great.

I am currently looking for part-time work in the Aged Care sector. Part-time work will be good for me to start with and then I can build up to full-time work. When I was doing my course I needed to do the practical placement part-time as I found the full-time placement too much.

I am very keen on sport – any sport really. I play cricket and football. Last year I was selected to compete in the Inclusion Carnival for football. It was an awesome experience. Our cricket team won the grand final this year.

If you know what you want to do, don't let anyone put you down or stop you. Just do it. Make sure you use the support that is available. Don't be reluctant to use it and make sure you talk to someone if you feel you are struggling. You can do it.

### Parents' Story

As Justin's parents we have played the role of advocate in seeking out the most supportive learning environments that we could find. At school, this meant working closely with medical professionals, school administration and importantly the teachers. We were lucky to have a very good experience during Justin's school years. After school, we followed the same principle and sought out people within the Disability Sector who could make recommendations and support Justin through TAFE. This was also a positive experience, with TAFE offering a very high level of support through Education Support, organised by their Disability Officer. Our next stage is employment and we have found an Employment Agency that we feel comfortable with and that Justin is keen to become involved with. We hope that they will continue the process for us and allow Justin to gain independence through work.

### Tips for other parents

My only advice would be to find people that have the knowledge you need and that you can form trusting relationships with. The self-confidence of our children is so important and finding the right people to help that grow is so important. Through the New Horizons Sporting Club, Justin has found confidence and as a result is more open to tackle new challenges.



## HAYLEY K >>>

I am Hayley and I am 24 years of age. This year I am doing the last year of my Teaching Degree and I am looking forward to graduating at the end of the year. I would have graduated earlier than this but I changed universities halfway through my study as I found a course that better suited my needs.

I love studying and teaching and I am very lucky as I work part-time as a teacher's aide. This is giving me valuable hands-on experience and I work in a very supportive school. My usual day will consist of going to work from 9 until 3. When I go home, I usually give myself a break before starting study in the evening. My course is online, so I don't need to attend any lectures.

When not working or studying I enjoy travelling and go away somewhere as often as I can, even if it's just popping over to the mainland for a weekend. I also enjoy reading, catching up with friends and playing the piano.

Being hard-of-hearing has meant there has been some challenges along the way but I have been able to use some wonderful technology and this has helped me enormously. I also make sure that I let people know how I work and this helps with their understanding of what support I may or may not need.

I think choosing the right subjects is important in years 11 and 12 but if you are not sure what you want to do, just make sure that you have a wide range of subject choices. Always remember that there is more than one way of doing something. Do not let one thing that hasn't worked out stop you from doing what you want to do.

### Parents' Story

When it came to deciding on Hayley's career path beyond Year 12, it was very much Hayley's decision to go to University to become a teacher. As parents, it was very hard to guide Hayley as neither of us had a hearing impairment and neither of us had been to University. Because of this, we turned to Hayley's teachers for support and advice. Hayley's teachers were experienced in this area and were able to support her in ways we could not.

### Tips for other parents

My advice for other parents is to believe in your child, no matter what, and help them achieve their goals in any way you can, even if that means turning to people outside of your family or professional network.



## JAMES >>>

I am James and I am 20 years of age. I am currently studying Literacy and Numeracy at TasTAFE, and working towards my Diploma in Sound Production. I found High School really tough but I enjoy being able to study at TasTAFE. My first interest was in IT but then I took an interest in being a DJ. Being a DJ is my dream job.

When I am not at TAFE I play music, produce and write songs, practice being a DJ and I also get some occasional work setting up stage productions, or being a second audio person and sometimes work as a DJ. I also enjoy video games.

The theory part of my course I find the most difficult but TasTAFE is great and I get extra teacher assistance to help me through. This year I am learning to live independently and stay in a group home three nights a week. It also means that I need to catch a bus to TAFE and I am learning other life skills such as budgeting and cooking.

My advice to other students is to try things out to see what you might like. This wasn't my original direction but I love it. Having my parents support was great. They have supported my decisions. It is also important to talk to Students Services or Teachers if you need assistance with your studies.

### Parents' Story

While I know the career path my son has chosen is a very hard industry to get started in, I have to let him follow it, as I have seen his confidence grow for the better. Now he's thinking about moving to Brisbane to study a Diploma in Sound Production. Even though I don't know how he would cope without support from family and friends, I have to let him go, as I think he has as much right as anyone else to follow his dreams.

The worst thing that can happen is that he falls on his face and has to pick himself back up and start again but he can only grow from that and become a stronger person for it.

### Tips for other parents

While we don't always agree with our children's choices, we do need to step aside sometimes and let them decide what they want to do as a career, in order for them to achieve their dreams, but be there to help if they ask for it.



## SAM >>>

Hi, I am Sam. I am 22 years of age. I am currently studying Pharmacy at the University of Tasmania and I am in my final year. This year is going to be a busy year for me. My typical day will start with attending lectures and tutorials in the morning and then doing study in the afternoons. I will qualify at the end of this year and ideally I would love to work in a Hospital Pharmacy.

When I was looking at the options of tertiary study, I knew I would need support from the University through the Disability Practitioners, as I needed adjustments made so I could access all classes and the science laboratories.

I lived at home before starting Uni and moved from Georgetown to Hobart. I currently live independently in student accommodation at University of Tasmania and really enjoy my lifestyle. I have made some great friends while being here. When I am not studying, I enjoy being around my friends, going to sporting events and just relaxing.

If you feel that you want to continue to study, then give Uni a go. It's been great for me. One thing though is: ask your school if you can do some work experience in the job that you think you may like. I was heading towards a different career when at school and it wasn't until I had some work experience that I realised I was actually heading down the wrong path.

### Parents' Story

As parents, we supported Sam to pursue his choice to study Pharmacy at UTAS. Job satisfaction, physical access to course content, accommodation options and future employment were considered. During the decision-making process, there had been ongoing discussion within our family re possible study/employment pathways available to Sam.

Sam had a gap year and part-way through the year decided to enrol in a Business Study unit at UTAS Launceston Campus. This enrolment was supported by the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO), who was a breath of fresh air!! She was a wealth of information and her 'can do' attitude was supportive and timely. She guided us through processes and timelines as Sam began his transition to tertiary education.

Relocation to Hobart UTAS campus was necessary. We needed to do fact-finding around how this would look for Sam. Access to campus facilities and

appropriate accommodation services needed to be explored. A range of questions needed to be answered. The NDCO acted on our behalf, investigating options and arranging meetings with relevant parties in Hobart. During our initial visit to UTAS Hobart we were able to have conversations with the Dean of Pharmacy, Director of Accommodation Services and the University of Tasmania's Disability Advisor.

Once Sam's application to study Pharmacy was accepted, a series of meetings ensued to support his transition into Uni life. All stakeholders (including Sam and ourselves) were able to collaboratively discuss and investigate options for possible adjustments and modification. The implementation process was smooth and timely, helping Sam to commence his studies at Uni the following academic year.

### Tips for other parents

Your allocated NDIS Case Support planner should be key to assisting, developing and helping to implement an appropriate transition model. If the key worker is not able to support you appropriately, keep knocking on doors until you find someone who can! As parents, we were proud of Sam as he embraced his new independent life and responsibilities. It was challenging to 'let go' a little and trust the commitment level of an independent support worker. This trust can only happen if you respect the professional qualities and determination of your key worker.

The input we received from the NDCO and UTAS Disability Advisor was invaluable. All staff involved in Sam's transition to University were professional, positive and resourceful. The transition pathway may seem overwhelming, but with the right people and support it can happen.

As a result, Sam has successfully established himself in a new community. A positive attitude, hard work and determination has enabled Sam to embrace his new independent lifestyle.



I am Emily and I am 27 years of age. I am currently studying for my Certificate III in Horticulture at TasTAFE and will complete it next year. I completed my Certificate II in 2015. I enjoy studying at TAFE and the options for social interaction it provides. The accommodations that have been made for me, mean I can go at my own pace which limits pressure and anxiety. I did try University after leaving school but the pace and educational format was not a good fit.

Horticulture has been great in regards to the hands-on learning and informal atmosphere. I enjoy growing plants and I find it interesting to learn how the different species have evolved or been cultivated. Ultimately, I am interested in working in community gardens or nurseries. My interest is in making the world more sustainable.

Currently I do one full day at TAFE, which is supplemented by home study. Other days of the week, I am receiving some life skills training and when not doing that I try to walk every day and spend time with friends and family. I also have a number of pets – three cats, a dog and a rabbit – which help me to have a relaxed home environment.

When I first left school, I suffered badly from depression. I had no life skills and wasn't able to function independently. Now I have skills which allow me to have independence and enjoy things such as going to the cinema, restaurants and doing the supermarket shopping.

My advice to anyone going through a tough time is to not give up. The tough times pass. Things get better if you put in some effort. It may just take longer for you to achieve things that your peers learn quite quickly. Everyone has different strengths; it doesn't make you any less.

### Parent's Story

The biggest barrier to negotiate for Emily to access 'life' was around change and anxiety. It was really important to establish a relationship with a person from a new study or working environment before anything formal began. The trusting relationships with staff enabled Emily to be honest about her needs and to seek help when necessary. It has been important to plan in advance for a 'way out' to ensure that Emily does not feel overwhelmed and trapped. Developing understanding around how to 'get out', where to go, etc. between Emily, staff and supporting people before formal participation begins enables Emily to participate with greater confidence.

Sharing a realistic vision of the future has been useful for motivation and perseverance. When individuals are bogged down in anxiety and/or depression, it is often difficult for them to dream and imagine.

Above all, perseverance is paramount! I've learnt the importance of accepting each obstacle requiring support as it comes and doggedly searching out those people who can help!



