

CHILDREN COMMUNITIES CONNECTIONS CONFERENCE 2012

He's not a behaviour issue, he's my son!
Families and young people with disabilities
perceptions of Community Access Services
in Australia.

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Presentation outline

- Research purpose
- Brief review of international and national literature regarding transition from Secondary Education to Community Access Services in Australia
- Learnings from young people with disabilities and families



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Research purpose

- Exploration of the service quality and innovation in Community Access Services (CAS) designed with and for, young people with disabilities within Australia.



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Research Methodology

- Phase one literature review, focus groups, face to face interviews critical discourse analysis
- Phase two National questionnaire



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A brief review of the literature

Australian and International findings



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A brief review of the literature

- Transition from secondary school to what?
- What has been the impact on people with disabilities?
- What has been the impact on families/informal carers?



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A brief review of the literature

'Incorporating a family centred perspective in the delivery of assessment and support services is the best way of ensuring that a balanced perspective is employed in identifying and meeting the needs of families with a child who has a disability'.



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A brief review of the literature

Adopting such a perspective also provides a valuable opportunity for families to contribute to the development of a more inclusive framework for policy development
Social Policy Research Centre, 2002.
Supporting families who have a child with a disability, pg.24.



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A brief review of the literature

- An Australian study of 20 families by Schneider et al. (2006) found that , because there was very little informal support from outside the family, *families were heavily reliant on formal services.*



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A brief review of the literature

- *The economic and social marginalisation is not restricted to the individual with a disability but is common problem for the individuals families and caregivers.*
- *Apart from higher levels of stress and anxiety than their peers without a disabled child,*
- *36% of the parents with a child with a disability had turned down a job offer because of their child's disability,*



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A brief review of the literature

- *17% had turned down a promotion, 29% had changed working hours, 36% had reduced the hours they worked, 17% had changed jobs and 17% had quit altogether. (Winn, S. & Hay, I. 2009. Transition from school for youths with a disability: issues and challenges. Disability and Society 24(1) p106).*



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A brief review of the literature

- *'This is a time when young people can get lost between children's and adults services, finding their support cut off from one day to the next at their 18th birthday , and thrown back on their own unaided resources and those of their families' (McGrath & Yeowart, 2009, cited in Rajkovic, Thompson & Valentine, 2009, p.125.)*



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A brief review of the literature

- In the United Kingdom recent research has identified 5 principles underlying a Transition Support Program including;
 1. Comprehensive multi-agency engagement
 2. Full participation of young people and their families
 3. Provision of high quality information
 4. Effective transition planning
 5. Array of opportunities for living life
 (Merriman, 2009)



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Learnings from young people with disabilities and families



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Initial perspectives of families in South Australia

- *I don't want my son to retire when he is 20 years old*
- *My daughter gets on a bus, then another bus, then goes swimming for maybe one hour, then gets on a bus, then another bus.....*



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Case study One



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Case study Two



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National perspectives of people with disabilities and family members

- By steadily closing institutions, which provided care, for people with disabilities, a 'promise of community inclusion was one of the great social policy changes of the 20th. Century' (National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009, pg. 9).
- Shut Out: The Experience of people with a disability, their families and carers (2009)
- Strong Voices Department of the Premier and Cabinet, South Australia, (2011)



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Future service provision designed with people with disabilities

- 'The young person with a disability is part of a family and community and we should use the strengths and resilience of those relationships to support them to plan their future'.

(Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2006. *Better Pathways Consultation Paper* p.7).



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Future service provision designed with people with disabilities

- National Disability Strategy (2011)
"....the views of people with disability are central to the design, funding, delivery and evaluation of policies, programs and services which impact upon them, with appropriate support and adjustment to participation" (pg. 23)



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Future service provision designed with people with disabilities and families

- Seeing the child as an individual and 'looking beyond the disability'
- Valuing childrens achievements outside of established developmental criteria that may at times emphasise all that a child cannot do



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Summary

- Presentation of initial findings from a literature regarding the transition from Secondary Education to Community Access Services in Australia
- Learning's from the perspectives of young people with disabilities and families



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