



Transition

A time of change

A guide for young people



Contents

Not everything in this information package will be relevant to you but you can use this contents page to guide you to topics which may be of interest.

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Transition

Your journey to adulthood



Finishing high school and becoming an adult is a very important time in your life. Many things can change when you become an adult, including:

- » where you live,
- » what you do with your time (work, study, leisure),
- » the people you spend time with,
- » where and how you get medical help.

These changes are referred to as your 'transition' to adulthood, and this guide is designed to help you along the way.

What will be different?

As an adult, no one expects you to be able to do everything by yourself. There are lots of different services out there that can help you with your health, employment and lifestyle. These services are a little bit different from services you had when you were a child and they might expect different things from you.

Some services will include your family as part of the team but the main focus will be on YOU. They will talk directly to you and your opinion will matter more to them than your family's opinion.

When you are with adult services you will be expected to:

- » making your own appointments
- » setting goals for what you want to achieve with them
- » be motivated and want to help yourself

Remember...

“Try not to be shy.
This is about you
starting to take more
control of your
future”.

- » know about your condition/disability and how it affects you every day
- » know who your contact person in the service is and what they do
- » know when and how to access help to do what they suggest
- » **Speak up about what you want** and how you want to get there.

Making daily decisions

Turning 18 means you are going to have a lot more choices and decisions to make.

Some people, because of difficulties with thinking, problem solving or maturity may need help to make good decisions about their life. These decisions might include:

- » how they spend their money
- » personal day to day matters
- » health care decisions.

For some people, parents continue to offer this support even after they turn 18. Other people may choose not to have parents involved. In these cases, they may choose a friend or relative instead. There are also services such as Adult Guardian or The Public Trustee (www.pt.qld.gov.au), who can legally be appointed to help young people make good decisions. However, before some organisations can listen to this person, they need legal proof that they are allowed to help. This proof can be called:

- » enduring power of attorney
- » advanced health directive or a statutory health authority.

You will need to get this proof through a lawyer, The Public Trustee, or completing an enduring power of attorney form. For more information about this, see www.qld.gov.au/law/legal-mediation-and-justice-of-the-peace/power-of-attorney-and-making-decisions-for-others/power-of-attorney/

(or just Google search 'Queensland enduring power of attorney')

Some people are not aware that they need help making good decisions. Other people find it hard to choose a person who has their best interests in mind. In these cases, it is important to involve the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Q-CAT). Q-CAT is a government department whose

QPRS is here to help

During your transition, staff at the Queensland Paediatric Rehabilitation Service (QPRS) can:

- » help you work towards becoming more independent
- » help you explore options for things you want to do once you have finished school
- » help you find out about other services that may be useful as an adult
- » help inform people about what you want to achieve and how to go about this process
- » help you find and access health services.

**Queensland Paediatric
Rehabilitation Service**

 (07) 3068 2950

job is to decide if people need help when making decisions. They can then choose the best person or service to help that person make good decisions.

Disclosure (telling others about your condition)

A personal choice

Disclosure is a personal choice. It is always a good idea to do some research prior to disclosing. If you are thinking of telling someone about your head injury consider:

- » Will this person use this information to help you?
- » Is it really their business?
- » How close is this person to me—only people in your close circle of friends need to know personal details about you.

When should you tell people you have had a brain injury or have impairments?

A helpful tool you might like to help make these decisions is the 'Choosing Your Path, Disclosure: It's a Personal Decision' program, which is available at www.westernsydney.edu.au/choosingyourpath

Some benefits

There can be benefits of telling someone about your disability. It may:

- » enable supports to be provided to help you learn new things.
- » help to avoid misunderstandings
- » help to educate others regarding the impact of impairments on everyday life
- » allow changes to be made in the workplace so that you can do what you need to do.

Concerns

Some people worry about disclosure because they fear they may be discriminated against, denied opportunities and entitlements, pitied by others, or that it might impact upon their privacy.

See <http://jobaccess.gov.au> for information on how to disclose to an employer (enter 'disclosure' into the search tool on the site).

See www.legalaid.qld.gov.au for legal advice if you feel you are being discriminated against (enter 'discrimination' into the search tool).

Voting

Voting is the formal process whereby Australians can choose who they want to represent them in federal, state and local government. It is compulsory for all Australian citizens over the age of 18 to enrol and vote in elections. If you forget or choose not to vote, you may be fined.

Enrolling to vote

To enrol for the first time, complete the online form at www.aec.gov.au/enrol, print it out, sign it and return the form to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC).

If you are unable to sign your name due to a physical disability you may get someone else to complete your enrolment form and sign it on your behalf. To complete this form you will need a registered medical practitioner to complete and sign the medical certificate on this form.



Centrelink

Centrelink is a government organisation that provides financial and employment assistance to people living in Australia.

Financial assistance

There are many different types of assistance packages available through Centrelink including:

- » disability payments
- » mobility allowance
- » youth allowance
- » rent assistance

There are strict rules for each type of assistance and you may not be able to access all of these packages. If you need assistance to fill out the forms, you can:

- » call the disability support centre on **132717**
- » make an appointment with a disability officer
- » drop into your local Centrelink office and ask to speak with a social worker.

Other services

Centrelink can also help with:

Employment services including

- » job capacity assessments (to decide how much you are able to work and connect you to an employment agency who can support you find a job).
- » Access to further education and training.
- » Social work services, including counseling and support to Centrelink customers with difficult personal or family issues and help with claims for payments (Tel: 13 2850)
- » Centre-pay that can help you pay your bills as direct debit





Making a will

What is a will?

A will is a document which sets out how you want your property to be distributed after you die.

How do I make a will?

If you are over the age of 18 and are of sound mind, memory and understanding, you can make a will. Wills can be drawn up by anyone but must meet strict conditions or they are not valid.

You can get legal advice from a private solicitor (lawyer) before drawing up your will or contact the Public Trustee. The Public Trustee has a free will-making service.

Can someone who cannot make their own will get a will?

A court can approve a will being made for someone who can not legally make a will themselves. This includes children and people who do not have the necessary mental capacity to make a will.

What sort of property can be distributed under a will?

A will can deal with all types of property including real estate (e.g. house, land), personal property (e.g. cars, bank accounts) and insurance and superannuation policies (unless a beneficiary is named in the policy).

If you are over the age of 18 and are of sound mind, memory and understanding, you can make a will.

How do I cancel my will?

Cancelling your will is called revoking it. Your will is revoked if you make a new will or get married.

What happens if I don't make a will?

If you die without a will, then the law says who is to get your property.

Public Trustee



www.pt.qld.gov.au/



07 3213 9288

Your health

Paying for your healthcare

The Australian public health system Medicare (see box below) covers most Australian residents for health care. However, Medicare does not cover everything and you can choose to take out private health insurance to give yourself more choice in health care.

Private health insurance

Private health insurance requires you to pay a fee (premium) and in return, when you need to access health care, they will cover part of the cost of this. The amount that they cover differs depending on the health insurance company, so always check beforehand.

Private health insurance companies offer two types of cover: 1) **hospital cover** and 2) **extras cover**. You can choose to have hospital cover only or hospital and extras. With hospital cover, you will be covered if you require a hospital stay and a procedure. Extras cover is for all the therapy and treatment that can occur outside of the hospital. Each health insurer covers different therapies so it is best to talk with them to find out what they can do for you. If your parents have health insurance, you can be covered by this until you turn 21. If you are studying, they may cover you for longer. Ask your parents to check with their provider.

Getting the best insurance for you

There are many different deals available so it is important to get the one that is right for you. Things to consider include:

- » what health services are covered?
- » are existing conditions included?
- » is there an annual limit on therapies?
- » what is the excess (the amount you have to pay)?
- » will there be additional costs at the time of the health service?

Helpful tips

- » Write a list of what is important for you to have in your health insurance.
- » Check the prices of at least three health insurance companies.
- » Use a comparison website like iSelect (www.iselect.com.au) to compare health insurance policies and companies.



www.privatehealth.gov.au/healthinsurance/
www.iselect.com.au

Medicare

Medicare ensures all Australians can obtain free or low-cost medical and hospital care. Generally, if you have a Medicare card, you will not have to pay for up to 85% of your doctors' or public hospital bills.

Using your Medicare card

You must take your Medicare card with you to medical appointments and show this to reception staff when you arrive. Some doctors still charge a fee



when you see them, but you can go to a Medicare office (usually at your local shopping centre) and they will refund part of this. If going to the Medicare office is difficult, you can give Medicare your bank account details and they can put the refund money into this account.

What is bulk billing?

Bulk billing means your visit to the doctor is free — as long as you have your Medicare card and show it to reception staff. Not all doctors have bulk billing for their customers so you will need to find out if your GP does. Just ask the receptionist. Sometimes they may have a sign saying 'bulk billing available'.



www.medicareaustralia.gov.au



132 011

Health professionals

A range of professionals will help you manage your health as an adult. Here's an introduction to the most common health professionals you may find yourself dealing with.

General practitioner

A general practitioner, or 'GP', is the local doctor you see when you are feeling sick or have a question about your health. It's a good idea to visit your GP at least once a year for a check-up, even if you are feeling well, so that he/she can get to know you.

Your GP will also arrange for you to see a specialist health professional if needed. For example, if you have a concern about your heart they can recommend (refer) you to a heart specialist. Your GP will also know about special government programs that may help reduce the cost of your medical care. If you have a health care question, but cannot see your GP straight away, you can call **1343 2584** for advice.

Dentist

It's important to look after your teeth. Once you have your adult teeth, you only get one chance to look after them. If you don't, your teeth can look bad, cause bad breath, and can be really expensive to fix.

Public dental services

Public dental services are subsidised by the state government to offer basic care to children and adults holding a Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card. They may charge a small fee, depending on the treatment, but overall, they are much cheaper than a private dentist.

www.health.qld.gov.au/oralhealth/services

Private dental services

If you are over 18 years and do not have a Health Care Card, you have to go to a private dental clinic.

To find your nearest dentist, you can:

- » look in the Yellow Pages under 'Dentists'
- » search the internet for dentists in your local area.

- » ask your private health insurance provider for a list of dentists in your local area.

If you have private health insurance, some of the costs will be covered for you. Be sure to ask how much the appointment will cost beforehand so you can budget for it. Some private health insurers will cover the cost of two check-ups per year, but it has to be a dentist on their 'approved list'.

Optometrist

An optometrist examines people's eyes for vision problems and prescribes and sells glasses or contact lenses. If you already have glasses, you should have your eyes checked every 12 months to two years. If you don't have glasses, you should see an optometrist if:

- » you have blurry vision either with objects up close or far away
- » your eyes are teary or watery
- » you have spots, strings or flashes of light in your sight
- » you regularly get headaches when reading.

If you have private health insurance, some of the costs will be covered for you.

Most optometrists bulk bill, which means that you do not have to pay for your eye test. There will be a cost for glasses if you need them, but if you have private health insurance then the cost of glasses is less. Optometrists can be found:

- » at your local shopping centre
- » by searching the web for optometrists in your local area
- » Ask your private health insurance provider for a list of optometrists in your local area.

Once you have chosen one, call to make an appointment and take your Medicare card and health insurance details with you.

Psychologist

Psychologists assist people with everyday problems such as stress and relationship difficulties, and some specialize in treating people with a mental illness such as depression, anxiety or psychosis. They help people to develop the skills needed to function better. Psychologists cannot prescribe medication. Their treatments are based on changing behaviour and emotional responses without medication. Through a referral by your GP, you may be able to get up to 10 sessions in a calendar year using a Medicare rebate, which means that this will be a lot cheaper.

Ways to find a psychologist include:

- » ask your GP
- » the 'find a psychologist' website:
www.psychology.org.au/FindaPsychologist/

Dietitian

Dietitians provide advice and education on healthy eating habits to treat specific illnesses and to promote general health and wellbeing. They can work with you to help you achieve a healthy weight and a well-balanced diet, manage food allergies or intolerances, advise on specialised tube feeds or manage any other diet-related issues. It is a good idea to see a dietitian if you are having trouble losing or gaining weight, are receiving tube feeds, if you need to restrict certain foods from your diet, or if you just need some good advice about eating and drinking well!

To see a dietitian in the public system, you will generally require a referral from your medical specialist in the hospital. You can also choose to see a private dietitian – ask your GP for a recommendation or find one yourself by visiting the Dietitian Association of Australia website:
www.daa.asn.au.



Physiotherapist

Physiotherapists treat patients with physical difficulties resulting from illness or injury. Physiotherapists work with people to improve their movement and function and reduce pain. It might be a good idea to see a physiotherapist if you:

- » experience pain in your muscles or joints (back, neck, shoulder, arm, hip, knee, leg or foot)
- » hurt your muscles when playing sport
- » have difficulty moving and stretching a joint (knee, ankle, hip) because your muscles are tight.

Talk with your GP about programs that might reduce the cost of these services.

Ways to find a physiotherapist include:

- » ask your GP
- » Do a search on the internet
- » the 'find a physiotherapist' webpage on the internet: www.physiotherapy.asn.au/APAWCM/Controls/FindaPhysio.aspx
- » ask your **NDIS** planner or case manager.

Occupational therapist

Occupational therapists support people to do everyday tasks they need and want to do. The focus is on helping people participate in activities of everyday life, whether that is self-care (looking after yourself and your home), work or fun. This can be done by helping the person learn new skills, by changing the activity or the environment so that the person can have maximum involvement. You can find out more information about what occupational therapy can offer you at www.otaus.com.au.

Speech pathologists

Speech pathologists (speechies) can help with:

- » eating, drinking or swallowing
- » expressing yourself either verbally or non-verbally
- » choosing and set-up of communication devices/technology
- » developing better conversational skills
- » improving social skills.

Managing my physical impairment

Managing your physical impairment in the adult health care system will be a bit different to what you have experienced as a child.

As an adult, there is no doctor that will regularly check the range in your limbs, the amount of spasticity, your back and hips and your skin. Therefore it will be your responsibility to ask yourself the following questions:

- » are my muscles getting tighter?
- » is my hand or foot changing shape?
- » do i get pain?
- » is it stopping me doing the things I want to do?
- » are there changes to my skin?

If you answer 'yes' to any of the questions, make an appointment with your GP who may then refer you to:

- » a medical specialist such as orthopaedic surgeon
- » a rehabilitation specialist
- » physiotherapy
- » occupational therapy.

Orthotics

If you require new orthotics, you will need to either apply via NDIS, fund it yourself or use your private health insurance. To receive orthotics via NDIS you need to say that you require them to carry out everyday activities (eg walk, do your job, get out and about, drive etc.)

Splints

If you have been wearing hand splints and need these replaced, you can either ask your

GP to refer you to:

- » a private OT (will be a gap to pay),
- » rehabilitation team attached to a hospital (limited hospitals have this option)
- » University of Queensland hypertonicity clinic (**07 33652232**).

Alternatively, you can apply to the NDIS and request a splint as part of your plan. You will need to say that it helps you achieve functional goals such as being able to work or look after yourself.

Private occupational therapists can be found on the Occupational Therapy Australia website (see below).



Occupational Therapy Australia

www.otaus.com.au

Q & A

Will my physical impairment change?

The tightness in your hands and feet may change while you have growth spurts.

After you have finished growing, it is still important to keep working on your management program to prevent this getting worse. It is unlikely to ever get completely better. Therefore remember to:

- » keep wearing your splints,
- » take your medications or ask GP if you want to change them
- » do your stretches
- » stay active
- » check your skin
- » seek help early if you notice your muscles tightening, or your splint is not fitting well or if you have pain.

What should I do if my joints or limbs are painful?

- » Check your splints are fitting correctly- are there red marks/blisters?
- » Talk with your physiotherapist/ personal trainer- you may need to adjust your exercise regime or amount of walking etc
- » See your GP and ask for referral in order to understand what may be causing the pain- it may be muscular, joint pain from arthritis or contracture.

Talking with your health professionals

As an adult you will need to discuss your health and wellbeing with your doctor and other professionals. Some people find the **'GLADD'** approach helpful when communicating. GLADD stands for **Give, Listen, Ask, Decide, Do**.

GIVE

- » information about how you are feeling
- » information about what you have done to help yourself
- » your medical history if they don't know it
- » information about how your daily life is being affected (a health diary might be helpful)
- » honest answers.

LISTEN

- » to what people tell you about your condition and how you can reduce the effect it has on your life.

ASK

- » any questions you have about your health.
Tip: Write these down beforehand.
- » if you don't understand something the doctor has said, ask them to explain it again using simpler words.
- » If you have not understood something that has been discussed, try asking these questions:
 - › please tell me more about that?
 - › could you explain that to me again?
 - › could you write that down for me?
 - › is there is something you can give me to read?

DECIDE

- » what you want to achieve with your health
- » get involved in making decisions about how you want your health care to be managed
- » at your appointment what you need to do next.

DO

- » your part in following the action plan
- » be a useful member of your health care team.

Consent and confidentiality

When can I go to a doctor by myself and when do I need my parent's consent?

You must be capable of forming sound and reasoned judgments to consent to medical treatment. If you are 16 years old, it is generally assumed by law that you have full capacity to consent, however people under 16 can have this capacity too. Unless it is a life-threatening emergency, a doctor must get your consent for any medical treatment.

For minor medical treatment (eg. for a cold or acne), you have the right to refuse if you are mature enough to understand the treatment.

For more complicated treatment (eg. contraceptive advice), you may still have the right to agree to, or refuse, treatment without your parents' consent. The doctor has to be satisfied that you understand the treatment and its consequences, and that the procedure or treatment is in your best interests.

Your parents can only agree to or refuse medical treatment on your behalf if you are unable to make your own decisions. This decision must be made in your best interests.

If you, your parents and your doctor disagree about treatment, a court may need to decide what will happen.

Is what I tell a doctor confidential?

Generally, what you tell a doctor is confidential, but they can disclose information to people who have an interest in your health (such as your parent or guardian) if:

- » your doctor believes you do not understand the decisions you are making; or
- » they consider it to be in your best interests.

Doctors (and sometimes nurses) are legally obliged to report certain things like thoughts of suicide, infectious diseases or when they think you are at risk of harm. They also may have to report you if you are driving against recommendation.

Before you go to an appointment

Plan ahead and take responsibility for what you need to take to the appointment.

Taking charge of your appointments

- » if you cannot make an appointment, then phone and cancel- otherwise you may have to wait a long time for another appointment
- » keep track of your appointments on your phone, calendar, or diary
- » keep a track of the names of your health team.

Plan ahead

- » bring a support person or family member
- » think about how you will get there
- » check building access and parking
- » give yourself enough travel time.

Be in charge of your medications

- » Keep a list of names and dosages on phone, tablet or MYHealth Passport
- » Before a doctor's appointment check your repeats.

Looking after your health equipment

As an adult, you will be responsible for looking after your own health equipment. This includes:

- » cleaning it regularly
- » checking it for damage
- » knowing who to contact if it needs fixing or replacing.

Who and what

An important step in this process is knowing which professional helped you get this equipment in the first instance. For example:



- » Orthotists for AFO, in shoe orthotics
- » Physiotherapists for wheelchairs and walking frames
- » Occupational therapists for wheelchairs, shower chairs, toilet frames, hand splints

Where and how

If you need replacement items for this equipment you may have to:

- » purchase this yourself
- » contact your therapist at a local community health team (referral from the GP or some centres allow self referral)
- » Apply to NDIS and include the necessary equipment in your plan. You will need to say the equipment helps you to participate in home, work and/or recreation activities.
- » contact your adult rehabilitation specialist.

Gadgets to make life easier

Sometimes looking after yourself, making meals, caring for a home, doing things independently can be tricky. Don't worry. There are many devices and tools out there that can help.

There are gadgets you can buy for the kitchen and home, and there are many computer apps which can help when you are out and about.

LifeTec is an organisation dedicated to helping you find gadgets to make your life a bit easier. The company can be found online, but also have a demonstration room in Newmarket where you can try these out.

They do not sell the products so there will be no pushy sales people, just professionals who will be able to answer any questions you might have.

Once you have chosen something which best meets your needs they will be able to tell you where to buy it.

LifeTec



www.lifetec.org.au



1300 885 886

Staying healthy

Maintaining good health is important so that you can do the things in life that you want to do. It is often about making some good choices about the things we do each and every day.

Food and drink

Eating well is important as food supplies the energy nutrients that our bodies need to work and stay healthy. Unhealthy eating may lead to serious long term health problems. Some helpful suggestions include:

- » maintain a balanced diet. Don't forget to eat fruit and vegetables and try to reduce the amount of fat and sugar in your diet.
- » drink plenty of water – don't wait until you are thirsty. Try to drink about two litres each day.
- » if you would like further advice on this you can see a dietician who can help you explore healthy food choices.

Rest

Our bodies and minds need rest to recover and re-energise. If you don't get enough rest then you might find it difficult to make good decisions, and your muscles may not work very well and you become clumsier.

Some tips for getting enough rest may include:

- » take a break when tired
- » maintain a good sleep pattern – wake up and go to bed at a regular time
- » don't do anything too energetic just before bed
- » if worrying about something is keeping you awake, talk to someone who can help you with it.

Staying healthy



www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy



Work

Sitting at home all week can make people feel lonely so try and get out and about. It is a good idea to do something that is important to you that involves you in the community. This can be paid employment, volunteer work or just being involved in a local community group.

Work can also be those things you do to help out around the home – like chores. It doesn't feel fair if one person is left to do all the work. It can be frustrating if people have to constantly be asked to help out. Remember, even though you may not enjoy chores, people often feel good knowing that they have done their bit to help out. So talk with the people you live with and share out these 'work' responsibilities.

Leisure

All work and no play is not a good idea either. Be sure to:

- » make time for friends
- » include physical activity into your day (aim for 30 minutes moderate activity five times a week)
- » find a hobby or leisure activity you enjoy doing. It is a good idea to try a few different things to find one that really suits you.

Depression

Moods are an important part of our everyday experiences. From time to time, everyone feels sad or out of sorts. However, depression lasts longer than sadness and often involves feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

Depression is not something to be ashamed of or feel guilty about. It is not just a 'mood' that someone can 'snap out of'.

If you are concerned about depression, please talk to your family and friends, and see your GP.

Signs of depression

People with depression may:

- » feel sad, moody, dispirited, anxious or worried
- » be irritable, emotionally distant and/or unable to cope with everyday demands
- » lack energy and motivation
- » avoid contact with people and dread everyday activities
- » increase their use of drugs or alcohol
- » lose their appetite or start over eating
- » have disturbed sleep.

If you are concerned about depression, please talk to your family and friends, and see your GP.

Lifeline



www.lifeline.org.au



13 11 44

Beyond Blue



www.beyondblue.org.au



1300 22 46 36

Kids Helpline



www.kidshelpline.com.au



1800 551 800

Fatigue

Fatigue, or feeling more tired than usual, is a common problem that occurs after brain injury or is associated with some conditions. You may feel sleepy, have no energy or become irritable.

Physical fatigue: Physical fatigue occurs when your body becomes tired. This can sometimes make movement and activity difficult. You may find you become clumsier or get stiff muscles.

Mental fatigue: This is when your brain becomes tired from having to focus and think. When mentally fatigued, it is harder to pay attention and it takes longer to think about things. It can also make it difficult to remember things.

In the work place

- » It may become more difficult to complete physical activity later in the workday.
- » Concentration decreases and therefore tasks take longer to finish.
- » You may have difficulty remembering what you have done and what you should be doing.

When driving

- » You are not as aware of the hazards on the road.
- » Your reaction time decreases so it takes you longer to stop or avoid danger.
- » You are at greater risk of having an accident.

When you are feeling fatigued

- » Have plenty of rests throughout the day. This could be just sitting still for five minutes.
- » Use your orthotic or adaptive equipment to minimise the energy you spend doing something.
- » Change activities more frequently so you are not stuck doing repetitive activity.
- » Organise your day so the harder activities are done earlier.
- » Allow for longer time to complete things when you know you will be tired.
- » Organise alternative transport if you're going to be tired—don't drive tired!

Remember...

Fatigue builds up so it is most likely to be worse at the end of the day and at the end of the week.

Lifestyle

The following pages will be looking at other important stuff you need to think about and take responsibility for as you become an adult.

Understanding the NDIS?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) may help you to pay for services, supports and equipment that will support your lifestyle choices. So let's make sure you understand how you can access this scheme if you need it.

What is it?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides eligible people with supports so that they can participate in the daily life activities they need to do, want to do or have to do.

Who is eligible?

You are eligible to apply if you have an impairment or condition that is likely to be permanent and that affects your ability to take part in everyday activities. The impairment needs to be severe enough to substantially:

- » reduce your ability to participate effectively or
- » reduce your ability to perform tasks without assistance from another person or equipment.

You will need to demonstrate that your impairment affects your capacity for social participation and ability to work and that you are likely to require support for your lifetime (ie not a temporary problem).

Visit www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-access-checklist

and complete the checklist to help you know if you are eligible.



What type of information is needed when applying for NDIS?

You will be asked to include a letter, assessment or report from a health or educational professional that details the impairment AND how this impacts on your everyday life. If you do not have a current report then you can take the application form to a professional and ask them to complete it.

What can be funded?

- » help for self-care and activities of daily living e.g. preparing meals, shopping, showering
- » transport to community, social, work and daily life activities (if you are unable to drive or catch public transport)
- » help to apply for and get a job or keep a job
- » therapies to help learn new skills
- » support to access recreation and social activities
- » help with household tasks so that you can live independently
- » provision of equipment including prescription, set-up and training
- » home modification, design and installation
- » mobility equipment e.g. wheelchair, walker.

What will not be funded?

A support will not be funded if it:

- » is not related to the disability
- » duplicates a support you are already receiving via another system e.g. Medciare or Centrelink
- » relates to day to day living costs that are not related to your support needs (e.g. clothing, food)
- » is likely to cause harm or pose a risk to others.

Things like:

- » Splints or orthotics
- » Mobility aids-eg wheelchair, walker
- » Daily living aids e.g. shower chair, kettle holder
- » Communication equipment
- » Help to look after my money
- » Help to catch public transport
- » Modifications to a vehicle
- » Help to find a job
- » Help to attend uni



The NDIS planning process

Step 1:

Think about your **needs** and **goals**

Step 2:

Meet with your planner

Step 3:

Develop your plan and manage your supports

Step 4:

Approve your plan

Step 5:

Review your plan

What are goals?

Goals are your ambitions, dreams or simply what you want to achieve. Some examples may be:

- » I want to get a job
- » I want to go to Uni
- » I want to go to the footy
- » I want to stay fit
- » I want to go dancing
- » I want to live on my own or share with others
- » I want to travel
- » I want to go shopping on my own

Social and recreational activities

It is important for your emotional health to have fun with your friends and do things that you enjoy. It's also good to do a mixture of activities by yourself. Do you have activities that you enjoy doing in your spare time?

This could include:

- » playing sport (e.g. football, basketball, tennis)
- » meeting a friend for coffee
- » watching a movie at the cinema or at home
- » doing arts or crafts (e.g. painting, sewing)
- » reading a book
- » riding your bike
- » swimming
- » exercising
- » playing with your dog at the dog park
- » going to a concert/gig/festivals.

Where can I get information about what is available?

Sport

For details about sporting clubs, check the local paper or search on the internet.

Gym

Gyms and health clubs can be expensive, so consider your budget. Go to a variety of gyms and talk with the staff about what they can offer you and what type of payment plans are available.

Social outings

Some organisations and community services have planned outings on a regular basis. Talk with the transition officer about the types of services in your local area. The community resource at Synapse will also be able to tell you about these services.

Tel: 1800 673 074

Church

Many local churches have programs such as youth groups for young people on a regular basis.

TAFE/University

Student services often arrange group activities for students. Check out the notice boards on campus.



Friendships

When you are at school, it is easy to make and keep friends as you see them every day. However, when you leave school, it is harder because you will need to make the effort to talk to people and contact them to arrange an activity. When you start work and study, you will also meet new people who you might want to make friends with.

Some people have difficulty making friends because they are shy, don't know what to say, are impulsive or get confused when trying to keep up with a conversation. If you would like to improve your skills you can:

- » ask your GP to refer you to a psychologist, OT or speech pathologist who offer help with social skills
- » request supports via NDIS.

Alternatively going to group activities will provide you with a way to meet people and get to know them gradually.

Tips for making and keeping friends

- » Make sure you have phone numbers of your friends.
- » Contacting your friends on a regular basis – talk about what you have been doing and listen to what they have been doing.
- » Plan ahead and book time in your diary or calendar to see your friends.
- » If your friend asks you to go somewhere, write down the details and put it in your diary so you don't forget.
- » Remember special events in your friends' lives – their birthday and other special occasions.
- » Join a sporting or recreational organisation to meet people who have similar interests as you (see social and recreational information sheet for details).



Some common problems may include:

- » sexual functions (ability to have an erection)
- » increased or decreased desire for sex
- » difficulties with behaviors eg not respecting personal space; saying inappropriate things.

Other physical and psychological problems can also impact on your sexuality e.g.

- » fatigue
- » motor difficulties
- » low self-esteem
- » difficulty regulating emotions e.g. get angry easily
- » communicating
- » difficulty with social skills.

Seeking professional help can be embarrassing as sex is a personal and private part of life. A GP is a good first port of call so that together you can explore what the problems may be and work towards solutions.

Your local Family planning association (in Queensland this is TRUE - www.true.org.au) can provide support, reading materials, one-on one appointments. The NDIS may be able to assist with funding if you include relationships in your goals.

Remember... Everyone expresses his or her sexuality differently. It might be helpful to talk with people about the way you express your sexuality and affection if this is causing conflict.

Sexuality

Sexuality is not just about sex. It is about all your sexual thoughts, feelings, values, beliefs, actions and drives. As with personality, a person's sexuality is not like anyone else's. There are differences between how people give and receive affection, feel desirable and how people act when they are in a relationship.

Some young adults need help with:

- » knowing who you want to have a close relationship with and how to go about it.
- » telling people to stop when they are getting more intimate than you want or making you feel uncomfortable or expecting to do things you don't want to.
- » problem solving ways to overcome physical difficulties when wanting to have a sexual relationship or meeting your needs.
- » remembering safe sex practices.

Impact of brain impairment on sexuality

The brain controls most of our feelings towards others and our sexual thoughts, feelings and drives.

Alcohol

By the time you finish high school, it is most likely that you, or someone you know, will have experimented with alcohol.

If you have brain impairment, it is important to remember that alcohol may:

- » affect you more quickly and more powerfully
- » increase the risk of seizures if you have epilepsy
- » affect your coordination - therefore putting you at more risk of fall or injuries
- » result in other medical conditions
- » affect medications with serious side effects
- » affect your mood and emotions
- » affect memory
- » affect your ability to make good decisions. You may find yourself in risky situations such as fights, car accidents or unwanted sexual experiences.

It's OK to say no

If you have decided that you do not want to drink, be confident in saying no. Sometimes it can be hard to say no to alcohol especially in situations where everyone else is doing it. Some things you could say include:

'I'm OK thanks, I think I will stick with my Coke.'

'Thanks, but it gives me a tummy ache.'

'Thanks for the offer but I'm going to keep an eye on my mate.'

If you decide to drink, you can reduce the possible problems by:

- » eating before and while drinking
- » drinking water after every alcoholic drink
- » finishing your drink before topping it up
- » drinking slowly
- » knowing your limits
- » having days and weekends without drinking.



Warning signs

Alcohol can become a problem if you drink too much, too often. Some signs that it is becoming a problem may be:

- » not being able to concentrate
- » often feeling hung over
- » thinking about drinking a lot
- » feeling on edge
- » having to drink more to feel the effect of alcohol.

Alcohol and Drug Information Service

☎ 1800 422 599 or 1800 177 833

Kids Help Line

☎ 1800 551 800

The Cool Spot

🏠 www.thecoolspot.gov/index.asp

Your Room

🏠 www.yourroom.com.au

☎ 1800 442 599

Getting out and about safely

As you become more independent and do more things on your own, it is important that you make choices that will help keep you safe and happy.

At times, you are going to be with people who are not making good choices about the things they do, which puts themselves or others at risk of being hurt. Some of these things may include getting drunk, using drugs, getting into fights, or driving recklessly.

Before you find yourself in one of these situations, it is important to think about how you would handle it and what you might want to do if your 'friends' are putting pressure on you. Maybe you could problem solve this in advance with your caregiver or someone older whom you trust.

If you want to get out more but your parents are worried about your readiness, request some support via your NDIS plan. A support worker with similar interests will enable you to start learning to do adult things without mum and dad.

Personal safety plan

A plan involves thinking about possible situations and having solutions for any possible problems.

Situations

Think about some possible situations where you might need help and who to ask for help.

For example:

- » you miss the bus
- » you get lost
- » you feel sick
- » a fire starts in the house
- » someone you don't know starts to make you feel uncomfortable.

Who to ask for help?

- » Friends
- » Family
- » People you can trust
- » Police, medical staff or staff at information desks in shopping centres or train stations.

Discussing your safety plans with family members helps them to worry less and they might be more willing to give you some space.

Some basic steps

- » Tell someone where you are going.
- » Have your contacts organised in your phone.
- » Have apps for the taxi service, translink etc on your phone.
- » Always have your phone charged.
- » As a back-up, have phone numbers and a phonecard in your wallet.

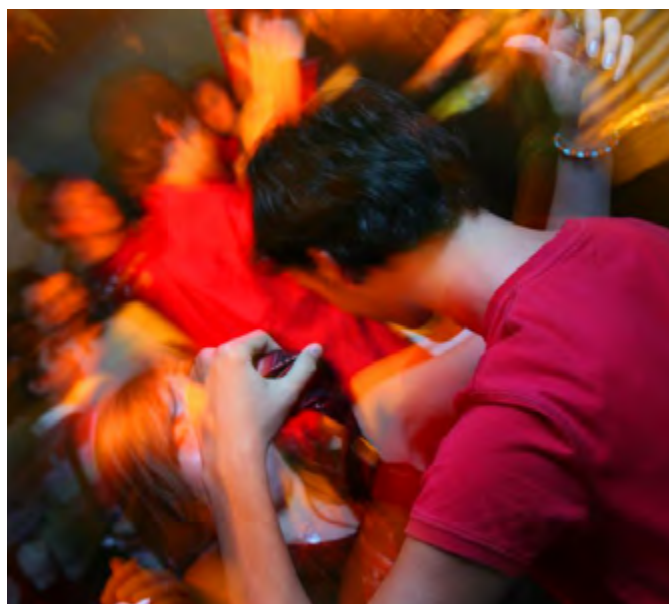
Remember: in an emergency, contact '000'

You should call **000** when someone is seriously injured or if you need urgent medical help, your life or property is being threatened or if you have just witnessed a serious accident or crime.

ReachOut



www.reachout.com



Accommodation

Choosing where you want to live is an important decision that you will have to make at some stage. There are many different options, and it is important to find out what will suit you best.

Questions to ask yourself

- » Who do I want to live with?
- » Can I look after myself?
- » What type of accommodation do I want to live in?
- » Where do I want to live?
- » Is it close to where I need to go?
- » Can I access transport?
- » What can I afford? (remember to consider rent, bond, bills (e.g. gas, electricity, phone), and food.
- » What else will I need to move out of home?

Accommodation options

Living at home

This is very common among young people. If you choose to do this, you may want to discuss with your parents ways you can help. This might include giving money for board and expenses like food, internet and electricity or helping out with chores and other household responsibilities.

Living with other family

This might be an option to move away from home but still have a supportive person to help you out if needed.

Tips for living with people

- » **Don't borrow your flatmates stuff without asking.**
- » **Respect flatmates' privacy.**
- » **Discuss and agree on house rules before moving in.**
- » **Talk about issues before they become too big—regular house meetings might help.**
- » **Do your share of the housework – maybe work out a roster to share this evenly.**
- » **Make sure all the bills are paid on time.**



Supported living units

These are houses where a group of people who have a disability live together with the help of support workers who may teach them how to live independently in the community. You can access these via the **NDIS**.

Share housing

This is a cheaper option where you share a house with other people (friends or people you have not met before). Usually, you meet before you move in to see if you like them and you like the house.

Government housing

This is an option for people who have a disability or are low-income earners. There are criteria you must meet and there can be long waiting lists (up to two years) in certain areas.

Private rentals

This is where you sign a lease for six or 12 months on a house or unit of your choice. You can live there by yourself, or get a roommate to share the cost.



Rental agreements

Once you have decided on a place, you will probably have to sign a rental agreement. Make sure to read all the fine print and ensure that you:

- » know what you are agreeing to
- » are able to meet these expectations.

Bond

This is an amount of money held by the real estate as security for the property. This is usually about four weeks' rent. This should be refunded when you move out as long as there has been no damage to the property.

Rental assistance

If you are on a Centrelink payment, you might be eligible for rental assistance.

Department of Housing



www.communities.qld.gov.au/housing

Synapse



www.synapse.org.au

Finding a place to live

Newspapers

Look for the 'to let' or 'share accommodation' sections. The biggest sections are in Wednesday and Saturday's papers. You can also check your free local paper.

Online

www.realestate.com.au

www.gumtree.com.au

www.domain.com.au

Notice boards

At shopping centres or at university or TAFE are good for share accommodation.

Real estate agents

Real estate agents in the area where you want to live can show you a variety of properties available. Be clear and polite when requesting the types of properties you want to view.

Transport

Using public transport

It's not only cheaper than having your own car, but is less stressful, faster and way better for the planet, too. There are many different public transport options available including buses, trains and ferries.

Tips when travelling on public transport

You can plan your trip by using a journey planner on the internet. You state where you are starting from, where you want to go, and what time you need to leave/arrive and they tell you what bus/train you could catch to get there, including what stops you need to get on and off.

Consider the time of day you are travelling because it can sometimes be cheaper to travel outside of peak hour (after 8.30am and before 3.30pm).

Make sure you catch the bus/train in the correct direction.

When the bus/train arrives, check the destination sign and route number.

When catching a train

- » You will have to pay before you get on the train. You can do this at the ticket machine, the ticket office or touching on at the Go card machine.
- » Stand behind the yellow line until the train has stopped.
- » Allow passengers leaving the train to exit before you get on.
- » Know how many stops it is before you have to get off.
- » Some trains are 'express' trains and won't stop at every station.

When catching a bus

- » Have your go card or money to give the driver ready when you hop on the bus.
- » About a block from where you need to get off the bus, pull a hanging cord or press the button to indicate to the driver that you want to get off the bus at the next stop.

Public transport in South East Queensland

Go cards

The Go card is TransLink's electronic ticket that allows you to travel on all TransLink bus, train and ferry services (the public transport system used in and around Brisbane).

Travelling with a GO card is easy – simply touch on (wave your card at the machine next to the driver at the front of the bus or on the train station platform) at the beginning of your journey and touch off at the end (at the machine near the exit door). Your fare is automatically deducted from your card balance, based on how far you have travelled. It is important to remember to touch off, otherwise the card will charge you a maximum fee for the journey. If remembering is tricky for you, or you are unable to touch on and off due to your disability, you may be able to talk with your doctor about organising a Translink access pass.

You can buy a go card

- » online (see link below)
- » at your nearest station
- » some newsagencies
- » by calling 131230 (24 hours).

Concession cards

If you are a full-time student or have a pension card, you may be entitled to have a transport concession card that allows you to travel for a reduced fare. This is

a special Translink card. You must have your student or pension card with you if using a concession card.

Translink



<http://translink.com.au/>



13 12 30



Driving

If you have an injury or medical condition it is important to speak to a doctor about whether you are safe to drive a car. You may need a medical certificate confirming your fitness to drive and your doctor may also recommend that your license be subject to conditions.

Medical conditions that could effect someone's ability to drive safely include:

- » acquired brain injury
- » cerebral palsy
- » limb deficiency/amputation
- » spinal cord injury

Why do I need a special driving test?

Driving requires many skills such as concentration, good visual skills, fast physical reaction time, physical coordination, judgment and fast thinking skills. If you have a medical condition, you may find some of these skills hard.

If you have a physical disability the driving assessment will help to understand what modifications may be necessary so that you will be able to drive.

You are required by law to disclose any medical condition as your insurer may not cover you if you have an accident and have not declared your medical condition.

Getting a licence

Medical certificate

The first step is to visit your doctor who will check your vision and give you a medical certificate requesting an Occupational Therapy Driving Assessment. If you have an NDIS plan, include any extra costs in your plan e.g. the OT driving assessment, modifications to car, specialist driving lessons.



Learner licence

Queensland has a graduated driver licensing system that encourages safe driving. The first stage is to get a learner licence. You can apply for your learner licence at the age of 16.

To get your learner licence, you must:

1. Get a copy of 'Your keys to driving in Queensland' which is a complete guide to Queensland's road rules. You can download or order a copy from www.tmr.qld.gov.au or buy it from a Transport and Main Roads (TMR) customer service centre or a participating newsagent in Queensland.

2. Complete a Driver Licence application form

Note: Remember to tick medical condition box and take your medical certificate with you

3. Pass the written road rules test. You must take this test at a TMR customer service centre.

Before you take the test, you can do a practice road rules test on the TMR website. Practice test questions can also be found in *Your Keys to Driving in Queensland*.

You can search for your nearest centre at www.tmr.qld.gov.au

Learning to drive

1. Have an occupational therapy driving assessment if requested by your doctor.
2. Get 'L' or 'Learner' plates
3. Complete 100 hours of supervised on road driving in the TMR Learner Logbook supplied when you passed the Learner Licence test.

Driving test

Once you have held a learner licence for at least 12 months, accumulated 100 hours of on road driving experience and passed an online hazard perception test and practical driving test, you can progress to a provisional licence.

When you complete a driver licence application form, remember to tick medical condition box and take your medical certificate with you.

Jet's Law

Licence holders are required by law to disclose to the Department of Transport and Main Roads details of long-term or permanent medical condition that is likely to adversely affect their ability to drive safely. If you fail to report your condition, you may receive a penalty of more than \$6,000 and be disqualified from driving.

In 2004, a driver with epilepsy had a seizure and crashed into a car in which 22-month-old, Jet Rowland was travelling. Jet was killed by the impact of the crash. Medical condition reporting legislation introduced after the tragic death of Jet Rowland has been named 'Jet's Law' in his recognition.

Queensland Transport



www.tmr.qld.gov.au



13 23 80

RACQ Learn2Go (maps for learner drivers)



www.learn2go.com.au



Occupational therapy driving assessments

Your doctor is responsible for determining your medical fitness to start driving. An occupational therapy (OT) driving assessment will help them to make this decision.

The assessment

The OT driving assessment will take about two hours and includes a clinic-based (off road) and an on-road assessment.

Clinic-based assessment

You will be asked to complete some thinking tasks and physical tasks.

On-road assessment (45 minutes)

You will complete driving tasks in a dual-control car. An occupational therapist and driving instructor will be in the car with you. This part will only take place after you have had an opportunity to learn to drive.

Outcome

You will be told at the end of the assessment if you are safe to continue driving, need further lessons, car modifications or need to stop driving. A report is sent to your doctor.

You will need to bring to your assessment:

1. a valid learners permit
2. a copy of your medical certificate
3. a recent vision assessment.

Cost

Assessments can cost from \$400 depending on individual need. You may be eligible to get help with the cost.

Medicare rebates (\$50) may be available. Ask your GP about a Chronic Illness Plan.

If you have an NDIS plan, include driving as a goal and then costs of assessment, modifications and some lessons will be funded.

Check with your Occupational Therapist as some regions have assessors in the public system.

A list of OT driving assessors can be found at the OT Australia Qld website:

www.otqld.org.au

Car modifications

There are many changes that can be made to cars to enable people with disabilities to drive.

Examples include:

- Hand controls
- Swivel seat
- Postural support
- Transfer board
- Accelerator control system
- Pedal extensions
- Spinner knobs

Driving schools with modified vehicles

RACQ	3872 8925
Driving education and training services	3821 5331



Managing your money

Budgeting

Part of being independent means managing your money so you spend less than you earn. Making sure you have some money left over means you can cover surprise expenses or save up for something you want. You can make your own simple budget to plan and track how much money you earn and spend.

For example, a fortnightly budget might look like this:

INCOME	
Salary/wages	\$
Austudy/Centrelink payment	\$
Other wages/income	\$
TOTAL INCOME	\$
LIVING EXPENSES	
Rent	\$
Electricity	\$
Gas	\$
Water	\$
Clothing	\$
Telephone	\$
Medical/Dental	\$
Leisure	\$
Food	\$
Travel/Petrol	\$
Other	\$
TOTAL expenses	\$
Total income minus total expenses	\$
Savings money	\$

Bills and receipts

Keep all your receipts in one place, or alternatively there are phone apps where you can store receipts. If you get a receipt via email (for on-line purchases) save them in a folder. You may need the receipt as proof you have paid your bill or purchased the item from a certain store.

Having past receipts will help you work out how much you need each month for living expenses and therefore how much you have for entertainment and leisure activities.

One suggestion is to keep your bill money, your food money and your spending money all separately. This will ensure that you won't get tempted to spend your bill money on extra food, or your food money on CDs. A budget sheet is a good way to help you organise your own money. A budget should always be reviewed every month or so to make sure you're on track.

Need more help?

If you find it difficult to stick to a budget and often spend more than you earn, there are services that can assist you manage your money. These include:

Budgeting advice services

Check out local neighbourhood centres for programs or Google services on the internet.

Centrelink

Centrelink can help pay your bills from your allowance before it gets put into your bank account. www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/managing-your-money-day-day.

NDIS

If your goal is to be more independent but you need help with budgeting, include it in your plan.

Public Trustee

Can help manage your finances, ensure that your bills get paid and allow you a small weekly allowance to spend on whatever you want. www.pt.qld.gov.au

Websites with helpful information

www.moneysmart.gov.au/managing-your-money/budgeting/simple-ways-to-save-money

Information about bank accounts that will not let you overdraw:

www.finder.com.au/bank-accounts-no-overdrawn-fees

Banking

How you manage your money may change now that you have become an adult. Often people have children's bank accounts that were opened for them by their parents. You may have to consider opening a new account now that you are no longer a child.

How do I open a bank account?

To open an account, you will need to provide the bank with identification. They will usually ask for a number of items such as a driver's licence, 18+ card, student ID, Medicare card or birth certificate.

Which bank should I choose?

Before choosing a bank, you should consider how you want to access your money. Do you want it in a savings account, withdraw it to spend as needed or maybe you want to use a card for all your spending? These questions will help you decide which account suits you best. Banks usually charge fees for different services, so find out what these are. Make sure you compare the different banks before you pick an account.

What is a PIN?

A PIN (or personal identification number) is a number you use to access your accounts at an ATM or via an EFTPOS machine at a shop. It is important to remember them and not give them to anyone else. Don't keep a copy of your PIN with your card either.

Stolen card

If your card is lost or stolen, you must ring your bank immediately. Some banks allow you to stop the card by logging into your account via the internet. They will cancel the card so no one can use it and then give you another one. Most banks have a 24-hour emergency contact number.

Debit card vs credit card?

They look the same-both have a 16 digit number, expiration date and PIN code. A debit card allows you to buy something only if there is money in that account. Whereas a credit card allows you to purchase items and pay the bank later. However if you don't pay by the due date, you pay interest which means you end up paying more for the item.



www.infochoice.com.au/banking.aspx
www.banks.com.au

Mobile phones

Mobile phones are a convenient way to communicate. You can also load them with apps for reminders and alerts, maps and directions.



Things you should know

Prepaid phones

Prepaid phones allow you to buy your handset without having to sign a contract or have a credit rating. To make calls, you buy prepaid phone cards in advance, so you don't get mobile phone bills or build up credit debts. This is the best way to avoid large bills you can't afford.

Contract/payment plans

If you decide to use a payment plan, you will need to sign a contract, which means you legally have to pay for all of the phone calls, text messages and data that you use. You usually have to do this for a set period of time, for example, 12 or 24 months. You have to be 18 to sign a mobile phone contract, otherwise you will need to have an adult sign as well.

What things should I consider before deciding on a phone?

If you are thinking about getting a mobile phone, updating a current phone or changing your plan, you should shop around for the best deal. Ask yourself the following questions:

- >> How much can I afford?
- >> Do I understand what the contract says?
- >> Do I have to pay for the phone and connection?

What are the call charges to different places at different times?

- >> How much are extra features such as voicemail and SMS?
- >> What's the minimum monthly payment? Are there any free calls?
- >> What are the ongoing commitments (length of contract)?
- >> Is there a cancellation fee?

Work / Study

Choosing a career

Relax! It's OK if you do not know exactly what you want to be by the time you finish school. Chances are you are going to change your career many times over your life. The most important thing is to start thinking about your options.

To get started, try asking yourself:

- » What am I good at?
- » What am I passionate about?
- » What are my skills and talents?
- » Do I want to work with other people?
- » Do I want to work in an active job?

You can also explore your options by:

- » Doing some work experience
- » Talking with family and friends about possibilities
- » Search the internet

Work experience

Work experience gives you a chance to try out the types of jobs you are considering. It allows you to participate in the every day activities of a workplace, see if you are suited to that type of work and can often be a helpful first step towards finding a job.

While work experience is usually unpaid, it gives you experience to put on your resume.

Research shows people can go through **30** jobs across **5** different industries in a working lifetime. So if you don't like a job you tried for work experience, it's OK. Just try something else.



How do I decide what to do?

- » Make a list of things that you might like to do when you finish school.
- » Talk with other people to find out what they have tried.
- » Talk with the school guidance counsellor.
- » Talk with QPRS staff about your options.
- » Request sessions with a vocational counsellor via NDIS.

How do I get work experience?

This can sometimes be organised through your school. Talk with your guidance officer about this.

If you have finished school, employment agencies may assist you in making contact with employers.

You can also do it yourself, just find a company you wish to experience and contact them directly.



www.myfuture.edu.au

www.mycareermatch.com.au

www.workexperiencedirectory.com.au

Getting a job

The benefits of having a job include:

- » earning money
- » gaining experience
- » meeting new people.

Contact employers directly

If you have identified a few businesses or organisations that you would like to work for, try preparing your résumé or CV and sending it directly to them. You should attach a letter introducing yourself and asking if they would consider you for any positions they have available. For helpful tips on creating good résumés, talk with your guidance officer or careers counsellor at school.

Advertised jobs

Jobs can be advertised in newspapers or on online recruitment websites (see below).

Employment services

Visit <https://jobsearch.gov.au/serviceproviders> to explore job search agencies/support services. There are different ones:

- » JobActive is for most people looking for work.
- » DES (Disability Support Service) is for people with a disability or illness.
- » TtW (Transition to Work).

You can register with employment/recruitment agencies for free and if they have a job that matches your skills, they will tell you about it and can arrange the interviews. They can also assist people who require more supportive employment options.

Networking

One of the best ways to find your first job is through a referral from people you know. Spread the word among your friends and family. Explain what type of work you're looking for, that you're available for interviews and when you could start.

Help to get work

Due to difficulties with motor skills, thinking skills or social skills, many young people require extra help to develop work skills, apply for jobs or to get a job. There are services that help in different ways.

Disability Support services (DES)

Help people with a disability, injury or health problem to find and maintain employment.

Need to go to Centrelink first- they will require you to undertake a Job Capacity Assessment- see more info on following page.

You can then use one of the specialist support services to help you get started with finding work. www.jobaccess.gov.au/find-a-provider

NDIS

The National Disability Insurance Scheme will provide assistance if you are not eligible for DES. They can help with:

- » Training/building skills in order to be ready for work eg learning to catch public transport, go for an interview, follow instructions (School Leaver Employment Supports). Up to two years.
- » Personal care or assistance with transport.
- » Assistive devices e.g. wheelchair, communication device.
- » Supported employment.



www.myfuture.edu.au/com
<http://jobaccess.gov.au/JobSeekers>
www.seek.com.au
www.mycareer.com.au
www.careerone.com.au
www.careersonline.com.au

Job capacity assessments

If you are seeking support in gaining employment through a specialised agency, you may be asked to take a job capacity assessment. This is also required to obtain a disability support pension from Centrelink.

The assessment

It involves a face-to-face interview at a Centrelink office. During the interview, you will be asked what you can do and what things that you may need help with once you are working. A friend or a family member can attend this appointment with you.

Things they need to know

The Centrelink officer will ask if you:

- » have any physical difficulties.
- » get very tired easily.
- » take longer to do some things and learn new skills.
- » get overwhelmed with lots of noise and people.

What to take?

Your rehabilitation reports and any other documents about your condition or head injury. If the job capacity assessor needs more information, they may ask permission to contact your doctor or other health professional, or ask you to get it. In some cases, they may pay for you to have a specialist medical or psychologist assessment.

What happens afterwards?

The assessors will complete a report making recommendations regarding:

- » how many hours you have the capacity to work (there are three categories: under eight hours, eight to 15 hours and 16 to 30 hours. Thirty hours is considered full-time employment).
- » what type of employment agency would best be able to support you.
- » financial assistance you may be entitled to.



www.centrelink.gov.au

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Support to attend TAFE or university

While at high school you may have had some support from your school to help you learn and complete assessments or been provided with physical help or equipment. Some of this support may also be offered through the TAFE and university you wish to enrol in. This can be accessed through the Disability Service Officers (DSO) found at the student services at your TAFE or university.

What Disability Service Officers (DSO) do:

DSOs provide information and assistance to students with a disability. DSOs work collaboratively with students to identify their support requirements. This means you can have a say in how you want to be supported. The DSOs don't know your school history so it is up to you to tell them what happened to you and the impact this has on your learning.

You can use your medical reports from QPRS to help with this process. It is best to get this support early – you can always decrease the amount of support you get but sometimes it is too late to get help after the assessments are finished.

A DSO can help with:

- » providing physical equipment for you to access the classrooms
- » providing modifications to the course based on the 'reasonable adjustment' concept
- » access to a note-taker or tutor to help you organise your studies.

What is reasonable adjustment

The ways DSO can help are ruled by what is called 'reasonable adjustment'. This basically states that they can not provide special advantages to you (you will still have to sit the exams and prove that you can do what the subject is teaching) but they can make some changes so that you have the same opportunities as other people doing the course (give you more time to write your exams).

How to contact them

An appointment can be made with the disability support officers by contacting student support services at your specific TAFE or university. Check their website for contact details.

Preparing for Adulthood Knowledge Checklist

This checklist covers some of the things that people need to know about as they are an adult. This checklist can be used to help you work out what you already know and what things you might want to find out about. This checklist can be used regularly through the last few years of school to help you see progress in the things that you are gaining knowledge in.

	I don't know anything about this	I know a little bit about this	I know a lot about this
Social and Emotional Wellbeing			
What are my interests, talents and abilities and Emotional Wellbeing			
How my head injury has impacted me			
What makes me upset or worried			
Who can help me if my family cannot			
How my role in the family may change as I become an adult			
When and how to disclose (tell people) information about myself			
What are the responsibilities of being an adult eg: voting, legal rights			
Where I can live in the future (accommodation options)			
Can I get a licence, what are the restrictions around this, and how do I do it			
Health and wellness			
What are my allergies?			
What are my medications, what they are for and their side effects?			
Who is my GP and the other health professionals I see?			
How my condition impacts my sexuality?			
Things related to sexual health (safe sex, consent, STD's, places that can help)			
What are the impact of smoking, drugs and alcohol on my health?			
The activities that I am not to do because they put me and others at risk			
What are my health care routines and supplies?			
My rights to privacy, making decisions and consent			
What is the difference between public and private health care?			
What are the costs of maintaining my health care and equipment supplies?			
What services are available to help adults maintain their health?			
How to access adult services when I need to?			
How the adult system is different?			
Work and study			
How my condition affects my learning and work			
What I want to do after school?			
What steps I need to take to do further study			

Preparing for Adulthood Skills Checklist

This checklist covers some of the things (skills) that people need to do as they are an adult. It can be used to help you work out what you already can do and what things you might want to learn to do. The checklist can be used regularly through the last few years of school to track the progress you have made in developing independence for adulthood. Tick the column which best describes your answer to each statement.

See bottom of table for the meaning of each column.

	I need full support to do this	I do half of this myself	I do most of it myself	I do it by myself	I can direct someone to do it
Social and Emotional Wellbeing					
Spending time with friends outside of school					
Behaving appropriately around other people					
Choosing my own social and recreation activities					
Managing my stress					
Speaking up for what I want or need					
Making decisions					
Knowing about accommodation options for the future					
Living skills					
Managing my personal care needs (showering, toileting, dressing)					
Taking care of my belongings					
Making meals					
Participating in household chores					
Spending time at home alone					
Using a telephone					
Using the internet safely					
Accessing help in an emergency					
Managing my money / sticking to a budget					
Buying the things I want or need					
Using a bank account					
Using public transport					
Driving a car					
Getting around the community safely					
Asking for directions or locate places using signs					
Making or changing an appointment					
Accessing Centrelink services					
Health and Wellness					
Providing my medical history as needed to people					
Taking responsibility for eating well and exercising					
Taking my medication and getting scripts filled					
Looking after my health equipment (cleaning, fixing etc)					
Participating in my health care appointments (ask/answer questions/make decisions)					
Setting goals with my health professionals					

I need full support to do this – a family member or friend has to do it all for you. **I do half of this myself** – you can do part of it, and someone else does the rest. **I do most of it myself** is where you do most of it but someone will help you to start, finish or helps with some part in the process - (for example, setting things out on a bench ready for you, or telling you to keep going until you have finished). **I do it by myself** – you can perform the activity with no help at all. **I can direct someone to do it** – you may not be able to physically do the activity, but you know how it is done and can tell someone when and how to do it for you.