



THE CYCLE OF POVERTY AND DISABILITY – EVERY CHILD MATTERS

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DIVERSITY SOUTH INC

SUPPORTING A FULFILLING LIFE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

- ▶ Established 1994
- ▶ Created by families and interested community members in the Peel and surrounding regions
- ▶ Support local family members with disability to live closer to home and live an ordinary life
- ▶ NDIS home and living, community access and support co-ordination services
- ▶ People with disability with high and complex support needs

DISABILITY IN WA

- ▶ One in five people – 411,500 people have a disability in WA
- ▶ 68,000 Western Australians are the primary carer for a friend or family member with a disability
- ▶ Approx 7.4% of total population aged 0-24 years have a disability – estimated 61,700 in WA
- ▶ NDIS in WA end June 2022 – 46,475 active participants - \$3,281m
 - ▶ 36% autism, 19% intellectual disability, 10% psychosocial disability
 - ▶ 7.8% Indigenous and 8.1% CALD
 - ▶ 12% aged 0-6 years
 - ▶ 25% aged 7-14 years
 - ▶ 10% aged 15-18 years
 - ▶ 9% aged 19-24 years

Disability Broader Context

- ▶ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
- ▶ NDIS and NIIS
- ▶ NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- ▶ Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031
- ▶ WA State Disability Strategy 2020-2030
- ▶ Disability Royal Commission – fundamental rights of people with disability must be protected
- ▶ Closing the Gap Agreement
- ▶ Social Model of Disability vs Medical Model of Disability

Cycle of Poverty and Disability

- ▶ Poverty is prevalent amongst people with disability due to a combination of factors including:
 - ▶ low incomes;
 - ▶ social exclusion;
 - ▶ fewer employment opportunities; and
 - ▶ additional costs due to their disability
- ▶ Childhood disability may also be a trigger event for poverty

Cycle of Poverty and Disability

- ▶ 1 in 6 people with disability living in poverty compared to 1 in 10 without disability
- ▶ Poverty is underestimated amongst people with disability
- ▶ Extra costs of disability not taken into account when assessing whether people are living below the poverty line:
 - ▶ costs of adjustments to home or workplace;
 - ▶ care costs;
 - ▶ additional transportation costs; and
 - ▶ medical and pharmaceutical costs

AIHW People with Disability in Australia 2022

- ▶ 41% of people with disability aged 15-64 have income from wages or salary compared to 73% without disability
- ▶ 44% of people with disability aged 15-64 receive a government payment compared to 12% without disability
- ▶ 45% of single parent families where the parent has a disability have a low income - \$383 or below per week

Economic Opportunity - Employment

- ▶ People with disability have twice the unemployment rate of the general public
- ▶ Only 1 in 2 people with disability of working age are employed compared to 4 in 5 people without disability
- ▶ Makes good business sense – people with disability:
 - ▶ Are a reliable labor source;
 - ▶ Take less sick days – less than half of the accrued cost of sickness than an average employee;
 - ▶ Reduced workers comp – 4 x lower; and
 - ▶ Number of WHS incidents – 6 x lower
- ▶ Inclusive employment is key to reducing poverty for people with disability

Economic Opportunity - Housing

- ▶ People with disability, are at greater risk of housing stress and homelessness and face additional barriers to accessing support and housing services
- ▶ 8.6% of specialist homelessness services clients have disability
- ▶ Approximately 40% of social housing households have a person with disability
- ▶ 1 in 3 people with disability did not go out as often as they would like and for 15-24 year olds this is highest at 47%
- ▶ Comprehensive Disability Housing Action Plan – better targeting of subsidies, rebates and removing property transfer duties, targets for inclusive universal housing

Economic Opportunity - Education

- ▶ 10% of school students aged 5-18 have a disability
- ▶ 89% of students with disability go to mainstream school and 12% go to special school
- ▶ 32% of people with disability completed Year 12 compared to 62% without disability
- ▶ 2 in 3 students with disability have difficulties at school because of their disability
- ▶ Only 6.2% participated in VET in WA compared to 9.5% nationally
- ▶ More work on inclusive education and positive behaviour support
- ▶ Pathways to continued learning beyond school and include life skills in VET

There is opportunity to flourish...but...

- ▶ Promote the human rights and lived experience of people with disability in addressing the cycle of poverty and disability
- ▶ Support people with disability to tell their own stories in their own words
- ▶ Being able to actively participate and contribute is central to living a good life
- ▶ Greater support for parents, families and carers – flexible working childcare
- ▶ Bring humanity back into what can be inhumane service systems
- ▶ Market based approaches – incentivise low risk high margin services
- ▶ People with high and complex support needs end up in fragmented systems

THANK YOU

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect against the white background.