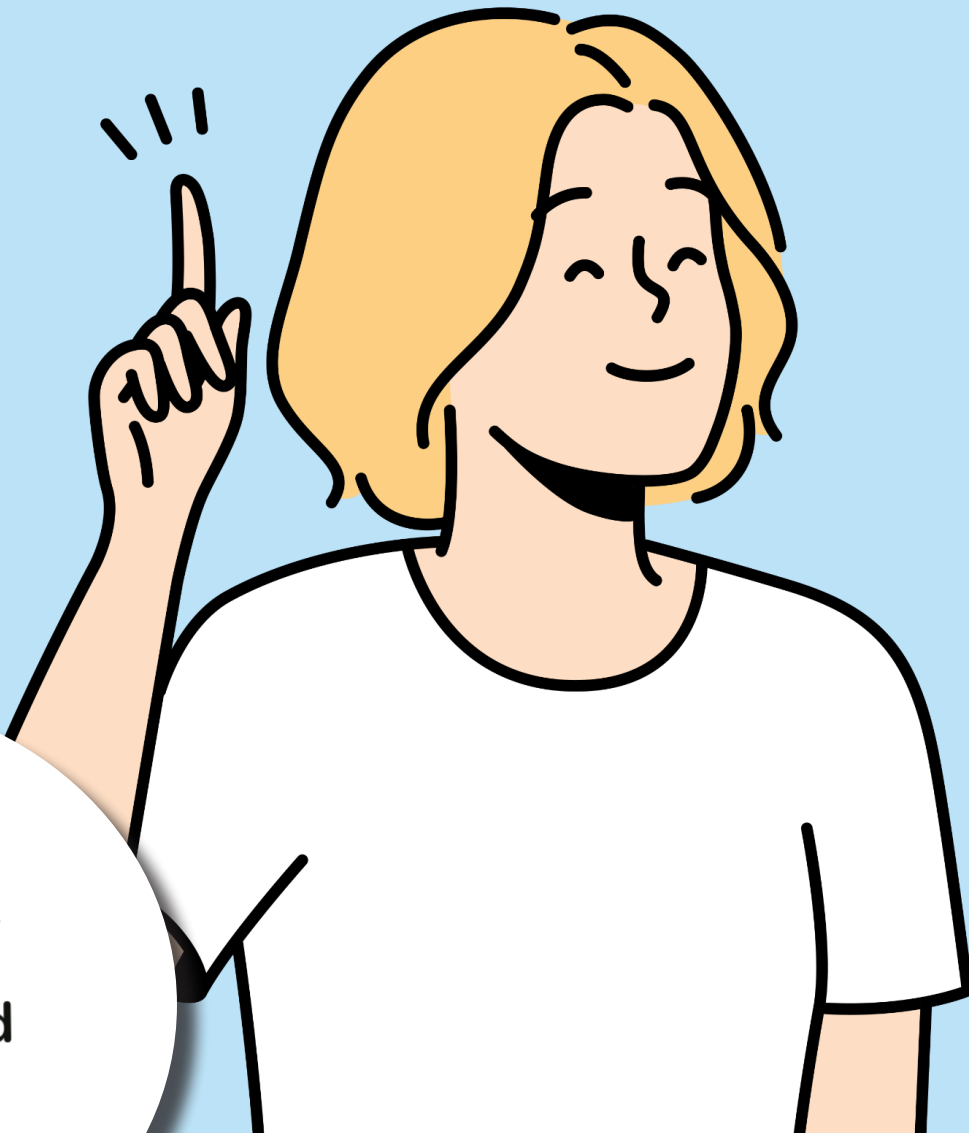


**DREAM**  
Employment  
Network



# Understanding disability

For employers



Easy Read

# About this book



This book is about

- the social model of disability



- types of disability



- how to talk about disability



- the benefits of being accessible



- being a flexible workplace



- rights and responsibilities.

# Who is this book for?



This book is for **employers**.



Employers give people jobs.



People with disability can share this book with their employers.

## More help



This book introduces many important topics.



Helpful links are at the end of this book if you want to learn more.

# The social model of disability



The **social model of disability** means

- people with disability **can** participate equally when the community is accessible



- people with disability **cannot** participate equally when the community has **accessibility barriers**.



Accessibility barriers can be found in

- attitudes people have about disability

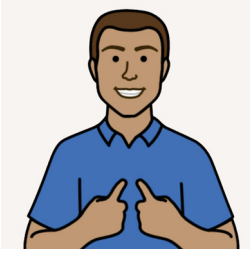


- physical spaces, for example **no** wheelchair ramps



- communications, for example **no** Easy Read or plain language information.

# Types of disability



Every person with disability is unique.



Employers **must** treat people with disability as individuals, **not** as types or categories.

## Visibility



Disability can be visible.  
For example, a person in a wheelchair.



Disability can be invisible.  
For example, a person with intellectual disability.

## Developing disability



Some people are born with disability.  
For example, someone with Down Syndrome.



Some people develop disability later in life.  
For example, someone who had a stroke.

## Physical disability



Some disabilities are physical.  
For example, the body works in a different way.

## Intellectual disability



Some disabilities are intellectual.  
For example, the brain works in a different way.

# Psychosocial disability



**Psychosocial disability** is disability caused by mental health challenges.



Some examples of mental health challenges include

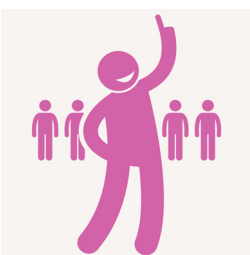
- depression or anxiety



- bipolar disorder.



Not everyone with mental health challenges is a person with disability.



Employers **must** respect the different lived experiences of people with psychosocial disability.

# Neurodivergence



**Neurodivergence** includes disability that changes how the brain processes information.

Examples of neurodivergent people include

- people with ADHD

- Autistic people



- some people with Dyslexia



- some people with psychosocial disability.

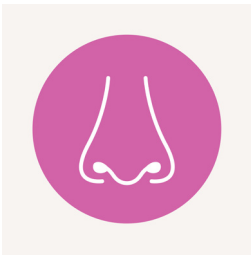


# Sensory disability

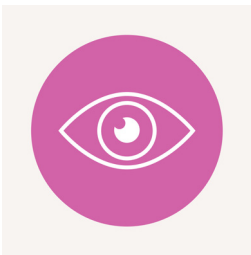
## Sensory disability impacts



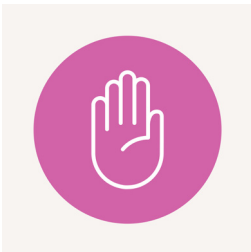
- taste



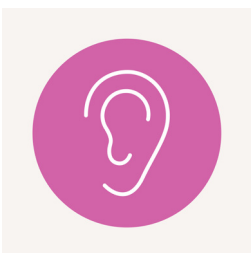
- smell



- sight



- touch



- hearing.



Some people with hearing difficulty choose **not** to be part of the disability community.

## d/Deaf people

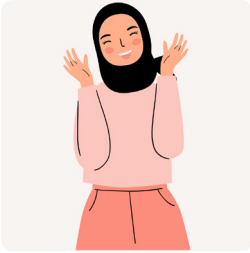


Many people who are d/Deaf choose **not** to be part of the disability community.



There is a strong **Deaf community** that uses sign language. In Australia, this is called **Auslan**.

# How to talk about disability



Disability is **not** a bad word.



Many people in the disability community are proud of who they are.



You can say **disabled person** or you can say **person with disability**.



Employers should find out what employees with disability want them to say.

# Focus on strengths



Inclusive employers use **strengths based language**.



Strengths based language means you talk about what a person with disability **can** do.



It does **not** help to only focus on the things people **cannot** do.

# Asking about disability



Employers can ask if a person needs **reasonable accommodations**.



Reasonable accommodations mean

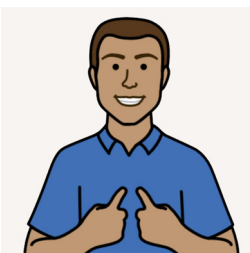
- employers respect employee access needs



- employers make changes to help employees with disability to do their job properly.



Employers should **not** expect people with disability to share everything about their disability.



The person with disability should choose what they share, unless it is about reasonable accommodations.

# The benefits of being accessible



A diverse group of employees can improve

- how much work gets done



- creativity



- problem solving.



People with disability

- can bring new ideas



- can help your organisation talk to more customers and different people.

# Being a flexible workplace

A flexible workplace means all employees have more choice about



- where they work



- when they work

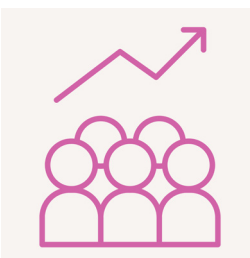


- how much they work.



Being a flexible workplace

- keeps employees happy



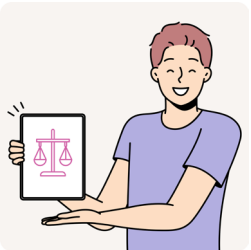
- welcomes more people to apply for jobs at your organisation.



# Rights and responsibilities



Employers **cannot** treat people with disability unfairly or favour people **without** disability.



The **Disability Discrimination Act** is a law that protects the rights of employees with disability.





# Helpful websites

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/disability-discrimination>

<https://www.nds.org.au/index.php/disability-types-and-description>

<https://www.yacvic.org.au/ydas/blog/hiring-disabled-young-people>

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=TpkwSQQbFEg>

<https://australiandisabilitynetwork.org.au/resources/recruiting-and-careers>

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/benefits-employing-people-with-disability>

<https://www.nds.org.au/images/resources/employment/WA-Public-Sector-Disability-Employment-Confidence/Disability-Employer-Resource---Myths-and-Facts.pdf>



## Helpful websites

[https://cyda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/DREAM\\_making\\_adjustments\\_easy\\_read.pdf](https://cyda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/DREAM_making_adjustments_easy_read.pdf)

<https://pwd.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/PWDA-Language-Guide-v2-2021.pdf>

[https://cyda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/DREAM\\_reasonable-adjustments.pdf](https://cyda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/DREAM_reasonable-adjustments.pdf)



## More information



Email CYDA

YouthactionTeam@cyda.org.au



Call CYDA

0423 833 523



## Services to help you call us



If English is **not** your first language

Call **TIS** or the Translating and Interpreting Service

131 450



If you have communication disability

Call the **NRS** or National Relay Service

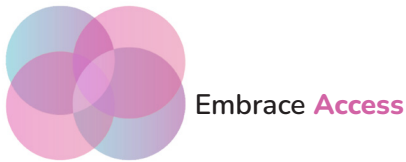
1800 555 660



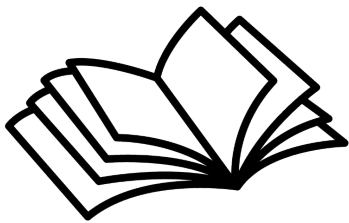
If you use TTY or teletypewriters

Call the **NRS** or National Relay Service

1800 555 677



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## Easy Read

CYDA's DREAM resources have been created to provide general information to employers and young people with disability who may be seeking employment. The content has been informed by a co-design process with employers and young people with disability. Funding for the project was provided by the Australian Government's Department of Social Services, as part of a Disability Youth Leadership Grant.

This fact sheet was current as of June 2024 and may not contain the most recent information and updates. Information is provided as a general guide and should not be considered legal or professional advice.

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