
In this Disability Education and Employment News, we have information on the inaugural meeting the North Sydney Vocational Support Network (NSVSN), Enhancing the Links – Sydney and Hunter-Central Coast, School to Tertiary Forums - Normanhurst Boys & Freshwater and Managing Disability at Work: The things you need to know. Plus further information on other Resources, Conferences and Workshops, News articles and other information for the Disability Education, Training and Employment Sectors.

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Education News:
TAFE loses $50m to private schools
Anna Patty
May 31, 2010 - 3:00AM
NSW TAFE has lost $50 million in public funding to private providers who have won contracts to deliver adult language, literacy and numeracy programs to job-seekers.

The federal Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, has awarded contracts previously held by TAFE to private providers including the publicly listed Navitas global education group and Mission Australia, which enjoys tax exemptions as a charity.

The state government confirmed the federal government's competitive tendering policy had stripped $50 million from NSW TAFE over three years.
The deputy president of the NSW Teachers Federation, Gary Zadkovich, said up to 170 TAFE teaching positions would be cut after institutes in Sydney, south-west Sydney, the Illawarra and Riverina missed out on tenders last week.

For the rest of this article go to http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/tafe-loses-50m-to-private-schools-20100530-wniy.html

**Seeking a new deal on dyslexia – Age**

31/05/2010
Elisabeth Tarica

A NATION as self-confident as Australia doesn't expect to receive lessons in advanced education practices from such humble places as Irvinestown, a small village two hours west of Belfast in Northern Ireland.

Yet that's what Nola Firth found this year when she visited the 250 students at the village's St Paul's Primary School, where sophisticated and effective strategies were being used to deal with dyslexia.

St Paul's is one of many schools in the UK that have been awarded dyslexia friendly status by the British Dyslexia Association.

Dr Firth, a research fellow at the Royal Children's Hospital's Centre for Adolescent Health and the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, travelled to the UK, the US and Canada to visit dyslexia-friendly schools as part of a Churchill fellowship. She found that in these schools students spoke freely and without stigma about having the learning difficulty, the hurdles they face and what support they need to help them cope.

For the rest of this article go to http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/seeking-a-new-deal-on-dyslexia-20100528-wl5z.html

**Parents of autistic students sue for more funding – Age**

23/05/2010
Natalie Craig

PARENTS of autistic children are suing the state government for failing to provide learning assistance at mainstream schools.

Students with autism spectrum disorders win government funding for a classroom assistant if they have a speech delay. Children who speak capably, but without social or emotional understanding, are generally refused funding and decipher the world unaided.

Disability discrimination advocates have told The Sunday Age at least seven parents have had their complaints against the state government over autism funding referred to the Federal Court.

They are suing under discrimination law, arguing that the withholding of funds means their children are not getting the necessary support in the class.

Dozens of other parents are also interested in legal action and are considering a class action to force widespread change in autism funding to provide a harmonious, supportive environment for all students.

Some say their children are so bereft in social situations that they are refusing to go to school, absconding, disrupting classes, are not learning and have repeated grade levels.

For the rest of this article go to http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/parents-of-autistic-students-sue-for-more-funding-20100522-w31a.html

**Employment News:**

**NSW Government agencies to support disabled workers – Herald Sun/AAP**

02/06/2010

THE work prospects of people with disabilities in NSW is expected to improve as state government agencies make greater use of companies hiring disabled workers.

Under a so-called Premier's Memorandum issued today, government agencies are being encouraged to buy more goods and services from such companies under changes to cut administrative redtape.

"Under the changes, NSW Government agencies can purchase good and services directly from disability employment organisations without the need to purchase from State Contracts or to seek approval from the State Contracts Control Board," Premier Kristina Keneally said in a statement.

This means the agencies will be able to procure what they need from the companies without having to go through a separate tender process.
Federal funds frozen for disability enterprises – Sydney Morning Herald
03/06/2010
Philip Wen

More people with disabilities are being told to find work when there are fewer jobs, writes Philip Wen.

A typical working day for Clinton Roffey involves sitting at a workbench next to his workmates and painstakingly fitting the heads of disposable razor blades on to their handles. He and his team get through 20,000 razors a day.

Roffey has cerebral palsy, but does not let it slow him down. The 25-year-old lights up when he talks about his passion: "I love travel. I've always wanted to travel and see the world. My mum's Irish so we go to England and Ireland a fair bit."

Roffey's colleague, Kevin Kogle, guides his fingers across the razor and checks the heads are properly fitted before they are packed. Kogle is intellectually disabled and was seven when he lost his sight.

"I was playing cricket with my school friends and I had the cricket bat in my hand," Kogle says. "And this other person bowling the ball, he threw it, and the ball hit me between the eyes." Now 57, he can see little more than shadows and outlines and requires help to get around.

Both work at Access Industries, an Australian Disability Enterprise in Seven Hills. Access is one of 355 not-for-profit ADEs that employ 20,000 people with severe disabilities.

Chance to grow in St Clair – Mt Druitt Standard
30/05/2010
Nikolaos Stavrou

THE Ability Options Wholesale Nursery in St Clair has been recognised for its stellar work in the Mt Druitt-St Marys region.

Disability Services Minister Paul Lynch commended the nursery at Ability Options' annual lunch at Fairfield RSL recently.

Ability Options is a statewide organisation dedicated to working with people with a disability in the areas of lifestyle, accommodation, employment, wellbeing and independent living.

Ability Options Wholesale Nursery gives people with a disability support in a unique workplace training environment through the wholesale production of potted colour plants and herbs. This helps them to transit to positions in open employment.

Disabled need a clear vision, says services head – Australian
Stephen Lunn
31/05/2010

IT'S not just the hundreds of thousands of exhausted carers denied their aspirations by the inadequate system for the nation's disabled.

Those living with disability themselves are entitled to be all they can be, too, says Bruce Bonyhady, head of a disability service, Yooralla, and a driver behind the push for a taxpayer-funded, national, no-fault disability insurance scheme.

People with disabilities also imagine a future in productive work, Mr Bonyhady says, and with the right mix of public funding in education and employment, they should be enabled, and encouraged, to reach their potential.

"(But) our current system for supporting people with disability is manifestly inadequate.

MS fears at work incorrect, study finds
AFTER a decade with multiple sclerosis, Fiona Hall is all too familiar with the uncomfortable walk to the boss’s office to talk about her disease.
"I've had the full gamut of reactions - from being supported to being sacked. So little is known about MS in the wider community, you are scared about how people are going to react," said Ms Hall, 57.

A new survey reveals thousands of Australians with MS are putting off telling their employer about their disease for months or even years, fearing discrimination. As a result they are not dealing properly with the symptoms as they progress and many are forced to quit prematurely.

For the rest of this article go to

Welfare News:
Rules for disability pension eased – Age
03/06/2010
Misha Schubert

PEOPLE diagnosed with diseases such as liver cancer will automatically qualify for the disability pension starting on July 1.
The rules will also apply to those with Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease or small-cell cancer of the ovaries, uterus, lung or large intestine.

Under the changes such persons will no longer have to pass a work test, with their diagnosis alone fast-tracking them to the disability support pension.
The faster process for those with a clear case balances changes at the other end of the spectrum.
Those with milder disabilities will face tougher rules and longer periods.
But for those with severely debilitating conditions, the application process will be faster and less onerous.

For the rest of this article go to

Welfare confusion leaves thousands out in the cold – Sydney Morning Herald
31/05/2010
Kirsty Needham

More than 168,000 people are missing out on parenting, carer and disability payments worth $623 million a year because it is too complicated to claim welfare benefits that many eligible Australians are unaware even exist, the Australia Institute has found.

As the federal government moves to toughen access to the Newstart allowance, requiring new jobseekers to present fortnightly to Centrelink, the Missing Out report found the money the government saved because eligible people did not claim was 1½ times the amount it lost to cheats in 2008.

David Baker, an Australia Institute research fellow, said the government and opposition were "playing to preconceptions of welfare recipients" in an election year, but this only added to the stigma that stopped many legitimate recipients from claiming. The executive director of Anglicare, Kasy Chambers, said government assistance was provided for good reason and the system needed to be changed if people were failing to navigate through the bureaucracy.

For the rest of this article go to

International News:
Study shows more disabled students are dropping out of university
Afua Hirsch and Alice Lagnado - The Guardian, Tuesday 25 May 2010

Increasing numbers of disabled students are dropping out. What are universities doing wrong?
Former student Rosie Watson felt let down by Durham University. PStudent Rosie Watson felt humiliated and let down
when her tutors failed to take into account her deafness. Although when she began her anthropology degree course at Durham University Watson was assessed and given the help of a note-taker and a laptop, she says tutors and lecturers humiliated her and failed to take her needs into account. When she raised the issue, she was offered counselling to help her adjust to university life.

"[One tutor] tapped on the loop [of her hearing aid system] and shouted down it "Rosie can you hear me, Rosie" and I was made to feel humiliated, especially when other students laughed at this," Watson says. "I asked the tutor if she realised just how upsetting that had been for me; her reaction was to say that she always shouted 'because her grandmother is old'. "She went on to say 'Read my lips'. [It is] offensive to be made to feel that I am an old person and in some way slow in my learning, rather then just somebody who is hearing impaired."

For the rest of this article go to www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/may/25/disabled-student-drop-out-university-increase

**Adolescents Cope with Mental Illness Stigmas, Report CWRU Researchers May 25, 2010**

Living with a mental illness can be a tough experience for adults, but with the increasing numbers of youth diagnosed and taking medications for mood disorders, it can become a time of isolation, according to a study from Case Western Reserve University Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences.

In one of the first studies of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 with mental illnesses and taking medications, researchers found that at least 90 percent of the study’s participants reported experiencing some form of stigma. It has led to shame, secrecy and limiting social interactions.

Forty adolescents in the study reported that the attitudes of parents and schools either protect against or magnify the youth’s feelings of being different or ashamed that they have a mental illness.

For the rest of this article go to http://blog.case.edu/case-news/2010/05/25/mentalillnessstudy

**Cambridge University Press Grants Digital Rights to Bookshare for Accessible Formats Conversion**

Cambridge University Press has entered into a license agreement with Bookshare, the Calif.-based nonprofit organization that provides books in accessible formats for people with qualified print disabilities, such as blindness or low vision, a physical disability, or a severe learning disability that affects reading.

Under the terms of the digital rights license agreement, Cambridge will deliver academic and scholarly books from all of its regional publishing centers around the world to Bookshare for conversion into accessible formats. Individuals with qualified print disabilities around the world will be able to download the books for a nominal Bookshare membership fee and read them using a computer or other assistive technology, with voice generated by text-to-speech technology, as well as options for digital Braille. Qualified students in the U.S. will have free access to the books, thanks to a special award from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

For the rest of this article go to http://newsbreaks.infotoday.com/Digest/Cambridge-University-Press-Grants-Digital-Rights-to-Bookshare-for-Accessible-Formats-Conversion-67307.asp

**Conferences and Workshops:**

**Assistive Technology: The tip of the iceberg Conference**

Registration for Assistive Technology: The tip of the iceberg, ARATA National Conference is NOW OPEN.

The conference will be held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart from Wednesday 11- Friday 13 August 2010.

Download the full registration guide with program from www.arata.org.au

An accessible version of the registration form will be available shortly. If you require an accessible version, please forward your request via email to arata10@ammp.com.au

Secure online registration will open shortly at www.arata.org.au

REGISTER EARLY and SAVE with early bird registration closing Thursday 27th May 2010.

If you have any questions or enquiries please contact A.M. Meetings Plus on +61 (0)3 9372 7182 or arata10@ammp.com.au
Annual Student Equity in Higher Education Conference
The Melbourne Cricket Ground
11 and 12 October, 2010
For further details and updates:
www.ncsehe2010.com.au

Pathways 10, 2010 Conference - Creating space for people with disabilities in tertiary education
Brisbane from Wednesday, 1 December 2010 to Friday, 3 December 2010.
The Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability (ATEND) and the members of the Pathways 10 Conference Organising Committee extend a warm invitation to everyone who shares the vision for more inclusive tertiary education experiences and outcomes for people with disabilities.
Pathways 10, 2010 will be held at the vibrant Southbank precinct in the heart of Brisbane at various venues including Southbank Institute of Technology and Griffith University.
Join us for three days of thought-provoking discussion, information-sharing, strategising and problem solving as well as networking opportunities and some great social events.
Topics to be explored at the conference include:
- The Widening Participation Agenda
- Creating inclusive learning environments in tertiary education
- Curriculum development
- Pedagogy
- Assessment

Creating space in workplaces and professions
Reframing the role of the Disabilities Service Practitioner
We are looking forward to creating a stimulating conference program as well as an engaging space in which you can network, reconnect with friends and meet new people.
Watch this space for regular updates. – www.pathways10.org
Contact Judy Hartley, Pathways 10 Organising Committee Chair
07 3735 7280
j.hartley@griffith.edu.au

NSW Events:
NSVSN inaugural meeting
North Sydney Vocational Support Network (NSVSN) inaugural meeting will be held on 11 June, in the Charles Blunt conference centre in the grounds of the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney.
NSVSN - A Network for direct support staff of Education, Training, Employment related and other relevant providers.
The Network aims to be the peak cross disability forum for communication, information sharing, and joint planning between schools, higher education, vocational services and government programs in the North Sydney Region.
Membership of the NSVSN is open to Staff at -
- Government, Independent and Catholic schools;
- University, TAFE and RTOs;
- Job Services Australia Providers;
- Disability Employment Providers;
- Local Disability Service providers;
- ADHC postschool programs;
- others involved in the transition of people with a disability and/or their employment.
The Network will provide members with regular opportunities to meet with other local providers relevant to transition of school leavers with disability; network during a social morning tea; discuss arising issues affecting the region; and to participate in information sessions on current transition related topics.
The inaugural meeting of the NSVSN will be held on 11 June, in the Charles Blunt conference centre in the grounds of the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney. At the inaugural meeting a steering committee will be formed which will share roles such as Chair and Minute taker, organising meetings, speakers and the running of the Network.

For catering purposes you will need to register to attend for the Inaugural meeting. Registrations will close on Tuesday 8th June 2010.

For further information and registration go to http://ndco.cds.org.au/index.php/nsvsnmeeting

Enhancing the Links - Sydney, Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club
Thursday 24 June 2010
9am-3:30pm (registration from 8:15)
Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club, Fitzroy Room
24 John St, Lidcombe

Presentations from expert practitioners about available services and supports for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, mental illness, or learning difficulties to ensure a positive transition from school.

Essential up-to-date information about post-school pathways, including:
- TAFE
- University
- Employment
- Info for students with Mental Health Conditions
- Info for students with Aspergers
- Panel discussions, case studies, resources and networking opportunities.

Who should come?
Schools: Counsellors, Careers Advisers, District Guidance Officers, Disability Programs Consultants, STTs, AP (Learning Support, Vision, Hearing), Principals, Head Teachers (Support), Head Teachers (Welfare), Support Teachers, ISTIs, Learning support teams, STLAs, SLSOs, Year Advisers 10-12, VET coordinators.

TAFE: Equity Managers, Teacher/Consultants, Counsellors, Consultants (TVET), Disability Teachers, Career Advisers

Universities: Disability Advisors, Counsellors, Careers Advisors, Marketing Personnel

Government, Community and other Agencies: Local Community Brokers, Australian Apprenticeships Centres, DEEWR funded Employment Service Providers, Transition to Work and Community Participation Program Providers, ADHC staff

Registration and Payment information
This event costs $33 for participants and is subsidised by the National Disability Coordination Officer Program. Morning tea and lunch will be provided.

Places are limited so register early!
For further information and registration go to http://pubsites.uws.edu.au/ndco/news/index.htm#enhancing

School to Tertiary Forums - Normanhurst Boys
What pathways are available once you have finished school?
An information session for those interested in postsecondary pathways for students with additional support needs.
Wednesday June 30th, 2010 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Normanhurst Boys, School Hall,
The session is designed for students who are currently in year 10, 11 and 12 who are interested in finding what is available for them if they wish to study at University or TAFE, find a job or Apprenticeships/Traineeships.

The presentations will include:
- Disclosing a disability
- University
- TAFE
- Employment services

For additional information http://ndco.cds.org.au/index.php/schooltotertiary

As numbers are limited you must register online at http://ndco.cds.org.au/index.php/normanhurst

Registration Closes Friday 25th June
A light morning tea will be provided
This information session are open to all Students from year 10, 11 and 12 in the public, private and catholic school systems with additional learning needs in the North Sydney Region and their Parents, Carers, Teachers, Support Teachers Learning Assistance, School Welfare, Counsellors and Career Advisers.

Enhancing the Links - Hunter-Central Coast
A Free Hunter-Central Coast Seminar and Service Expo to Assist Students and People with a Disability in the Transition to Training, Education and Employment.
Thursday 22 July 2010
The University of Newcastle - Great Hall
9.00 am – 3.30 pm (Registration from 8.00 am)
Register by 16 July using our simple and fast online link (or download a registration form) at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/ndco/staffresources/linksprogram.html
More Information
Kay Dean, NDCO Newcastle-Hunter
E: kay.dean@newcastle.edu.au | P: 4921 8844 | M: 0438 218848
Timothy Hart, NDCO Northern Sydney/Central Coast
E: thart@med.usyd.edu.au | P: (02) 8878 0514

School to Tertiary Forums - Freshwater
What pathways are available once you have finished school?
An information session for those interested in postsecondary pathways for students with additional support needs.
Monday July 26th, 2010 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Freshwater School Hall
The session is designed for students who are currently in year 10, 11 and 12 who are interested in finding what is available for them if they wish to study at University or TAFE, find a job or Apprenticeships/Traineeships.
The presentations will include:
• Disclosing a disability
• University
• TAFE
• Employment services
For additional information http://ndco.cds.org.au/index.php/schooltotertiary
As numbers are limited you must register online at http://ndco.cds.org.au/index.php/freshwater
Registration Closes Wednesday 21st July
A light morning tea will be provided
This information session are open to all Students from year 10, 11 and 12 in the public, private and catholic school systems with additional learning needs in the North Sydney Region and their Parents, Carers, Teachers, Support Teachers Learning Assistance, School Welfare, Counsellors and Career Advisers.

Managing Disability at Work: The things you need to know
Friday 30 July, 2010
9 am – 3:30 pm (includes lunch)
University of Technology Sydney
A joint initiative being run by the UTS, the University of Sydney, UNSW, the Australian Employers Network on Disability and the NDCO Program (CDS, UWS).
Who should come?
All currently enrolled University students in NSW/ACT with a disability thinking about career pathways.
Does that mean you?
Perhaps you don’t think of yourself as having a disability but the definition is broad and includes dyslexia, mental illness
and ongoing medical conditions.
The focus is on assisting you to maximise all opportunities whilst still at university, find the best career pathway, and how to access it after graduation. The forum will provide practical strategies and information, the opportunity to network and meet with other students and experts in the field.

Why come?
To find out more about practical career strategies and programs to give you an edge in a tough job market.
To participate in workshops:
What do I want to do?
- Designed as an introductory session for the beginner job seeker, it includes information on career exploration and researching jobs.
- Finding the job you want! Covers information on services such as: Stepping Into, WAM, DES Services, career counselling and networking.
- The Application - selling your skills and dealing with disclosure. Contains information on disclosure, selling your strengths, resume tips.
- The Interview – making a good impression and addressing workplace adjustments. Contains information on options for raising workplace adjustments, interview expectations.

University Careers Advisors will be available and the event promises to be inspiring and informative. A light lunch will be provided and a chance to meet people from other Universities.
The Event is free and lunch will be provided.
For more information go to http://ndco.cds.org.au/index.php/uni

Publication:
Australian vocational education and training statistics: Apprentices and trainees: Early trend estimates to March 2010
This new publication presents early trend estimates of apprentice and trainee commencements at the national level for trade and non-trade occupations up to March 2010.

New Resources:
Assistive Technology: My Dream Classroom
HumanWare has designed this interactive tool to help educators discover different solutions for students who are blind, have low vision or learning disabilities. Find out more go to http://www.humanware.com/mydreamclassroom.com/

New National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline website
An effective tool to empower people with disability, their families and carers to eliminate abuse and neglect of vulnerable people the community as well as in specialist disability services.
The site address is: www.disabilityhotline.org

2010 Workers with Mental Illness: a Practical Guide for Managers
Safe Work Australia supports the development of Working with Mental Illness: a Guide for Managers, a publication that provides information and practical guidance on managing mental illness at work.

Who provides VET programs?
Only Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) can provide Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs. Here is a list of RTO sites in Australia
Media Releases:

Workplace mental health guide launched

President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, Cathy Branson QC, launched Workers with mental illness: a practical guide for managers at the Australian Employers Network on Disability Conference in Sydney today.

"Workers with mental illness: a practical guide for managers aims to help managers better understand mental illness, develop strategies that assist workers with a mental illness and ensure that their workplaces are healthy and productive," President Branson said.

“We developed this guide because research conducted by the Australian Human Rights Commission showed that managers want to provide support to staff members who live with a mental illness, but often lack the confidence or skills to do so,” said President Branson.

For the rest of this media release go to http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2010/51_10.html

Government focuses on disadvantaged job seekers

PORTFOLIO: Education, Employment and Workplace Relations


SNIPPET: Minister for Human Services Chris Bowen and Minister for Employment Participation Mark Arbib today announced a new initiative to help get highly disadvantaged job seekers into work. Under Local Connections to Work, disadvantaged job seekers will be able to access, in one location, financial assistance, advocacy, housing, employment and health support services, education and counselling, and other services which may help overcome barriers to employment. Services provided on the ground to job seekers in each location will be driven by local needs and tailored to the circumstances of the job seeker and their families.

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Funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) under the National Disability Coordination Officer Programme.

The NDCOs for Region 1 and 3 are Hosted at the Centre for Disability Studies