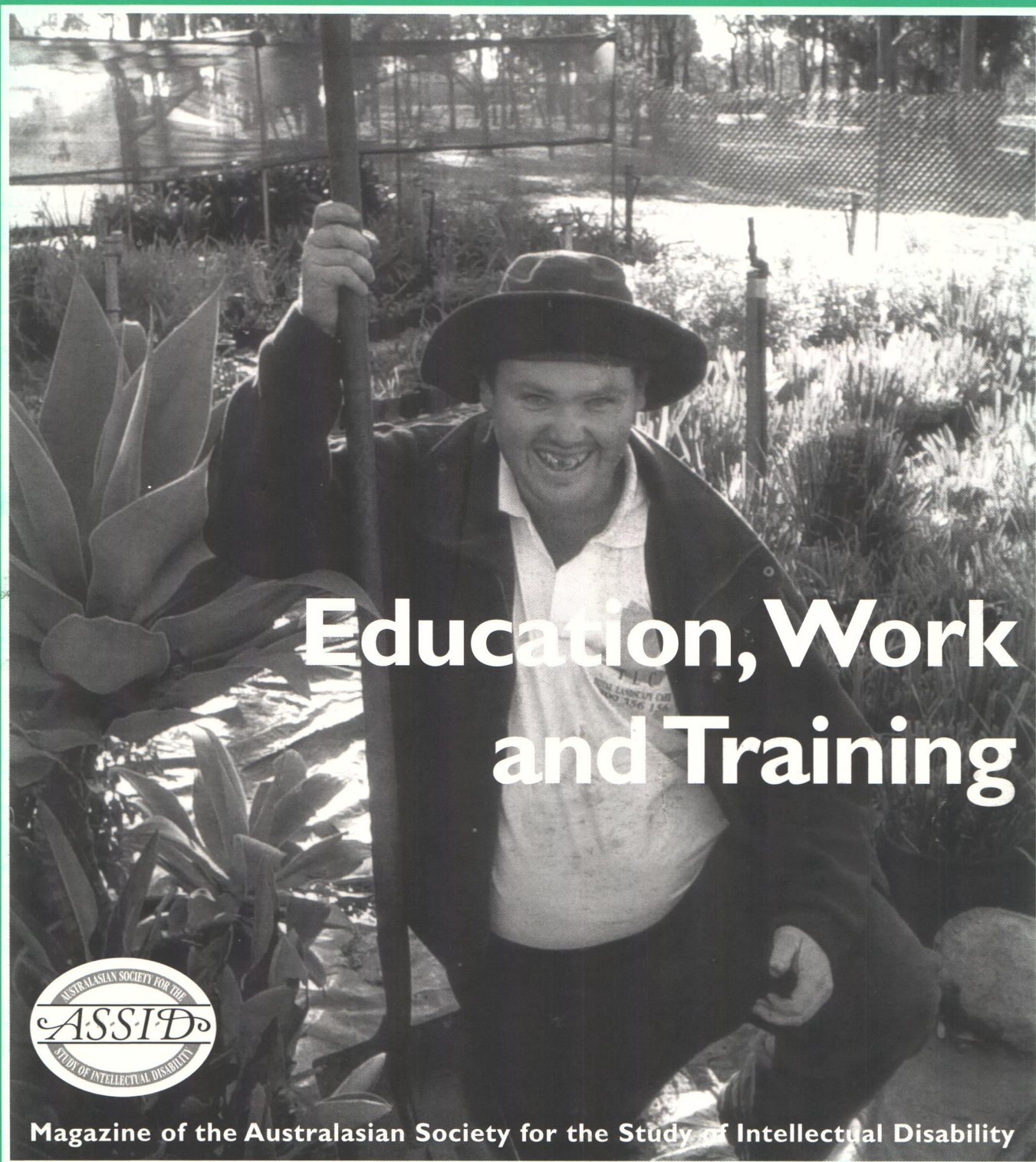


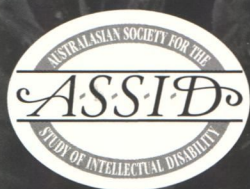
Volume 25, Issue 1, March 2005

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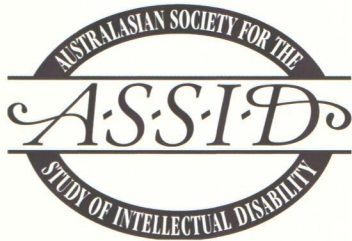
ISSN 1446-9987
Intellectual Disability Australasia



Education, Work and Training



Magazine of the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability



Intellectual Disability Australasia is produced and distributed by the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability.

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Printed by:
 Bloxham & Chambers Printers

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Editorial

How can service systems build strength and resilience in individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families? Could individual support packages that provide resources for individuals to purchase solutions actually create a false belief that the package will meet all the needs of the individual and their family? These are some of the big questions that were raised by Jay Weatherill, the South Australian Minister for Families and Communities and Minister for Disability when he opened the 2004 Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability conference. His paper, which appears in this edition of IDA, provided a stimulating and thought provoking start to the conference that was held in Adelaide last November.

Richard O'Loughlin, ASSID (SA) State President, has provided us with an excellent summary of the conference on behalf of the organising committee. Olive Webb read out a delightful poem at the closing ceremony of the conference that we have reprinted here. We are also pleased to bring you a number of papers from the conference in this and subsequent editions of IDA. In this edition, we have two articles that compliment each other nicely. Tony Shaddock, in his paper entitled Education, Work, Career and Security argues that we must engage in 'inclusive thought processes' so that entitlements of individuals with disabilities are implemented effectively, rather than 'lost in translation'. Adequate resourcing, appropriate staff training, curriculum targeted at the skills students most need, appropriate financial support and remuneration for post-school options are critical if individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are to access the same sorts of outcomes as other students and workers.

Kerry Jones reinforces this message through her paper on vocational employment and training opportunities for people with disabilities and the pathways to further employment and training for students. She describes how the Western Futures Lighthouse Disability Project uses transition planning processes to develop workplace learning opportunities. This project has been successful in increasing the representation of individuals with disabilities in the vocational training and employment sector and has developed effective collaborative partnerships with individuals, organisations, and different levels of government.

As occurs each year at the annual conference, the ASSID Board for 2003/2004 met for the last time and the new Board for 2005/2005 conducted its first meeting for the year. Printed in this edition of IDA is the list of new Board members, including Australasian and Regional Executive members who are already hard at work planning activities for the coming year and ensuring the broader membership receive the best outcomes possible from their association.

Deb Keen



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Education, Work, Career & Security

This feature article is an edited extract from Professor Shaddock's keynote address given at the 39th National Conference of the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability

By Tony Shaddock PhD

Inclusive thought processes in service planning and delivery, and not just inclusive practices in classrooms - as important as they are - will determine whether people with disabilities are likely to experience maximum, long term benefits from education, including the opportunity to engage in work that is rewarding and a life that is satisfying.

A well-directed education for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities is one that equips them to function effectively in their present and future environments. In western society, these environments are likely to be schools, families, community facilities and/or workplaces, and these places are, to say the least, multifaceted, complex and dynamic. These environments are continually changing in response to prevailing social, economic and political factors. For example, where once the post-school destination for a person with a moderate intellectual disability was a sheltered workshop (or nothing at all - so they were at home with mum) now there is an emphasis on a wide range of employment options (or nothing at all - so they are at home with mum, or daytime television).

Those of us who have been involved in the field for some time (even before it was called 'an industry') may remember a time when society looked to government to supply the majority of the basic social welfare services. In those days, the Australian population was small and our needs were relatively modest. However, this situation has changed dramatically and now our society is very much affected by 'globalization, changes in the traditional structure of societies, the rise of economic rationalism, greater emphasis on individual rights, and increased expectations of government by the electorate' (Shaddock, 2002).

The essence of these changes is that:

- Governments no longer control major economic and social influences that affect their citizens and they do not have the resources to fund everything that their citizens expect of them.
- Western societies are becoming more dynamic, more differentiated, more individualistic and more self-interested.
- There is less political stability as traditional voting blocks are eroded and as individuals change their allegiances on the basis of particular issues that they perceive are of crucial importance to them (such as interest rates).

- Economic rationalism has given supremacy to 'getting the economy right' as the foundation for all other benefits that the state may provide, including social benefits.
- Competition, deregulation, individual rights and consumer choice have been fostered on the assumption that in a deregulated and competitive economy in which all individuals have the right and the ability to make choices, the purchasers (consumers of services) will be better off because the providers will improve their overall performance and efficiency.
- There is a *belief* that government and its bureaucracies should stay out of social welfare as much as possible and should use incentives and disincentives to move people out of 'welfare dependency' and provide a minimal safety net for those who remain dependent.

My intention in this paper is not to discuss the economic rationalist worldview - I accept that it is the current orthodoxy. I merely make the point that it is a somewhat inadequate worldview because its fundamental assumptions cannot be sustained at the individual level, particularly for people with an intellectual or developmental disability.

While it is not particularly remarkable that social and educational services are shaped by dominant assumptions and values, it is instructive to examine how these assumptions and values are influencing what is considered to be good, promising or exemplary practices in the education of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities these days. For example, in a popular text for undergraduate education students Sands, Kozleski and French (2000) list five main educational outcomes for students with disabilities: develop and support family connections; exercise choice and become self-determined; engage in lifelong learning pursuits; enjoy socioeconomic security and productivity; participate in, and support, school and neighbourhood communities. Sands et al. argue for these outcomes on the basis of 'changing social and economic conditions' (p. 28). Even ten years ago, who would have predicted this particular set of outcomes for school students with disabilities?

Contrast these curriculum goals with the recommended curriculum for students with intellectual disabilities just 10 years ago in a well-known Australian text on students with special needs: self-help skills; gross motor skills; fine motor skills; communication skills; socialisation skills; functional academic

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skills; pre-vocational skills; recreational skills (Casey, 1994, p.69).

Clearly the subtext in the contemporary curriculum goals for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities is that school students with disabilities had better learn the skills, find the supports and develop the networks that will assist them to have a good life without extensive government support once they have left school.

In addition to major changes to the curriculum, other issues I will now examine arise from (a) inclusive practice; (b) the reliance on para-educators; (c) increasing levels of challenging behaviours in schools; (d) transition from school; and (e) the funding of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and of the Draft Educational Standards for Education.

Inclusive Practice

The major contemporary challenge in the education of students with disabilities is to ensure that inclusion 'works' for all students. One of the difficulties that teachers face is that our society seems willing to accept the adoption of far-reaching educational policies that have not been subjected to extensive research, trialing or field testing before they are implemented - and inclusion is no exception. So, inclusive practice has been adopted and mandated without much evidence-based direction about how to achieve success for all students.

The debate about inclusion has been muddied by a lack of clarity about its meaning and intentions (Sasso, 2001). Some protagonists see inclusion as *a means* to an end and argue 'An inclusive setting *may* be an appropriate placement - it depends on the outcomes achieved'. However, others - myself included - view inclusion as an *end* in itself and argue 'If you've broken no laws then your place is in your neighbourhood school'. As most western countries now have legislation and standards that mandate inclusive practice, it is obvious that the latter view has prevailed. There is no point debating the merits of inclusion; there is very little likelihood of a 'product recall' or even an apology; so our job is to ensure that all children with disabilities in inclusive settings experience the benefits.

For those of us committed to the *study* of intellectual disability (as ASSID members are), this situation has considerable implications for the research we undertake about inclusion. For example, under the current circumstances, where we are already 'doing inclusion', there is a good case for defining and specifying what exemplary inclusive practice is, finding examples of it in ordinary schools, systematically researching those examples, and making the findings available to mainstream teachers across Australia. This is the strategy that I, and my colleagues the NSW Department of Education and Giorelli Educational Consultancy Services, have adopted in a major DEST-funded research project on 'Students with Disabilities in Mainstream Schools' (see <http://www.canberra.edu.au/special-ed/research/improving-outcomes/index.html>). Some of our studies involve detailed observation of exemplary current practice. By asking really straightforward questions, such as

those recommended below by Green (2000), we are attempting to improve the understanding of ordinary teachers about how students with disabilities can receive a quality educational experience in ordinary schools under ordinary circumstances. Arguing for the development and application of theory in field-based research, Green (2000) writes:

The simple question 'Does it work?' needs to be supplemented by a whole range of further questions to address the full complexity of most intervention scenarios - questions such as 'How does it work?', 'What components are necessary to success?', 'What components are redundant?', 'Why does it work in this context?' (or equally importantly not work), 'Can it be replicated?', 'Is this an appropriate and acceptable way of tackling the problem?' (p. 127)

The Role of Teacher Aides or Para-educators

This latter question, 'Is this an appropriate and acceptable way of tackling the problem?' invites attention to the extensive use of paraprofessionals (known also as 'integration aides', 'special teachers' assistants' 'teacher aides special', para-professionals and similar) to support students with disabilities. The proliferation of teacher aides to improve the educational attainments of students with disabilities is another educational development for which there is the flimsiest of research support, at least in terms of students' learning.

In Australia the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW] (2003) reports a staggering 261.3% increase in 'integration aides' between 1996 and 2001, from 7519 to 10,396, while during the same period, the increase in special education teachers was only 741 (6.9%). AIHW also reported that "64.3% (of integration aides) received incomes of less than \$20,800" (p. 26) that prompted Giangreco et al. (2001) to observe that 'students with disabilities and para-educators might reasonably be considered to include some of the most marginalized people within school hierarchies' (p. 59).

While it is well known that teacher aides work in a variety of ways and that they are often highly valued by students, parents, teachers and principals, it is anomalous that the least trained person frequently has responsibility for the most complex student. The increasing reliance on paraprofessionals to deliver instructional support to students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms suggests that much more research is needed on the roles that paraprofessionals play and their impact on student outcomes in particular. It is quite disturbing that a costly educational practice that is becoming financially unsustainable continues to be used when few studies have shown a positive effect on student outcomes; when practices such as peer tutoring (Shukla, Kennedy & Cushing, 1999) have been shown to have a greater positive impact on a range of outcomes for students with disabilities than being assisted by a paraprofessional; and when some studies have demonstrated negative impacts for students when a paraprofessional is available (such

as decreased engagement of the student with the teacher (Giangreco et al, 1997; Young, Simpson, Myles & Kamps, 1997). There may, however, be significant benefits for the teacher who is supported by a paraprofessional around the management of students and their behaviour.

Challenging behaviour

All teachers now must deal with an increasing amount of challenging behaviour. Challenging behaviour negatively affects other students and leads to teacher stress, burnout and job turnover. In a recent study my colleagues and I asked 52 teachers of students with special needs in mainstream and special settings to describe student behaviours that concerned them, how they responded and the reasons for their response (Murik, Shaddock, Spinks, Zilber & Curry, in press). We categorised the reported behaviour 'as predominantly 'physical aggression', 'disruption to peer learning', 'verbal aggression', 'anti-social behaviour' or 'non-compliance'.

Teachers are frequently exhorted to avoid basing their responses to challenging behaviour on a 'punishment paradigm' and to use more positive approaches that are evidence-based (Sugai, 2004). It was refreshing to find in our study, that 85% of the reported interventions tried to encourage positive student behaviour and that 66% of the interventions were regarded as successful. We also found that in nearly half the interventions the teachers attempted to understand the communicative intent of the students' behaviour. As promising as these findings were, a more sombre conclusion can be drawn, i.e., that although the teachers reported quite sophisticated and student-centred strategies when dealing with students' difficult behaviour, they saw themselves as unsuccessful on at least one third of occasions.

It is not surprising then that many teachers say that inclusive practice is not particularly difficult but managing the behaviour of some students is an ongoing frustration. Challenging behaviour changes the ecology of classrooms, limiting what is possible. Although we no longer require students with an intellectual or developmental disability to 'earn' the right to belong in a regular classroom, those students who engage in challenging behaviour represent a major challenge for inclusive philosophy and policy.

Post-school, transition and career

There are many exciting examples of supported employment, supported self-employment and business partnerships for people with disabilities, however, the majority of individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability who engage in paid work, still do so in segregated environments (Kraemer & Blacher, 2001). Furthermore, the Australian Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee Report into Poverty and Financial Hardship (2004) noted the high correlation between disability and poverty and that people with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed, to have lower workforce participation rates and to incur greater living expenses because of their disability. The reality is that the

incomes of many people with disabilities, whether derived from government benefits and/or paid work, are insufficient to support anything other than a subsistence existence and a poor quality of life. So, even when they have a job, many people with disabilities do not experience all of the benefits of paid work, and in particular, an adequate level of financial independence.

In a series of studies on the employment of young people with a disability my colleagues and I did in-depth interviews with 30 employers who had experience in employing people with disabilities in their business (Shaddock, Spinks & Ducker, 1999). We asked these employers for the characteristics they were looking for in *all* employees. From their responses, it was clear that these employers valued personal and interpersonal attributes more than specific work skills and most said that they felt confident about providing on-the-job training in the technical and task-related skills that employees needed.

In a complementary Delphi study with 38 'transition education' teachers, we posed the following stimulus question, "What needs to be done to facilitate the successful employment of students with disabilities in their transition from school to post school?" The teachers' views were quite consistent with the employers' and they gave the highest priority to the following items: plan early for transition from school; plan collaboratively with parents, employers and training organisations; give students a variety of experiences of employment (and the 'experience of work' and not simply 'work experience'; establish early links between students and sources of post school support; encourage the active participation of students with disabilities in the transition process and; give priority (time and resources) to transition education in schools.

Our research revealed a much tougher employment market for all young people these days. An increasing number of jobs are part-time; there is a high unemployment rate for teenagers; the most severe decline in job availability is occurring at the early entry levels; there are stricter eligibility criteria for government support; and a growing proportion of young adults depend on their parents for financial support.

So, in a climate of welfare reform and 'mutual obligation' in which there is cost-cutting in many post school programs, the message from our research is that if students with disabilities are going to graduate and become part of the workforce in a financially meaningful way, then they, their families and their teachers will need to be more resourceful and to pursue more individualised opportunities, such as supported self-employment. Certainly the employers we interviewed strongly argued for local initiatives and linkages that capitalised on family, community and business connections rather than on government-sponsored schemes for getting and keeping a job. The employers also suggested that a significant inhibitor to the transition process is the generally poor level of understanding of the *abilities* of people with disabilities and the erroneous assumptions held by many employers about the impact of a disability on work performance. As one employer put it "I've

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got a blind person working for me. He's not disabled ... he just can't see ... and I can't speak French!"

Under funding of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the (Draft) Disability Standards

The *Disability Discrimination Act* (1992) has enhanced the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of Australian life (Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission [HREOC], 2003). Furthermore, for several years the wide spread discussion of draft 'Educational Standards' that detail the provisions of the Act has had a major impact on schools and educational institutions. The increasing prominence of the DDA and of the Draft Standards is putting schools under considerable pressure and requiring them to invest considerable resources in compliance.

The gradual realisation of the coverage and scope of the DDA has led to legal challenges to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's interpretation of the DDA and to an examination of its financial costs and benefits. This is an unusual cost-benefit exercise because by and large, the *providers* bear the costs and *the students and families* experience the benefits.

In its analysis of the impact of the Disability Standards for Education, The Allen Consulting Group, (n.d.), after critiquing and substantially reducing the estimates of costs made by state and territory education providers, concluded that the cost of implementing the Educational Standards across Australia would be \$148.9 million. As it is unlikely that the Educational Standards will be phased in (as they are merely a specification of the intent of the DDA that became law over ten years ago), the implication is that Education sectors in the States and Territory require a substantial injection of new funds immediately if they are to provide students with disabilities who are already in mainstream settings with a satisfactory education.

Conclusion

The title of this paper 'Education, Work, Career and Security' suggests that those of us involved in the education industry should set our sights high so that students with intellectual and developmental disabilities have access to the same sorts of outcomes as other Australian students. Certainly, students with intellectual disabilities should be included in mainstream schools, but those schools must be properly resourced and those who teach them must be appropriately trained and adequately supported. Of course students with disabilities should have access to the curriculum, but that curriculum should directly target the skills that the students most need for their present and future environments. And of course, school leavers with an intellectual or developmental disability should have the option of paid work, employment and/or benefits but their income should not force them to be permanently dependent or to live in poverty. To achieve these objectives we must engage in *inclusive thought processes* so that the entitlements of individuals with

disabilities are not 'lost in translation' in the implementation process. Let's face it ... if given the chance, would any of us really choose to be assessed on a standardised instrument and streamed into a 'post school option' or would we rather pursue a 'career' that offered a reasonable level of independence, security and the chance for a decent life?

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ASSID 39th Annual Conference

The South Australian branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability (ASSID) hosted the ASSID 39th annual conference in Adelaide from 9 - 12 November 2004.

“Visions and realities: The way things are and the way things should be. Empowering people with intellectual disability and supporting their families in the 21st century.”

Report provided by Richard O’Loughlin, ASSID (SA) State President, 2004 conference convenor (on behalf of the SA conference organising and program committees)

The event was held at the Adelaide Hilton. The conference organising committee had wrestled with issues concerning the nature of the venue at which to stage the conference. After much consideration and deliberation the conference organising committee decided to seek to make delegates and presenters feel ‘special’ and valued by providing a stylish and upmarket venue (rather than accepting the notion that our conference delegates, from within the field of disability, come from a ‘cash-strapped’ sector that need to ‘make do’). This meant that the conference organisers needed to work harder at containing costs so as to keep the conference registration costs competitive and affordable while aiming to, at least, break even. The challenge we set ourselves was to run a ‘five-star’ conference on a shoe string budget. Although the final reconciliation has yet to be done, at this stage it appears that we have broken even and probably generated a modest surplus.

The conference was opened by the state minister who holds the portfolio for disability issues in SA: The Honourable Jay Wetherill. ASSID (SA) would like to once more acknowledge the minister’s support provided through the SA Department for Families and Communities, to the ASSID conference via significant sponsorship. The Ministers’ opening comments (see this edition of IDA) were followed by the indigenous welcome by an Elder of the Kuarna People: Mrs Josie Agius. The 39th ASSID conference was then officially underway.

The conference included 8 keynote speakers, and up to 7 parallel streams in concurrent sessions.

The keynote speakers included Professors David Felce, Jim Mansell and Roger Stancliffe, who provided challenging and provocative presentations on various aspects and perspectives on de-institutionalisation and community living. The realities were confronted and gauntlets thrown down. Compelling data were presented illustrating how far we have (and have not) progressed, what does (and does not) make a difference to the experiences of community living and participation for people

with intellectual disability. Roger Stancliffe presented a report card of comparative state by state breakdowns of populations of people being supported in community versus institutional settings, (leaving the host state, South Australia, wincing – although Roger’s presentation left delegates from all Australian states with serious issues to consider); Dr Christine Bigby considered the life transitions associated with ageing; Professor Tony Shaddock entertained us with a presentation on education, work, career and security while challenging us to confront (via numerous amusing anecdotes) that which vocational training is actually preparing people for; Professor Trevor Parmenter considered specific family quality of life issues amidst the broad context and influences of 21st century western culture and society; Professor Gwynnyth Llewellyn raised compelling issues about supporting people with intellectual disability who are parents; and Professor Peter Dowrick gave a taste of the range of interventions possible using innovative ‘Feedforward’ techniques (looking at how to use self modelling video techniques to project and realise desired goals).

The overall flavour of these presentations was a mixture of grim and confronting realities presenting a potentially bitter brew if it were not for the leavening of a determined optimism that involved data driven identification of the way forward. The goals and dream generated by the ideological shift of the 60s and 70s have apparently foundered on the economic imperatives and other pragmatic constraints of the nervous nineties and relatively conservative ‘Noughties’. And yet, we have an increasing capacity to demonstrate, through decades of data and experience, how to effectively improve the quality of life of people with intellectual disability and their families.

There is good work being done and many took the opportunities that the conference provided to showcase this work. There were over 140 papers with presenters including researchers and university academics, service providers from both public sector and non-government agencies, families and people with intellectual disabilities. Presenter and delegates (in addition to locals) came from interstate and overseas, including New Zealand, the United States, Scotland, Wales, England and Sweden.

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Streams included:

- i) Employment
- ii) Cross Cultural Issues
- iii) Dual Disability, Disorders and Other Complex Needs
- iv) Learning and Development
- v) Community Living
- vi) Policy and Service Delivery
- vii) Innovative Practice
- viii) Aboriginal Issues
- ix) Families /Ageing
- x) Families and Self Determination
- xi) Health
- xii) Sexuality and Relationships
- xiii) Self Advocacy
- xiv) Legal and Forensic
- xv) Parents with Learning Difficulties
- xvii) Workforce Training Issues
- xviii) Genetics Panel

It is anticipated that conference presentations will be made available via the ASSID website (although this is

dependent upon gaining consent from each of the presenters to do this). A number of the papers will also appear in IDA. The range of papers reflects the range of conference delegates that is, in turn, a reflection of ASSID membership and of the range of people involved in disability.

There were a total of approximately 400 delegates (Approximately 200 of whom attended on 'day tickets'). Of the total number of delegates, 17 were concessions (i.e., on some form of pension indicating that they were either people with a disability or carers). Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services funding was utilised to subsidise the attendance of 39 people (36 people with intellectual disability, 1 parent and 2 carers) and to subsidise the transport and accommodation costs of two interstate delegates with intellectual disability.

The conference had a strong self advocacy stream running over two of the four days. This included a self advocacy workshop that was videoed and produced into what is anticipated will be a training resource. ASSID (SA) anticipates 'launching' this self advocacy training package early in 2005. A number of papers were presented by people with intellectual disability. A 'Healthy Eating' lunch event was run specifically catering to people with intellectual disability.

People with intellectual disability were not, however, segregated to their 'own' stream. Other streams had papers presented by people with intellectual disability (e.g., in the Employment, Community Living and Policy and Service Delivery streams).

People with intellectual disability had a visible presence and made a significant contribution to the conference. The entertainment on the night of the conference dinner was provided by a professional dance troupe known as 'Club Slick' who ran an interactive dance workshop. The membership of this dance team consists of people with intellectual disability, (specialising in 50s and 60s style "Rock and Roll") Their after dinner performance was an energising and startling display of competence and good natured fun. The performance culminated with an irresistible conga line of virtually the entire assemblage of dinner guests.

Critical feedback from the self advocates is that they would like a greater opportunity to participate in the conference; would prefer more 'plain language' papers; and suggested that they would like a 'conference of their own'.

Feedback received from conference delegates via evaluation questionnaires was on the whole positive with 89% of respondents rating their overall opinion of the conference as "Good"

ASSID 2004

*Written by Olive Webb
and presented at the closing ceremony*

We come along to ASSID
Poised to hear the latest stuff
To meet old friends and tell new lies
And swap the huff and puff
The papers tell us stories
Of people's lives – their highs and lows
With data dots, regression lines
How they dance or tread on toes
The papers paint a picture
Of the issues that we face
And the canvas of the easel
Soon reflects this annual place
This year we are in Adelaide
With sun and driving rain
And drawn from Richard's year of sweat
His triumphs and his pain
Next year we cross the Tasman
For the first time – Now Hear Ye Hear!
Come to Auckland – to the Kiwis
You're all invited – See you there

AWARDS ANNOUNCEMENT

The Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability congratulates the following award-winners for 2004:

Alexandra Beck, Richard P. Hastings, Dave Daley & Jim Stevenson

were awarded the

2004 JIDD EDITOR'S PRIZE

for their paper

"Pro-social behaviour and behaviour problems independently predict maternal stress"

(JIDD Volume 29, No. 4)

which was judged to be the most outstanding contribution among all papers published in JIDD throughout 2004

Dr Helen Beange

was conferred with the honorary title,

FELLOW of ASSID (FASSID)

in recognition of her exceptional and significant contribution to the field of intellectual disability.

This honour was announced at the ASSID annual conference held in November 2004.

Deb Keen & Marie Knox

were awarded the

2004 ASSID NATIONAL RESEARCH PRIZE

for their paper

"Approach to challenging behaviour: a family affair"

(JIDD Volume 29, No. 1)

which was judged to be the most innovative contribution to JIDD by an Australasian author/s resulting in positive life changes for people with an intellectual disability

Sheridan Forster

was awarded the

ASSID RESEARCH GRANT for 2005.

Sheridan is undertaking a Master of Biomedical Science at the Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Monash University under the supervision of Dr. Teresa Iacono.

The topic of her research is *Communicative Interactions between Adults with Profound Intellectual Disability and Support Workers.*

to "Very Good". Positive comments were about how well organised and professional the conference was; a good balance between big picture presentations and experiential work; the quality of the IT support; timekeeping; the networking opportunities and strong sense of professional community.

Critical comments were about the temperature of the theatres; irritation at people arriving late to sessions; some mismatching between the size of rooms and the popularity of particular sessions; that note paper and pens were not provided as part of the conference kit; the suggestion that there be greater utilisation of roving microphones for question and answer session after presentations; and complaints about lunch not being provided on one of the conference days. (This was one of the conference committees cost containment measure that enabled the conference to offer the "Healthy Eating" workshop to people with intellectual disability on the Thursday).

The whole enterprise was a collaborative effort with support provided in a variety of ways from across the sector in SA. The program committee had representation from the public sector, NGOs, universities, and included a parent representative and a self advocate. The individuals who made themselves avail-

able to chair sessions were a veritable 'who's who' from across the disability sector in South Australia.

The ASSID (SA) regional committee wishes to acknowledge the support of all agencies and individuals involved.

The view of the conference committee is that the primary purpose of such events is to bridge the gap between theory and practice by providing a forum where researchers, service providers, clients and their families can gather in order to discuss, debate and share their experiences. The SA conference committee believe that the 39th ASSID conference achieved this goal.

The experience gained from ASSID (SA)'s conference organising adventures will add to the bank of experience accumulated by the ASSID Australasian Board. The benefits of this experience will, in turn, be offered in support to the 2005 conference committee. Good luck to the New Zealand committee. They have a challenging journey ahead, culminating in an exciting, exhausting but ultimately satisfying experience for those who have the time, energy and inclination to make a contribution.

Region Update

Queensland

by **Chris Montgomery**

A review of the Sharing the Road conference is currently under way with planning in progress for the 2005 conferences in Brisbane and Townsville. Confirmed speakers so far include Multicultural Specialist, Dr. Lilah Pengra (USA), autism spectrum disorder expert Wendy Lawson, anthropologist, Jani Klotz, journalist Ross Williams and Diversity Consultant, Margherita Coppolino.

The planning day for the year is scheduled for February 5.

New Zealand

by **Marleen Verhoeven**

Preparations are buzzing for the 40th ASSID Conference to be held in Auckland in October this year. Fran Hartnett has been appointed conference convenor. Keynote speakers are close to being confirmed.

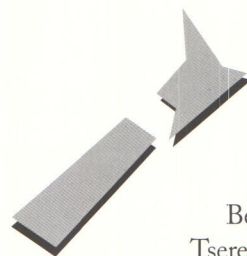
We have now completed our financial audit for the year ended 30 June 2004. Olive Webb continues on in her role as Australasian Vice President and on the Regional executive with Angus Cappie.

Victoria

by **Daniel Pennefather**

The 4th annual Disability Support Workers (DSW) Conference was held in November, in the historic grounds of The University of Melbourne, and attracted a record of over 400 delegates. Keynote speaker Dr Sheryl Larson, American expert on Staff Recruitment and Retention was well received. She also conducted a couple of workshops for managers and administrators prior to the DSW Conference that were well attended. Other speakers at the conference included Dr Christopher Newell and many more, resulting in a full and varied program for Disability Support Workers.

The DSW Conference was once again proud to host the 2004 Victorian Direct Support Worker Awards. ASSID Victoria



congratulates the five winners; Timothy Beare, Julie Carpenter, Mia Tseres, Sussanne Pyers and Jackie O'Brien.

More information can be found at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/humanservicenews/dec04/dis.htm.

The conference was hailed as a great success by the delegates, and ASSID Victoria thanks Karen Nankervis, Sue Mason, Carolyn Neville and Glen Jose for ensuring such a quality event. Thanks also go to the RMIT University students and all others who assisted.

ASSID Victoria also responded to the latest call for public comment about changes to disability legislation in Victoria as discussed in the Report of Recommendations (Department of Human Services, 2004). To read the response or for a copy please refer to the Victorian branch web site or contact Alexandra.Phillips@med.monash.edu.au

So many ideas for ASSID Victoria in 2005 have already surfaced, that a Strategic Planning day is scheduled for early February. The committee aims to take the information gathered to the Australasian Association for strategic direction, so it looks like being a progressive year for ASSID Victoria in 2005.

New South Wales

by **Tony Tinlin**

NSW & ACT held their Regional AGM in Sydney in November. It was a very entertaining meeting with participants in the North and on a train. A workshop is being held in Sydney on 3rd February by Dr Douglas Boer a forensic clinical psychologist who has worked in the provision of sex offender treatment and assessment and who presented workshops in a number of countries.

The Regional conference will be held at the University of Canberra on the 28 and 29 July 2005. The theme of the conference is working together – bringing together the range of direct support staff who assist people with an intellectual disability take their places in society. For information contact Ken

King (ken@comcons.org.au) or Tony Tinlin (Tinlin@drag-net.com.au). Involvement in several other events during the year is being considered by the committee. It promises to be a very busy year for the committee and members.

The AGM was held in November with the executive remaining unchanged, Tony Tinlin (president), Linda Goddard (vice president), Jenni Avery (secretary), and Barbara Anderson (treasurer). Linda Goddard (CSU) has been appointed Conference Convenor for the 2006 Conference. A great vote of thanks to Linda for accepting the task.

A meeting was held with Lois Ford from the ACT Department of Disability Housing and Community Services to discuss the 2005 Regional Conference and the 2006 Australasian Conference which will be held in Canberra. She was well informed about the activities of ASSID and is keen to work with us.

Western Australia

by **Kate Randall**

We have had a quiet time since December with no formal events for ASSID WA. We are joined by two new members on our regional council this year, and I'd like to extend a warm welcome to both Chris Coopes and Karen Soldatic. Mark Rapley, who has been a part of both state and national councils for several years, is taking a year out to focus on his new appointment as Foundation Professor of Human and Community Studies at the School of International, Cultural and Community studies at Edith Cowan University.

Planning is underway for 2005 with our state conference to be held later in the year as well as other ASSID events leading up to it.

South Australia

by **Richard O'Loughlin**

The SA branch is both delighted and relieved to have run a successful Australasian annual conference (refer to article in this edition of IDA for more information). The challenge is now to resist 'resting on our laurels' and to ensure that we offer our membership some worthwhile events this year.

Although the SA committee have not yet met (at time of writing) we have a number of events planned for 2005.

The first event we anticipate running arises directly out of the activity of the recent conference. One of the issues that the SA conference committee(s) had focussed on was the active participation of people with intellectual disability at the conference. One of the ways this ambition was realised was a workshop on 'self advocacy' that was run as part of the conference. This workshop was videoed and has been professionally produced with the assistance of funding provided by SA public sector lead agency (IDSC) to create a video training resource package for people with intellectual disability who may be interested in how to create and maintain

an effective self advocacy group. We hope to launch this 'package' early in 2005.

The SA committee also intends to follow through with its plans to increase engagement with the tertiary education sector and to run events in conjunction with Adelaide's other 2 universities (Flinders and Uni of SA) having held a successful AGM at the University of Adelaide in 2004.

Tasmania

by **Donna Ryan**

A successful workshop was held in lieu of a conference in Tasmania in October 2004. Three presenters, Professor Roy Brown, Matthew Spicer and Eddie Bartnik provided those in attendance with exceptional presentations. Our regional association is considering the value of the workshop as opposed to a conference.

Our regional Strategic Planning Day is happening on February 23rd. We are aiming to increase attendance at our planning day by contacting organizational members and encouraging them to send along representatives. One of the main aims for our strategic planning at this stage is to increase the involvement in and awareness of ASSID in the Tasmanian region. There are a number of ways we aim to do this for 2005. ASSID Tasmania is also keen to continue with our sponsorship of the IABA training with further talks to be held concerning the possibility of IABA running a "Train the Trainer" series here in 2005. We are also aiming to launch the ASSID Tasmania Student Award this year and are at present finalizing consent for the naming of the Award. ■

Advertising Rates

(from Jan 2005 - until Dec 2005)

• Display advertisement:

\$176 (incl. GST) for quarter page (artwork supplied). Where ASSID has to arrange art work, add \$70 (incl. GST).

• Pre-printed inserts:

\$220 (incl. GST). Weight restrictions apply, contact editorial assistant for details.

For information regarding closing details for receipt of advertising and material, please contact:

The Editorial Assistant,
Intellectual Disability Australasia
email: krvt3@bigpond.com

Note: acceptance and publication or distribution of material does not indicate endorsement of a position, program, material or product by the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability.

Improving Participation in Vocational Education and Training and Employment for Students with Disabilities

By Kerry Jones,
Western Futures Lighthouse Disability Project

The Lighthouse Initiative originated from the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation's (ECEP) work with the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) Disability Forum. This work aimed to address the under-representation of students with disabilities in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system, with specific focus on VET in Schools programs. The rationale for increasing participation in VET is based solidly on the demonstrated nexus between the acquisition of VET qualifications and significantly higher employment rates.

The primary strategy of the initiative is to intervene at the upper secondary school level, providing the support needed and structured opportunities for VET and work placement so that pathways into VET (and employment) are developed for students with disabilities.

There are 2 key premises underpinning the Lighthouse Disability Initiative: –

1. The under-representation of students with a disability in the VET system (and subsequently employment) can be addressed by interventions targeting students while they are still in senior school
2. Achieving successful VET and employment outcomes for students with a disability requires the development of partnerships between schools, Registered Training Organisations, employers and Disability Employment Agencies.

The Western Futures (formerly WAVES) Lighthouse Disability Project was 1 of 3 funded nationally. Initially funded for 2 years (2000 – 01), the program was refunded due to its successful results, including higher than expected employment outcomes. The Initiative now runs with inputs from project partners and local school cluster management groups. Extensive work is underway in partnership with the Department of Education and Children's Services (SA) to establish the model across the school regions in South Australia.

Critical Success Factors

The four critical success factors of the Western Futures Lighthouse Disability Project are: (1) the transition plan, (2) structured workplace learning support model, (3) partnerships and collaborations, (4) ongoing case management.

Transition Plan

The program is a staged process over a 12 month period and coincides with the school term calendar. Students commence

with an employability skills program as a foundation for the next three steps of the transition plan. This training is delivered using units from the Certificate I in Employment Skills Training (40191SA) and is conducted at school as part of the day to day curriculum, and off campus with a Registered Training Organisation. It covers generic skills such as communication, team work, personal presentation, workplace numeracy and literacy, rights and responsibilities in the workplace. The off campus training prepares students for the new responsibilities of an adult learning environment.

Students then gain technical skills through an accredited industry program. This training is delivered off campus by a Registered Training Organisation. Staff are trained and mentored in disability awareness and innovative approaches to training and assessment to ensure they cater for the learning needs of students with a disability.

Students complete their training with eighty hours of structured work place learning (supported by a Disability Employment Agency), where they apply the skills and knowledge they have gained. As part of the process, students preparing to leave school and enter the work force register with a Disability Employment Agency, which then assists them with finding and keeping a job.

This approach fosters a smooth transition model for students with a disability, for the following reasons: (1) a clear plan for the transition year is put in place. This also assists students who struggle with change due to their disability to prepare for this significant step in life, (2) students gain accredited training and workplace experience that will assist them in the job market, (3) ongoing relationships are established between students, their parents and post school services early in the transition year. This reduces the pre-employment phase within employment services, as processes are completed during the last 6 months of the individual's schooling, resulting in more efficient securing of employment for the individual.

Structured Workplace Learning Support Model

One of the access barriers for students with a disability in undertaking VET is a lack of the support individuals need to be successful in the structured workplace learning environment.

Disability Employment Agencies, Registered Training Organisations and Local School Management groups have worked in partnership to set-up work placements and support the individual to gain competency in the workplace. Disability Employment agencies have supported individuals by providing transport training, on the job training and support with integration and acceptance in the workplace.



Partnerships and Collaborations

The program success is due to the partnerships and collaborations between Local School Management Groups, Public and Independent Schools, Disability Employment Agencies, Registered Training Organisations, Local, State and Federal Governments, Industry, Community Organisations and the State Disability Recruitment Coordination Service (now a national service). The collaborative nature of this initiative has allowed a sharing and leveraging of resources that has built a level of intervention beyond the capacities of any one stakeholder group.

Fostering the professional development of staff in the sectors of Secondary Education, Vocational Education and Training and Disability Employment built the infrastructure necessary to ensure the sustainability of models implemented.

An important partner in the process is the parents who are engaged in the process from the application phase and support their sons and daughters to participate in the Lighthouse program and beyond.

Ongoing Case Management

Disability Employment Agencies are integral to the post-school outcomes for students. By providing an individualised case management approach, these agencies identify and secure appropriate employment opportunities for the person with a disability, provide the necessary on-site training and the ongoing support to both the worker with a disability and to the employer.

All participants have the opportunity to register for a service from a Disability Employment Agency. The agencies have provided staff resources to support students in their structured workplace learning and transport training. Having been involved in the students work preparation, Disability Employment Agencies are then in a better position to be able to offer a post school option as part of a seamless transition process from school to work.

Outcomes

Qualitative

Students with Disabilities

Nationally accredited training.

Employment pathways

- Self-esteem, motivation and confidence to do things they previously did not feel comfortable doing (public speaking in front of large audiences)
- Independence (transport training),
- Renewed interest in learning

- (increased school retention rates; some participants went onto further VET studies).
- Students' and parents' expectations are extended. One parent stated she noticed a "growth in maturity, confidence and independence..." in her son and that it was "...good to see him manage and to take on more responsibility".
- Higher job retention rates of students who have participated in the Lighthouse program.
- Access to Structured Workplace Learning activities for students with a disability.

Project Partners (Schools, Registered Training Organisations Disability Employment Agencies)

- Positive pathways leading to meaningful outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Social inclusion for their students with disabilities.
- Increased school retention rates of students at risk of leaving school early.
- Ability to meet the State Education Strategy for students with a disability.
- Ability to identify and address the needs of students with a disability.
- Practical application of equity principles and policies.
- Professional development of staff.
- Opportunity to share resources, with commitment to a common goal breaking down competition and communication barriers, promoting resource sharing and facilitating significant outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Establishment of links, networks and partnerships that enable school communities to facilitate a seamless transition from school into employment for students with a disability.
- Quality work preparation activities for potential job seekers, leading to increased efficiency in placing students into employment.

Employers

- Employees entering the workplace with a strong foundation of skills and experience.

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Improving Participation in Vocational Education and Training and Employment for Students with Disabilities

- Professional development of current staff to include/support workers with a disability in their business.
- Greater input into training of potential employees through the structured work placements.
- Ability to meet equity and social justice principles and policies.
- Opportunity to identify potential employees.

Quantitative

VET Participation

88 participants over 4 years of project trial

95% Intellectual Disability

5% Physical

70 completed Structured Workplace Learning as part of their VET program.

VET Programs Participated in:

Employability Skills68

Mechanical Engineering18

Retail48

Other 4

Try-A-Trade 9

(Combination of Automotive, Horticulture and Warehousing Units of Competency)

Pathways

60 participants registered for ongoing employment placement and support with Disability Employment Agencies

- 50 are currently in employment (4 are in New Apprenticeships)

- 2 completed New Apprenticeships and are still in employment
- 10 are currently registered job seekers

This number of employment outcomes is significant and directly attributed the case management model we have used.

Summary

The success of the Western Futures (WAVES) Lighthouse Disability Project can be measured on a number of levels. First, the increased participation of school students in VET and the subsequent improvement in employment outcomes for the participants has been the primary objective achieved. Second, development of partnerships involving 3 levels of Government, employers, community agencies and young people with a disability has enabled both a leveraging of resources and an improved understanding amongst the partners of the various contexts and roles within which the partners must operate. Finally, a clear demonstration of the effectiveness and efficiency of utilising employment focused Case Management resources from early in the students' transition year right through to employment placement and post placement support. In conclusion, the Western Futures Lighthouse Disability Project has provided a clear exemplar of how to improve participation in VET and employment for students with disabilities. It has reinforced the long held belief that by providing the appropriate supports, people with a disability can participate and achieve within the community at levels beyond the current expectations. The challenge now is to ensure that the learning's of this project are widely adopted and sustainability of the model is ensured through appropriate and on-going resourcing.

Join ASSID - L now

ASSID-L is a mailing list for people with an interest about individuals that have an intellectual disability and their families.

Due to continued attacks by spammers, many people unsubscribed to the list. These problems have been overcome and we encourage you to rejoin, or to sign up for the first time if you've not previously participated in the list.

To join the list, send an email to robert.davis@med.monash.edu.au with 'subscribe to ASSID-L' in the subject heading.

We look forward to increased relevant traffic on the list!

Ministers address at ASSID Conference

Hon Jay Weatherill MP

Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Housing,
Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability



Government
of South Australia

Acknowledgments:

- *Regional President of the Australian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability Richard O'Loughlin*
- *Members*
- *Ladies and gentlemen*

I would like to acknowledge that we meet on Kurna land and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country.

It's a great pleasure to be here this morning.

I want to thank the State Council of the Australian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability for inviting me to open the national conference.

In particular, I want to welcome the many interstate and international participants to South Australia.

Your association plays an important role in looking at issues in intellectual disability from a perspective more detached than that of service providers and service recipients.

At a conference like this, it is important to reflect on the things that are important in our lives, because they are also important in the lives of people with intellectual disability.

One of the most pleasing aspects of being an Australian citizen is the capacity to choose one's own destiny – being able to choose a job, the people we live with, where we live, our hobbies and interests.

Our capacity to make these choices leads to the rich diversity in South Australia, which I think is an important part of any viable democratic society.

A key component in the capacity to be independent and in control of one's destiny is the development of skills and having opportunities to use those skills.

Those of you who are parents would understand how this process occurred for your children – how they learned at school, how they learned through your example and through trying out things; and when they had skills, how they wanted to test them and progress on their path to independence. So it should be for people with intellectual disability.

There is no doubt that, in the past, some of our responses to people with intellectual disability have been controlling, based on a viewpoint that we know what is best and that they shouldn't take risks and as a result learn – learning is, after all, risky business.

Another key part of being your own boss is taking responsibility for your own destiny.

For most of us, this means having a job to earn the money to buy the things that are important to us.

It's also about developing our own personality, pursuing our

interests, fostering and developing relationships, developing our eccentricities – all of the things that Justice Kirby once described as “letting people flourish as precious individuals”.

What happens when we are not in control?

One only has to look at some of our indigenous communities to see how personal and community disempowerment leads to a range of social ills which we often try to address by treating symptoms rather than causes.

Being your own boss means choosing how you fit into and contribute to your community.

For many people, making a contribution is an important part of their lives, and not just for awards or overt recognition – often it is for its own sake; to demonstrate to yourself that you have something to offer.

If you think of times of happiness in your lives, I'm almost certain they were times when you were in control – not of others, but of your own destiny.

Why should it be any different for people with intellectual disability?

I don't believe it is, and therefore the paradigms we construct for ourselves and our children should also be the ones we use for people with intellectual disability.

We will be able to do that only if people with intellectual disability have opportunities to grow, to learn and to flourish.

I know ASSID says developmental programs should be a priority for people with an intellectual disability.

Of course, that process starts with babies and toddlers in the family through a natural process that we all know about but would find very difficult to articulate.

Young children with intellectual disability should be supported by families, and the service system should be aimed at helping families to become strong, resilient and resourceful.

Again, when children with intellectual disability grow older, we should be mindful of times of transition and support them through such times.

Transition to school, from school to adult life, from the family home to a new home – all need to be viewed through a normative perspective with the objective of increasing skills, independence and personal sovereignty.

I don't want to give the impression that all issues in the lives of people with intellectual disability can be resolved by developmental programs.

That is not the case – many people with intellectual disability will require lifelong coordinated services – but our goal

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Ministers address at ASSID Conference

should be about maximising personal power, even if for some people that will be quite limited.

It is when people are not in control of their lives and cannot communicate what they want that we are most likely to see behaviours that are labelled as “challenging”.

I am also aware that over the past decade there has been an increasing push towards the use of purchased services, and that terms such as “packages” have crept into the service vocabulary, almost bringing with it a view that if people have a “package”, their needs will be met.

I don't believe this is the case for the population generally, and I certainly don't believe it is the case for people with intellectual disability.

We need to examine exactly what it is we are doing through the provision of packages.

There are examples that an emphasis on packages and funding being the solution to problems can have the effect of reducing our commitment to developmental programs, community development, and more innovative ways of finding solutions to enable people with intellectual disability to make their way in the South Australian community.

I am aware that some of the purchased solutions for individuals have, in fact, been limiting, and in some instances dependency making.

For example, whilst IDSC's Moving On program has been very successful for some people, it is doubtful whether it has provided long-term learning opportunities for many others. I think it's time there was a new paradigm that ensured that everything we did had a development focus.

Your organisation has also challenged political and service leaders in many ways to re-invigorate some of the impetus that occurred in the mid 1980s.

There is no doubt that was a time of significant change and optimism; however, it was equally a time when much more funding was available and there was an expectation that funding would be there for all time.

Unfortunately, that is not the case.

It will be no surprise to you that there is immense pressures on government funding.

While we will always be striving to ensure new funding in this field to meet emerging need, these resources will never be enough to enable us to do everything that in our hearts we believe is necessary.

This imposes new requirements on the service system; indeed, nearly every service sector in Australia is under similar pressure.

One response might be: well, there's no new money, therefore we can't do anything.

Another response might be: money will be limited, therefore it's important that we find new and different ways of providing services and opportunities if people with intellectual disability are to take their place in the South Australian community.

What are those new and innovative ways ahead?

Well, in many ways, that is for you as practitioners in this field to discover.

I know there have been a number of initiatives to look at different ways of providing support; some of these have been to galvanise the resources of families and friends, as well as those of government rather than relying solely on government.

Further, there are some significant costs in disability services, such as the cost of night support, which are expensive.

Perhaps we can provide this through such mechanisms such as live-in staff.

It is also important that we develop a focus on early intervention.

If we are able to support families to keep their sons and daughters with intellectual disability as valuable members of their family, we will have short-circuited one of the mechanisms whereby people with intellectual disability are defined as “problems” that the service system has to resolve.

Supporting families to ensure they are able to continue to support their sons and daughters is, in my view, a very important component of the service system.

I'll be making an announcement this afternoon, in fact, on what we are doing in our post-school options program, to help support families.

I also believe that the sector has been somewhat inward looking, and at the risk of sounding critical, I believe much of the activity that occurs through the Moving On program has been inwardly directed.

Perhaps with a little innovation we may have found a range of community connections whereby people with intellectual disability who were not able to join the workforce had opportunities to volunteer and to participate in programs that were about increasing their skills and developing their capacity to contribute to the South Australian community.

Furthermore, we need to ensure that we don't recruit clients who are able to access mainstream services.

While being declared “intellectually disabled” may provide access to a range of services, it also labels the person and sometimes starts a process of separation from the rest of the community and its services, resources and opportunities to participate and contribute.

It is therefore important that intellectual disability services are complementary to mainstream services and that they are developed only for people with significant and complex needs.

One of the key factors in any service system is the people. I believe there remain some important things that we have to get right.

Let me outline just a few.

We must ensure that those working in this field have values that are consistent with our vision for people with intellectual disability.

If you do not believe and demonstrate through your actions

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Paul's dream made real by Wesley Life Skills, Englorie Park

By Fiona Pennington,
Public Affairs Officer, Wesley Mission

Paul Lovett loved the idea of working as a gardener in the fresh, open air. However, he also had a mild intellectually disability which meant he lacked some social skills which made him an unattractive prospect with mainstream employment agencies. But when Paul joined Wesley Life Skills service in 2001 he was encouraged to pursue his chosen career.

Wesley Life Skills is a post-school day program that runs three days a week and helps people like Paul reach their goals by providing support for people with disabilities as they move from school into employment.

"After an individual assessment we work with clients, one on one, to build up self confidence, living skills and social skills. Then they're ready to go out and begin work," said Belinda Bailey, facilitator of the Englorie Park Lifeskills service. "A lot of clients might have the skills to work, but coming from a large school environment they just need more confidence. Paul already had great social skills. He just needed training to travel independently in the community."

The program trains clients in living skills, social skills and addresses any other identifiable needs. Most clients take two years to complete the program with the aim of gaining full employment at the end. Wesley Life Skills works in partnership with Northwest Personnel to help move clients into employment. The joint venture has been so successful that a North West consultant now works from a room at the Life Skills house in Englorie Park.

When Paul was ready to start work he contacted Peter Delimitrouand, an employment consultant at North West Personnel. Mr Delimitrouand spoke with Paul and his family and looked at his employment preferences. "Paul really wanted to work in gardening because he comes from The Oaks and enjoys the country and the outdoors," Mr Delimitrouand said.

Mr Delimitrouand then went to the employment marketplace to find Paul a position that provided outdoor work which was located close to home. Only a few employers were positive about employing a client with disabilities. "A good employer understands people like Paul, but a lot of employers will close the door on your face, or swear at you. They're not interested," Mr Delimitrouand said. "If go up to 20 employers, 18 will say 'no' straight away."

A job at Holsworthy was advertised and Mr Delimitrouand contacted the employer and provided background information on Paul and Wesley Life Skills. He provided the potential employer with a list of Paul's skills and suggested that Paul be trialled for one week. The employer asked Paul for an interview the next day. "Paul was keen from the word go", said



Mr Delimitrouand. "Even if it was an hour away, he wanted to give it a go. He was very enthusiastic." The employer was also enthusiastic and offered Paul a week's work.

Leaving his house at 6.30am and catching two buses and a train to arrive at work at 8am; Paul embraced the challenge with great enthusiasm. "We provided Paul with the information and skills to utilise public transport and gave him some travel training from home to the job site," Ms Bailey said. "He progressed in leaps and bounds."

Paul was accepted into the job and began working three days a week. After a few months Paul's employers were so happy they extended his work to a five day week. At the end of a work day, Paul now has dirt on his hands and a big smile on his face. "I do mulching, weeding, raking, digging and watering plants. Today I was dumping sticks onto a truck," Paul said.

He is a valued member of the team and enjoys his relationship with his boss and fellow workers. "He loves it and they love him," Ms Bailey said. "Everybody said, 'he'll never get into a job,' but he just needed a little more time to mature." When Paul secured the job his friends at Lifeskills got excited. "Once Paul moved everybody else said, 'when are you getting my job?'," Ms Bailey said.

"We've had very positive outcomes for moving people into employment. We had seven clients last year and five of those moved into employment. There are six clients currently in the service and three began job trials at the end of June."

Wesley Life Skills held a certificate graduation last year to congratulate all clients who had begun a new job, Paul included.

ASSID Australasian Board 2004 / 05 (as at December 2004)

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AmGne - \$650.

Regs - \$480

Accoun - \$137 x 6 = \$822.00

=> \$1,302.00 DHS

\$ 650.00 ASSIN

Total - \$1,952 = \$2,127

DHS - \$685 + \$480 = \$1,165

ASSIN - \$650 + \$312 = \$962

Accoun

Meeting 9/10 S 1 DHS

Day 1 10/10 M 2 DHS

2 11/10 T 3 DHS

3 12/10 W 4 DHS

4 13/10 T 5 DHS

Meeting 14/10 F 6 ASSIN

Ministers address at ASSID Conference

continued from p16

that you are working with important human beings, you should not be working in this field.

We must ensure that staff have the skills to implement the programs and provide the services, some of which are very complex.

This is against the backdrop of low wages for many workers.

We should apply our values regarding people with intellectual disability to our workers.

If we value the safety and security of our clients, we should ensure nothing less for staff.

Notwithstanding the nature of the service we provide, too many staff get injured. That has to improve.

There is a great deal of common ground between ASSID's position and the Government's position.

We came to office with a firm commitment to put social inclusion at the forefront of our policy agenda.

We established a Social Inclusion Initiative to drive collaboration across government in this area.

And we know that people with disabilities are among those who suffer the most from exclusion in our community.

We believe in the the right to every aspect of citizenship as contributing members of the community and the right of access to a range of inclusive services and resources used by all South Australians.

My task is to provide the leadership to make those principles a reality.

I would very much like ASSID to work with the Department for Families and Communities and IDSC to keep these issues on the agenda.

I am equally keen for all of your to work with your governments to further the interests of people with intellectual disability.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be with you today.

I now have great pleasure in declaring the national conference open.

UPCOMING EVENTS

13 - 15 April 2005

The Challenge of Inclusion:

People labelled with 'Challenging Behaviour' and the Struggle to Belong.

Community Resource Unit Conference

Brisbane Conference and Exhibition Centre

Email: cru@cru.org.au

6 - 8 May 2005

6th World Congress of the International Brain Injury Association

Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre

Web: www.internationalbrain.org

12-15 July 2005

1st Asian-Pacific Regional Congress of IASSID

The Howard International House, Taipei, Taiwan

The theme of the conference is 'Life course perspectives of research with people with intellectual disabilities: global trends and local strategies'.

Email: service@asiapacificiassid.org

Web: www.asiapacificiassid.org

28 and 29 July 2005

ASSID NSW & ACT Regional Conference

Working together to enhance quality of life for people with disabilities

University of Canberra

The theme of the conference is working together - bringing together the range of direct support staff who assist people with an intellectual disability take their places in society.

For information: Ken King (ken@comcons.org.au) or Tony Tinlin (Tinlin@dragnet.com.au)

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Post: PO Box 1179, ALBURY, NSW, 2640.

Tel: (02) 6023 1800

28 - 30 Sept 2005

Delivering Better Health Outcomes for People with Developmental Disability Conference

Organised by the new Australian Association of Developmental Disability Medicine Inc.

Keynote speakers include Professor Mike Kerr; Professor Anna Cooper; Professor Tony Holland; Dr Richard Stevenson; Dr Phil Davidson; and Professor Bob Cummins.

10 - 13 October 2005

ASSID Conference

Theme: Out of the ordinary? Creativity, Co-operation, Collaboration

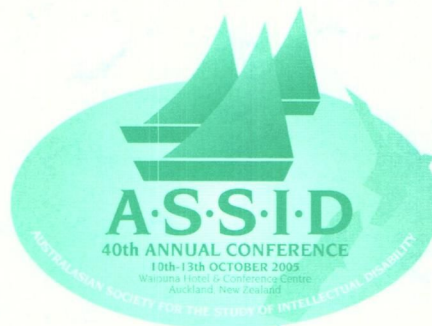
Waipuna Hotel and Conference Centre, Auckland, New Zealand.

Guest speakers: Dr Philip Ferguson, Dr Dan Goodley, Dr Edwin Jones, and Dr Diane Ferguson and more

Web: www.assid-conf05.org.nz

Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability (ASSID) 40th Annual Conference

10 – 13 October 2005



Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre
Mt Wellington, Auckland, New Zealand

Theme

*“Out of the Ordinary?
Creativity, co-operation,
collaboration”*

Programme Strands

- ◆ Health
- ◆ Advocacy
- ◆ Self-Advocacy
- ◆ Community Living
- ◆ Families & Education
- ◆ Culture & Indigenous Issues
- ◆ Social, Criminal & Forensic Justice

Keynotes

- **Dr Philip Ferguson**
University of Missouri - St Louis
- **Dr Diane Ferguson**
University of Missouri - St Louis
- **Dr Dan Goodley**
University of Sheffield, UK
- **Dr Edwin Jones**
Researcher, Bro Morgannwg, NHS Trust; Honorary Fellow, University of Glamorgan, Wales
- **Dr Susan Hayes**
Head of Department, Centre for Behavioural Sciences, The University of Sydney, AUS
- **Dr Glynis Murphy**
Professor of Clinical Psychology, Institute for Health Research, University of Lancaster, UK
- **Dr Patricia O'Brien**
Director, National Institute for the study of Learning Difficulties, Trinity College, University of Dublin

Timelines

Call for Presentations

now open – visit the website or contact the Organiser
* closes 15 July 2005

Registration

opening March 2005 & available online

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www.assid-conf05.org.nz