

## **Transition to Work programs not delivering employment outcomes**

The end of high school marks an important period in a young adult's life. One of the big decisions they must make is around the kind of job or career they would like to have after finishing school. This decision is no different for people with intellectual or learning disabilities.

People with intellectual disabilities have the same goals to work in meaningful and stable jobs like everyone else, and to get work suited to their skillsets and interests.

Getting a job is crucial for economic security, personal wellbeing, and social inclusion.

Yet it is evident that people with intellectual disability are still being overlooked and undervalued in the job market.

With the barriers people with intellectual disability often face getting jobs, [Transition to Work](#) programs have been established to support school leavers develop the skills and qualifications they need to apply for jobs and get work.

But [An evaluation of employment outcomes achieved by transition to work service providers in Sydney, Australia](#) by Tianxi Xu and Roger J. Stancliffe shows that many of these programs are failing school leavers with intellectual disability, with only half of graduates gaining work after completing the two-year program. Of the other half, the employment outcome not only included those with a job in open employment, but also those who gained work in sheltered employment (ADE), and those who had joined a [DES](#) and did not actually have a job.

With hundreds of school leavers entering Transition to Work programs each year, there are serious concerns that some of these programs are consistently failing to gain employment for their clients.

Five years of data show that many of the service providers that didn't achieve employment for any of their clients over that period still received government funding each year.

A lack of action from regulators in allowing service providers with extremely poor results to continue to receive funding is unacceptable.

Questions must be asked about how service providers with a record of little or no employment outcomes, not only can continue to enrol new clients, but also continue to be funded.

Because ultimately, with service providers operating programs with no employment prospects, it is people with intellectual disability who are losing out.

Losing out on economic security, losing out on personal wellbeing, and losing out on social inclusion.

For more information read [An evaluation of employment outcomes achieved by transition to work service providers in Sydney, Australia](#).

The Australasian Society for Intellectual Disability (ASID) is a peak body in intellectual disability which promotes research to inform and influence good practice and policy to achieve a society where people with intellectual disability are afforded the same rights and opportunities as everyone. Information and membership details can be found on the ASID website <https://www.asid.asn.au/>

ASID owns two international academic journals published through Taylor & Francis: *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability* (JIDD) and *Research and Practice in Intellectual and*

*Developmental Disabilities* (RAPIDD). ASID members have access to these journals as part of their membership.

To increase the accessibility of research, this article synthesises the key messages from a 2019 JIDD published article related to employment of people with intellectual disability.