

The logo for the Youth Coalition of the ACT. It features a red trapezoidal shape with the text 'youth coalition' in white lowercase letters. Below this, the text 'of the ACT' is written in a smaller, green lowercase font. The logo is framed by thin black lines: a vertical line on the left, a horizontal line across the top, and a horizontal line at the bottom right corner.

**youth coalition**

of the ACT

**Submission to a Policy Framework for  
People with Disability in the ACT  
Strategic Priorities 2009-14  
Consultation Paper**

**June 2009**

[www.youthcoalition.net](http://www.youthcoalition.net)

The Youth Coalition of the ACT acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners and continuing custodians of the lands of the ACT and we pay our respects to the Elders, families and ancestors.

We acknowledge that the effect of forced removal of Indigenous children from their families as well as past racist policies and actions continues today.

We acknowledge that the Indigenous people hold distinctive rights as the original people of modern day Australia including the right to a distinct status and culture, self-determination and land. The Youth Coalition of the ACT celebrates Indigenous cultures and the invaluable contribution they make to our community.

Submission to A Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic  
Priorities 2009-14 Consultation Paper  
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June 2009

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# 1. Introduction

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Section 1 of this submission provides contextual information about the Youth Coalition of the ACT (Youth Coalition), the consultation process for developing this submission and background information on young people with disability in the ACT. It also outlines the process by which this submission was developed, describes the format of the submission and provides a summary of comments on the Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14 Consultation Paper (Consultation Paper).

The Youth Coalition believes the principle of community inclusion should underpin the development of the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14*. Achieving community inclusion relies on ensuring sustainable, relevant, and accessible services that have the capacity to service people in the ACT in a timely manner. To participate in community young people with disability require increased support through important transitioning periods of development for young adults, across accommodation, education, employment and social settings.

## 1.1 The Youth Coalition of the ACT

The Youth Coalition is the peak youth affairs body in the ACT. Comprised of 75 members, programs, and individuals the Youth Coalition is responsible for representing and promoting the interests and wellbeing of people aged between 12 and 25 years and those who work with them.

The Youth Coalition is represented on many ACT Government advisory structures and provides advice to the ACT Government on youth issues as well as providing information to youth services about policy and program matters.

A key role of the Youth Coalition is the development and analysis of ACT social policy and program decisions for young people and youth services. The Youth Coalition facilitates the development of strong linkages and promotes collaboration between the community, government and private sectors to achieve better outcomes for young people in the ACT.

## 1.2 Process for Developing and Format of this Submission

The Youth Coalition welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14. We would like to congratulate the ACT Government on its commitment to creating an inclusive community.

This submission is based on the following:

- The priority areas highlighted in the Youth Coalition Strategic Plan 2007-10;
- The policy positions outlined in the Youth Coalition Policy Platform;
- The views of participants of the Youth Coalition's Biennial Policy Forum;
- Specific consultations conducted with key stakeholder agencies in the ACT; and,
- Current and topical research on youth affairs.

This submission has been divided into 6 sections, which include the following:

1. Introduction (this section);
2. Summary of Recommendations;
3. Strategic Priorities;
4. Further Development of Framework;
5. Conclusion; and
6. References.

## **The Consultation Process**

The Youth Coalition invited the six key services that currently provide targeted services to young people with disability in the ACT. Stakeholders were provided with the *Consultation Paper*, the previous Strategy and the Youth Coalition's Policy Platform Position on Disability.

An open discussion was facilitated, with a focus on the strategic priorities as identified in the Government's *Consultation Paper*.

This submission represents an opportunity for the Youth Coalition and stakeholders to identify and advise ACT Government of emerging issues, areas in need of additional resources and collaboratively develop social policy in the ACT.

### **1.3 Young People with Disability in the ACT**

'Disabilities' refers to a broad range of circumstances in which someone has any limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. The occurrence of disabilities in young people is high with almost 10% of young people experiencing a disability.

Opportunities that young people with disabilities are presented with should always aim to build upon young people's strengths and the young people themselves should meaningfully participate in all decisions that affect them.

The Youth Coalition believes that all possible efforts should be made to ensure that these young people are afforded adequate support and equitable access to programs, services and opportunities that, in accordance with Article 22 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, allows them to have a "full and decent life". The Youth Coalition also recognises that young people with disabilities are confronted with high levels of stigma and discrimination that can lead to their exclusion and social isolation.

Young people with disabilities face significant barriers to accessing services, programs and opportunities available for other young people without disabilities. This can occur for a range of reasons that may include inadequate or inappropriate buildings and infrastructure, financial cost, discrimination or a general lack of support and belief in young people with disabilities.

The Youth Coalition believes that it is the responsibility of society – through government and the community sector – to work towards removing many of these barriers. Equitable access for young people with disabilities requires not only financial commitments towards upgrading infrastructure and providing additional support, but also requires a community willingness and capacity to be inclusive and a mind set that seeks to engage young people with disabilities. Public transport is a considerable barrier to young people with disabilities being able to access services. Transport is a key determinant of the capacity for young people with disabilities to participate in a range of social, educational and work related opportunities there must be safe,

reliable, regular and affordable transport for those with disabilities.

“Disability” covers a wide spectrum of circumstances that require differing levels of care and support. As a result it is difficult to generalise about disabilities. However, evidence suggests that young people with disabilities have greatly improved life experiences when involved in the general community in supportive and inclusive ways. Partnerships and collaborations that seek to engage young people with and without disabilities can be highly successful and result in very positive experiences for young people. This is the case not only for social and recreational activities, but also in the fields of education and employment.

However, all attempts for involvement must be accompanied by appropriate levels of resourcing that allows for this to occur in supportive ways. The youth sector presents many opportunities and examples of good practice for the involvement of both young people with and without disabilities.

The impact of having a disability can often mean that young people face considerable discrimination in a range of areas. Young people with disabilities in employment can be exploited and undervalued in the workplace. The Youth Coalition believes that young people should not be stereotyped as being ‘able’ or ‘unable’ to perform various tasks on face value and all assessments of young people’s abilities should be based on their actual ability.

Young people with disabilities can easily become socially isolated, particularly in times of transition where opportunities, particularly those post-secondary, can be scarce and lead young people to become disengaged from social, recreational, educational and work-life interactions. The Youth Coalition believes that opportunities for young people with disabilities post-secondary education must be examined with a view to filling many gaps that currently exist in post-secondary options. As young people’s disabilities are unique, the Youth Coalition believes that services should be provided across the spectrum of need which young people have.

## **1.4 Summary of Comments on Consultation Paper**

Youth Coalition consultation participants agreed there are several significant strengths of the *Consultation Paper*, which include:

- The strategic priorities serve as an appropriate overarching framework for developing disability policy;
- The most important service gaps may be targeted through the identified priorities;
- The identified priorities have the capacity to address the challenges experienced by young people with disability, but young people should be identified as a specific target group; and,
- Compiling the *Consultation Paper* in the first person was received well by the consultation group as the group thought the first person represented a people centred approach.

These are important strengths of the document and the development of social policy in the ACT. In light of this, this submission has been based on how these strengths can be built upon to ensure that disability policy in the ACT is effective and meets the diverse and unique needs of young people with disability and their families.

The consultation group supported the acknowledgement of the role of families, carers and guardians in decision making in the preamble to the outline of the strategic

priorities however the consultation group were disappointed the rights of a person with disability in decision making is not clearly stated.

## 2. Summary of Recommendations

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The Youth Coalition makes the following recommendations:

### **Recommendation 1**

That the Central Information Point includes the provision of service information, referral pathways and information on waiting lists/ service capacity, based on the model developed by the Social Research Centre, Sydney.

### **Recommendation 2**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* provides for Disability Service and Demographic Mapping.

### **Recommendation 3**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* provides for increasing the capacity of services which support young people through key transitions in life, in particular accommodation, work and education.

### **Recommendation 4**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* make a commitment to fund projects that aim to increase the capacity of employers, workers and community organisations to support people with disabilities to access a range of work options and community activities.

### **Recommendation 5**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* includes provisions for updating building codes in the ACT to increase accessibility of services and activities, including:

- Sound loops; and
- Funding to improve existing facilities to include sound loops.

### **Recommendation 6**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* include support strategies for workers in the disability sector to reduce staff turn over through remuneration, increased education opportunities and resources to cover on job client support costs.

### **Recommendation 7**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* recognises and develops synergies with the ACT Young People's Plan 2009 - 2014, to form meaningful actions in relation to young people with disability.

### **Recommendation 8**

That all actions within the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* which apply to young people are developed using evidence based youth participation models, and in collaboration with key stakeholders, including young people and youth services.

## **3. Strategic Priorities**

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Section 3 of this submission includes comments and recommendations on the strategic priorities identified in the *Consultation Paper*. The Youth Coalition believes that the strategic priorities, as outlined in the *Consultation Paper*, serve as an appropriate overarching framework for developing disability policy. The identified priorities have the capacity to address the challenges experienced by young people; however, young people should be identified as a specific target group. Comments and recommendations will be related to specific strategic priorities.

### **3.1 Strategic Priority 1 — I want the right support, right time, right place**

#### **3.1.1 Information and Service Capacity**

The Youth Coalition commends the ACT Government for recognising the importance of a range of accessible supports for people with disability. However, in further developing the framework it is important that the ACT Government address the limited service capacity and the limited communication or knowledge of waiting lists. Key stakeholders report that consumers and carers promote “false hope”. Waiting lists of the consulted services are often greater than several years.

Clear information on the services and support options available should include wait list and capacity information. Providing “false hope” or information on quality services that have no capacity for new referrals should be prevented.

#### **3.1.2 Central Information Point**

The Youth Coalition welcomes plans for a Central Information Point, to ensure better access to service information and reduce the amount of time spent in relaying personal histories.

Centralised intake and waiting list systems will be discussed further in relation to Strategy Priority 5.

#### **3.1.3 Demographic and Service Mapping**

Relevant and updated demographic / geographic analyses and population forecasting are crucial to inform the ACT Government and youth services about the changing nature of Canberra's youth population, and help agencies efficiently plan and deliver infrastructure and services to young people and their families.

The consultation group identified a need for more information outlining the demand for services, location and capacity of services to inform a more relevant and accessible service system. Demographic mapping and service mapping including location and capacity / waiting lists, and accessible transport mapping would provide the relevant information capable of informing and enabling the right support, right time and right place.

The Youth Coalition calls for the development of a demographic and service profile of young people with disability to inform the details of the Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14.

### 3.1.4 Focus on Transitions

The Youth Coalition and consultation participants identified transitions as a high priority issue. Services stated there is a lack of exit points for program participants and highlighted the need for planning for transition points for clients up to six or seven years in advance of entering the program. The transition areas identified include:

- Young adults unable to access supported or independent accommodation hence limiting support and options for young people and their families; and
- Lack of appropriate pathways / options for young adults to explore work options and education.

The Youth Coalition supports synergy across ACT Government Policy Frameworks. Transitions are emerging as a key issue in the *ACT Young People's Plan 2009 -2014 Discussion Paper* and a key issue for young people with disability.

#### **Recommendation 1**

That the Central Information Point includes the provision of service information, referral pathways and information on waiting lists/ service capacity, based on the model developed by the Social Research Centre, Sydney.

#### **Recommendation 2**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* provides for Disability Service and Demographic Mapping.

#### **Recommendation 3**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* provides for increasing the capacity of services which support young people through key transitions in life, in particular accommodation, work and education.

See also Strategic Priority 5 – I want to tell my story once, page 13.

## 3.2 Strategic Priority 2 — I want to contribute to the community

The Youth Coalition recognises the importance of meaningful choices across employment, education and recreation. The consultation highlighted a lack of meaningful choices for people with disability across these areas.

The Youth Coalition consultation revealed that a lack of service capacity often led to people with disability not having a full range of options to develop skills and fulfil potential, thus limiting the capacity of people with disability to contribute to the community. Inadequate service capacity limits choices preventing contribution across all aspects of life including living, learning, working and socialising.

Consultation participants stated due to capacity inadequacies and waiting lists people with disability were generally limited to participating in a specific program focusing on one of life skills, education, work or social activities rather than a range of program activities across a range of programs. Often people's choices were limited due to services and clubs not having employees and members with the right skill set to support people with disability access activities.

An area of particular concern is the lack of contribution of young people with disability in choosing work experience options and education. The wants, ambitions and

desires of young people should be identified, acknowledged and included in the design of work experience and individual learning plans.

**Recommendation 4**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* fund projects that aim to increase the capacity of employers, workers and community organisations to support people with disabilities to access a range of work options and community activities.

### **3.3 Strategic Priority 3 — I want to socialise and engage in the community**

#### **3.3.1 Meaningful Choices and Participation**

Participation gives young people opportunities to voice their opinions and make decisions about their own lives. Young people's participation in decisions that affect them and the life of their community is valuable and has a range of positive outcomes for young people and those who engage with them.

The range of ways that young people participate is broad, covering areas such as formal and informal volunteering, informal political action, activities with political implication, awareness raising, altruistic acts and general social participation.

As discussed in relation to Strategy Priority One, a range of choices covering people's needs, wants and ambitions is necessary for meaningful participation. The Youth Coalition recognises that young people are citizens and as such, participate in society.

The service providers consulted identified participating in decision making as an important priority. While the role of families, carers and guardians in decision-making is acknowledged in the consultation paper the rights of a person with a disability is not stated clearly.

Following consultation with key stakeholders, the Youth Coalition calls for:

- More information on how information gathered will be used
- Clearer guidelines explaining the scope of funding, issues up for discussion
- Realising and acknowledging people's capacity to contribute
- Ensuring forums for contribution are appropriate – including support
- Updating building regulations to include hearing loops in community and Government facilities
- Ensuring accessible transport options exist for community members to attend

During the consultation for this submission, the Youth Coalition had limited capacity to consult young people with disability. It is important to ensure that youth participation forms an integral part of the further development, and subsequent implementation of *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14*.

**Recommendation 8**

That all actions within the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* which apply to young people are developed using evidence based youth participation models, and in collaboration with key stakeholders, including young people and youth services.

**3.3.2 Transport**

The Youth Coalition recognises that access to affordable, safe and timely public transport is essential to the ability to participate and a key socio-economic determinant of health and wellbeing for young people. The Youth Coalition acknowledges that young people are among the greatest users of public transport options in the ACT, and that transport services need to be further developed in order to facilitate young people's participation in their communities through employment, educational, recreational and social activities.

All of these activities benefit young people and the broader community. When young people do not have safe, affordable and accessible public transport their life opportunities are more limited.

Access to affordable and accessible transport is specifically relevant to young people with disability. Public transport options to mainstream and targeted services and activities, including workplaces and schools is essential to enable increased opportunity for participation and contributions by young people with disability.

More specific information on the demand for and supply of accessible public transport options to disability services could be provided through targeted service and demographic mapping.

**Recommendation 2**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* provides for Disability Service and Demographic Mapping.

**3.3.3 Building Codes**

Key stakeholders reported that building codes could address barriers to continuous improvement in the sector. It was highlighted that a significant number of public buildings in the ACT did not have appropriate facilities for people with disability. For example, sound loops are not implemented in most new buildings in the ACT. Sound loops provide a low cost infrastructure solution enabling more accessible and functional Government and community facilities for hearing impaired community members.

**Recommendation 5**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* includes provisions for updating building codes in the ACT to increase accessibility of services and activities, including:

- Sound loops; and
- Funding to improve existing facilities to include sound loops.

### **3.4 Strategic Priority 4 – I want to know what I need to know**

#### **3.4.1 Central Information Point**

As mentioned in Strategic Priority One, Section 3.1 of this document, the Youth Coalition welcomes plans for a Central Information Point, to ensure better access to service information and reduce the amount of time spent in relaying personal histories.

Further to this, the Youth Coalition suggests that the inclusion of service waiting list information and service alternatives may increase access to appropriate and timely information for young people with disability.

Centralised intake and waiting list systems will be discussed further in relation to Strategic Priority 5.

#### **3.4.2 Demographic and Service Mapping**

As discussed in relation to Strategic Priority One, Section 3.1 of this document, there is a need for more information outlining the demand for services, location and capacity of services to inform a more relevant and accessible service system.

#### **Recommendation 1**

That the Central Information Point includes the provision of service information, referral pathways and information on waiting lists/ service capacity, based on the model developed by the Social Research Centre, Sydney.

### **3.5 Strategic Priority 5 — I want to tell my story once**

#### **3.5.1 Central Information Point**

Whilst the Youth Coalition acknowledges the discussion of central information point, the Youth Coalition highlights the need to extend this concept to include an intake and waiting list system. The Youth Coalition supports providing young people with streamlined access to services and the implementation of a 'no wrong door' policy. Further consultation needs to be conducted with stakeholders to ensure that experiences and outcomes for young people are improved.

The Social Policy Research Centre, Sydney developed the Models of Centralised Intake and Waiting List Management Systems Report, which reviewed models of centralised intake systems. The six components of centralised intake and waiting list systems identified in the Report include:

- Common / standardised screening and assessment tool/s;
- Networked database (common computer system);
- Information interface (front door to the service, all following similar procedures);
- Common waiting list/reassessment register;
- Common needs evaluation process; and
- Agreed allocation procedure.

The Youth Coalition acknowledges the potential benefits, including young people accessing several areas of service with one uniform eligibility criteria; facilitating the development of fair, efficient and consistent provision of support; centralised data comparison and analysis; maintaining accountability and transparency; streamlining

of information transfer; reduction in workload from other services; and young people connected with appropriate services to begin with.

However we believe there may be significant challenges in the roll out including difficulty in developing a tool that satisfies all services and is not too broad; limitations imposed on professional judgment of 'case by case' issues; confidentiality and privacy issues; young people's refusal to consent to information being placed on database; managerial support and costs, substantial IT support; requires highly skilled coordinator; and need policies and procedures re: clients who are not eligible to access any services.

We therefore look forward to supporting collaborations between the ACT Government and disability sector to further develop this initiative.

### **Recommendation 3**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* provides for increasing the capacity of services which support young people through key transitions in life, in particular accommodation, work and education.

## **3.6 Strategic Priority 6 – I want a quality service system**

The Youth Coalition believes that a quality service system that is responsive and continuously improving is of high priority to those working in and accessing the sector. In order to achieve a quality service sector a focus on sector development and transitions is essential.

### **3.6.1 Staff Turnover**

High staff turnover is a factor that reduces the quality and the ability to supply continuing service to consumers and continuously improving service. Service providers identified lower remuneration rates for workers in the community disability sector in comparison to employees in other areas of the community sector and a lower remuneration in the non-government sector in comparison to the government sector as causes of high staff turn over.

Work in the community disability sector requires multiple and often high level skills. Service providers suggested more education opportunities would be beneficial. However, they also noted that "getting time off work even when funded" to attend education opportunities is difficult without affecting service delivery. Sector workers identified opportunities to increase skill sets as a priority.

Sector workers identified extra costs like client fuel costs or client food costs were often covered by workers due to insufficient resources or difficulty gaining compensation from families of consumers. Workers suggested functions like cost recovery and financing of activities should be separated from worker's duties to ensure extra costs did not fall upon workers.

### **3.6.2 Responsive and Continuous Service**

As discussed in relation to Strategic Priority One, Section 3.1 of this document, planning for and allocating resources to transition points is essential for a strong sector able to provide continuous service to consumers. Transition related sector gaps exist due to the lack of exit points for consumers in services, inadequate long-term planning for consumers prior to transition points, and specifically a lack of

accommodation and work options for young people with disability wanting more independent or supported accommodation.

Transition points specifically highlighted by service providers include:  
Young adults wanting more independent or supported accommodation; and  
Wider choices and opportunities to enter the workforce including Year Ten work experience and options in individual learning plans.

**Recommendation 6**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* include support strategies for workers in the disability sector to reduce staff turn over through remuneration, increased education opportunities and resources to cover on job client support costs.

**Recommendation 7**

That the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* recognises and develops synergies with the ACT Young People's Plan 2009 - 2014, to form meaningful actions in relation to young people with disability

## **4. Further Development of Framework**

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Section 4 of this submission discusses areas for consideration in the further planning and development of the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT 2009 – 2014*.

### **4.1 Human Rights and Child Friendly City**

The Youth Coalition strongly supports the inclusion of human rights within all ACT Government policy. The Youth Coalition recognises the intention by the ACT Government, as outlined in the *ACT Young People's Plan 2009 – 2014 Discussion Paper*, to develop Canberra as a “child friendly city” and highlights the synergies between a “child friendly city” and an inclusive community providing development opportunities for young people to contribute and participate in society. The Youth Coalition highlights the opportunity to find and develop synergies between the *Policy Framework for People with Disability 2009 - 2014* and the *ACT Young People's Plan 2009 - 2014*.

### **4.2 Building on Previous Framework**

The *ACT Disability Policy Framework 2004 – 2008* (the current Strategy) provides strategic direction by which each ACT Government agency can be guided in its response to issues identified by the disability community. The Disability Advisory Councils's Challenge 2014 provides a strong vision for the period of the upcoming strategy. This vision should still be evident throughout the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14*.

### **4.3 Developing Whole of Government Policy**

The Youth Coalition understands there is currently no template or procedure that guides social policy development in the ACT Government, but that policy needs to be consistent with The Canberra Plan and Human Rights legislation.

This presents significant challenges for policy makers, program managers, stakeholders and the community, as it becomes extremely difficult to identify who is responsible for actions, their efficacy and timelines.

The ACT Government has been developing key policy documents in the areas of alcohol and other drugs, mental health and multicultural affairs. In each of their draft forms, none of these policy documents cross-reference to each other. Furthermore the ACT Young People's Plan 2009 – 2014 is currently being drafted at the same time as the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14*. These are key policy documents that would underpin a whole-of-government strategy such as this.

The Youth Coalition therefore calls on the ACT Government to develop strategies to take advantage of this unique and important opportunity presented in this term of government to create synergies across key policy areas, particularly in youth affairs.

## 4.4 Definition of Disability

Whilst a broad definition of disability may be assumed from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey, the Consultation Paper provides no specific definition of disability. A specific definition would provide general clarity and assist young people with disability to gain greater understanding of issues and plans; potentially minimizing misrepresentation and miscommunication.

## 4.5 Youth Participation

*Participation for young people is about getting them involved so they can have their say in a way that is comfortable and appropriate for them. It involves actively listening to what the young people have to say and incorporating their ideas in decision-making.*

NSW Commission for Children and Young  
People  
[www.kids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au)

Youth participation requires a commitment from the ACT Government, and other stakeholders, to adequately resource the process, and to build a culture where young people are able to contribute in valuable and meaningful ways. Without adequate resources and commitment to the implementation of youth participation policies and practices, services are at risk of engaging young people in tokenistic ways.

The ACT Government has reflected its commitment to youth participation through the ACT Young People's Plan 2004 – 2008. The Youth Coalition therefore calls upon the ACT Government to ensure that youth participation models, policies and practices are identified and utilised in the further development of the Framework, in alignment with UNICEF's Eight Building Blocks of a Child Friendly City.

### **Recommendation 8**

That all actions within the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* which apply to young people are developed using evidence based youth participation models, and in collaboration with key stakeholders, including young people and youth services.

## 4.6 Structure of Framework

A number of specific elements need to be considered and utilised in the Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14, for it to be an effective and meaningful policy document. The structure should:

- Include detailed aims and objectives;
- Provide and explain any legislative and regulatory context;
- Provide definitions of key terms;
- Explain conflicts and limitations;
- Explain the policy context;
- Provide monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms;
- Identify key stakeholders;
- Identify policy areas to be progressed;
- Provide an overview of the current knowledge (review of the literature and / or the current ACT system);
- Provide demographic information;
- Provide information about key issues;

- Explain the roles of key stakeholders;
- Identify priorities;
- Outline responsibility for the progression of actions;
- Specify strategies for implementation; and,
- Contain recommendations for action.

#### **4.7 Implementation of Framework**

The *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14* should contain an implementation plan that outlines the responsibilities for the progression of actions, includes a timetable and identifies reporting and evaluation mechanisms. It is also essential that the strategies are developed and implemented in collaboration with key stakeholders, including young people with and community disability sector workers.

## 5. Conclusion

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The Youth Coalition would like to again thank the ACT Government for the opportunity to contribute to the *Policy Framework for People with Disability in the ACT Strategic Priorities 2009-14 Consultation Paper*. We commend the commitment by the ACT Government to developing a Strategy based upon community consultation and key stakeholder feedback. All of the priority areas and recommendations are essential and of high priority.

The Youth Coalition strongly recommends demographic and service mapping to inform all other planning and service capacity development as a priority action. The Youth coalition highlights the essential need to increase focus and resources on transitional support for young people across accommodation, working opportunities and education.

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