

## Fact Sheet: Developing a Vision

### Having a vision

Around the world people with disability – including people with significant support needs - are living in their own homes, having jobs, having rich social lives and are generally enjoying the good things in life that most of us want. It has been suggested by families that for many people with disability these good things don't "just happen" and that having a clear vision and some positive dreams about the kind of life you want for a family member with disability can be an invaluable first step.

The clearer the vision, the easier it will be to make plans and stick to them – the vision can act as a compass. Having a vision can help families and people with disability to plan productively, stay focused and to make decisions in a considered way.

### What is a vision?

At its most basic, a vision is an outline of what would be included in a good life for a person with disability. A vision could also be thought of as a plan or dream for the future.

Most of us have ideas about what we would like our life and the lives of our family members to look now and in the future.

When people are asked to describe what they are hoping for – what a good life would include for them – the list is fairly consistent and includes elements that relate to: relationships, home, work and leisure, education, passions, safety/security, health, spirituality, contribution to community and decision-making.

Developing a vision for and with a person with disability reflects a desire to embrace "ordinary dreams" for that person – dreams that we would hold for ourselves and for our other family members.

## Things that other families have said about thinking through a vision for the future...

- Allow yourself to dream big!
- It's never too late to start planning but, the earlier you start, the easier it will be to create a life full of the important stuff for a person with disability.
- A vision statement doesn't need to be long and complicated. It has saved us time and effort by helping us to focus our efforts.
- Saying yes to a vision for the future has made it easier to say no to options that are in conflict with what we are aiming for.
- We've included our son in the visioning and planning as much as possible. We have been guided by what we know about him and by what we all want in our life.
- By having thought through our dreams we are able to start embracing opportunities that will gradually make them happen.
- Share the vision...with friends, neighbours, allies and professionals. If people know what you are aiming for they are more likely to share in the journey.

*It was surprising what the effect of formalising our thoughts in writing was. It made us clarify our thoughts, it made us check that our ideas were shared ones and it helped us when it came to the next stage of communicating this vision to other people.*

*- NSW mother*



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