

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

Introduction

In formulating its policy on disability and the importance of community inclusion, the NSWJBD notes statements by the United Nations and other bodies concerned with people with disabilities and their rights.

In particular, the NSWJBD notes that the parties to the Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities:

1. Recognise that discrimination against any person on the basis of disability is a violation of the inherent dignity of the human person,
2. Recognise the diversity of persons with disabilities,
3. Recognise persons with disabilities continue to face barriers in their participation as equal members of society and violations to their human rights in all parts of the world,
4. Recognise the importance for persons with disabilities of their individual autonomy and independence, including the freedom to make their own choices,
5. Consider that persons with disabilities should have the opportunity to be actively involved in decision-making processes about policies and programmes, especially those directly concerning them,

These parties have agreed to the following fundamental principles:

- a) Dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
- b) Non-discrimination;
- c) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society on an equal basis with others for persons with disabilities;
- d) Respect for difference and acceptance of disability as part of human diversity and humanity;
- e) Equality of opportunity;
- f) Accessibility;
- g) Equality between men and women.

The NSWJBD also notes that NSW Government has adopted the following principles of an inclusive society:

- People with disabilities are full and valued members of the community
- People with disabilities will have access to services provided to the general community
- In the provision of services to people with disabilities the focus will be on the whole of life needs of individuals in their own communities
- Better outcomes for people with disabilities will result from cooperation among service providers, with active participation of people with disabilities
- Services will support and be sensitive to the diversity of people with disabilities

- The legal rights of people with disabilities will be recognised and protected

Policy Principles for the NSWJBD

- 1) The NSWJBD accepts the principles contained in the above statements, and asks its affiliated organisations, as well as the JCA, to endorse them and take active steps to implement them.
- 2) The NSWJBD encourages the implementation of the ethical imperative that people with disabilities have a right to participate fully in the religious and social life of the community. It does this not only as an expression of Jewish values and universal human rights but also in the knowledge that everyone's lives are enriched when we make our communities inclusive
- 3) The NSWJBD sees its role as one of advocacy in promoting the implementation of these principles within the Jewish community.
- 4) The NSWJBD notes that discrimination in employment, service provision and education on the grounds of disability is prohibited by the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act, and calls upon members of the Jewish community to avoid acts of discrimination.
- 5) The NSWJBD recognises that people with disabilities wish to participate in social, cultural and religious life of the community and that some may need assistance to do this. The NSWJBD recommends that communal organisations make every effort to encourage, facilitate and support the participation of people with disabilities in the life of the community.
- 6) The NSWJBD recognises that children and young people with disability are children and young people first and should be afforded the same opportunities as children and young people without disability in the Jewish community. This includes enrolment and education at Jewish schools and participation in social, religious and cultural activities designed for children and young people.
- 7) The NSWJBD accepts that most people with disability prefer to choose where they live, with whom they live and who will provide the support they might need. To achieve this, the NSWJBD recognises the need for affordable, accessible housing, an effective network of responsive, flexible community services, as well as strong informal community support. The NSWJBD accepts that some people with disability want to live in supported accommodation within the Jewish community. The NSWJBD recognises the current role of JewishCare in providing supported accommodation and its role in developing accommodation options for people with disability who wish to live in a Jewish environment. The NSWJBD recommends that JewishCare work closely with people with disabilities and other communal organisations in the pursuit of this objective.
- 8) The NSWJBD recognises that most people with disabilities want to work and yet they continue to face many barriers to employment. To support the increased employment of people with disabilities, the NSWJBD encourages Jewish communal organisations and members of the community to facilitate the creation of employment opportunities.

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- 9) The NSWJBD appreciates the special role played by carers in supporting people with disabilities, and recommends that communal organisations acknowledge the role of carers and identify ways of assisting them. Accordingly, the NSWJBD will work with appropriate communal organisations, including the JCA, to increase the availability of individualised support for people with disability and their carers.
- 10) The NSWJBD recommends that Jewish organisations should seek ways of co-operating with programs managed by other community, ethnic and faith based organisations.
- 11) The NSWJBD recommends that organisations in the community providing services for people with disabilities should make every effort to work collaboratively. This would include measures to avoid overlapping and duplication, exchange of information, co-operative planning of programs and co-ordinated approaches to Government for increased funding of respite care and community based support programs.