

Individual Advocacy Client Handbook



Empowerment of people with intellectual disability and their families

About VALID's Individual Advocacy Support

VALID is funded by the Victorian Government to provide a free individual advocacy support to adults with an intellectual disability and their families.

Individual advocacy supports people to exercise their rights and to be included within their local communities.

VALID's individual advocacy support:

- is available to adults with an intellectual disability who are considered eligible to receive Victorian disability support services.
- is usually on a short term basis.
- can be provided in a range of ways including, information, advice, referral, direct support (i.e.. attending meeting) and representation (see next page)
- is provided in a manner that is consistent with the 'To Stand Beside' method.
- assists people to address specific issues and challenges that they may be facing with either specialist or community-based services.

Principles

VALID provides free Advocacy support to people who are eligible under the Victorian Disability Act 2006.

VALID respects the right of people who use its services to privacy and confidentiality.

VALID works with individuals/families in a manner which seeks to empower them.

VALID's advocacy service is provided to people in a non-discriminatory manner.

VALID works with individuals/families in the least intrusive way as possible e.g., only ask the info we need.

Priority criteria for Individual Advocacy

VALID must manage demand (i.e., when there are more people asking for support than we have staff to assist) for its services.

To do this VALID will respond first to people who are either:

- at risk of harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and/or.
- without any alternative form of advocacy support or representation.

Types of Advocacy Support

Standing Behind: VALID provides advice and guidance to support people with intellectual disability to assert their rights and achieve their goals.

Standing Beside: VALID works alongside people with intellectual disability to assist them in raising and addressing their issues effectively.

Standing Before: VALID provides representation to defend and promote the rights and interests of people with intellectual disability.

Family Advocacy

VALID provides advice and assistance to support the natural role played by families advocating for a family member with a disability. However, we do not advocate for the needs of the family itself, and our advocacy is always directed towards the VALID Mission, and guided by the principles of the Disability Act 2006.

Advocacy Support

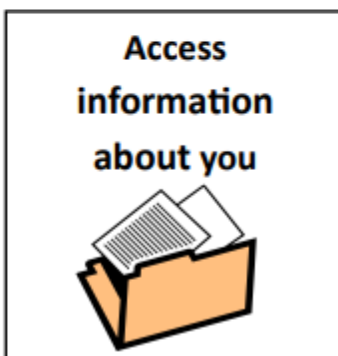
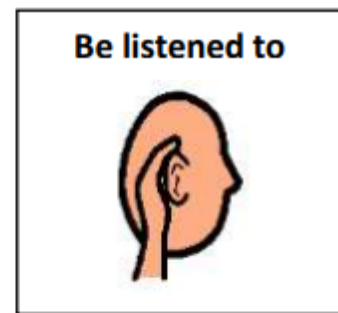
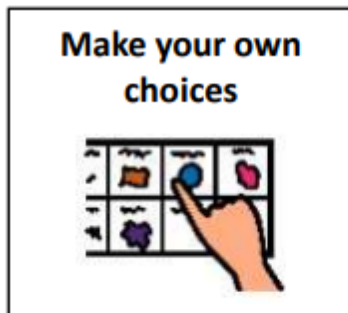
VALID provides advice, where sought, to assist advocates who are representing or supporting people with intellectual disability. Where an advocate is actively engaged with a person with intellectual disability, our advice is provided to the advocate rather than to the person, to avoid potential confusion or conflict.

Referral

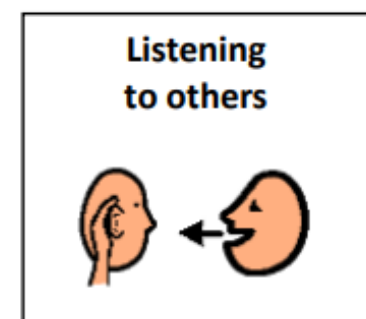
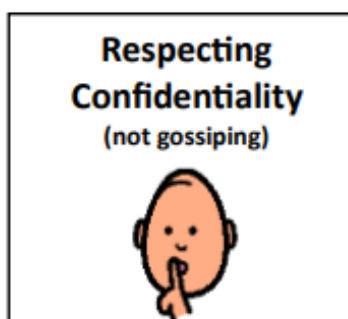
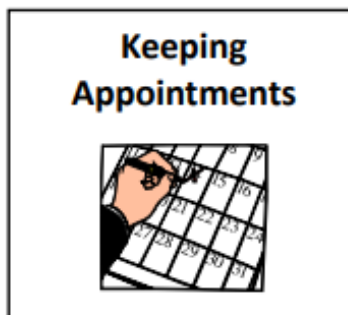
Where VALID is unable to provide advocacy support, we will refer people to other relevant services. For example, families of children are referred to Association for Children with a Disability and people with legal issues are referred to a legal advocacy service like Villamanta.

Rights and Responsibilities

When you use VALID's support you have the right to:



When you use VALID's support you need to be responsible by:



Privacy & Confidentiality policy



VALID does keep some information about you, but we will not tell other people your private information.



Information you give to VALID will be kept secure and confidential.



In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act you may access your file.



The only exception to this policy is where staff are bound by a law to report (e.g., physical abuse) information to the police or government.

Consent to Referral policy



VALID will not accept referrals for service if the individual or family have not given consent for the referral to be made.



The only time we will vary this is where a guardian/carer of a person who is unable to give informed consent due to illness (e.g., dementia) or disability (e.g., intellectual, psychiatric, brain injury) requests assistance for that person.



VALID will still seek to respect the individual privacy and rights of all concerned.

SPEAKING UP ABOUT YOUR CONCERNS

IF YOU



have a problem

or



**are unhappy about
VALID services**



It's okay



to talk to



**Family/
Advocate**



Key Worker



Coordinator



**It's
OK
to complain**

**Disability Services
Commissioner (Vic.)**



to sort it out, so you are happy

Useful Numbers



NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme)

Phone: 1800 800 110 TTY: 1800 555 677 and ask for 1800 800 110

Website: www.ndis.gov.au



Carer Gateway Service 1800 422 737



Centrelink 1800 050 004

Statewide Advocacy Organisations:

Association for Children 03 9818 2000

Advocacy for children under 18 yrs old 1800 654 111



Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service 03 5229 2925

Legal advocacy toll free 1800 014 111



Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS) 03 9267 3733

Advocacy for young people 12 - 25 yrs old 1300 727 176



NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission T: 1800 035 544

Complaints about any service purchased with NDIS funding

E: feedback@ndiscommission.gov.au

W: www.ndiscommission.gov.au



NDIS Quality
and Safeguards
Commission

Disability Services Commissioner 1800 677 342



Disability
Services
Commissioner



For a full **list of advocacy services** visit the VALID website: www.valid.org.au

34 Stanley Street
Collingwood, VIC 3066

P (03) 9416 4003

E info@valid.org.au

Contact Information

VALID provides free independent advocacy for people with an **intellectual disability** who are over the age of 18 and reside in Victoria.

We have limited capacity to take on new cases and we prioritise situations where a person with an intellectual disability is experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation.

All service providers and other professionals, please send us an email to intake@valid.org.au with information about your enquiry.

If you are a person with an intellectual disability, a family member or a friend of a person with an intellectual disability you can call us on **03 9114 9415** and leave a message, or you can email us on intake@valid.org.au