

## Why is Citizen Advocacy needed?

Everyone needs justice, acceptance and security. From time to time we all need support and assistance. For people with intellectual disabilities these needs are often not met.

People with a disability can experience rejection and isolation. They have fewer opportunities to experience 'ordinary' life and are particularly vulnerable to unfair treatment and exploitation. Some people are subject to neglect and abuse.

A 'one to one' C.A. relationship becomes a positive aspect of their life.

## Who can get support from an Advocate ?

North East Citizen Advocacy (NECA) can support people who have an intellectual disability and who live in the north-east metropolitan region of Melbourne.

If you know of someone who is isolated, or needs some help with a problem, contact the Coordinators at the NECA office.

one  
to  
one

## North East Citizen Advocacy

56 Gabonia Ave  
PO Box 251  
Watsonia 3087

For more information  
contact the Coordinator



P: 8407 3684  
M: 0412 099 597

E: [neca@citizenadvocacy.com.au](mailto:neca@citizenadvocacy.com.au)

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[www.citizenadvocacy.com.au](http://www.citizenadvocacy.com.au)

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'One to One' advocacy for  
people with  
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## North East Citizen Advocacy

A community based program in the local area that initiates a supportive relationship between people with an intellectual disability and unpaid members of the community.

A means of defending people's interests and rights, Citizen Advocacy can be one of the most significant ways that alliances are established and supported.



The Citizen Advocate is trained and carefully matched to a person with a disability (participant) who needs a 'one to one' relationship.

Matches can be of different types, such as:

- ◆ an ongoing commitment,
- ◆ a short-term assignment or
- ◆ a crisis situation.

An advocate assists their participant to improve the quality of his/her life, to be a spokes person, to support the participant having control over decisions affecting everyday life.

### Advocates can make a difference!

A person with an intellectual disability may be in need of experiences and opportunities, be feeling lonely or facing difficulties. An advocate can help them have greater control over their lives, as the advocate is orientated by the coordinator to address a person's needs.

- ◆ 'Melissa' attends a doctor's appointment with 'Clare' so her symptoms are clearly understood and treatment is implemented.
- ◆ 'Stan' has found appropriate accommodation for 'Frank' and visits him regularly.
- ◆ 'Janine' is reconnecting 'Don' to his brother, who he had not seen since he was placed in an institution. She supports him in dealing with rejection issues.
- ◆ 'Mary' is helping 'Andrea' solve the problems she is having with her landlord, by connecting her with relevant agencies.
- ◆ 'Justin' lives in a Group Home and loves sport. 'Tom' now takes him to a Golf Driving Range and they work on improving their swings. This way 'Tom' can keep an eye on his situation.

### Citizen Advocates are people who:

- ◆ come from all walks of life,
- ◆ are various ages,
- ◆ generally have had no previous involvement with people who have disabilities,
- ◆ bring all sorts of life experiences to the relationship,
- ◆ are able to express their fundamental generosity and compassion,
- ◆ have high expectations of what people with intellectual disabilities, can achieve with the right support,
- ◆ are prepared to make a commitment to be loyal to the person with an intellectual disability.

North East Citizen Advocacy is a program funded by the Department of Social Services and has a voluntary Committee of Management

NECA has been active since 1986, in the local council areas of Banyule, Darebin, Nillumbik and Whittlesea.

It is one of many programs around Australia, with links to the USA and UK.

NECA upholds the principles stated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of People with Disabilities.



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