

Disability - support for families

Making a Difference is a State government program to provide support for Victorian families and other unpaid carers who are caring for a person with a disability.

Making a Difference is:

- Focussed on the whole family
- For people with disabilities of many types
- Available through various family support agencies throughout Victoria
- Funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services.

Caring for a person with a disability can be difficult

Providing care for a person with a disability can be very difficult. Many families who provide care:

- Experience worry and great stress
- Have problems getting the help and services they need for caring
- Find it difficult to get services at the times when they are needed.

Making a Difference helps coordinate assistance on behalf of families

Making a Difference provides a person called a case manager who helps families or carers to identify their problems and needs. The case manager also:

- Knows about the type of help and services available
- Helps identify available options
- Helps families or carers reach their own decisions
- Does not tell families or carers what to do
- May organise help and services on behalf of families, carers and people with disabilities.

Making a Difference can help coordinate many types of support

Where necessary, extra services may be provided through the program. This may include:

- Home assistance with bathing, shopping and at meal times
- Out of home activities (like recreational or social activities, school or day placement and holiday support)
- Respite in and out of home
- Special equipment or aids
- Volunteer and other carer reimbursement expenses
- Transport assistance
- Professional support.

Many people are eligible for help

People may be eligible if:

- The person being cared for is over five years old.
- The person has moderate to severe disabilities or has difficult problems which need special help.
- The family or carer has many complicated needs as a result of caring for the person with a disability.

Making a Difference gives priority to families and carers with high needs

Families or carers with high needs are given priority in the Making a Difference program. For example, when:

- Caring for a person with more than one severe disability, whose behaviour is difficult to manage
- The carer has a lot of stress and needs a lot of help and support, or
- The main carer is over 60 years old.

Where to get help

- Your Department of Human Services office freecall 1800 783 783

Things to remember

- Help is available for families and other unpaid carers who care for a person with a disability.
- A case manager coordinates help for each family or carer.
- People with disabilities and their carers make their own decisions about support. Assistance is provided based on individual needs.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by:

DHS - Disability Services

Copyright © 1999/2010 State of Victoria. Reproduced from the Better Health Channel (www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) at no cost with permission of the Victorian Minister for Health. Unauthorised reproduction and other uses comprised in the copyright are prohibited without permission.

- This Better Health Channel fact sheet has passed through a rigorous approval process. For the latest updates and more information visit www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au.