

# School leaver service supports young job seeker with disability secure his ideal job

Images available here.

After finishing high school, Clayton Maddern was eager to find a job but was unsure where to start. He joined the Ingleburn based SLES (School Leaver Employment Supports) service run by disability provider Afford to develop his workplace knowledge and skills for the best chance at securing long-term employment.

Staggering statistics reveal that young people (aged 15–24) with a disability are more than twice as likely than those aged 25–64 to be unemployed.[1] Of those employed, 1 in 4 people aged 15-24 with disability would like to work more hours.[2] Younger adults with disability are also more likely to experience a higher level of psychological distress[3], which could present challenges in securing long term employment.

To curb these statistics, Afford's (Australian Foundation for Disability) SLES service gives young people opportunities to explore their interests, to understand what they want out of a job.

SLES is suitable for young school leavers aged 17 to 25 years old and focuses on the individual employment goals of each trainee. Trainees are supported to learn about work and life resilience and various avenues for employment.

Through the Afford SLES learning service, trainees work on developing their resume writing and interview techniques, among other skills. They also learn about the job-hunting process and can participate in work experience. Trainees also learn interpersonal and communication skills to apply in a workplace environment.

When Clayton joined SLES in November 2018, his employment goals focussed on securing a job within an Afford Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE), with his ideal role being a forklift driver.

Throughout his SLES journey, Clayton worked extremely hard during group-based programs to develop his job readiness for work life. He participated in work experience opportunities at Bunnings and was invited to complete a work trial at Afford's Ingleburn ADE.

Applying the workplace knowledge and skills that he learned through SLES, in January 2020, Clayton secured full-time employment with Ingleburn ADE as a picker and packer. He completed his forklift licence training and has progressed into the role of forklift driver for the factory.

Symone Marjanovic, Afford's National Employments Support Manager, says that the SLES service encourages trainees to hone in on their strengths to find the right job for them.

"Trainees can develop their job readiness skills and have opportunities to visit workplaces to speak to managers about the skills required for roles in different industries and workplace expectations," Symone explained.

"We also encourage SLES trainees to feel comfortable voicing their feelings and seeking help when they need it. Supporting trainees to develop their job-readiness skills and coping strategies for everyday life, ensures they complete SLES as informed, confident and work-ready individuals," Symone said.

Afford is a registered charity and has been operating in Australia for 70 years, providing a range of disability supports to thousands of people every day.

As one of Australia's longest-serving not-for-profit disability organisations, Afford supports individuals to achieve their goals for work, home and life under the NDIS.

For more information, visit [www.afford.com.au](http://www.afford.com.au) or call 1300 233 673.

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About Afford - [www.afford.com.au](http://www.afford.com.au)

Afford is a registered charity providing disability services to thousands to over 4000 people and families across Australia. Afford supports people of all abilities achieve their goals for home, work, and life under the NDIS. The not-for-profit has championed choice, respect and opportunity for people of all abilities for 70 years. The supports provided by Afford include Supported Accommodation, Short-Term Accommodation, Social and Community Programs; SLES (School Leaver Employment Support) service, Carer Support, Disability Employment Services (DES), Supported Employment in Australian Disability Enterprises (ADE); Allied Health Support, Support Coordination, supported holidays (Afford Getaways) and healthy lifestyle activities and outings (Club Afford).

[1] <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/dis/73-1/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents-1/employment/unemployment>

[2] <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/employment>

[3] <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/health/health-status>

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