



Participant Handbook





Gig Buddies is a project started in 2012 by the charity Stay Up Late in the UK

In Australia it is run by ACL Disability Services Since 2015

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Gig buddy participant;
an adult with a learning disability and/or autism who needs support to attend gigs or events of their choosing.

Gig buddy volunteer;
An adult who would like to support someone with learning disabilities and/or autism attend gigs and other social events.

Gig Buddies lingo!

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Welcome! and thank you for joining Gig Buddies

What is Gig Buddies all about?

Going out to see bands, your favourite sport or other events is part of everyday life for many people. However, you may need some support to do this.

A Gig Buddies volunteer is someone who wants to go to events and do fun things, but also wants to help out someone who may need some support.

Gig Buddies tries to find a volunteer who likes the same things as you, so that you can do things together that you both love.

What do we want?

We want to tackle social isolation. We want every person with a learning disability to be able to make friends, meet people and have new experiences.

Why do we need Gig Buddies?

In 2012, Stay Up Late UK commissioned research with the University of Brighton into the barriers that people with learning disabilities face when it comes to going out in the evening.

These barriers included:

- Isolation
- Not being able to get the support they needed
- Not feeling safe out in the community
- Not having the confidence or motivation
- No-one to go with
- Not knowing what was on
- Low income

A Gig Buddy volunteer may be able to help you overcome these barriers.

What makes a volunteer different from a support worker?

A volunteer is not like a support worker. They are there in an informal befriending role to help someone who may be socially isolated to access social events.

You and your volunteer choose your events together. You will talk together about what you both want to do, when it is and how much it will cost.

How does Gig Buddies work?

1. Sign up online

If you haven't already, fill in a form online. We will ask you what things you want to do, what things you like, and some other personal details.

2. Finding you a gig buddy volunteer

Once you have joined Gig Buddies, we will look for a volunteer to go to events with you once a month.

We can't guarantee finding you a volunteer, but the Gig Buddies team will work hard to try to find you a gig buddy as soon as possible.

How do we match you with a volunteer?

We look at our volunteer buddies for someone who:

- *likes the same type of music, sport, interests or hobbies as you*
- *lives near you (so it is easier to catch up or go to things together)*
- *is a similar age to you*

3. We get your volunteer ready

Your volunteer will then come to us for a training session. We also ask them for a NDIS Worker Screening Check and two references.

So, who volunteers for the Gig Buddies project?

We have volunteers from all walks of life and all ages from many suburbs and towns. We have bankers, students, retirees, lawyers, artists, musicians, computer programmers, sports people, and many more, all of whom would love to meet someone new to go to events with.

4. Meeting your gig buddy

We will have a meeting with you and your volunteer at a time that suits you both. A parent or support worker may also attend.

In this 'pairing meeting' we will talk about

- how you and your gig buddy will get to places together
- how you will contact each other
- how you will pay for things
- things you may need help with... and much more

5. Start going to gigs or other events with your new buddy

After your pairing meeting, you and your buddy will go out at least once a month* for one year. (*some months this may not be possible due to holidays etc.)

If you like, Gig Buddies staff can come to your first gig with you and your new buddy.

Five steps to being a Gig Buddy.



We also host social events...

If you don't have a buddy to go to events with, you can still come to our social events every month.

The Gig Buddies website has a shop where you can buy tickets to our social events. Some events are free, but you will still need to go to the Gig Buddies shop to register. See "WHATS ON" page on website.

Here are some of the things we have done in the past:

- food and music at a pub or club
- barefoot lawn bowls
- theatre, opera and musicals
- outdoor cinema
- silent disco at the Sydney Aquarium!
- Halloween boat party on Sydney Harbour
- Sydney Festival events
- Sydney Comedy Festival events
- Sydney Opera House events
- sporting events (Cricket, NRL, AFL, Basketball and Netball)
- and much more...!



(above) Logos from supporters of the project and from places we've had parties

*Sorry we can't accept Companion Cards for our events because we buy tickets in bulk before selling them to you.

The Gig Buddies project does not profit from ticket sales. Ticket prices are based on wholesale prices paid.

Interview With Tim – Gig Buddies Participant

**Tim was one of the first participants to join Gig Buddies.
We talked about what it is like being a part of Gig Buddies.**



What other things have you been able to do through Gig Buddies?

I have been able to go and see bands and live music in new places that I have never been to.

I have been able to talk to someone other than my family about things, over a slice of pizza.

I have been able to help design Gig Buddies flyers', posters and help out during social events.

How has Gig Buddies made your life better?

I have been able to go out at night. It's exciting that I get to experience new things. I got to go on stage and help with setting up the bands' equipment at the launch party

What do you think makes a good gig buddy?

Being friendly. Someone who is happy to have a conversation about similar interests. Someone who can help me plan our outings together.

What doesn't make a good gig buddy?

Not listening or talking to me.

What's the best way to keep in touch?

Calling and talking to me on the phone.

Gig Buddies and the NDIS

The standard administration charge for Gig Buddies participants is *3 hours per month, from either Core Supports or Capacity Building. This supports the programme with promotion, recruiting, vetting, matching & training volunteers, the buddy pairing process, running social events and general administration.

The Gig Buddies team provides ongoing support to all participants, facilitating mainstream social & sporting opportunities to enable an experience beyond the limitations of a disability specific event.

Gig Buddies staff can help you to get the project included in your package. Talk to us about getting a letter of recommendation and a quote for service.

Service Agreement

Gig Buddies will provide the participant with a service agreement after establishing which category of the two listed below the support to be provided falls under, as well as obtaining the following additional information:

- NDIS Plan Number
- Plan start date
- Plan end date
- Plan managed by:
 - NDIS (Agency Managed)
 - Self Managed
 - Self Managed with Financial Intermediary



Category 1. Capacity Building

Increased Social & Community Participation (Support Category 3.09)

Life transition planning including mentoring peer support & individual skill development.

Support Item Ref No. 09_006_0106_6_3 (see current "NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits" on NDIS website)

Establishing volunteer assistance within the Participant's home or community to develop skills - for instance, taking part in social activities & maintaining contact with others.

Cost per month (*3 hours): \$189.63

*Based on 3 x hourly price of \$63.21 per hour

Category 2. Core Supports

Assistance with Social & Community Participation (Support Category 1.04)

Provision of supports to enable the Participant to engage in community/social & or recreational activities within the community.

Support Item Ref No. 04_104_0125_6_1 (see current "NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits" on NDIS website)

Provision of support to enable a participant to engage in community, social and/or recreational activities.

Cost per month (*3 hours): \$166.41

*Based on 3 x hourly price of \$55.47 per hour

*3 hours is not reflective of time spent with your volunteer. See next page for where your fee goes.

What does Gig Buddies NDIS funding go towards?



Our Philosophy

INCLUSION

Social inclusion is central to the Gig Buddies philosophy.

What is inclusion?

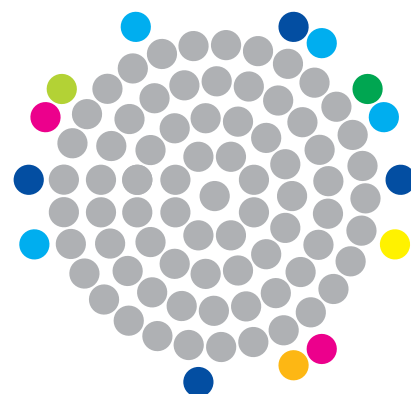
- Making sure that there are no barriers to people being able to take part in society.
- Building communities in ordinary life that include people with disabilities.
- Putting people with disabilities' wishes and views at the centre of action.
- Accepting difference as ordinary, not as an excuse to reject or ostracise.
- Not 'blaming' the individual or turning them into the problem.
- Involving everyone in identifying solutions.
- Encouraging co-operative problem solving.
- Removing barriers for others as well as disabled people, that is, it is an equal opportunities model.
- Acknowledging disabled people's rights to full participation as citizens.

ACTIVITIES

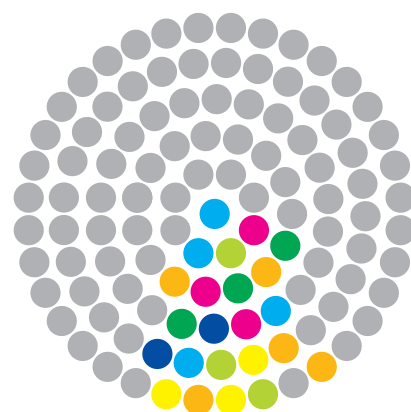
Increase meaningful **participation** of adults with learning disabilities in various cultural activities and gigs.

USER-LED

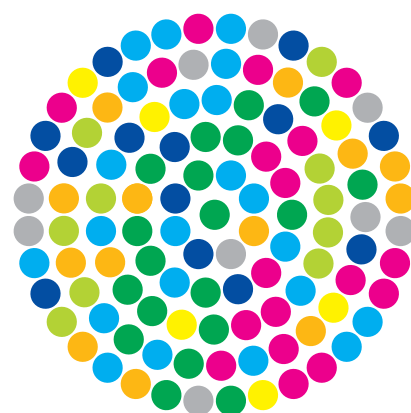
The “Soul Fly Band” are an **advisory group** of participants who meet once a month and guide and advise the running of the Gig Buddies project.



EXCLUSION



INTEGRATION



INCLUSION

CHOICES

People with learning disabilities being able to make real **choices** about the way they lead their lives.

COMMUNITY

Develop ongoing relationships to enable people with learning disabilities to develop **friendships** in their communities.

Boundaries

What do we mean by boundaries?

In all friendships we need boundaries so that we all feel comfortable and happy.

When you are paired with a buddy, please think about these boundaries:

Time

Volunteers make a commitment to go to a gig **once or twice a month for a year** – you need to make sure you and your volunteer buddy respect this boundary. If you can't make a gig, let your gig buddy know. Do not pressure your gig buddy into going to more gigs, or make them feel bad if they can't. Remember, your buddy is a volunteer and not a support worker.



If you feel your buddy is not coming with you to enough events, or not responding to your calls or emails, please call the Gig Buddies team.

Contact

You will need to give your buddy a phone number or email address so they can communicate with you and/or your family or support worker.

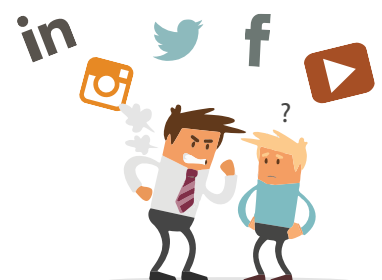
Your buddy may have a full time job or be very busy, and may not be able to reply straight away. Please find out when is the best time to message or talk to them.



Please give your buddy time to respond to your text messages, emails and voice messages. If you do not hear back from them, please let us know.

Social Media

Please check with your buddy if they are happy for you to contact them, add photos or tag them in Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.



How we act with each other?

Always tell somebody if you do not feel comfortable with how your buddy is behaving or speaking to you.

Just a friend

Your Gig Buddy volunteer is a friend who you can go to events or go out with with once or twice a month. Please don't ask them to help you with other things like shopping, cleaning or driving you to places.

Money

Your buddy can help you with your money, but can not give you money.



Social Media

The best way to tell people about the Gig Buddies project is through social media. Below are the types of social media that we use.

Gig Buddies Sydney website www.gigbuddiessydney.org

Go to our website for frequently asked questions (FAQs), News (blog), photo and video galleries (media), upcoming events (what's on) and much more.

Facebook page

Please 'like' Gig Buddies Sydney on Facebook, and feel free to write comments or share photos about your gigs.

Instagram [#gigbudssydney](https://www.instagram.com/gigbudssydney)

Follow [gig_buddies_sydney](https://www.instagram.com/gigbudssydney) and tag us in your photos using the hash tag [#gigbudssydney](https://www.instagram.com/gigbudssydney)

Gig Buddies Sydney blog and newsletter

To get the latest Gig Buddies Sydney news, head to our website and sign up for our weekly newsletter.

Other social media

We can also be found on:

Twitter (@gigbudssydney or tag #gigbudssyd),

LinkedIn

YouTube

If you would like us to upload your videos or photos, email us at: info@gigbuddiessydney.org

If you are at one of our events, please let us know if you don't want your photo taken and put on social media.



Social Media Policy

ACL Disability Services and the Gig Buddies project social media house rules

When it comes to our social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and the ACL Disability Services and Gig Buddies blogs), we encourage visitors to publish content and/or personal opinions and/or respond to existing content posted, and we strive for open debate. We do not take decisions on moderating content lightly, but we will remove any posts that do not adhere to our house rules and block anyone who chooses to break them repeatedly.

We will remove posts containing:

- Inaccurate, misleading or inappropriate statements about ACL Disability Services and/or the Gig Buddies project, its products and/or its people including staff, clients, volunteers, participants or associates.
- Abusive, defamatory, offensive or hateful comments regarding race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation or political beliefs.
- Discussions of illegal activity or unlawful information.
- Trolling of or instigating deliberately disruptive discussions about ACL Disability Services and/or Gig Buddies staff, clients, volunteers, participants or associates.
- Violations of any intellectual property rights.
- Spam or suspicious links e.g. phishing.
- Malicious content.

In the name of open debate, we ask that visitors also be aware of the following:

Visitors' posts on the ACL Disability Services and/or Gig Buddies blog, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or LinkedIn pages may not necessarily reflect the opinions of ACL Disability Services and/or the Gig Buddies project, nor does ACL Disability Services and/or the Gig Buddies project confirm their accuracy.

As this is a public forum and participation is voluntary, by posting on the ACL Disability Services and/or Gig Buddies blog, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or LinkedIn accounts you grant ACL Disability Services and/or Gig Buddies the right to use any posted content in any way and in any media without any legal or monetary obligation to the author.

Help us keep it suitable for all audiences. If you think that a post has broken any of our house rules, contact us at info@gigbuddiessydney.org

Your responsibilities

When you become a gig buddy, you also have some responsibilities. You have the right to know what these responsibilities are. Different services and programs may have different responsibilities. We will explain these to you in writing.

You are responsible towards everybody at the Gig Buddies project. This includes you, other people, staff and volunteers.

Your responsibilities are to:

- respect people's rights
- respect people's privacy
- help people feel safe at Gig Buddies
- help make sure there is no violence at Gig Buddies
- tell us about what you need
- tell us if you have any problems as soon as you can
- help people feel welcome in the Gig Buddies project



When you are with your gig buddy volunteer or at our events (including online events), these acts will not be tolerated:

- Any discrimination or abuse towards staff, other gig buddies or volunteers. (see mutual respect policy below)
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Violence
- Antisocial behaviour or bullying
- Harassment of any kind



Mutual Respect Policy

ACL Disability Services and the Gig Buddies project adopts a zero tolerance to all emotional, physical, verbal, sexual and written abuse from anyone involved in the project.

We thoroughly condemn and will not tolerate any discrimination of any kind based on a physical or learning disability, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, gender, age, religion or any other defining characteristics.

Your rights

As a part of the Gig Buddies project, you have a right to:

- have a say in what help you get
- have a say in how we can help you
- tell us what you think about the Gig Buddies project
- tell us how we can do things better
- tell us how the health care system can do things better
- change how the system works for you and other people
- give us your opinion about our programs and services
- tell us how our programs and services could work better
- work on your skills and confidence
- have a say and get involved

Ways to get involved

- Subscribe to our newsletter online. Go to www.gigbuddiessydney.org
- Follow Gig Buddies on Facebook and Twitter
- Contact the “Soul Fly Band” (our advisory team of participants)
- Become an advocacy member (join the Soul Fly Band)
- Tell us what you think online, in person or by filling in a survey
- Contact the Gig Buddies team to talk about what you can do.



Confidentiality

- Information collected about you is kept confidential.
- You can stop your involvement with the Gig Buddies project and ask to have your personal information removed from the database at anytime.



You can find us on:

Facebook - www.facebook.com/gigbuddiessydneynew

Twitter - www.twitter.com/gigbudsydney - @gigbudsydney

Instagram - www.instagram.com/gig-buddies-sydney

@gig_buddies_sydney

#gigbudsydney



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Gig Buddies Sydney is an initiative of



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