An Introduction to Human Rights in Disability Services –
A training program for disability support workers in Tasmania

Principles and Rights in the United Nations
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities– A summary

General principles*
Individual autonomy

Respect for difference
Accessibility
Non-discrimination

Full and effective participation in the community
Respect for evolving capacities of children
Equality of opportunity
Equality between women and men

* Source: Ramcharan (2012) Roadmap resource for achieving dignity without restraint, Office of the Senior Practitioner Victoria, DHS, p.17
Individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and be independent and respect for inherent dignity

People with disability have the right to autonomy. They have the right to:

- Make their own choices
- Be independent
- Determine their own lives

People with disability must be treated with dignity.

Respect for difference, human diversity and humanity

People with disability’s differences must be respected. All human beings have differences. People with disability are as diverse as the population as a whole. They come in different colours, heights, weights, have different views, beliefs and so forth. It is our duty to have respect for the diversity of humankind.

Accessibility

People with disability must have access to places, services and information. This includes physical access and making information available in ways that people can understand e.g. Easy English.

Non-discrimination

People with disability must be treated fairly and must not be discriminated against. It is unlawful to treat a person unfavourably because the person has a disability. This is discrimination.

Full and effective participation in the community

People with disability must be able to fully participate and be included in the community. They have the same rights to vote, the same rights to take part in public life and to access community resources. People with disability have the same rights to take part in social and economic life, education and recreation, as well as to work.

Recognise and respect for evolving capacities of children

The abilities of children to grow and change over time must be respected. Children have the right to be educated and the right to a family life. It is vital to support children to grow to their full potential so that they can make the most of life as adults.

Equality of opportunity

People with disability must have the same opportunities as everyone else. It should never be assumed that people with disability are not able to contribute to our society
simply because of their disability. We all bring our own skills and gifts to the community and we should have the same right as others to use our skills and gifts.

Equality of men and women

Women and men must be treated equally. Women and men should not be treated unfavourably or denied opportunities because of their gender. The different needs and experiences of women and men should be thought about and taken into account when they receive support.

Women with disabilities are more at risk of having their human rights violated and experience many different types of discrimination.

Protected rights

Equality and non-discrimination

Guarantees equal rights and protection under the law and freedom from discrimination for people with a disability.

Women with disabilities
Recognises that women and girls with a disability are more vulnerable to rights violations. It requires that specific measures are taken to protect their rights.

Children with disabilities
Respects the interests of children with a disability. They must be the main consideration in all actions and need to have the right to express their views freely.

Awareness raising
Requires States to promote the capability and contribution of people with a disability and combat harmful stereotypes.

Accessibility
Requires States to ensure that the built environment, public facilities, communication and information are accessible for all members of the community.

Right to life
Recognises that every human being has an inherent right to life.

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies
Requires States to ensure the protection and safety of people with a disability in armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters.

Equal recognition before the law
Requires States to take necessary measures, if required, to ensure people with a disability can properly exercise their legal rights.

Access to justice
Requires States to ensure effective access to justice for people with a disability.
**Liberty and security of the person**  
Requires that people with a disability are not unlawfully deprived of their liberty.

**Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**  
Requires that people with a disability are not subjected to torture or cruel treatment. People with a disability should also not be subjected to medical or scientific experimentation without their consent.

**Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse**  
Requires that people with a disability are not subject to any type of violence. Measures should be taken to detect, investigate and prosecute acts of violence. States should take appropriate measures to support the recovery of people with a disability who have been victims of exploitation, violence or abuse.

**Protecting the integrity of the person**  
Requires States to ensure respect for the physical and mental integrity of people with a disability.

**Liberty of movement and nationality**  
Requires States to ensure people with a disability have the freedom to choose their residence and nationality on an equal basis with others. Article 18 also requires States to ensure that people with a disability are free to leave any country including their own.

**Living independently and being included in the community**  
Requires that people with a disability have access to specialist and generic services that are necessary to support independent living and inclusion in the community.

**Personal mobility**  
Requires that effective measures are taken so people with a disability have the greatest possible personal mobility and independence. This can mean easy and affordable access to mobility aids and assistive technologies.

**Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information**  
Requires that public information is provided in accessible formats, via appropriate technologies. This information needs to be available in sign language and Braille. Other augmentative communication should be used wherever possible. Companies and the mass media are urged to provide information in an accessible way for people with a disability.

**Respect for privacy**  
Requires that people with a disability are not subject to unreasonable or unlawful interference with their privacy, or to unlawful attacks on their reputation. States should protect the privacy of information about people with a disability on an equal basis with others.

**Respect for home and the family**
Requires that discrimination against people with a disability is eliminated in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships.
Education
Requires States to recognise the right of people with a disability to an inclusive education and life-long learning that will enable them to realise their potential.

Health
Requires that people with a disability are able to access the full range of generic and specialised health care services to attain the highest standard of health possible.

Habilitation and rehabilitation
Requires that States provide services to help ensure that people with a disability are able to attain and maintain maximum independence.

Work and employment
Requires States to recognise the right of people with a disability to freely choose or accept employment within a labour market and work environment that is open, accessible and inclusive.

Adequate standard of living and social protection
Requires that States recognise the rights of people with a disability to have an adequate standard of living for themselves and for their families. This includes having adequate food, clothing and housing.

Participation in political and public life
Requires States to guarantee the political rights of people with a disability. It also requires States to ensure that these rights are enjoyed on an equal basis with others.

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport
Requires States to take effective measures to ensure that people with a disability are able to access cultural materials in accessible formats. This includes enjoying access to television, film, theatre and other cultural activities. People with a disability should also be able to use their creative, artistic and intellectual potential on an equal basis with others.