



# Participant Handbook



# CONTENTS

The Gig Buddies project is run by ACL Disability Services.



The project was started in Sydney in 2015.

It was created by Stay Up Late in the UK in 2012.

## **ACL Disability Services Office:**

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McMahons Point  
NSW, 2060

Office Phone (Business Hours)  
**9419 6951**

Sydney **0411 252 228**

Central Coast **0402 708 814**

Western Sydney **0466 389 961**

GWS **0478 045 121**

Southern Sydney **0478 043 996**

Northern Beaches **0466 793 100**

**Gig buddy participant;**  
an adult with 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 disability and/or autism attend gigs and other social events.

*Gig Buddies lingo!*

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
What is Gig Buddies & why do we need it?	
<b>How does it work?</b>	<b>4</b>
Finding & meeting your gig buddy volunteer	
<b>5 Steps</b>	<b>5</b>
5 Steps to being a gig buddy	
<b>Social Events</b>	<b>6</b>
We also have social events and parties	
<b>NDIS</b>	<b>7</b>
Why do we charge for the project?	
<b>Our Philosophy</b>	<b>9</b>
Why we do what we do.	
<b>Being a Great Buddy: Boundaries</b>	<b>10</b>
Working with your buddy	
<b>Your Responsibilities</b>	<b>11</b>
Do's and don'ts Mutual respect policy	
<b>Your Rights</b>	<b>12</b>
Your rights How to get involved	
<b>Online Community</b>	<b>13</b>
How to follow us	
<b>How you can support a Participant</b>	<b>14</b>
Guide for support networks	
<b>Feedback</b>	<b>15</b>
How to provide feedback or make a complaint	

# 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.

We want to tackle social isolation. We want every person with a learning disability and/or autism 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 and/or autism 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 events are on

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 you access social events and the community.

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

Go to the Gig Buddies website and 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 suitable 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 and they will complete the NDIS Worker Orientation Module. We also ask them for a NDIS Worker Screening Check and two references.

## 4. Meeting your gig buddy

### 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, and many more, all of whom would love to meet someone new to go to events with.*

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 once a month\* for one year or more. (\*some months this may not be possible due to holidays etc.)

*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...

Whether you have a buddy or not, you can still come to our group social events every month.

The Gig Buddies team host a variety of group social events and activities across Sydney and the Central Coast.

The Gig Buddies website has a shop where you can get tickets to our group social events.

Many events are free to attend for participants with an active service agreement, but you will still need to go to the Gig Buddies shop to register.

See the “WHATS ON” page on the 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 and VIVID events
- Sydney Comedy Festival events
- Sydney Opera House events
- sporting events (Cricket, NRL, AFL, Basketball and Netball... just to name a few)
- and much more...!



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

The Gig Buddies project does not profit from ticket sales. Ticket prices are based on wholesale prices paid. At most Gig Buddies group social events, participants pay for their own food and drinks.

# 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 project 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 and volunteers, 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 NDIS package. Talk to us about getting a letter of recommendation and a quote for service.*



## Service Agreement

Gig Buddies staff will provide the participant with a service agreement after establishing which category of the two listed below the support to be provided falls under.

### 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 is based on 3 hours of the above support item**

See website<sup>#</sup> for current rates

### 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 is based on 3 hours of the above support item**

See website<sup>#</sup> for current rates

or

\*3 hours is not reflective of time spent with your volunteer. See next page for where your fee goes. Fee remains the same for the duration of your service agreement.

Information correct at time of printing  
# for current NDIS rates see website below:  
[www.gigbuddiessydney.org/participate](http://www.gigbuddiessydney.org/participate)

# What does Gig Buddies NDIS funding go towards?





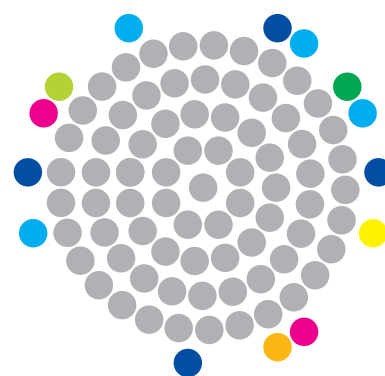
# Our Philosophy

## Inclusion

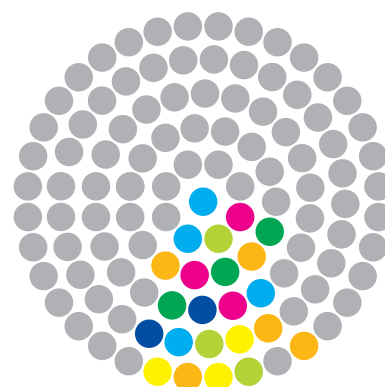
**Social inclusion** is central to the Gig Buddies philosophy.

### What is inclusion?

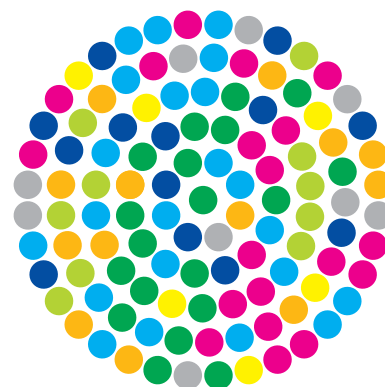
- Making sure that there are no barriers to people being able to take part in society.
- Building communities in ordinary life that include people with disabilities.
- Putting people with disabilities' wishes and views at the centre of action.
- Accepting difference as ordinary, not as an excuse to reject 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.



EXCLUSION



INTEGRATION



INCLUSION

## Activities

Increase meaningful **participation** of adults with learning disabilities and/or autism 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.

## Choices

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

## Community

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

# Being a great buddy

## 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 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 contact 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.



### 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 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.



# Being a great buddy

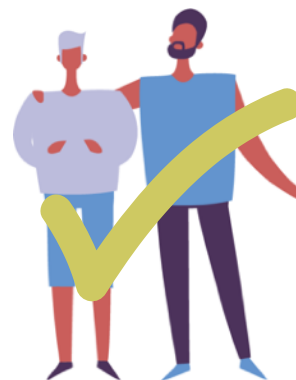
## Your responsibilities

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.

# Being a great buddy

## 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](http://www.gigbuddiessydney.org)
- Follow Gig Buddies on Facebook and Twitter
- Contact the “Soul Fly Buddies” (our advisory team of participants)
- Become an advocacy member (join the Soul Fly Buddies)
- 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.





# Gig Buddies' Online Community

The best way to keep up with what's going on in 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](http://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.

Once paired with a buddy, you can join our "GB Insiders" group on Facebook, where you can share photos and connect with other paired buddies.

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

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

## Gig Buddies blog and newsletter

To get the latest Gig Buddies 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 from a Gig Buddies event, please email us at: [info@gigbuddiessydney.org](mailto: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.

# If you are supporting a Gig Buddies participant, here's how you can help.

These are some things that you can do to help ensure that the person you care for or support gets a great experience from having a gig buddy.

## Check in

Ask them if they have enjoyed the time they spend with their buddy. If there is anything they are worried or unhappy about, help them to call the Gig Buddies staff. Occasionally buddies just don't click – if this is the case, we're happy to re-match participants with another volunteer.

## Meet the volunteer

Make an effort to chat to the volunteer if you have a chance to meet them. Let them know that you are somebody that they can speak to about how to support their gig buddy well.

## Research

Help the person you support to research things they'd like to do with their buddy – it's good if both the volunteer and participant make suggestions for events.

## Let us know

Buddies should be in contact regularly. Please, let Gig Buddies staff know as soon as possible if there is a problem here. If the person you support hasn't heard from their gig buddy volunteer for over a month, please support them to get in contact with them or contact the Gig Buddies staff.

## Planning

When gig buddies go out to events together, the person you support may need some help with taking out the right amount of money or writing down event details in their diary.

## Tickets

Volunteers sometimes may book event tickets for their buddy and ask their buddy to pay them back. They may need your help and/or involvement in this process.

# Feedback, complaints and disputes

If the Participant wishes to give the Provider feedback, the Participant can talk to **Jo Smail** on the below contact details:

**Position: Service Coordinator**

**Phone: (02) 9419 6951**

**Email: jo@assistcom.org**

**Mail: 125 Blues Point Road, McMahons Point NSW 2060**

If the Participant is not happy with the provision of supports and wishes to make a complaint, the Participant can talk to **Carol Smail** on the below contact details:

**Position: CEO**

**Phone: (02) 9419 6951**

**Email: carol@assistcom.org**

**Mail: 125 Blues Point Road, McMahons Point NSW 2060**

If the Participant is not satisfied or does not want to talk to this person, the Participant can contact the **NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission**:

**Phone 1800 035 544**

**Operating hours Monday to Friday 9am – 6.30pm AEDT**

**Email [contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au](mailto:contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au)**

**Or complete the contact form on the NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission:**

**<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/contact-us>**



**NDIS Quality  
and Safeguards  
Commission**

**Further information**

**TTY (Text telephone) 113 667**

**Need an interpreter? <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/languages/language-interpreting-services>**

**National Relay Service: ask for 1800 035 544**

Postal address

**NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission**

**PO Box 210**

**Penrith NSW 2751**

If you would prefer to talk to an advocacy service (people who are not involved with Gig Buddies who can legally support you and give you advice), see the list below.

## **People With Disability (PWD)**

(02) 9370 3100

Free Call 1800 422 015

[pwd@pwd.org.au](mailto:pwd@pwd.org.au)

## **Intellectual Disability Rights' Service**

(02) 93265 6300

Free call 1800 665 908

[info@idrs.org.au](mailto:info@idrs.org.au)

## **Side By Side Advocacy**

[info@sidebysideadvocacy.org.au](mailto:info@sidebysideadvocacy.org.au)

(02) 9808-5500



## Sydney

Email: [info@gigbuddiessydney.org](mailto:info@gigbuddiessydney.org)

Phone: (02) 9419 6951

Mobile: 0411 252 228

[www.gigbuddiessydney.org](http://www.gigbuddiessydney.org)

### Sydney Social Media

**Facebook** [www.facebook.com/gigbuddiessydneynew](http://www.facebook.com/gigbuddiessydneynew)

**Twitter** [@gigbudsydney](http://www.twitter.com/gigbudsydney)

**Instagram** [www.instagram.com/gig-buddies-sydney](http://www.instagram.com/gig-buddies-sydney)

[@gig\\_buddies\\_sydney](https://www.instagram.com/gig_buddies_sydney)

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



## Central Coast

Email: [info@gigbuddiescentralcoast.org](mailto:info@gigbuddiescentralcoast.org)

Phone: (02) 9419 6951

Mobile: 0402 708 814

[www.gigbuddiescentralcoast.org](http://www.gigbuddiescentralcoast.org)

### Central Coast Social Media

**Facebook** [www.facebook.com/gigbuddiescentralcoast](http://www.facebook.com/gigbuddiescentralcoast)

**Twitter** [@coastgig](http://www.twitter.com/coastgig)

**Instagram** [www.instagram.com/gig\\_buddies\\_central\\_coast](http://www.instagram.com/gig_buddies_central_coast)

[@gig\\_buddies\\_central\\_coast](https://www.instagram.com/gig_buddies_central_coast)

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

Gig Buddies is an initiative of

**ACL Disability Services**

125 Blues Point Road,  
McMahons Point, NSW, 2060



I support the  
**ndis**

Gig Buddies and ACL Disability Services is a registered NDIS service provider, not-for-profit and charity  
ABN 60114099928 - NDIS Reg No 4050003928