



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday 18 February 2019

Youth Disability Advocacy Network urges Royal Commission into institutional abuse of people with disabilities

The Youth Disability Advocacy Network Inc. (YDAN) welcome today's agreement in the House of Representatives to acknowledge what people with disability and advocacy organisations have been demanding for years – the need for a Royal Commission into the abuse of people with disabilities.

This is a critical opportunity for the many thousands of people with disability to have their voices heard and obtain justice for the violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect they have experienced.

YDAN joins many other advocacy organisations and activists imploring the Government to commit to a timeline and act quickly on the matter.

“We welcome the Government's support, and also recognise the bipartisanship on this issue. This vote passing in the House of Representatives is a monumental day for people with disabilities in Australia” said YDAN Executive Chair, Mr Jesse Williams.

“We congratulate all the tireless activists that have worked tremendously hard on this issue, all the survivors of abuse who flew to Canberra and fought for this on short notice and shared their stories, and the handful of voices in Parliament, particularly Senator Jordon Steele-John, who helped set this in motion.

Our thoughts are with the victims and survivors of the abuse and their loved ones who are no doubt overwhelmed with a range of emotions at this news. The truth can now be brought to light and we can begin to see justice, and they can share their stories. The Government must, however, commit to a timeline for this Royal Commission and not delay. More lives are at stake.”

The 2015 Senate Inquiry into violence, abuse and neglect against people with disabilities in institutional and residential settings found that abuse against people with a disabilities was rife in Australia. Media reports provided evidence of persistent problems occurring in some residential settings. Stories received from parents and young people express the scope of abuse, such as being tied to chairs and locked in closets in schools.

“The abuse is still ongoing. Those of us in the disability community know this and also know that for change, action must be taken. I invite anyone who cares about justice and human rights to place pressure on the Federal Government to call the Royal Commission now, and ensure that it is broad and does not limit itself to only a



few settings. Call Prime Minister Scott Morrison's office, write to your local representative – don't let them put this on the back burner"

ABOUT THE YOUTH DISABILITY ADVOCACY NETWORK:

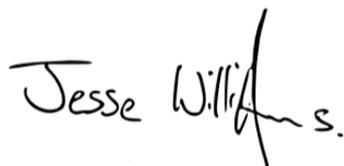
The Youth Disability Advocacy Network Inc. (YDAN) was first established in 2015 as the peak body for young people with disabilities in Western Australia, with the hopes of providing a forgotten, ignored and underrepresented demographic of the disability sector in WA with the opportunity to be included and consulted.

We hope to encourage young people with disabilities in Western Australia to feel that their opinions are not only important, but wanted and will be listened to when policies are being developed that target their demographic.

Our purpose is to promote and advance the human rights and freedoms of young people with disabilities. We strive to be the leading voice and body of young people with disabilities in Western Australia, ensuring they are respected, valued, and listened to in all aspects of life. We hope to empower young people and create a future that is just, and free from discrimination.

More information about the work of the Youth Disability Advocacy Network, head to our website: www.ydan.com.au

For all media enquiries please contact the Executive Chair using details below.



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"Dedicated young people advocating for the rights and inclusion of all youth living with disabilities in WA"

