Living the Life I Want: A guide to help with planning

What is it?

Living the Life I Want: A guide to help with planning to assist people with intellectual disability and complex support needs and their supporters, to set goals and make plans. The term ‘complex support needs’ captures the multiple interlocking experiences and factors that span disability, health, behavioural and social issues over the life course. ‘Complexity’ is a product of the individual life situations and the failure of support structures to respond appropriately over time.

Who is it for?

The guide is intended for use by a person with intellectual disability and complex support needs. The guide was developed in response to recognition that people with complex support needs are likely to require a planning guide that provides step-by-step, easy read, and visual content. The guide is also intended for use by a supporter working with a person with intellectual disability and complex support needs. A supporter may be a family member, friend, or worker. The Supporters Section provides more detail and examples about how to work through the guide with the person.

What is in it?

The guide uses Easy Read text and images to explain the process of goal setting and plan making.

In the guide the planning process is divided into four stages:

Stage 1: Getting to know me
Stage 2: Thinking about my goals
Stage 3: Making it happen
Stage 4: Doing it, Thinking about it, Changing it

At each stage, there is a general statement describing the stage, a worked example of Layla, and a fold out worksheet where the person can write and draw (on a body outline) their own goals and plans.
Stage 3: Making It Happen uses a ‘Head, Hands, Heart’ frame to unpack the complexity involved in thinking, doing and feeling to set goals and make plans.

Using this frame encourages the person (and their supporter) to recognise potential barriers and identify solutions.

How can I get it?

The Living the Life I Want planning guide can be downloaded at: arts.unsw.edu.au/research/intellectual-disability-behaviour-support-program

Contact idbs@unsw.edu.au for more information.