

# Making his dreams a reality – Jono's story

**Jono's journey to SDA has taught him you have to fight not only for what you require but also for what you deserve.**

## **Tell us about yourself.**

I'm a 31-year-old man who has Cerebral Palsy (CP). I get around in a wheelchair and communicate with a tablet. I am living the life I always dreamt of because I took control and made things happen!

My pastimes include playing poker, computer games, PlayStation 4 and chess. I love to watch sports, particularly ice hockey. "Go, Melbourne Mustangs!" I've travelled both interstate and overseas. As soon as borders are open I am heading to South America.

I am passionate about showing the world that people with disability live a regular life.



## **Can you describe your housing journey?**

As a young adult I had dreams like most people – to work, to travel and to have my own home. Coming into adulthood, I began feeling cramped living with my family and I needed my privacy, as well as a space that felt like my own.

One day in 2015 my boss asked me if I was interested in moving out of home. He told me about 6 specialist units that were being built in Frankston. I drove by the site to check it out and discovered that they were being built with some home automation features. I knew it was the right fit for me. Immediately, I began harassing the Department of Human Services with weekly emails pleading with them to select me for a unit.

Around 8 months later, I was accepted for one of those units and moved in April 2016. I was on cloud 9, my journey of living independently was about to begin. It was an exciting, yet scary experience. I went from receiving round the clock care at home from mum, to having no idea who would support me day-to-day in this new living arrangement.

The complex was equipped with 24/7 staff support. Although there weren't allocated times for support, I could just text staff when I required assistance.

It was a great first step, but after 3 years, I was ready for my next adventure and a higher level of independence.

Once I had a clear vision of what I wanted, it was about finding the right people to help make it happen. The Summer Foundation was my first point of contact. I spoke to them about my living arrangement, and what I was looking for moving forward. With my needs in mind, they shared information about apartments that were being built and talked me through the set up. I was all in.

In December 2019, I was offered an apartment on the basis that I get the right SDA funding in my NDIS plan.

“ It doesn’t stop me from being actively involved in the community. I do not, and have not, let anything stop me from reaching my goals. ”

After almost a year of organising and waiting, in November of 2020, I moved into my apartment in Docklands, Melbourne. This is the dream, and it is one of the best decisions I have made.

**How does it feel now to be living in your new SDA home?**

It’s coming up to 10 months since I moved into my new apartment in Docklands, Melbourne. The importance of living in a place that truly feels like home to you is priceless to most people. This new apartment is the first to make me feel that way.

Living in SDA has given me the opportunity to choose my own support workers for daily supports.

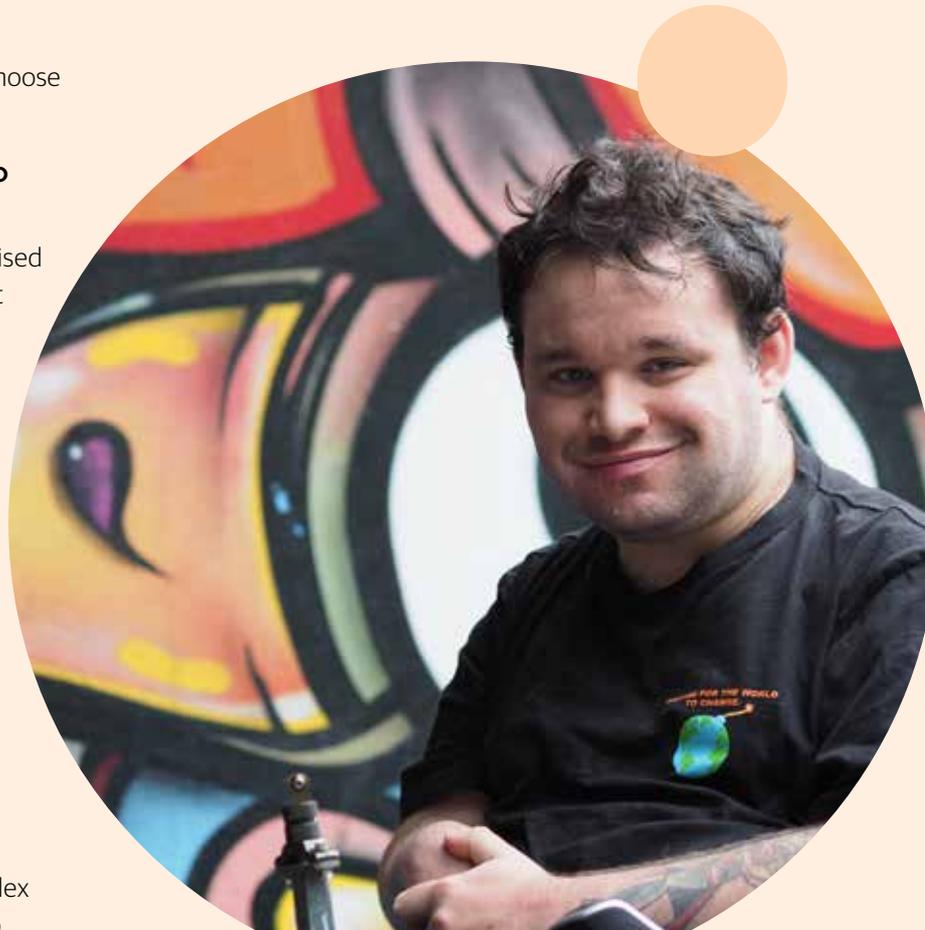
**Any advice for other people hoping to move to SDA?**

Since I moved out of my family home I have realised you must fight for what you not only require but deserve. My journey to living in SDA wasn’t without setbacks and I definitely had to fight my way here. I encourage people to ask for assistance from those around them – without having people around me who wanted to assist me to achieve my goals, I wouldn’t be here right now.

**You’re a blogger, public speaker and self advocate – how do you maintain the momentum?**

I am an avid writer and I publish weekly blogs about living with complex disability on my website. I am also a public speaker and enjoy sharing my experiences with others. I want to show the world that even though I have a complex disability I still live an ordinary life. If you want to keep up to date on my life and opinions then head to [jonathanbredin.com.au](http://jonathanbredin.com.au)

“ This is the first time in my life that I have had this level of control over who provides my support. Having this choice and control has been life changing. ”



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