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Canberra National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant Liam has turned his love of story writing and drawing cartoons into “Everyone Needs a Liam” – his own small business where he uses money raised to keep self-publishing his own work.

Not only does the 24-year-old sell his books. He also sells pins, key rings and USB sticks just to name a few with what he calls “Liam-isms” – uplifting phrases he shares with people hoping to brighten their day.

Liam likes to sell his books at markets, at his local bookshop, and at Australian comic book conventions he goes to where he can mix, share his work and talk about it with others.

Liam’s story-writing journey started when he was young. He began with simple comic books and stories. He went on to read more detailed work, before starting to write and self-publish his own books and drawing cartoon characters to feature on each front cover.

‘Writing is part of my DNA,’ he said. ‘I couldn’t read until I was about 15, but once I started, I couldn’t stop. Then I couldn’t stop writing. I love the escapism!’

In August 2022, Liam took his first big step, starting “Everyone Needs a Liam,” – the business name, a nod to his kind and thoughtful nature.

‘Mum and I came up with the name after she told her friends about the nice things I do for people,’ he said.
‘Mum’s friends would say, “Everyone needs a Liam!”’ he added smiling. ‘I like to say nice things to make people feel good. I think we need more of it in the world!’

In 2023, Liam was thrilled to get an ArtsACT grant to help further his career. It didn’t stop there. In 2024, he was over the moon to also get a Creative Australia Arts and Disability grant. He couldn’t believe his luck.

The same year Liam fronted a crowd at the Adelaide Fringe Festival to talk about his journey. He also quoted from his books in character. It led him to winning a “Week 4 Emerging Artist” award.

‘I love speaking at events, meeting people and talking to them about what I do,’ he said. ‘At the end a lot of people come up to me and say how much they enjoyed it. They want to know how they can follow their dreams too!’
‘Liam’s talks motivate others,’ mum, Jenny, said. ‘He shows them what’s possible!’

Liams NDIS funding, plus all this other support, has given him the confidence to continue to further his life, job and social skills.

It’s clear Jenny is proud of her son – who he is, how far he’s come, all the work he’s done and continues to do.
‘I could see how wonderful Liam’s stories and cartoons were, so I bought him a laptop, but all the creativity is solely Liam. I just edit his spelling and grammar!’ she said.

While Liam’s public life leaves little room for down-time, his private life is busy too. Liam also has a part-time job at an optometrist.

‘I work 5 days a week. I’m the welcome person,’ he said. It’s a part-time role where Liam’s friendly nature adds value to all who enter the store. The inclusive workplace also supports him to further his job skills so he can save and work towards supporting himself.

To get Liam to where he is today, NDIS funding has played a key role in his success. Supports, such as occupational therapy has helped him l learn the skills he needs to look at different situations and work them out confidently on his own.

Now, with another book, “Rabbit Rebellion” – a tale told through a rabbits eyes, hot off the press this emerging science fiction and fantasy author will be one to watch.

‘I’ve got 6 more stories in draft,’ Liam said proudly. ‘It will take me about 6 months to edit them before I had them over to Mum to check my grammar and spelling.’

There’s no stopping Liam’s vision and drive – he’s not just writing stories, he’s living one!

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