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Media Release

***Accept Difference* a finalist in the NSW Disability Industry Innovation Awards**

The NSW Disability Industry Innovation Awards are an initiative of the NSW Government in partnership with the National Disability Services (NDS). The awards are now in their 5th year. **Accept Difference has been nominated as a finalist for:** Leadership in the Community accessibility and inclusion. Innovation in increasing participation and improving access to the community for people with disabilities and their families. www.disabilityawards.com.au/

Early Connections, an alliance of 5 Early Childhood Intervention Services across the Mid North Coast, Manning Great Lakes, Port Macquarie/Hastings, Kempsey, Nambucca Valley and Coffs Coast initiated **Accept Difference**.

Accept Difference aim is to cause whole community attitude shift towards Inclusion. Therefore, people who manage disability and their families are not ostracised but live in a community with a strong sense of belonging.

Accept Difference launched in July 2016 and within 2 weeks our **Accept Difference** 2016 television commercial had gone viral. We then followed on with a 3 month intensive awareness campaign involving highway billboards, radio, print and TV advertorial.

The success of the **Accept Difference** campaign has been due to our positive and inclusive approach to disability. We share positive stories of inclusion and work closely with families and businesses. This approach resonates with people globally in a way that they all share a sense of belonging to the campaign.

Accept Difference currently has well over 18 million views and today we are releasing a new video titled **The Different Ways We Communicate** on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.

Accept Difference is currently working towards building partnerships and to working with Government to increase the exposure of this campaign across Australia. The NSW Disability Industry Innovation Award creates opportunity for more conversations with the right people to keep our message alive and strong. The long-term goal is to see this campaign lead by people with disabilities at the forefront.

Anyone can support today by donating to **Accept Difference** at acceptdifference.org.au. We also invite larger organisations to make contact if they want to discuss investing into the promotion of inclusion for people with disabilities and their families. To show your support for the campaign you can either donate at acceptdifference.org.au or contact us from the details on the website to have further discussions on how you can help promote inclusion for people with disability and their families.

Interviews with key spokespeople as well as families with disability are available:

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