

JORDANA MAUSFELD

A+

Research Outcome

Synthesis
S1 Insightful synthesis of knowledge, skills, and ideas to produce a resolution to the research question.
S2 Insightful and thorough substantiation of key findings relevant to the research outcome.
S3 Clear and coherent expression of ideas.
S1 Considered synthesis of knowledge, skills, and ideas to produce a resolution to the research question.
S2 Substantiation of most key findings relevant to the research outcome.
S3 Mostly clear and coherent expression of ideas.
S1 Satisfactory synthesis of knowledge, skills, and ideas to produce a resolution to the research question.
S2 Substantiation of some key findings relevant to the research outcome.
S3 Generally clear expression of ideas.
S1 Basic use of information and ideas to produce a resolution to the research question.
S2 Basic explanation of ideas related to the research outcome.
S3 Basic expression of ideas.
S1 Attempted use of an idea to produce a resolution to the research question.
S2 Limited explanation of an idea or an aspect of the research outcome.
S3 Attempted expression of ideas.

This was outstanding work!
Your synthesis of your research was very thorough & insightful. Your substantiation of all your findings is perhaps some of the best I've seen. Well done on an excellent research project!

Introduction

The relationship between a Guide Dog owner and their dog is fascinating. Owning a Guide Dog produces mostly positive outcomes for the owner, which is unsurprising given the well-known, beneficial nature of interaction between humans and dogs. The research conducted was focussed on visually impaired Australian citizens who are Guide Dog owners. This report identifies the social, psychological and practical impacts of owning a Guide Dog, from a range of primary and secondary sources.

The purpose of this research was to explore an area of disadvantage in society and gain a developed empathy for people in this situation. This report may also serve a purpose in providing information for those considering applying for a Guide Dog.

Key findings are presented in three parts to address the question – namely, social impacts, psychological impacts and practical impacts.

How does owning a Guide Dog impact people with vision impairment in Australia socially?

Social impacts were mostly seen to be of a positive nature, as revealed in the following;

Less insecurity

Progressing from insecurity to confidence is a large benefit of owning a Guide Dog,¹⁻²⁻³⁻⁴⁻⁵ improving social experiences greatly.⁶⁻⁷⁻⁸⁻⁹ For people with vision impairments, there are always thoughts of looking and being different to everyone else,¹⁰⁻¹¹ and this brings feelings of insecurity concerning their social standing.¹²⁻¹³ In social situations, however, the Guide Dog “gets the attention”¹⁴, and the focus of strangers is on the dog.¹⁵⁻¹⁶ This diverted attention allows for a more ‘normal’ interaction

¹ Branson, V. and Rutt, W., 1982, *Lead with a watchful eye*, Adelaide, Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Australia, p.26

² Audible, 2016, *Come Let Me Guide You*, <http://www.audible.com.au/pd/Biographies-Memoirs/Come-Let-Me-Guide-You-Audiobook/B017RYU5X1>, accessed 23/03/16

³ State of Victoria, 2012, *Vision loss - living with a guide dog*, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-living-with-a-guide-dog>, accessed 15/02/2016

⁴ The Maitland Mercury, 2015, *Thornton mum relies on her guide dog*, <http://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/3262215/thornton-mum-relies-on-her-guide-dog/>, accessed 05/05/16

⁵ Merial Australia Pty Ltd, 2010, *The Extraordinary Magic Of A Guide Dog Partnership*, <http://www.seekingmedia.com.au/news.php?newsid=1165>, accessed 16/04/16

⁶ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

⁷ Brace, M., 2010, *One Man and His Guide Dog*, <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/one-man-and-his-guide-dog/id388942668?mt=2>, accessed 10/05/16

⁸ Lane, G., 2014, *There's More to a Dog Guide than Meets the Eye*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, p.63,96

⁹ Lifestyle Channel, 2016, *Me And My Guide Dog*, <http://www.lifestyle.com.au/tv/me-and-my-guide-dog/>, accessed 17/05/16

¹⁰ Richards, L., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Newcastle, 01/06/16

¹¹ Guide Dogs SA/NT, 2016, *Alisha's Story*, <https://www.guidedogs.org.au/campaigns>, accessed 25/02/16

¹² Sapp, W., 2003, *Effective Education for Learners with Exceptionalities*, Europe, Emerald Group Publishing, Ltd., pp. 259

¹³ Muldoon, C., 2000, *Do Guide Dogs enhance feelings of social competence and social acceptance in Guide Dog users*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, pp.69-70

¹⁴ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

¹⁵ State of Victoria, 2012, *Vision loss - living with a guide dog*, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-living-with-a-guide-dog>, accessed 15/02/2016

¹⁶ Muldoon, C., 2000, *Do Guide Dogs enhance feelings of social competence and social acceptance in Guide Dog users*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, p.80

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with others,¹⁷ including feelings of acceptance¹⁸⁻¹⁹ and being able to meet and converse with new people.^{20,21}

S1
A Judd.

Increased participation

Feeling different is a major negative voiced by those with vision impairments,²²⁻²³ damaging their social interaction. As discussed in a recent Guide Dogs Australia newsletter, “long periods of loneliness or social isolation can have a negative impact on your physical, mental and social health.”²⁴ Laura Richards, who has a vision impairment and is awaiting a Guide Dog says she “often [feels] different”, especially when she is in very normal social environments.²⁵ Social situations then become less enjoyable and more avoided.^{26,27,28} However, these feelings of isolation within social situations are improved with a Guide Dog.²⁹⁻³⁰ Many Guide Dog owners express “increased feelings of acceptance and participation when [they are] with [their] guide dog”.³¹ Peter Green, a Guide Dog owner, says this is because “a lot of questions are asked about how they’re trained and what it was like without a Guide Dog and... what it is like now”.³² Having these conversation points, encouraged by the presence of a Guide Dog, improves the quality and quantity of social interaction.³³ This was reinforced by the willingness of Peter to meet and be interviewed.³⁴

✓ S2
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Meeting new people and conversation

The opportunity to meet new people is improved greatly by the perceived approachability of a Guide Dog owner³⁵ (compared to someone with a cane)^{36-37,38}, and the conversation points that Guide

¹⁷ Brace, M., 2010, *One Man and His Guide Dog*, <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/one-man-and-his-guide-dog/id388942668?mt=2>, accessed 10/05/16

¹⁸ Muldoon, C., 2000, *Do Guide Dogs enhance feelings of social competence and social acceptance in Guide Dog users*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, p.84

¹⁹ Lane, G., 2014, *There's More to a Dog Guide than Meets the Eye*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, p.63

²⁰ State of Victoria, 2012, *Vision loss - living with a guide dog*, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-living-with-a-guide-dog>, accessed 15/02/2016

²¹ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

²² Guide Dogs SA/NT, 2016, *Client Stories Blog*, <https://www.guidedogs.org.au/client-stories-blog>, accessed 10/02/16

²³ Lifestyle Channel, 2016, *Me And My Guide Dog*, <http://www.lifestyle.com.au/tv/me-and-my-guide-dog/>, accessed 17/05/16

²⁴ Guide Dogs Australia, 2015, *My Insight*, <https://www.guidedogs.org.au/my-insight>, accessed 02/02/16

²⁵ Richards, L., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Newcastle, 01/06/16

²⁶ Muldoon, C., 2000, *Do Guide Dogs enhance feelings of social competence and social acceptance in Guide Dog users*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, pp.69,70,79

²⁷ Richards, L., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Newcastle, 01/06/16

²⁸ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

²⁹ The Maitland Mercury, 2015, *Thornton mum relies on her guide dog*, <http://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/3262215/thornton-mum-relies-on-her-guide-dog/>, accessed 05/05/16

³⁰ Lane, G., 2014, *There's More to a Dog Guide than Meets the Eye*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, p.63

³¹ Muldoon, C., 2000, *Do Guide Dogs enhance feelings of social competence and social acceptance in Guide Dog users*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, p.74

³² Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Noarlunga, 07/06/16

³³ Brace, M., 2010, *One Man and His Guide Dog*, <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/one-man-and-his-guide-dog/id388942668?mt=2>, accessed 10/05/16

³⁴ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Noarlunga, 07/06/16

³⁵ Brace, M., 2010, *One Man and His Guide Dog*, <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/one-man-and-his-guide-dog/id388942668?mt=2>, accessed 10/05/16

³⁶ Vision 2020 Australia, 2016, *Britta - A day in the life of a Guide Dog*, <http://www.vision2020australia.org.au/blog/2012-04-23/britta-a-day-in-the-life-of-a-guide-dog>, accessed 23/02/16

³⁷ Guide Dogs SA/NT, 2016, *Alisha's Story*, <https://www.guidedogs.org.au/campaigns>, accessed 25/02/16

³⁸ Turner, G., 2015, *Dog or stick*, <http://www.divine.vic.gov.au/access/assistive-technologies/dog-or-stick>, accessed 27/04/16

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Dogs provide.³⁹⁻⁴⁰ Laura Richards, who currently uses a cane, says it “often scares people away”⁴¹⁻⁴², making people more aware of her visual impairment, but making her less approachable. Charlotte Germaine, a recent Guide Dog owner, says she strongly disliked her cane and still does, and the experiences that come from owning a Guide Dog are much more rewarding.⁴³⁻⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵⁴⁶ Peter Green says that when he first moved to his new home in Victor Harbor, many people “just stopped and... asked how she was and how old she was”,⁴⁷ showing that his Guide Dog, Heidi, provided a good conversation starter and made him very approachable. S1
✓ Added

This approachability can be a negative, however, as people can interrupt the visually impaired person to talk about the dog or ask to pat them.⁴⁸⁻⁴⁹⁻⁵⁰ Charlotte Germaine observed, “I’m concentrating on a task, then all of a sudden... someone [stops] me and [asks] a lot of questions”.⁵¹

Another negative that arises from social interaction is that the dogs can get quite excitable when people are paying a lot of attention to them.⁵²⁻⁵³ Peter Green says in some social situations his dog, Heidi, “gets very excitable, like a lot of dogs do”.⁵⁴ This is a common trait of dogs,⁵⁵ so it is not a problem that can’t be solved, and after becoming more comfortable with Heidi, Peter said that he is “more at ease” with her misbehavior now.⁵⁶ S3
Added.

How does owning a Guide Dog impact people with vision impairment in Australia psychologically?

Psychological impacts on the life of a person with a visual impairment are often negative. Owning a Guide Dog can improve some of these, as elaborated below;

³⁹ State of Victoria, 2012, *Vision loss - living with a guide dog*, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-living-with-a-guide-dog>, accessed 15/02/2016

⁴⁰ Vision Australia, 2016, *FAQ about owning a seeing eye dog*, <http://seda.visionaustralia.org/how-we-help/faq-about-owning-a-seeing-eye-dog>, accessed 30/03/16

⁴¹ Richards, L., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Newcastle, 01/06/16

⁴² Tomlinson, L., 2013, *Freya’s more than a guide dog*, <http://54.79.2.48/weekend-courier/news/freyas-more-than-a-guide-dog/>, accessed 09/05/16

⁴³ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

⁴⁴ Turner, G., 2015, *Dog or stick*, <http://www.divine.vic.gov.au/access/assistive-technologies/dog-or-stick>, accessed 27/04/16

⁴⁵ Lane, G., 2014, *There’s More to a Dog Guide than Meets the Eye*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, pp.84,88

⁴⁶ Tomlinson, L., 2013, *Freya’s more than a guide dog*, <http://54.79.2.48/weekend-courier/news/freyas-more-than-a-guide-dog/>, accessed 09/05/16

⁴⁷ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Noarlunga, 07/06/16

⁴⁸ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

⁴⁹ Life Unscripted, 2015, *ALL Blind People should Have a Guide Dog*, <https://blindbeader.wordpress.com/2015/03/20/all-blind-people-should-have-a-guide-dog/>, accessed 04/02/16

⁵⁰ Vision 2020 Australia, 2016, *Britta - A day in the life of a Guide Dog*, <http://www.vision2020australia.org.au/blog/2012-04-23/britta-a-day-in-the-life-of-a-guide-dog>, accessed 23/02/16

⁵¹ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

⁵² Life Unscripted, 2015, *ALL Blind People should Have a Guide Dog*, <https://blindbeader.wordpress.com/2015/03/20/all-blind-people-should-have-a-guide-dog/>, accessed 04/02/16

⁵³ Vision 2020 Australia, 2016, *Britta - A day in the life of a Guide Dog*, <http://www.vision2020australia.org.au/blog/2012-04-23/britta-a-day-in-the-life-of-a-guide-dog>, accessed 23/02/16

⁵⁴ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Noarlunga, 07/06/16

⁵⁵ Life Unscripted, 2015, *ALL Blind People should Have a Guide Dog*, <https://blindbeader.wordpress.com/2015/03/20/all-blind-people-should-have-a-guide-dog/>, accessed 04/02/16

⁵⁶ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Noarlunga, 07/06/16

Confidence

Confidence is significantly improved by knowing what the surroundings are like, and having the attention directed away from the visually impaired person.^{57-58,59,60} Those with vision impairments are often self-conscious of looking and being different to everyone else.⁶¹⁻⁶² With a Guide Dog, these feelings diminish, and confidence increases.^{63-64,65-66} An example of this was seen in the questionnaire with Charlotte Germaine.⁶⁷ Since Charlotte received her Guide Dog, Henry, she has “done numerous talks to schools, kindergartens (see Figure 1), community groups, churches and more to raise awareness about the RSB & Guide Dogs... things I wouldn’t have done before I had Henry.”⁶⁸



Figure 1⁶⁹: Charlotte addresses Minlaton Kindergarten with Henry, her Guide Dog

Independence

Reliance on other people is a large part of having a visual impairment.⁷⁰⁻⁷¹ Without a Guide Dog, Laura Richards “VERY often [has] to depend on others for many things... I have to ask to link arms with people to be led around”.⁷² With a Guide Dog, on the other hand, independence and freedom is

⁵⁷ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Noarlunga, 07/06/16

⁵⁸ Vision 2020 Australia, 2016, *Britta - A day in the life of a Guide Dog*, <http://www.vision2020australia.org.au/blog/2012-04-23/britta-a-day-in-the-life-of-a-guide-dog>, accessed 23/02/16

⁵⁹ Lane, G., 2014, *There's More to a Dog Guide than Meets the Eye*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, p.63,96

⁶⁰ Puppy Walk for Guide Dogs, 2016, *Hester A Guide Dog Puppy's Tale*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6DZuE8H8sc>, accessed 07/03/16

⁶¹ Guide Dogs SA/NT, 2016, *Client Stories Blog*, <https://www.guidedogs.org.au/client-stories-blog>, accessed 10/02/16

⁶² Lifestyle Channel, 2016, *Me And My Guide Dog*, <http://www.lifestyle.com.au/tv/me-and-my-guide-dog/>, accessed 17/05/16

⁶³ Honsch, J.D., 2013, *A Helping Paw: Guide Dogs Provide the Blind with Vision, Independence, and Love*, <http://www.workingdogs.com/vcguidedog.htm>, accessed 15/02/16

⁶⁴ The Maitland Mercury, 2015, *Thornton mum relies on her guide dog*, <http://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/3262215/thornton-mum-relies-on-her-guide-dog/>, accessed 05/05/16

⁶⁵ Merial Australia Pty Ltd, 2010, *The Extraordinary Magic Of A Guide Dog Partnership*, <http://www.seekingmedia.com.au/news.php?newsid=1165>, accessed 16/04/16

⁶⁶ Lifestyle Channel, 2016, *Me And My Guide Dog*, <http://www.lifestyle.com.au/tv/me-and-my-guide-dog/>, accessed 17/05/16

⁶⁷ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

⁶⁸ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

⁶⁹ Yorke Peninsula Country Times, 2015, *Minlaton kindy raising money for RSB*, <http://www.ypct.com.au/index.php/component/k2/item/8729-minlaton-kindy-raising-money-for-rsb>, accessed 27/06/16

⁷⁰ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Noarlunga, 07/06/16

⁷¹ Walhorf, R., 1996, *Blindness-What It Means In The Mind Of A Blind Child*, <https://nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/fr/fr15/issue2/f150205.html>, accessed 27/06/16

⁷² Richards, L., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Newcastle, 01/06/16

increased.⁷³⁻⁷⁴⁻⁷⁵⁻⁷⁶⁻⁷⁷⁻⁷⁸ Before a Guide Dog, Peter Green, a blind man from birth, “had to rely on [his] daughter and [his] wife to get to places”.⁷⁹ He says without Heidi, life was “a real maze”.⁸⁰ But now he is “able to get out on [his] own and go places”.⁸¹ Dr. Jody Sandler, the Director of Veterinary Services for Guiding Eyes for the Blind, says that “the first thing that someone gets from a guide dog is mobility and independence”.⁸²⁻⁸³ This initial (and continued)⁸⁴⁻⁸⁵ increase of independence greatly improves psychological wellbeing.⁸⁶⁻⁸⁷

S3
A. Sandler

Acceptance

Understanding the experiences and life of those with a vision impairment is hard for those with no experience of people in this situation.⁸⁸ Charlotte Germaine feels that “some people walk on eggshells around me” when Henry, her Guide Dog, is with her.⁸⁹ This may come from a lack of understanding and education, or from the fact that, as Charlotte says, “some people aren’t dog lovers”.⁹⁰

Reactions of people, especially restaurant owners and taxi drivers,⁹¹⁻⁹² can make having a Guide Dog a negative psychological experience. Discrimination against Guide Dog owners is a major problem in Australia,⁹³⁻⁹⁴⁻⁹⁵ and it mostly comes from the public’s lack of knowledge on the topic.⁹⁶ Guide Dogs are “highly trained to open up the world for people who are blind or vision impaired, not close it

⁷³ Branson, V. and Rutt, W., 1982, *Lead with a watchful eye*, Adelaide, Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Australia, pp.28,31

⁷⁴ Muldoon, C., 2000, *Do Guide Dogs enhance feelings of social competence and social acceptance in Guide Dog users*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, pp.70,84,94

⁷⁵ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

⁷⁶ Devenish-Mearns, A., 2014, *Learning new tricks with a guide dog*, <http://www.abc.net.au/rampup/articles/2014/01/17/3922987.htm>, accessed 13/02/16

⁷⁷ State of Victoria, 2012, *Vision loss - living with a guide dog*, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-living-with-a-guide-dog>, accessed 15/02/2016

⁷⁸ The Maitland Mercury, 2015, *Thornton mum relies on her guide dog*, <http://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/3262215/thornton-mum-relies-on-her-guide-dog/>, accessed 05/05/16

⁷⁹ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

⁸⁰ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

⁸¹ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

⁸² Honsch, J.D., 2013, *A Helping Paw: Guide Dogs Provide the Blind with Vision, Independence, and Love*, <http://www.workingdogs.com/vcguidedog.htm>, accessed 15/02/16

⁸³ Turner, G., 2015, *Dog or stick*, <http://www.divine.vic.gov.au/access/assistive-technologies/dog-or-stick>, accessed 27/04/16

⁸⁴ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

⁸⁵ Honsch, J.D., 2013, *A Helping Paw: Guide Dogs Provide the Blind with Vision, Independence, and Love*, <http://www.workingdogs.com/vcguidedog.htm>, accessed 15/02/16

⁸⁶ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

⁸⁷ Devenish-Mearns, A., 2014, *Learning new tricks with a guide dog*, <http://www.abc.net.au/rampup/articles/2014/01/17/3922987.htm>, accessed 13/02/16

⁸⁸ Muldoon, C., 2000, *Do Guide Dogs enhance feelings of social competence and social acceptance in Guide Dog users*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, pp.75-76

⁸⁹ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

⁹⁰ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

⁹¹ Martin, K., 2015, *Guide Dogs: Access All Areas | Puppy Tales*, <http://puppytales.com.au/2015/04/29/guide-dogs-access-all-areas/>, accessed 27/04/16

⁹² Colley, C., 2015, *Guide dog users are still discriminated against at cafes and restaurants*, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/guide-dog-users-are-still-discriminated-against-at-cafes-and-restaurants-20150428-1mv0g3.html>, accessed 28/03/16

⁹³ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

⁹⁴ Lane, G., 2014, *There's More to a Dog Guide than Meets the Eye*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, pp.45,74

⁹⁵ Colley, C., 2015, *Guide dog users are still discriminated against at cafes and restaurants*, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/guide-dog-users-are-still-discriminated-against-at-cafes-and-restaurants-20150428-1mv0g3.html>, accessed 28/03/16

⁹⁶ Guide Dogs Australia, 2015, *It's time to end Guide Dog discrimination*, <https://guidedogs.com.au/content/upload/files/survey-findings.pdf>, accessed 05/02/16

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down⁹⁷⁻⁹⁸ and this is effectively what discrimination does.⁹⁹ Discrimination causes people with vision impairments to feel constrained by their condition¹⁰⁰⁻¹⁰¹ and it often impedes them from doing something they need to do.¹⁰²⁻¹⁰³ Cases of discrimination can be reported to the Police,¹⁰⁴ and they are required to respond to those with vision impairments (see Figure 2).¹⁰⁵⁻¹⁰⁶⁻¹⁰⁷⁻¹⁰⁸ Campaigns are also being organised throughout Australia to educate people on the laws around Guide Dog ownership to lessen the discrimination.¹⁰⁹⁻¹¹⁰⁻¹¹¹⁻¹¹²

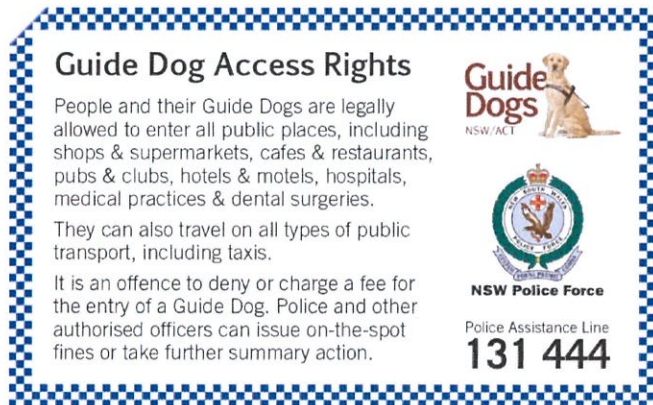


Figure 2¹¹³: A Guide Dogs Access Rights' Card

⁹⁷ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

⁹⁸ Earth Education, 2016, *Guide Dogs Are Truly Amazing*. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zb9l63Nm9zU>, accessed 24/02/16

⁹⁹ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

¹⁰⁰ Guide Dogs Australia, 2015, *It's time to end Guide Dog discrimination*, <https://guidedogs.com.au/content/upload/files/survey-findings.pdf>, accessed 05/02/16

¹⁰¹ Colley, C, 2015, *Guide dog users are still discriminated against at cafes and restaurants*, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/guide-dog-users-are-still-discriminated-against-at-cafes-and-restaurants-20150428-1mv0g3.html>, accessed 28/03/16

¹⁰² Mamamia, 2015, *On International Guide Dog Day, let's put an end to Guide Dog discrimination*, <http://www.mamamia.com.au/international-guide-dog-day/>, accessed 22/03/16

¹⁰³ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

¹⁰⁴ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

¹⁰⁵ Guide Dogs Australia, 2015, *It's time to end Guide Dog discrimination*, <https://guidedogs.com.au/content/upload/files/survey-findings.pdf>, accessed 05/02/16

¹⁰⁶ Mamamia, 2015, *On International Guide Dog Day, let's put an end to Guide Dog discrimination*, <http://www.mamamia.com.au/international-guide-dog-day/>, accessed 22/03/16

¹⁰⁷ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

¹⁰⁸ Mamamia, 2015, *On International Guide Dog Day, let's put an end to Guide Dog discrimination*, <http://www.mamamia.com.au/international-guide-dog-day/>, accessed 22/03/16

¹⁰⁹ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

¹¹⁰ Guide Dogs Australia, 2015, *It's time to end Guide Dog discrimination*, <https://guidedogs.com.au/content/upload/files/survey-findings.pdf>, accessed 05/02/16

¹¹¹ Mamamia, 2015, *On International Guide Dog Day, let's put an end to Guide Dog discrimination*, <http://www.mamamia.com.au/international-guide-dog-day/>, accessed 22/03/16

¹¹² WehbeGroup, 2016, *Local advocates for greater awareness about Guide dog access laws*, <http://eltelegraphweekend.com.au/local-advocates-for-greater-awareness-about-guide-dog-access-laws/>, accessed 23/03/16

¹¹³ Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, 2015, *International Guide Dog Day*, <http://www.guidedogs.com.au/news-and-events/news/29-04-2015/international-guide-dog-day>, accessed 27/06/16

Despite instances of Guide Dog Discrimination, owning a Guide Dog can still improve feelings of acceptance.^{114_115_116_117_118} A key point that Peter Green made was that he feels more accepted when people approach him with interest in his dog.¹¹⁹ Laura Richards has noticed that people with canes are treated much differently to those with Guide Dogs, as canes seem to make them a lot less approachable.^{120_121} Laura says she often feels isolated with her cane, and would feel “more normal” with a Guide Dog.¹²² Another Guide Dog owner noted feelings of acceptance and stated “It’s so different with a dog. People are fascinated by Guide Dogs and they don’t even ask me about my vision impairment”.¹²³

Companionship

Guide Dogs improve negative psychological situations the way many dogs do;¹²⁴ through companionship.^{125_126_127_128_129_130_131} A common trait of Henry, Charlotte Germaine’s Guide Dog, is to nudge her to make sure she is okay, or to tell her he has completed a command.¹³² This is part of

¹¹⁴ The Maitland Mercury, 2015, *Thornton mum relies on her guide dog*, <http://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/3262215/thornton-mum-relies-on-her-guide-dog/>, accessed 05/05/16

¹¹⁵ Guide Dogs SA, 2015, *Personalised Luxury Pet Hotel Lands at Adelaide Airport*, <http://www.adelaideairport.com.au/corporate/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guide-Dogs-SA-NT-Personalised-luxury-pet-hotel-lands-at-Adelaide-Airport.pdf>, accessed 15/02/16

¹¹⁶ Lawrenson, D., 2001, *Guide Dogs: From Puppies to Partners*, Crows Nest, Allen & Unwin, p.32

¹¹⁷ Lifestyle Channel, 2016, *Me And My Guide Dog*, <http://www.lifestyle.com.au/tv/me-and-my-guide-dog/>, accessed 17/05/16

¹¹⁸ Puppy Walk for Guide Dogs, 2016, *Hester A Guide Dog Puppy's Tale*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6DZuE8H8sc>, accessed 07/03/16

¹¹⁹ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

¹²⁰ Richards, L., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Newcastle, 01/06/16

¹²¹ Turner, G., 2015, *Dog or stick*, <http://www.divine.vic.gov.au/access/assistive-technologies/dog-or-stick>, accessed 27/04/16

¹²² Richards, L., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Newcastle, 01/06/16

¹²³ Guide Dogs Victoria, 2015, *Guide Dog Tales*, Victoria, Guide Dogs Victoria, p.3

¹²⁴ Audible, 2016, *Come Let Me Guide You*, <http://www.audible.com.au/pd/Biographies-Memoirs/Come-Let-Me-Guide-You-Audiobook/B017RYU5XI>, accessed 23/03/16

¹²⁵ Tomlinson, L., 2013, *Freya's more than a guide dog*, <http://54.79.2.48/weekend-courier/news/freyas-more-than-a-guide-dog/>, accessed 09/05/16

¹²⁶ Brace, M., 2010, *One Man and His Guide Dog*, <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/one-man-and-his-guide-dog/id388942668?mt=2>, accessed 10/05/16

¹²⁷ Honsch, J.D., 2013, *A Helping Paw: Guide Dogs Provide the Blind with Vision, Independence, and Love*, <http://www.workingdogs.com/vcguidedog.htm>, accessed 15/02/16

¹²⁸ The Maitland Mercury, 2015, *Thornton mum relies on her guide dog*, <http://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/3262215/thornton-mum-relies-on-her-guide-dog/>, accessed 05/05/16

¹²⁹ Lane, G., 2014, *There's More to a Dog Guide than Meets the Eye*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, pp.53,65

¹³⁰ Merial Australia Pty Ltd, 2010, *The Extraordinary Magic Of A Guide Dog Partnership*, <http://www.seekingmedia.com.au/news.php?newsid=1165>, accessed 16/04/16

¹³¹ Lifestyle Channel, 2016, *Me And My Guide Dog*, <http://www.lifestyle.com.au/tv/me-and-my-guide-dog/>, accessed 17/05/16

¹³² Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

the Guide Dogs' training,¹³³⁻¹³⁴⁻¹³⁵ creating feelings of closeness and connection.¹³⁶⁻¹³⁷⁻¹³⁸⁻¹³⁹ Complementary to this are the feelings of safety and love generated by the care received from the dogs.¹⁴⁰⁻¹⁴¹ Peter Green says his Guide Dog, Heidi, "loves the family. She loves us all", and that he "wouldn't be able to do without her"¹⁴², demonstrating the amazing love within the relationship between Guide Dog and owner.¹⁴³⁻¹⁴⁴ Charlotte Germaine says that she and Henry, her Guide Dog, had an instant connection, and following that, their bond has grown stronger and stronger.¹⁴⁵ Henry to Charlotte is a "constant companion" (see Figure 3). Wherever she goes, Henry will go with her, keeping her safe and calm.¹⁴⁶ The happiness and companionship that is brought about by owning a Guide Dog results in remarkable psychological benefits.¹⁴⁷⁻¹⁴⁸⁻¹⁴⁹⁻¹⁵⁰



Figure 3¹⁵¹: Charlotte Germaine and Guide Dog Henry

How does owning a Guide Dog impact people with vision impairment in Australia practically?

Owning a Guide Dog makes the practical aspects of life much easier as evidenced by the following;

¹³³ Brace, M., 2010, *One Man and His Guide Dog*, <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/one-man-and-his-guide-dog/id388942668?mt=2>, accessed 10/05/16

¹³⁴ NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

¹³⁵ Merial Australia Pty Ltd, 2010, *The Extraordinary Magic Of A Guide Dog Partnership*, <http://www.seekingmedia.com.au/news.php?newsid=1165>, accessed 16/04/16

¹³⁶ MacLennan, L., 2008, *Dog Days*, <http://www.abc.net.au/stateline/sa/content/2006/s2223076.htm>, accessed 29/04/16

¹³⁷ Tomlinson, L., 2013, *Freya's more than a guide dog*, <http://54.79.2.48/weekend-courier/news/freyas-more-than-a-guide-dog/>, accessed 09/05/16

¹³⁸ Merial Australia Pty Ltd, 2010, *The Extraordinary Magic Of A Guide Dog Partnership*, <http://www.seekingmedia.com.au/news.php?newsid=1165>, accessed 16/04/16

¹³⁹ Puppy Walk for Guide Dogs, 2016, *Hester A Guide Dog Puppy's Tale*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6DZuE8H8sc>, accessed 07/03/16

¹⁴⁰ Brace, M., 2010, *One Man and His Guide Dog*, <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/one-man-and-his-guide-dog/id388942668?mt=2>, accessed 10/05/16

¹⁴¹ Honsch, J.D., 2013, *A Helping Paw: Guide Dogs Provide the Blind with Vision, Independence, and Love*, <http://www.workingdogs.com/vcguidedog.htm>, accessed 15/02/16

¹⁴² Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

¹⁴³ The Maitland Mercury, 2015, *Thornton mum relies on her guide dog*, <http://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/3262215/thornton-mum-relies-on-her-guide-dog/>, accessed 05/05/16

¹⁴⁴ Lawrenson, D., 2001, *Guide Dogs: From Puppies to Partners*, Crows Nest, Allen & Unwin, p.32

¹⁴⁵ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

¹⁴⁶ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

¹⁴⁷ Audible, 2016, *Come Let Me Guide You*, <http://www.audible.com.au/pd/Biographies-Memoirs/Come-Let-Me-Guide-You-Audiobook/B017RYU5XI>, accessed 23/03/16

¹⁴⁸ Honsch, J.D., 2013, *A Helping Paw: Guide Dogs Provide the Blind with Vision, Independence, and Love*, <http://www.workingdogs.com/vcguidedog.htm>, accessed 15/02/16

¹⁴⁹ Tomlinson, L., 2013, *Freya's more than a guide dog*, <http://54.79.2.48/weekend-courier/news/freyas-more-than-a-guide-dog/>, accessed 09/05/16

¹⁵⁰ Lifestyle Channel, 2016, *Me And My Guide Dog*, <http://www.lifestyle.com.au/tv/me-and-my-guide-dog/>, accessed 17/05/16

¹⁵¹ Henry RSB Guide Dog, 2015, *Charlotte and Henry*,

<https://www.facebook.com/henryrsbgd/photos/a.849685101767582.1073741845.574514772617951/849685121767580/?type=3&theater>, accessed 27/06/16

Navigation assist

As a person with a vision impairment, simple practical navigation is very hard.¹⁵² There are issues with reaching bus-stops, walking through public places (e.g. shopping centres, parks, etc.), and transport is made more difficult.^{153,154} However, Laura Richards rightly noted that a Guide Dog becomes the owner's "set of eyes".^{155,156,157} Assistance with navigation is a major part of a Guide Dog's training.^{158,159,160,161,162,163} When asked about navigation, Charlotte Germaine commented that Henry helps with movement by "navigating around objects... [stopping] at kerbs and ramps... he will find the car door, take me to certain shops... find doors, find buttons, [he] keeps me safe from walking out into traffic".^{164,165,166} Guide Dogs can also find specific locations with simple commands,^{167,168,169,170} and memorise quickly.¹⁷¹

¹⁵² Gliddon, G., 2015, *Guide dog helps David Simmonds gain new perspective on life*, <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/leader/inner-east/guide-dog-helps-david-simmonds-gain-new-perspective-on-life/news-story/0afb3f671eabedd460824ebc8dbb65fc>, accessed 15/02/16

¹⁵³ Richards, L., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Newcastle, 01/06/16

¹⁵⁴ State of Victoria, 2012, *Vision loss - living with a guide dog*, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-living-with-a-guide-dog>, accessed 15/02/2016

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¹⁵⁹ MacLennan, L., 2008, *Dog Days*, <http://www.abc.net.au/stateline/sa/content/2006/s2223076.htm>, accessed 29/04/16

¹⁶⁰ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

¹⁶¹ Vision Australia, 2016, *FAQ about owning a seeing eye dog*, <http://seda.visionaustralia.org/how-we-help/faq-about-owning-a-seeing-eye-dog>, accessed 30/03/16

¹⁶² Merial Australia Pty Ltd, 2010, *The Extraordinary Magic Of A Guide Dog Partnership*, <http://www.seekingmedia.com.au/news.php?newsid=1165>, accessed 16/04/16

¹⁶³ Earth Education, 2016, *Guide Dogs Are Truly Amazing*, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zb9l63Nm9zU>, accessed 24/02/16

¹⁶⁴ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

¹⁶⁵ Martin, K., 2015, *Guide Dogs: Access All Areas | Puppy Tales*, <http://puppytales.com.au/2015/04/29/guide-dogs-access-all-areas/>, accessed 27/04/16

¹⁶⁶ Lifestyle Channel, 2016, *Me And My Guide Dog*, <http://www.lifestyle.com.au/tv/me-and-my-guide-dog/>, accessed 17/05/16

¹⁶⁷ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

¹⁶⁸ State of Victoria, 2012, *Vision loss - living with a guide dog*, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-living-with-a-guide-dog>, accessed 15/02/2016

¹⁶⁹ Martin, K., 2015, *Guide Dogs: Access All Areas | Puppy Tales*, <http://puppytales.com.au/2015/04/29/guide-dogs-access-all-areas/>, accessed 27/04/16

¹⁷⁰ Vision Australia, 2016, *FAQ about owning a seeing eye dog*, <http://seda.visionaustralia.org/how-we-help/faq-about-owning-a-seeing-eye-dog>, accessed 30/03/16

¹⁷¹ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

Safety

All Guide Dogs are trained to disobey commands if they spot hazards their companion has not heard,^{172_173_174_175_176} such as an approaching car^{177_178_179_180} or, in the following case, a missing elevator. Elsie Mead, the first Australian to obtain a Guide Dog,¹⁸¹ was in a building one day when she went to leave via the elevator. As she went to step in, her Guide Dog, Beau, would not allow her to enter. This continued for some time. When Elsie went to ask someone for help, the person exclaimed “the door is open but there’s no lift!” Beau had saved Elsie’s life.¹⁸² In an analysis of Guide Dog owners, the “subjects interviewed described feelings of comfort, security, safety... with their guide dog present.”^{183_184_185_186}

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General practical help

There are many challenges in the life of those with vision impairments that may cause them to apply for a Guide Dog. Challenges can be with children, moving house, encountering new areas, low-maintained footpaths, and changing jobs.^{187_188} Compared to a cane, Guide Dogs provide major benefits in general practical help.^{189_190_191_192} This includes undertakings such as picking up things that were dropped on the ground,^{193_194} or locating and transporting certain important objects (such as a mobile phone or a piece of clothing).¹⁹⁵

¹⁷² NSW Police Force Facebook, 2015, *The Law, The Facts And The Fines That Come With Guide Dog Discrimination*, <http://www.bluemts.com.au/news/the-law-the-facts-and-the-fines-that-come-with-guide-dog-discrimination/>, accessed 31/01/16

¹⁷³ State of Victoria, 2012, *Vision loss - living with a guide dog*, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/vision-loss-living-with-a-guide-dog>, accessed 15/02/2016

¹⁷⁴ Berry, J., 2016, *Guide dog takes on life saving duties*, <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/12/01/1070127348745.html?from=storyrhs>, accessed 22/04/16

¹⁷⁵ Vision Australia, 2016, *FAQ about owning a seeing eye dog*, <http://seda.visionaustralia.org/how-we-help/faq-about-owning-a-seeing-eye-dog>, accessed 30/03/16

¹⁷⁶ Ninemsn, 2015, *Guide dog jumps in front of bus to save blind owner*, <http://www.9news.com.au/world/2015/06/10/08/42/guide-dog-jumps-in-front-of-bus-to-save-blind-owner>, accessed 03/05/16

¹⁷⁷ Brace, M., 2010, *One Man and His Guide Dog*, <https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/one-man-and-his-guide-dog/id388942668?mt=2>, accessed 10/05/16

¹⁷⁸ Berry, J., 2016, *Guide dog takes on life saving duties*, <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/12/01/1070127348745.html?from=storyrhs>, accessed 22/04/16

¹⁷⁹ Green, P., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Nourlunga, 07/06/16

¹⁸⁰ Germaine, C., 2016, Interviewed by Jordana Mansfield, Adelaide, 11/06/16

¹⁸¹ Guide Dogs WA, 2016, *About Us*, <https://www.guidedogswa.com.au/about-us/>, accessed 27/06/16

¹⁸² Branson, V. and Rutt, W., 1982, *Lead with a watchful eye*, Adelaide, Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Australia, p.124

¹⁸³ Muldoon, C., 2000, *Do Guide Dogs enhance feelings of social competence and social acceptance in Guide Dog users*, Adelaide, The Flinders University Of South Australia, p.94

¹⁸⁴ The Maitland Mercury, 2015, *Thornton mum relies on her guide dog*, <http://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/3262215/thornton-mum-relies-on-her-guide-dog/>, accessed 05/05/16

¹⁸⁵ Ninemsn, 2015, *Guide dog jumps in front of bus to save blind owner*, <http://www.9news.com.au/world/2015/06/10/08/42/guide-dog-jumps-in-front-of-bus-to-save-blind-owner>, accessed 03/05/16

¹⁸⁶ Puppy Walk for Guide Dogs, 2016, *Hester A Guide Dog Puppy's Tale*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6DZuE8H8sc>, accessed 07/03/16

¹⁸⁷ Devenish-Meares, A., 2014, *Learning new tricks with a guide dog*, <http://www.abc.net.au/rampup/articles/2014/01/17/3922987.htm>, accessed 13/02/16

¹⁸⁸ Devenish-Meares, A., 2014, *Learning new tricks with a guide dog*, <http://www.abc.net.au/rampup/articles/2014/01/17/3922987.htm>, accessed 13/02/16

¹⁸⁹ MacLennan, L., 2008, *Dog Days*, <http://www.abc.net.au/stateline/sa/content/2006/s2223076.htm>, accessed 29/04/16

¹⁹⁰ Martin, K., 2015, *Guide Dogs: Access All Areas | Puppy Tales*, <http://puppytales.com.au/2015/04/29/guide-dogs-access-all-areas/>, accessed 27/04/16

¹⁹¹ Vision 2020 Australia, 2016, *Britta - A day in the life of a Guide Dog*, <http://www.vision2020australia.org.au/blog/2012-04-23/britta-a-day-in-the-life-of-a-guide-dog>, accessed 23/02/16

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Conclusion

The impacts of owning a Guide Dog are diverse. Social, psychological and practical impacts identified in this research are predominantly positive and transform the lives of the owners. In particular, the words confidence, independence and companionship are found repeatedly in many of the sources. Any negative impacts, such as discrimination issues, are largely made up for when looking at the big picture of how life is changed for the better. Research of this nature gives cause for thinking deeper about people outside our normal experience. Developing empathy for and understanding of the vision impaired helps us to appreciate the significance of the positive impacts a Guide Dog brings to their lives socially, psychologically and practically.

WORD COUNT: 1984

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Outstanding synthesis Jada!

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