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Until 18 months ago, 37 year old Cobden woman Rebecca Biddle had never cooked dinner, cleaned or paid a bill; relying entirely on her single mum, Jan, to take care of her after raising Rebecca and her brother, David, on her own.

In November 2017, Rebecca, who was born with an intellectual disability and epilepsy, was given a new lease on life after entering into the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which funded a support worker to teach Rebecca the skills that would eventually enable her to move out of home.

Rebecca said the best part of her new life under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is that it has meant her mum can take a well-deserved break.

“I didn’t have any support at all before. My mum has been supporting me on her own my whole life,” Rebecca said.

“Our lives have definitely changed for the better. Now I have the support, it means my mum can finally rest up and not have to stress about me which takes a load off her back,” Rebecca said.

Rebecca said her main challenge prior to joining the NDIS was not knowing how to cook.

“I had never cooked before. Now I cook dinner for mum and I once a week,” Rebecca said.

Rebecca is a passionate disability advocate, and works part-time at the Self Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU) in Melbourne running their Facebook page and helping to arrange self-advocacy meetings and conferences.

She is also a member of numerous other advocacy groups including the Victoria Self Advocacy Network, the All Abilities Self Advocacy Group South West Victoria and the NDIS working group, and sings in the All Abilities Choir.

Last year as part of the Australian self-advocacy project, she travelled to Sydney and Canberra with two support workers to talk to self-advocacy groups and disability support organisations about how they can come together for the benefit of their clients.

"Self-advocacy is about learning how to speak out about my rights, and teaching others to do the same," Rebecca said.

"In the future, I would love to become a paid representative of an advocacy group and work to help groups around the country to better network and share information."

"I also have a goal of travelling around Australia independently one day. We have a big country that I would like to explore!"

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