



You said, we heard: Supporting young children early

What you told us

Easy Read report



ndis

ndis.gov.au

How to use this report



The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) wrote this report. When you see the word 'we' or 'us', it means the NDIA.



This report is written in an easy to read way. We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold

We have written some words in **bold**.

Not bold

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 41.



This Easy Read report is a summary of another report.



You can find the other report on our website at www.ndis.gov.au.



You can ask for help to read this report.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What's in this report?

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What is this report about?



We want to make the NDIS easier to use.

We also want to make sure it is:



- fairer



- **consistent.**



When something is consistent, it is done the same way every time.



As part of this, we are going to change how some parts of the NDIS work.



But before we do this, we wanted to find out what the community thought.

This included:



- people with disability



- families and carers



- service providers



- disability organisations.



The community shared their ideas in different ways.



Some people wrote answers to our questions.



Some people visited our website to answer our questions.



Some people recorded their answers, such as in a video.



Some people talked to us at our events.



Some people talked to disability organisations.

In this report, we tell you what:



- we asked the community about



- people told us



- we will do in the future.



This report is about the paper called *Supporting young children early*.

What did we ask the community about?



To find out what the community thought, we wrote 3 papers.



One paper was about flexible NDIS plans and funding.

Another paper was about:



- getting an independent assessment



- applying for the NDIS.



The other paper was about supporting young children early.



We published these papers in November 2020.



These papers included questions for the community to answer.



You can find these papers on **our website**.



The Department of Social Services (DSS) also wrote an information paper about making the NDIS better.



You can find the information paper on the **DSS website**.

Supporting young children early



This report is about the paper called *Supporting young children early*.



We are going to find better ways to support young children and families.



This means we will make the Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) program better.



ECEI is part of the NDIS.



We believe it's better for children to get services and support as early in their lives as possible.



This is called **early intervention**.

Early intervention is for children with a:



- disability



- **developmental delay.**



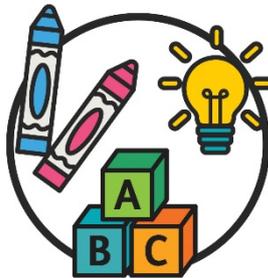
When a child has a developmental delay, they haven't grown the same way as other children their age.

Why is early childhood intervention important?



It's important for children with a disability or developmental delay to get support as early as possible while they grow and develop.

Early intervention helps them:



- learn new skills



- take part in family and day-to-day life



- be **independent** when they are older.
When you are independent, you can do things for yourself.

What did we ask the community?

We asked how we can support families to:



- understand the words we use



- understand their child's needs



- connect with services for everyone in the community to use



- celebrate if their child leaves the NDIS.

We asked how we can make sure early childhood workers and providers:



- have the right skills



- can support families in the same community to connect with each other.



We asked about the best way for us to check in with you about how your child is reaching their goals.



We also asked if a report from an early childhood provider would help you see how well your child is going.



You can find all the questions in the Easy Read paper on [our website](#).

What did people tell us?



Most people told us they support how we want to change early intervention.



But people said they were worried about how the things we change will affect them.



People also said they were worried about how we will change early intervention supports.

Early intervention

People told us that information about early intervention should be:



- helpful
- consistent
- easy to understand.



People told us we should think about using different ways to provide information about early intervention.

This could be information in a:



- video



- picture



- language other than English.

We should also share information that meets the needs of:



- young children



- families



- carers.

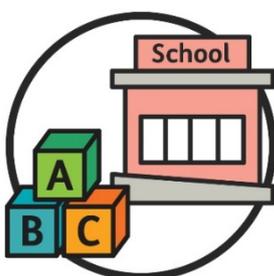


People told us we should work with different organisations to help families understand early intervention.

These organisations can be:



- places you go to for health care, such as your doctor



- places where you go to learn, like school



- disability services.



People told us we should make the rules about early intervention clearer.

This will help us make decisions that are:



- fair



- consistent.



People also told us we need new **guidelines** for **Early Childhood Partners**.



Guidelines are important ideas about how to do things.



Early Childhood Partners are organisations that talk to families and children about support and services.



These guidelines will help Early Childhood Partners understand how to give children the supports they need.

People told us we should train **NDIA Planners** so they can:



- support children



- help families understand the NDIS.



An NDIA Planner is someone who makes new plans.



People told us that we should work with governments to make sure supports and services work well for young children.

This includes:



- the Australian government



- state and territory governments

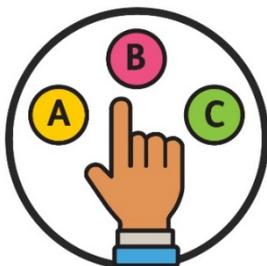


- local governments.

People told us if we leave out providers that aren't part of the NDIS, it can affect:



- families who live in **remote and very remote areas**



- how much choice and control they have.



Remote and very remote areas are places that are far away from cities or towns.

People also told us that if providers need to report to us, it might:



- make the work providers do harder



- limit the services and supports children can use.



People told us we should work with different organisations in the community to help children who are **vulnerable**.

If a child is vulnerable, they might be in danger of:



- being hurt



- getting sick



- someone taking advantage of them.

This will help us give the child supports and services that:



- meet their needs



- show respect for their **culture**.



Your culture is:

- your way of life
- how you think or act because of how you grew up.



People told us people who live in remote and very remote areas might not use supports and services they don't:

- trust
- know about.



People told us we should work with organisations people in remote and very remote areas trust.

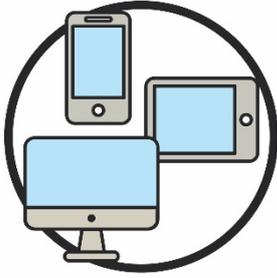
This will help:



- families connect with supports and services



- children get supports and services they need.



People also told us there should be other ways for children in remote and very remote areas to use their supports and services.

This could be getting supports and services:



- by video chat



- over the phone.

Independent assessments

Some people told us that **independent assessments** will make the NDIS:



- fair



- consistent



- easier to use.

Independent assessments are a new way for the NDIA to get information about:



- how your disability affects your life



- what supports you need from the NDIS.

But other people told us that independent assessments might not be easy to use if a parent doesn't:



- speak English as a first language



- understand the questions in the independent assessment.



People told us that children with a **sensory disability** might need a specialist they know to do the independent assessment.



A sensory disability affects someone's senses, such as their:

- sight
- hearing.



People told us that when **funding** comes from an independent assessment, it might not fully meet the needs of the child.



Funding is the money from your plan that pays for the supports and services you need.



But other people told us that independent assessments should be used to:

- make plans
- work out how much funding a child should have.





People told us some people who do independent assessments might not know enough about different disabilities.



This can affect what supports and services a child might get.



People told us that families in remote and very remote areas might not be able to find people who can do independent assessments.

Support for early intervention

People told us that some families like using support workers from their own:



- culture



- religion.

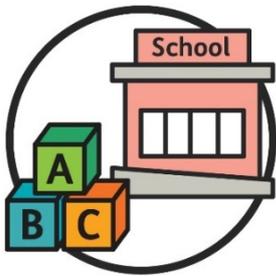


This can make a family feel comfortable to do daily activities when a support worker is with them, like praying.



People told us we should train early intervention support workers so they can speak up for what a child needs.

People told us we should connect with:



- schools



- childcare services



- health services



- people from different cultures.



People told us we should have clear information about how to stay connected to different supports and services.



People told us that families who took part in **short term early intervention (STEI)** felt unsure about the future.



STEI is early support for all children, even if they can't take part in the NDIS.



People told us there should be more information about how Early Childhood Partners will deliver STEI.



People told us we should make new rules for using STEI so supports are more consistent.



People told us we should change how we talk about developmental delay in the NDIS law.



This will make decisions about early intervention more consistent.



Some people told us they support changing the ECEI rules so they include children up to 9 years old.



But other people told us they are not sure what funding children aged 7 to 9 years old can get.



People told us there needs to be clear information about what will change for children aged 6 to 7 years old who already get supports and services.



People told us there needs to be clear information about how families will be affected if ECEI changes.

Planning for early intervention



People told us Early Childhood Partners need more support.

This will help Early Childhood Partners:



- deliver more supports and services



- meet more children's needs.



People told us the prices shouldn't change if families and carers want to support children at home.



People talked about changing the rules for how we make decisions about children with autism.



They said we should limit any supports and services that might hurt the child.



People also told us we should set rules for Early Childhood Partners so they can give families the right information about supports and services for their children.



People told us they support our decision to do more research about early intervention so we can make better choices about ECEI.

Other ways to use the NDIS



People told us **telehealth** should be used more to support families.

Telehealth is when you use health services:



- over the phone



- in a video chat.



People told us we should check in with participants more about how well their plans are going.

We call this a check-in.



A check-in is not a plan review.



People told us that **First Nations** families should have check-ins with people they:

- know
- trust.



First Nations people are also known as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



People told us reports from providers should be:

- short
- easy to understand.



People also told us reports:

- shouldn't take long to make
- should be ready in time for planning meetings.



People told us we should support families who want to keep using the NDIS, even though it's better for their child if they:



- move on from the NDIS



- use supports that aren't part of the NDIS.

People told us providers should report to families to:



- see how well their child is going



- celebrate their child moving on from the NDIS.

What will we do next?



We are still looking at what people told us.



We will think about what people said when we change the NDIS.

Some parts of the NDIS we are going to change first include:



- making information about ECEI clearer and easier to understand



- changing how we talk about developmental delay



- making a paper on how to better support children with autism.



We will keep asking the community what they think on other ways the NDIS could change.



We will start changing ECEI by the end of 2021.

More information

For more information about this report,
please contact us.



www.ndis.gov.au



1800 800 110



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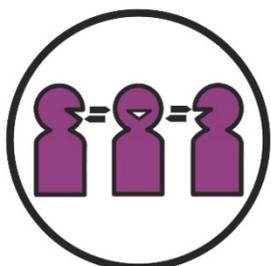
Support to talk to us



You can use our webchat feature to talk to us online.

www.ndis.gov.au/webchat/start

If you speak a language other than English, you can call:



Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

131 450

If you have a speech or hearing impairment, you can call:



TTY

1800 555 677



Speak and Listen

1800 555 727



National Relay Service

133 677

www.relayservice.gov.au

Word list

Check-in



When we have a check-in with you, it means that we talk to you about how your plan is going.

A check-in is a casual conversation, not a plan review.



Consistent



When something is consistent, it is done the same way every time.

Culture

Your culture is:



- your way of life
- the way you think or act because of the way you grew up.



Developmental delay

When a child has a developmental delay, it means they haven't grown the same way as other children their age.



Early Childhood Partners

Early Childhood Partners are organisations who talk to families and children about support and services.



Early intervention

We think that it's better if children can get services and support as early as possible in their lives.

We call this early intervention.



First Nations

First Nations people are also known as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Funding

Funding is the money from your plan that pays for the supports and services you need.



Independent

When you are independent, you can do things for yourself.

Independent assessments



Independent assessments are a new way for the NDIA to get information about:

- how your disability affects your life
- what supports you need from the NDIS.



NDIA Planner

A NDIA Planner is someone who makes new plans.



Remote and very remote areas

Remote and very remote areas are places that are far away from cities or towns.



Sensory disability

A sensory disability affects someone's senses, such as their:

- sight
- hearing.



Short term early intervention (STEI)

STEI is early support for all children, even if they can't take part in the NDIS.

Telehealth



Telehealth is when you use health services:

- over the phone
- in a video chat.

Vulnerable

If a child is vulnerable, they might be in danger of:



- being hurt
- getting sick
- someone taking advantage of them.



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