16 October 2025

The Children’s Expert Advisory Group met on Thursday 16 October 2025 for the tenth meeting of the year.

The meeting was held online.

Focus of the meeting

The Chair, Amity Durham, Deputy CEO, Children, Specialised Services and Scheme Interfaces, National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) opened the meeting.

The focus of the meeting was on early design concepts for the future children’s pathway from 0 to 8 years old and on early thinking on the future pathway for children aged 9 to 15 years old.

New children’s pathway – early concepts

The NDIA led a discussion on early design concepts for the new children’s pathway and incorporated feedback from a CEAG out of session workshop on Navigator service design for children held on 11 September 2025. The meeting noted that a timeframe for implementation of the future pathway for children has not yet been determined.

Two topics were discussed in relation to the pathway early design concepts:

- Pathway for children 0-8 years old
- Initial considerations for the pathway for children 9-15 years old.

Pathway for children 0-8 years old

CEAG member feedback included:

- The importance of the future Navigator role in supporting children accessing the NDIS and maintaining supports concurrently in other parts of the ecosystem, noting that is vital that children are not excluded from universal services such as early childhood education and care services and parenting support programs, and future Thriving Kids.
- Concerns for building a future navigator workforce that can service the volume of children.
- Suggestions of collaboration with Thriving Kids Advisory Group to develop strategies to assist in the development of any assessment processes.
- Suggestions that strategies are required to capture information to inform an understanding of the child’s functional needs through the different service systems and

how these might interact for families.
- Suggestions that any assessment process for children who appear to have lower support should consider any significant impacts of their needs in determining whether they should be directed to the NDIS for supports or to Thriving Kids.
- Importance of culturally safe practices and processes throughout the pathway.
- Concerns about terminology of ‘significantly reduced functional capacity’ in the requirements for access to the NDIS and how this language may impact children and families, including views that the terminology is not strengths based and creates a deficit perception.

Initial considerations for NDIS pathway for children 9-15 years old

CEAG member feedback included:

- Considerations for supporting secondary school readiness, skills development, and job readiness for children at the older end of the 9-15 years.
- Pathway design should consider age and stages for children 9-15 years and awareness of children in this cohort of individual differences between themselves and peers.
- The NDIA should consider ways to embed children’s participation in decision making for all children in the planning process, but particularly for 9-15 year olds.
- The pathway needs to be safe and supportive, should protect the participant and family's dignity, consider the child’s voice as well as the family’s and ensure that professionals and the family work together.
- Importance of supporting families on the journey of adjusting to their child’s developing independence and interactions with service systems as the child gets older.
- The NDIA should consider the impacts of other diagnoses that might be identified for children in this cohort.
- Development, learning, and wellbeing are intertwined and require multiple service system involvement for children 9-15 years.

CEAG Next Meeting

The Children’s Expert Advisory Group’s next meeting is 18 December 2025.

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