1 October 2026

Families of children with extra developmental needs can now access expanded information and supports, as part of the Australian Government's Thriving Kids program.

There will be a gradual rollout of Thriving Kids supports both nationally and across states and territories, with all supports to be in place by 1 January 2028.

Families can also access other key resources launching today including the new Thriving Kids Autism Helpline (1300 654 789), which will provide autism-specific information, guidance and connections to relevant supports and services.

Delivered by leading autism organisation Amaze, the Helpline is supported by a $24.4 million investment from the Australian Government.

It will operate Monday to Friday from 8.00 am to 7.00 pm and will be accessible through the National Relay Service for families who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

Key national services launching today include the new Thriving Kids Information and Resource Hub, delivered by the Raising Children Network.

Backed by a $9.7 million investment from the Australian Government, the Hub will provide families with reliable information, practical resources and guidance to help them understand and support their child's development.

Importantly, there will be no changes to access or eligibility to the National Disability Insurance Scheme until 1 January 2028.

Children with permanent and significant disability or high support needs will continue to access the NDIS.

Thriving Kids will provide supports to children aged 8 and under with developmental delay and/or autism with low to moderate support needs.

The Commonwealth will continue to work with state and territory governments as services grow over time.

Services will include practical support and connections, including through peer support, parenting groups, facilitated playgroups, and family programs.

States and territories will also deliver specialised assistance, for those children who need it, such as occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy, social workers, psychologists, and low-cost assistive technology, aids or equipment.

Further information about Thriving Kids can be found on the Department of Health's website .

Quotes attributable to NDIS Minister Jenny McAllister:

“Every child learns and grows in their own way. Some children need more time to master everyday skills – like communicating, learning, moving, interacting with others, or managing emotions.

“For these kids, getting support early can make a world of difference. It can help them build on their strengths, join in at home, at school and in the community, and build skills for everyday life.

“In designing Thriving Kids, we listened to experts and families who have navigated the system and know what needed to change.

“Today marks the gradual rollout of Thriving Kids services, and the launch of the new digital hub and national autism phone support service will give families an easy place to start – whether they just have questions about their child’s development or are ready to find practical support.

“Importantly, the way people access support under the National Disability Insurance Scheme will not change until full Thriving Kids services are rolled out in January 2028.”

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