NDIS and Get Skilled Access: The importance of physical distancing

Hi I'm Dylan Alcott, and it's great to talk to you in partnership with the NDIS and my company, Get Skilled Access

The COVID-19 coronavirus has brought a huge change to everyone and has had an increased and significant impact on my community.

So while we work hard to follow government advice and best practice, we are also taking extra steps to protect our physical and mental health.

As we work through the COVID-19 coronavirus landscape we've been washing our hands and covering our mouths and most importantly,practicing social, or as it is better phrased, physical distancing.

One of the first initiatives we need to adapt to is the concept of Social or Physical distancing.

Physical distancing on the whole seems easy.

To prevent the spread of coronavirus COVID-19 through community contact we need to maintain a 1.5 metre space from other people.

As a person who is blind and guide dog user, this seemingly simple directive presents a challenge for me,as it’s not possible to explain to Rocky my guide dog this new rule as he guides me through my daily life.

This means to ensure the safety of all of us, it’s important when Rocky and I are out in the community,everyone takes steps to maintain the appropriate physical distance.

The term Social Distancing is still widely used but it may be sending an incorrect message leading to an increase in social isolation especially to those people who are Autistic or have mental health issues.

When you say to someone who is on the Autism Spectrum “Physical Distancing“ they take it literally as don't touch or stay apart.

Likewise, social distancing can be taken as stay away from all social interaction.

So for someone who is on the Autism Spectrum, Physical Distancing is the correct term to stop the spread of coronavirus.

To stop us feeling like we have to “socially separate” from family and friends, it’s better to use the term “Physical Distancing” which means keeping a 1.5 metre distance

from other people when we’re out shopping, exercising or just enjoying some time outside.

Even though some of the restrictions are being reduced, I don't want to be forced into socially self isolating if physical distancing rules aren’t followed.

As we return to the new normal as restrictions change around Australia, that normal will look different for everyone from a social,
physical and mental health perspective.

For the disability community, this return will take even more planning and in some cases, it will be a slower return into this new way of life.

Start a conversation with friends, family, carers and employers And remember, don’t put too much pressure on yourself for both your physical and mental well being - it’s ok to start small.

Everyone with disability is different so what is right for me may not be right for someone else.

Talking does help to ensure everyone understands your needs.

I hope this short video has helped as we all work together in establishing what our new normal looks like moving forward for both our physical and mental health well being.

Please visit
[www.NDIS.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.NDIS.gov.au/coronavirus) where you’ll find more resources to assist you, your family, friends and colleagues with advice and best practice on how we all can navigate the future.