



# The early childhood approach

Helping children younger than 9

Information for parents and families

Easy Read version



**ndis**

[ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)

# How to use this fact sheet



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



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

**Bold**  
Not bold

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

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 14.



This Easy Read fact sheet is a summary of another fact sheet.



You can find the other fact sheet on our website at [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au).



You can ask for help to read this fact sheet. A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

## What is this fact sheet about?



You can get support for your child if:

- they are younger than 9
- you worry about how they are developing.

For example, you might worry about how your child:



- plays and moves around
- takes care of themselves
- plays with other children
- ask for things they want.



Your child might have **developmental delay**.



When a child has developmental delay, they might not develop at the same pace as other children of the same age.



This means they may need lots of extra help to do everyday things.

They might need this help for a long time.



For example, they might walk or talk for the first time later than other children their age.



Or your child might have a disability.



Our early childhood approach can support you so your child has a good start in life.



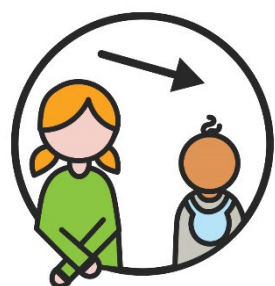
# What is the early childhood approach?



The early childhood approach is part of the **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**.



The NDIS provides supports and services to people with disability around Australia.



We use the early childhood approach to support children younger than 9 years old who have:

- a disability
- developmental delay.

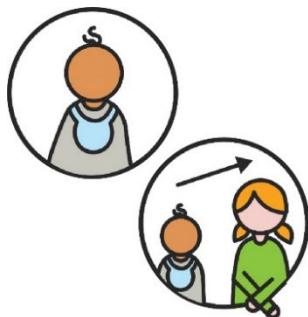


We work with **early childhood partners** to deliver the early childhood approach.

Early childhood partners support:

- children with developmental delay
- children with disability
- their families.





We think it's best if children get support:

- as early as possible in their lives
- while they grow and develop.

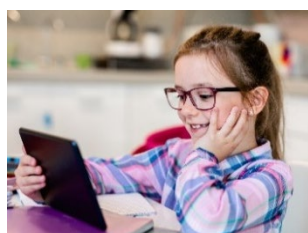
This helps children:



- learn new skills



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



- do things for themselves as they get older.

## Who can help your child?



If you think your child might need support, you should start by talking to someone who knows your child well.

For example, your child's:



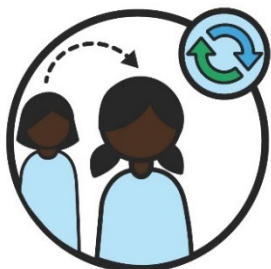
- doctor



- childcare provider



- child health nurse.



Children grow and develop so fast.



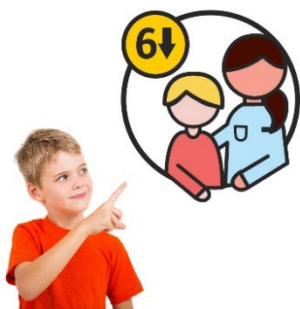
It's important to get support for them as soon as they need it.

Even if they only need it for a short time.

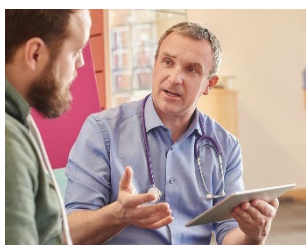
## Does your child need a diagnosis to get support?



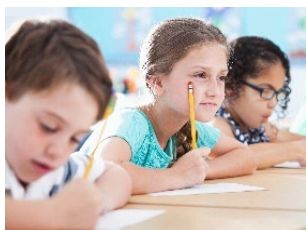
When your child gets a **diagnosis**, a doctor tells you that your child has a disability.



Your child does not need a diagnosis to get support if they are younger than 6.



Your child might have a diagnosis.



Or your child might have developmental delay.



You can talk to your doctor about your child's:

- developmental delay
- disability.





Children older than 6 sometimes need a diagnosis to get some early childhood support from the NDIS.



You doctor can help you with this.



It can take time to work out what support your child needs.



To make sure your child gets the right support, we look at:

- the way your child grows
- their day-to-day life.

## Early childhood partners



After you talk to the person who knows your child well, you can talk to an early childhood partner.



They can help you find the right supports and services for your child.

We call this **early connections**.

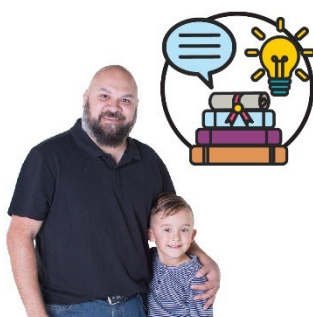
To understand what your child needs, early childhood partners work with:



- you and your child



- people who know your child.



They might help you learn new skills so you can support your child.

They might:



- give you information



- connect you to supports in the community

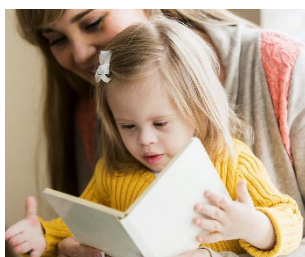


- help you apply for the NDIS if that is the right support for your child.



They might also offer early supports to you and your child if they:

- are younger than 6
- have **developmental concerns**.



When a child has developmental concerns, they might not develop at the same pace as other children of the same age.

But they might not need as much help as children with developmental delay.

## More information

For more information about this fact sheet,  
please contact us.



[www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)



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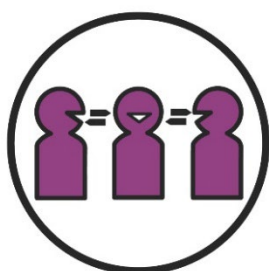
## Support to talk to us



You can talk to us online using our webchat feature at the top of our website.

[www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

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](http://www.relayservice.gov.au)



## Word list



### **Developmental delay**

When a child has developmental delay, it means they might not develop at the same pace as other children of the same age.



This means they may need lots of extra help to do everyday things.

They might need this help for a long time.

### **Developmental concerns**



When a child has developmental concerns, they might not develop at the same pace as other children of the same age.

But they might not need as much help as children with developmental delay.



### **Diagnosis**

When your child gets a diagnosis, a doctor tells you that your child has a disability.

## Early childhood partners

Early childhood partners support:



- children with developmental delay
- children with disability
- their families.



## Early connections

When an early childhood partner helps you find the right supports and services for your child, we call this early connections.



## National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The NDIS provides supports and services to people with disability around Australia.



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