

# Early Childhood Resource

## GUIDE FOR FAMILIES



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## Introduction

Northcott is an NDIS early childhood partner. We work closely with families and carers of children aged 0-9 years of age to develop the skills they need to take part in daily activities and achieve the best possible outcomes throughout their lives.

The NDIS early childhood approach allows families and carers of children under 9 who have developmental concerns, developmental delay or disability to access timely, targeted and individualised early childhood support for their child.

As an NDIS early childhood partner in the community, Northcott is the point of contact for families, supporting them to better understand their child's support needs and identifying the most appropriate response to address those needs.

Early supports may include access to information, direct provision of early intervention strategies, family-based education and parenting support and linkages to community and mainstream services. If it is identified that a child would be better supported through an individual funded National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) plan, we can assist families through the access process.

This resource was developed by Northcott's Community Capacity Building project team following feedback from Northcott staff, the early childhood sector, NSW Health, NSW Department of Education, families with lived experience, and other members of the community which identified the need for a resource guide to help families seek support for their little ones. All information in this resource is readily available online and has been collated to provide a process for identifying child health and development delays or concerns and guidance for seeking support.



## Child health and development

From the day your child is born they will start learning. As their parent/carer you are their very first teacher. Research shows us that it is within the first 2,000 days of life (the first five years) that most of your child's brain development occurs.

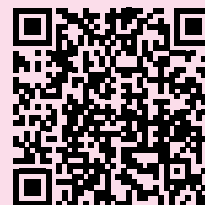
"Children's brains grow when they receive loving, human interaction".<sup>5</sup>

The most important thing you can do to support the growth of your child's brain and body, is to spend time connecting with them.

Being a parent is not only one of the most important roles you can play, it is also one of the most challenging. But the love and time you give your child will produce great benefits for them for the rest of their lives.



**Watch these videos on**  
[Child health and development](#)



## Building brains and bodies

There are simple things you can do with your child from birth and in their early years of life that will make a significant difference in helping them grow and thrive. These activities help build their brain and lay down important foundations for learning.<sup>6</sup>

Children do not need expensive toys or electronics. They just need your time and your love.

### Activities to do with your baby

- Look at picture books and point to what you see – this teaches your child to understand language.
- When your baby is awake, place soft toys or objects within reach so they can move their head, roll and move towards the object.
- Repeat your baby's sounds back to them – this creates and teaches your child about conversations.
- Babies love water, allow them to splash and pour water – this is the first stage of teaching them about science and maths (volume).
- Teach your little one baby sign language or gestures – it not only creates a mode of communication, but when they succeed it builds their confidence.

<sup>5</sup> NSW Health [Why the first 5 years matter | NSW Government](#) 17 May 2023

<sup>6</sup> NSW Health, 2024. [Child health and development](#)

## Activities to do with your toddler

- Singing to your toddler helps them understand words, uses memory and exercises their lips and tongue in preparation for speaking.
- As your child grows, playing with objects helps them learn to co-ordinate their bodies.
- Talk to your child about what is happening around them and ask them what they think helps build their imagination and their language.

## Activities to do with your pre-schooler

- Teach your little one to do things for themselves. For example, learning how to open their lunch box not only builds on their co-ordination and self-care skills, but it also builds their confidence and prepares them for school.
- Select books with simple language and teach your little one the words. See if they can remember them or play a game of memory. Over time this builds on their memory skills in readiness for school. Better still, let them tell you a story about what the pictures might be saying. Encourage descriptive language by asking questions such as, “who are of the characters in their story”, “what colour is their hair”, “is their hair straight or curly?” As them what might the surrounding look like? For example, “what do the clouds look like?”, “are there any trees?”. This builds on their imaginative play and storytelling skills.

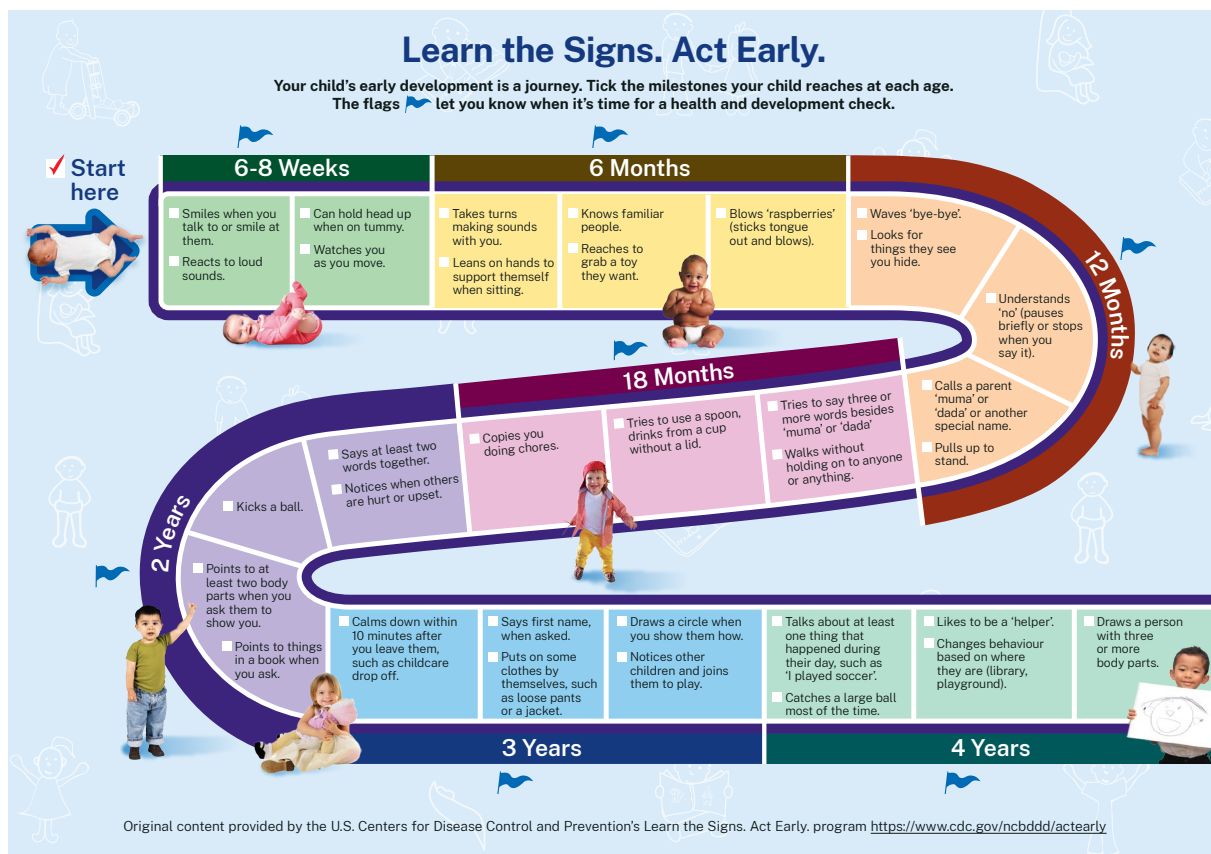
## Identifying a development delay or concern

**What we have heard:** some parents have told us that they have had concerns for their child and sought support, but received a ‘wait and see’ message. We do not want you to wait and see, we want you to ‘Act Early’.

When a child is born in NSW, parents receive a My Personal Health Record Book (often called the Blue Book), which becomes a record of their child’s health and development information.

Scan the QR code  
for a digital  
version of the  
[Blue Book](#).





## Learn the Signs. Act Early<sup>7</sup>

One way to 'Act Early' is to check your child's health and development. You can do this by tracking your child's growth and health in their Blue Book/Personal Health Record. These checklists look at how your child plays, learns, speaks, acts and moves - tracking your child is growing and developing.<sup>8</sup>

- 1 to 4 weeks    completed by child and family health nurse
- 6 to 8 weeks    [8-week-checklist.pdf](#)
- 6 months    [6-month-checklist.pdf](#)
- 12 months    [12-month-checklist.pdf](#)
- 18 months    [18-month-checklist.pdf](#)
- 2 years    [2-year-checklist.pdf](#)
- 3 years    [3-year-checklist.pdf](#)
- 4 years    [4-year-checklist.pdf](#)













Scan the QR code for a digital version of the [early learning journey](#).

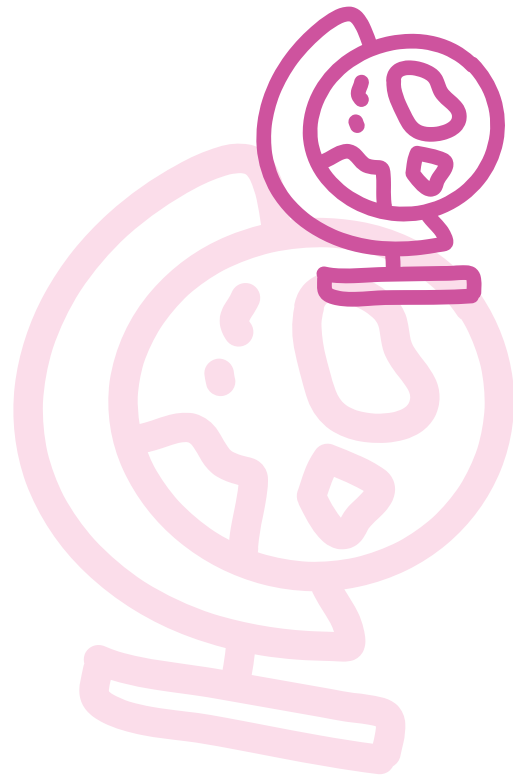


<sup>7</sup> NSW Health [learn-the-signs-poster.pdf](#)

<sup>8</sup> NSW Health, 2024. [Learn the Signs. Act Early](#)

## Milestones Matter in languages other than English

-  [Milestones Matter - Arabic](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Bengali](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Burmese](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Chinese Simplified](#)
-  [Milestones Matter – Chinese Traditional](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Dari](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Dinka](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Farsi](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Hindi](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Indonesian](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Khmer](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Korean](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Lao](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Mongolian](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Nepali](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Somali](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Tamil](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Thai](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Turkish](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Urdu](#)
-  [Milestones Matter - Vietnamese](#)



## Useful apps for tracking child development

For more ideas on how you can nurture your child's development, download these free apps:



### Love Talk Sing Read Play

[Love Talk Sing Read Play](#) has tips for every family to help their child learn and develop. The app is also available in other languages. The app is available on the App Store.



### Deadly Tots

[Deadly Tots](#) has information for Aboriginal families to help their bub learn and grow. The app is available on both the App Store and Google Play.



### Bright Tomorrows

[Bright Tomorrows](#) has over 1,000 meaningful moments and tips to help build young brains. The app is available on both the App Store and Google Play.



### Thrivary App

[THRIVARY](#) connects parents, carers and early childhood practitioners to real time guidance, information and learning on all things early childhood development and intervention for developing children (0-8 yrs), especially children with disability and/or development delay. The app is available on both the App Store and Google Play.

## Free health checks

Contact your local child and family health nurse or talk to your child and family health service if you are concerned about your child's growth and development.

[Child and family health services](#) are free for NSW parents and carers of children aged 0-5 years. They offer:

- [Health and development checks](#) for your child, to make sure they are on track to reach important milestones.
- Support and information on a range of parenting topics, such as:
  - sleeping and settling
  - feeding
  - development and behaviour
  - your own wellbeing.
- Opportunities to discuss referrals to other services such as audiometry or allied health as required.



# Services for Aboriginal families



## Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services

An [Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service \(ACCHS\)](#) is an incorporated Aboriginal organisation initiated by and based in a local Aboriginal community. They deliver a holistic and culturally appropriate health service to the community.

The Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) is the voice on Aboriginal health and the peak body that represents ACCHOs in NSW. It plays a vital role in addressing the needs of Aboriginal people and improving Aboriginal health outcomes.

## Culturally safe services for pregnant women

Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Services (AMIHS) supports pregnant women, their families and community. AMIHS can help mothers with:

- your health during and after your pregnancy
- your baby's health and how they're growing.

You can use AMIHS as soon as you find out you are pregnant and until your baby is up to 8 weeks old.

Once your baby is born, you will be referred to:

- a child and family health service, or
- a Building Strong Foundations (BSF) service, if one is near you.

## Culturally safe services for babies and children

BSF services are for Aboriginal children, families and communities. BSF services support parents with:

- feeding
- settling and sleeping
- health and development
- being school ready.



### Resources:

- [Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council - AH&MRC](#)
- [Youth Guide to My Health Record | AHMRC Resource](#)
- [Child Health Archives - AH&MRC](#)

## Free hearing assessments

[Free hearing assessments](#) for children can be arranged at the Community Health Centre or the Audiology Department at your local hospital.

An assessment can be arranged through other providers including Commonwealth funded and private audiologists, although not all may have paediatric expertise and equipment and may incur a fee.

## Free dental checks

All children (under 18 years of age) who are NSW residents and eligible for Medicare can access [free public dental services](#) in NSW.

The Child Dental Benefits Schedule is an Australian Government program that provides access to up to \$1,132 in benefits over 2 consecutive calendar years, covering most basic general dental services (but not specialist services like orthodontics or services provided under general anaesthetic).

## Statewide Eyesight Preschooler Screening (StEPS) program

NSW Health offers **free vision screening assessments** to all 4-year-old children in the year before they start school. This is organised by the preschool or daycare centre – you should receive further information about this screening from your centre. If your child does not attend preschool or daycare, or your centre does not provide the StEPS program or your child missed the visit, please contact your local Child & Family Health Centre.

See: [Statewide Eyesight Preschooler Screening](#)

### Hunter New England

**Contact:** Alison Boehme  
**Phone:** (02) 6538 5071  
**Email:** [HNELHD-StEPSProgram@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:HNELHD-StEPSProgram@health.nsw.gov.au)

### Mid North Coast

**Contact:** Wendy Mutton  
**Phone:** (02) 6656 7061  
**Email:** [mnclhd-steps@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mnclhd-steps@health.nsw.gov.au)

### Northern NSW

**Contact:** Kathryn Pressler  
**Phone:** (02) 6620 2836  
**Email:** [nswlhd-steps@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nswlhd-steps@health.nsw.gov.au)

### Northern Sydney

**Contact:** Jodi Simons  
**Phone:** (02) 9462 9550  
**Email:** [nsldhd-steps@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nsldhd-steps@health.nsw.gov.au)

## Who can you talk to?

If you have concerns about your little one's development, talking with your GP, child and family health nurse or early childhood educator is the first step. Your specialist might suggest your child would benefit from some extra support and refer your child to a community or mainstream service.

**GPs** have a unique perspective as they often care for the whole family. They can provide insights into additional support or interventions that are important in a family, for example, supporting the mental health of a parent.<sup>5</sup>

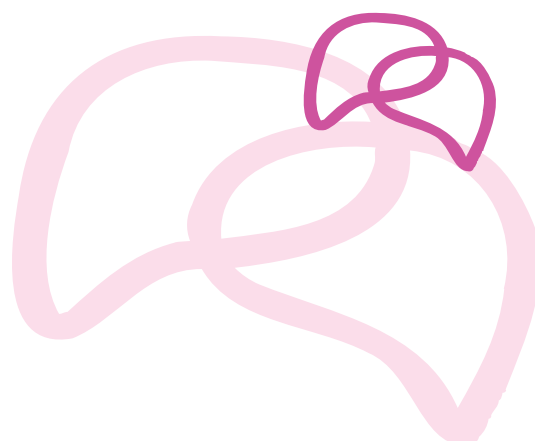
### Your GP can:

- support the family with their concerns through observations and screening (where appropriately trained and supported)
- identify appropriate assessments and tests, for example a hearing test
- identify the need for allied health assessment or intervention and refer you to appropriate allied health clinicians through local NSW Health Community Health Services, Child and Family Allied Health Services, private providers with Medicare rebates (Better Access to Mental Health or Enhanced Primary Care), non-governmental organisations or the Early Childhood Approach (ECA) and NDIS funded early childhood partners such as Northcott.

Your **early childhood educator** can play an important role in helping you access supports if you have concerns about your child's development. Educators will have valuable information you can use to support a referral to early intervention pathways, whether that is for behaviour guidance, speech concerns, or any other developmental area you may have concerns about. You should start by asking you early childhood centre's management team who is the person best equipped to support you. It would usually be the educator that knows your child the best.

It is a regulatory requirement for educators to be documenting your child's development for the purpose of their learning progress and to identify any areas of concern.

**KU** have prepared a great parent resource - [Preparing for Appointments to discuss development](#).



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5 NSW Health, 2024. [Agency for Clinical Innovation](#)

## Pathways for support

If your GP, family health nurse or early childhood educator refers you to community or mainstream support, it could be because your child needs some support in the following areas:

- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Child speech pathology
- Child and family health centre
- Occupational therapy (check for availability)

## Children's speech pathology

Community-based speech pathology treats children from birth to school age, with normal cognitive function or mild intellectual impairment.

Children who are eligible for other government funded speech pathology services (such as those funded through the Early Childhood Approach (ECA) or National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for a speech condition that is related to their disability) are not eligible to access Community-based speech pathology services.

Also, community-based speech pathology does not provide a service if the child has been deemed eligible for NDIS but are awaiting funding.

Community-based speech pathology provides intervention to children, who:

- have difficulty understanding what is said
- have difficulty talking (using words and sentences)
- are not using the correct sounds
- are stuttering
- have voice disorders
- have swallowing difficulties (eating and drinking).

Community-based speech pathology provides health services which are short-term, goal-focused and time limited.

### Aims

- to assess, diagnose and treat children referred to the service
- to provide appropriate services to children
- to educate families, parents and carers
- to contribute to student clinical education
- to disseminate clinical information to professionals
- to work in close conjunction with other services to establish and maintain a holistic approach to care.

## Occupational Therapy Clinic

For those in the Hunter region, the University of Newcastle offers a student-led [occupational therapy \(OT\) clinic](#) for children and young people. OT students work with children, their families and teachers to develop programs specific to a child's needs, helping them to reach their full potential at home, school and in the wider community. Please visit the website for the [current fees](#).

Community OT is also available in the Upper and Lower Hunter and Peel districts.

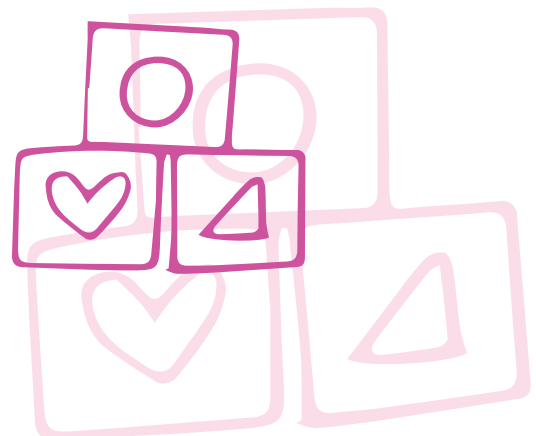
## Child Development Team

The Child Development Team (CDT) is a specialist child development unit for families with children aged 18 months to 12 years. The Multidisciplinary Team is based in the community and provides specialised consultative health care, usually for inpatients and on referral from a primary or secondary health professional.

There is **no cost** for services. The CDT conducts assessments for children with multiple or complex development needs, including:

- Learning disorders
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Global Developmental Delay
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

**Please note:** CDT is an assessment only service and does not offer therapy or ongoing management. It provides onward referrals and recommendations after completing their assessments.



# The National Disability Insurance Scheme

The **National Disability Insurance Scheme** (NDIS) funds individualised supports for eligible children with permanent and significant disabilities, their families and carer.

The **NDIS Early Childhood Approach** pathway assists children younger than 6 with developmental delay or children younger than 9 with disability and their families to access the right support when they need it.

## What does the Early Childhood Approach process look like?

Your Early Childhood Partner will work with you to understand what is going well and where your child may need further help. They will collect this information by:

- asking questions about your child's development
- observing your child playing, moving around and interacting with others
- talking to you about your family routines, the things your child enjoys and the things your family does together
- using other assessment tools, if required.

The Early Childhood Approach aims to:

- provide timely support to ensure that you can access the supports you need
- give you information about best-practice early childhood intervention supports and how you can help your child
- increase your confidence and capacity to manage and respond to your child's support needs
- increase your child's ability to do activities they need or want to do throughout their day
- increase your child's inclusion and participation in mainstream and community settings like childcare or recreation
- give you information about, and referrals to, other support services if needed, such as parent support groups.

Depending on your residential status, and further pathways, your Early Childhood Partner may request to see you and your child's three Evidence of Identity (EOI) documents.

**For a parent or a carer**, the EOI will include:

**One (1)** x primary document:

- Birth Certificate
- Passport
- Citizenship Certificate

**and**

**Two (2)** x secondary documents

- Medicare Card
- Drivers Licence
- Marriage Certificate
- Permanent Visa
- Bank card
- Centrelink CRN number

Your assigned Early Childhood Coordinator will further guide you with alternatives, if you do not have hard copies of listed documents.

**For a child**, you will need:

**One (1)** x primary document:

- Birth Certificate or
- Passport

**and**

**Two (2)** x secondary documents:

- Medicare
- Immunisation record

You will also need to provide:

- a current Centrelink Customer Reference number, or utility bill for further identification purposes
- a medical report from a medical practitioner, with your child's name, DOB, and residential address details on it.

## Free birth certificates

### For First Nations families

The [Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program \(PNABC\)](#) is making it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for and receive their birth certificate. The program conducts sign-up days in towns and areas where there are significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who don't have birth certificates.

### For those suffering financial and other forms of hardship

Fee waived birth certificates are available for those in financial or other forms of hardship. Please see **Section 2. Fee waiver considerations** of the [Fee Waiver Policy](#) for further information. Anyone can apply to the Registry directly in writing or at a Service NSW Service Centre. They will be asked to provide supporting evidence, such as a letter from a support service (which supports the criteria as outlined in Section 2. Fee waiver considerations). In the absence of supporting evidence, a decision is made on a case-by-case basis by the Registry or Service Centre manager.

### NSW Department of Education resources

The NSW Department of Education website provides detailed [resources for families](#).

### Transitioning to school resources

Your child does not need a formal diagnosis of disability to receive support in mainstream classes. However, your child may have a diagnosed disability that may benefit from additional support (known as targeted support).

Additionally, diagnosis of any of the following may also mean your child is eligible for targeted support:

- intellectual disability
- mental health disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- physical disability
- sensory impairment (hearing and/or vision)
- behaviour disorders.

Targeted support includes [support in a mainstream class](#) (called integration funding support), or placement in a [support class in a mainstream school](#) or a [school for specific purposes](#).

If you feel that your child may have additional learning and support needs, talk to your local school – regardless of whether you have a diagnosis for your child.



The following resources from the NSW Department of Education will help you and your child with the transition to primary school.

[Daisy's First Day](#) is a storybook about starting school featuring Australian animals.

[Getting ready for primary school](#) is a practical guide for parents and carers.

## Supporting young learners

The Department of Education says that “Families play an important role in supporting young children’s learning in early childhood and the early years of schools. These resources provide ideas to engage in learning at home through everyday experiences.”<sup>6</sup>

The learning outcome cards below will link learning at home to learning at school and the early years curriculum.

## Learning outcome cards

[Becoming secure strong and independent \(PDF 742 KB\)](#)

[Connecting to nature culture and your community \(PDF 1297 KB\)](#)

[Understanding and using your body and mind \(PDF 1400 KB\)](#)

[Being involved and confident in learning and play \(PDF 1383 KB\)](#)

[Learning to work with letters and numbers \(PDF 1027 KB\)](#)

## Languages other than English

The learning outcome cards for families have been [translated](#) into Arabic, Chinese simplified, Chinese Traditional, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Mongolian, Persian, Punjabi, Swahili, Thai, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese.

## Resources for Aboriginal families

These resources have been specifically developed for First Nations families.

[Being proud and strong \(PDF 1309 KB\)](#)

[Being connected to Country and community \(PDF 2639 KB\)](#)

[Learning to eat well be active and stay strong \(PDF 973 KB\)](#)

[Being heard speak up be heard and have a go \(PDF 1642 KB\)](#)

[Becoming a reader and mathematician \(PDF 1231 KB\)](#)

[Learning through playing \(PDF 16817 KB\)](#)



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<sup>6</sup> Department of Education, 2024. [Resources for families](#)

## Learning through play

The **learner cards** below provide a range of activities families can play with their children in the home. Each card explains the activity and the learning that is happening from the activity.

[Playing games with others \(PDF 691 KB\)](#)

[Learn about your culture as well as others \(PDF 721 KB\)](#)

[Moving my body and being active \(PDF 894 KB\)](#)

[Painting \(PDF 729 KB\)](#)

[Craft and collage \(PDF 1122 KB\)](#)

[Music and movement \(PDF 891 KB\)](#)

[Yoga and mindfulness \(PDF 634 KB\)](#)

[Sorting comparing and making patterns \(PDF 869 KB\)](#)

[Learn about numbers and counting \(PDF 481 KB\)](#)

[Learn about letters and their sounds \(PDF 665 KB\)](#)

The **10 everyday routine cards** below outline routines that happen in the home and build on a child's self-care developmental needs.

[Gardening \(PDF 1409 KB\)](#)

[Meal times \(PDF 525 KB\)](#)

[Recycling and reusing \(PDF 692 KB\)](#)

[Bath time \(PDF 574 KB\)](#)

[Doing the washing \(PDF 531 KB\)](#)

[Cooking \(PDF 575 KB\)](#)

[Groceries \(PDF 603 KB\)](#)

[Story time \(PDF 978 KB\)](#)

[Getting dressed \(PDF 520 KB\)](#)

[Play time \(PDF 872 KB\)](#)



## Podcast for families

The Department of Education has produced a podcast series for families, with a focus on how learning happens everyday in every way through play. It covers how families can support children's learning in the home through play and completing everyday routines.



**Episode 1** – Learning in the everyday

**Episode 2** – What guides what and how children learn in the early years

**Episode 3** – Play-based learning – how children learn through play

**Episode 4** – Letting your child take the lead!

**Episode 5** – How to support learning within the family and across learning areas

Scan the QR code to access all [5 episodes](#).



## Going to school

See the NSW Department of Education [Transition to primary school webpage](#) for some great resources.

### Children with additional needs:

It's never too early to start a conversation about your child's need. Check out information provided by the Department of Education about [when to talk to your local school](#).

The Department of Education is committed to supporting you and making sure your child gets the best possible education. Your school's teachers will talk to you about your child's strengths, needs and interests, and they can make adjustments to the way they teach in the classroom to help support your child's learning.

There are a range of services and programs available to support your child in NSW public schools. The Department of Education's main aim is to make sure your child can go to their local public school wherever possible.

You have an important role when it comes to deciding where your child will learn. You are always welcome to discuss your child's education, specific needs and support options with staff at your local school. Most students with disability are supported directly in their local school in mainstream classes.

Your local school can give your child support in mainstream classes through [personalised planning](#) and [adjustments](#). Schools receive resources to support the learning and wellbeing of all students, including those with disability and additional learning and support needs.

All students can be supported in mainstream classes without a confirmation of disability or the need for a formal application process. Targeted or additional specialist support, however, does require a separate application process.

# Multicultural support - translated resources

## NSW Department of Education

The Department of Education has lots of great resources, including animations, such as these ones below, translated into languages other than English.

[Translations for Learning through play](#)

[Translations for Learning through everyday routines](#)

[Translations for A strong start to school](#)



### Translated animations for “A strong start to school”

These animations are to help families manage their child’s transition to school. Click on your language to watch the animation.

[Arabic \(2:06\)](#)

[Simplified Chinese \(2:12\)](#)

[Traditional Chinese \(2:23\)](#)

[Farsi \(2:51\)](#)

[Hindi \(2:39\)](#)

[Japanese \(2:39\)](#)

[Khmer \(2:39\)](#)

[Korean \(2:17\)](#)

[Mongolian \(2:25\)](#)

[Punjabi \(2:28\)](#)

[Swahili \(2:19\)](#)

[Thai \(2:40\)](#)

[Turkish \(2:26\)](#)

[Urdu \(2:19\)](#)

[Vietnamese \(2:15\)](#)

## Mosaic Multicultural Connections

This organisation provides [parenting and family support](#) for people from migrant refugee backgrounds. The Multicultural Families team provides specialised support for families with children from 0 to 18 years old who are facing problems that affect their ability to care for their children. The problems that families may be struggling with include isolation, poor mental health, substance abuse, family violence, parenting in a cross-cultural environment and special needs of children. The support offered by Mosaic Multicultural Connections can take the form of information and referral, casework or parenting programs.

## Learning Links

This organisation provides vital early education, literacy and numeracy, communication and psychology programs. Their website has useful information on [supporting inclusive play](#). Learning to play inclusively is crucial to your child’s physical, social and emotional development. Playing with others can help your child to build [social skills](#), confidence, independence and [resilience](#).

## My Mental Health

This organisation provides [mental health services for culturally and linguistically diverse people](#).



## Embrace Multicultural Mental Health

[Embrace Multicultural Mental Health \(the Embrace Project\)](#) is run by Mental Health Australia and provides a national focus on mental health and suicide prevention for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

## Translation services

[Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#): this is an interpreting service provided by the Department of Home Affairs. It facilitates communication between culturally and linguistically diverse people and government agencies. An interpreter will need to be booked in advance for any meeting.

[Free Translating Service](#): This service allows holders of certain types of visas to get key personal documents translated for free.

[Multicultural NSW](#): This NSW Government services provides interpreting and translating services to ensure your messages are understood across the community in more than 100 languages 24hours a day/7days a week. Services include face-to-face, video and telephone interpreting and translations and transcripts services.

## Carer support

As a parent caring for a child with a developmental delay or disability, there may be times when providing this care can become difficult and stressful. Those in a caring role often need extra help but don't always know how to reach out. There are supports and resources to assist you to navigate these difficult times and carer burnout.



We recommend:

- [Carer Gateway: What services and support are available.](#)
- [Carer Gateway: Caring essentials](#) 1800 422 737
- [carersaustralia.com.au/information-for-carers/early-childhood-intervention/](https://carersaustralia.com.au/information-for-carers/early-childhood-intervention/)
- [Carers NSW: Carer support: Carer Gateway](#)
- [Recognising-Carer-Stress-For-Carers.png \(1414x2000\)](#)
- [Carer Wellbeing](#)
- [Pouring from an empty cup - a guide to carer wellbeing](#)
- [Carers NSW](#) – 02 9280 4744
- [Gather My Crew](#) is another great service. You can download their app from the website.

## For First Nations families

[WellMob](#): This website provides social, emotional and cultural wellbeing resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

[13YARN](#): If you, or someone you know, are feeling worried or no good, call 13 92 76 (24 hours/7 days) and talk with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter.

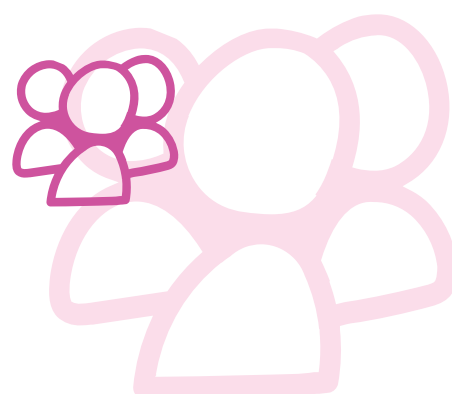
## Additional resources and support links

- [The early childhood approach for children younger than 9 | NDIS](#)
- [Finding Your Way: A practical guide for the early days of your child's disability, delay or autism diagnosis. - Kindred](#)
- [Department of Education - Early intervention](#)
- [Parent Resource - Preparing for appointments to discuss development](#)
- [Pocket Speechie 2025 - Hunter New England Local Health District](#)
- [Family Resources : Words Grow Minds](#)
- [Reimagine Australia](#) - resources and webinars
- [Envisage Families](#) - resources and workshops for parents
- [Raising Children Network](#)
- [Family and Child Connect](#) - a free, unlimited and confidential service that can connect you to practical supports
- Interrelate [Relationships and Parenting Courses](#)
- [Family Relationships Online](#)
- [Financial support: Centrelink online account - Services Australia](#)
- [Multicultural Children's Services — ECSC](#)
- Department of Education - [Resources for families](#)
- AIFS - [Children | Australian Institute of Family Studies](#)
- AIFS - [Supporting disability inclusion with children and families](#)
- Emerging Minds [Your support network: It takes a village](#)
- Interpreter Service - [Translating and Interpreting Service \(TIS National\)](#)

## Supports in the community

(Also see **My Supports** in rear of booklet)

- [Parent Counselling: 1300 1300 52 | Parent Line NSW](#)
- [Parenting Guides, Advice & Support | Tresillian Family Care Centres](#)
- [Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW \(MDAA\)](#)
- [Payments you can claim with Centrelink online account - Centrelink online account - Services Australia](#)
- [Child and family health services](#)



## Disability advocacy groups

The NSW Department of Communities and Justice has a [list of advocacy groups](#) listed on their website.

- [Disability Advocacy NSW](#)
- [People with Disability Australia](#)
- [Action for people with disability](#)
- [Disability Gateway](#) - You can request disability advocacy support through the Helpline 1800 643 787 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm) or fill out the [Contact Us Form](#).

## Policies

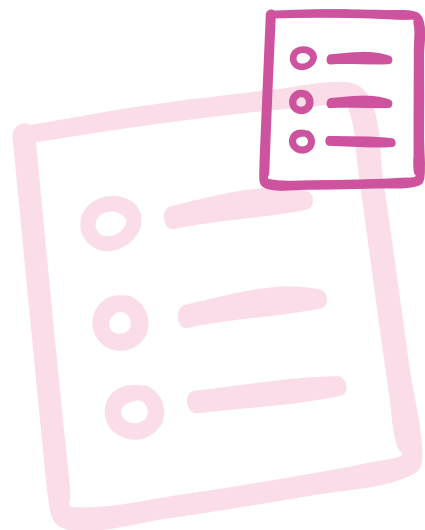
[Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) - Section 22 Education - (1) It is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person's disability.

[Understanding the Disability Services and Inclusion Act](#) - The DSI Act replaced and repealed the Disability Services Act 1986

[Disability rights training](#)

[Creating accessible and inclusive communications](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) - Article 28 says that children and young people have the right to education no matter who they are: regardless of race, gender or disability.





## Case Study 1: Isabelle

### Example of a little one who does not meet NDIS access – supports for family.

**Isabelle is three years old and lives with her mother, Rachel, and two-year-old twin sisters.** A busy working single parent, Rachel finds it difficult managing the competing demands of working and caring for three young children.

**Isabelle's father lives interstate.** He visits Isabelle twice a year. **When Rachel is working, her elderly parents care for Isabelle and her siblings,** but they are finding it challenging caring for three small children.

**Rachel only has one day a week off work and on that day, she takes Isabelle to playgroup.**

During the playgroup sessions, **Rachel noticed Isabelle's speech was not as well developed as other children her age.**

**The playgroup leader suggested Rachel should make an appointment with an Early Childhood Partner.**

**During the appointment, through careful questioning, functional screening and observing Isabelle,** it became clear that while Isabelle had met most of her developmental milestones, **it appeared she had a speech delay** although this didn't have a substantial impact on Isabelle's other developmental domains.

**Her behaviour, social skills and physical development were at an age-appropriate level.**

**Isabelle did not meet the developmental delay access criteria as outlined in the NDIS Act.** It was determined the support required for her speech delay was best met through mainstream supports.

#### Steps taken to support Isabelle and her family

- ✓ **The Early Childhood Partner discussed mainstream and community referral options with Rachel.**
- ✓ **Isabelle was then referred to the local Community Health Centre to access speech therapy.**
- ✓ **The Early Childhood Partner and Rachel also discussed suitable childcare options for Isabelle to assist in relieving some of the caring responsibilities for Rachel and her elderly parents.**



## Case Study 2: Georgia

### Example of a little one who does meet NDIS access – supports for family.



Three-year-old Georgia and her parents, Chloe and Cameron, have just started seeing a paediatrician who referred them to an Early Childhood Partner.

**Georgia presents with a significant communication, physical and social developmental delay. She can walk short distances but fatigues easily and is a bit clumsy on her feet.**

**Georgia has started speaking but she is only using one or two words, so she has difficulty expressing herself.** Her family are concerned and have tried various strategies to encourage her development but feel the strategies they have tried haven't worked. It's frustrating for Georgia too, who often screams at length and is unsettled during the day and night.

Chloe, Cameron and Georgia met with an Early Childhood Partner in their home where Chloe and Cameron discussed their concerns.

**The Early Childhood Partner observed Georgia in her natural environment and completed a screening tool.**

Chloe and Cameron identified and discussed goals for their daughter's development.

The Early Childhood Partner advised Georgia's parents to support her development she **would benefit from longer-term supports from a multidisciplinary team** through a NDIS plan. **This would include regular sessions, delivering specialised early childhood intervention** (with a key worker and it may include consultations/ongoing support with other members of the early childhood early intervention team as required).

**The Early Childhood Partner identified and recommended an assistive technology assessment to help aid Georgia's mobility.** Informal and mainstream supports were discussed with Chloe and Cameron and the Early Childhood Partner arranged to put them in touch with a local peer support group and an educational play program.

The family was also encouraged to engage with their local maternal and child health centre.

The Early Childhood Partner supported Chloe and Cameron to complete an Access Request Form, which was submitted to the NDIS.

Georgia became an NDIS participant and the Early Childhood Partner worked with Chloe and Cameron to **develop a tailored plan, which included the goals they had identified**

**for their daughter.** It also included recommendations for funded supports so Georgia could work towards the goals in her plan. This was then submitted to the NDIS for consideration.

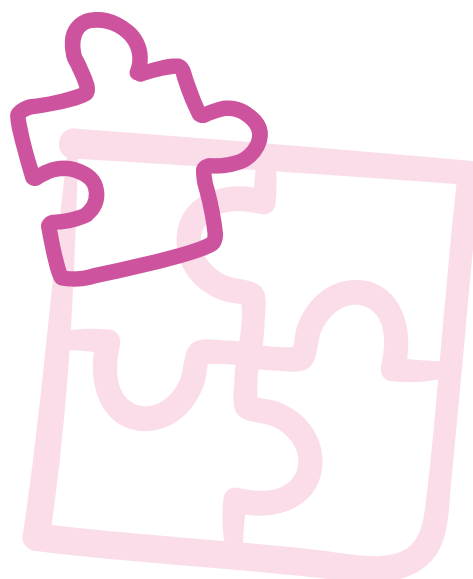
**The NDIS approved Georgia's plan, which included the funding recommended by the Early Childhood Partner for specialised early childhood intervention and an assistive technology assessment.**

The Early Childhood Partner supported Georgia's parents, providing them with a list of local providers who could deliver the supports funded in her NDIS plan.

Georgia and her family will meet with the Early Childhood Partner every 12 months to review her support needs and, where necessary, develop a new NDIS plan tailored to Georgia's changing support needs.

### **Steps to support Georgia and her family**

- ✓ Meet with the family to understand the goals that have been made and supports that may be needed for Georgia in the Early Childhood Education Centre (ECEC) setting.
- ✓ Staff to complete any training to support the use of Georgia's assistive technology.



## My supports

Family GP – phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Early Childhood Education Centre – phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary School: \_\_\_\_\_

## Emergency numbers

**Emergency (Ambulance, Fire or Police) .....000**

Poisons Information ..... 13 11 26

Healthdirect Australia - 24 hour health advice ..... 1800 022 222

**In an emergency see your GP or go straight to the emergency department at your nearest hospital.**

Pregnancy Birth & Baby ..... 1800 882 436

Karitane (parenting support) ..... 1300 227 464

Tresillian Family Care Centres (outside Sydney metro area) ..... 1300 272 736

Parentline ..... 1300 130 052

Australian Breastfeeding Association – 24 hours, everyday ..... 1800 686 268

Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Australia (PANDA) ..... 1300 726 306

Translating and Interpreting Service ..... 13 14 50

National Relay Service (service for d/Deaf or hearing/speech impairment) ..... 1300 555 727

SMS Relay ..... 0423 677 767

Kids Helpline ..... 1800 551 800

Mental Health ..... 1800 011 511

Headspace ..... 13 11 14

Beyond Blue ..... 1300 224 636

Domestic Violence Line – 24 hours everyday ..... 1800 656 463

Link2home Homelessness ..... 1800 152 152

Child Protection Helpline ..... 13 21 11

Interrelate – personal & family relationship counselling ..... 1300 473 528

Northcott (NDIS Early Childhood Partner) ..... 1800 118 481

Services Australia – Families line ..... 13 61 50

Centrelink Indigenous Call Centre ..... 1800 136 380

Services NSW ..... 13 77 88

Salvation Army ..... 13 72 58

Samaritans ..... 1300 656 336

Benevolent Society NSW ..... 1800 236 762

St Vincent de Paul ..... 13 18 12

## Community directories

[My Community Directory](#)

## Ask Izzy

See your local council website for local supports – go to the search bar and type in Community Directory or My Community Directory.

## Notes


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# Northcott NDIS Early Childhood Services

For more information visit:

 [northcott.com.au/services/ndis-early-childhood-approach/](http://northcott.com.au/services/ndis-early-childhood-approach/)

 [northcott@ndis.gov.au](mailto:northcott@ndis.gov.au)

 1800 118 481

Created by members of the Northcott Early Childhood Community Capacity Building Team – Saira Booler, Di Fisher, Hannah Prosser and Tamara Salashnikova.