

Information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Factsheet 1 for foster and kinship carers

What is the NDIS?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the new way of providing support for people with disability, their families and carers.

The NDIS is managed by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

NDIS Implementation

The NDIS rolled out in Queensland between July 2016 and June 2019, and is now live across the state.

As the NDIS progresses to full-scheme operation in each region, processes and relationships are continuing to develop between the NDIA and Queensland Government services, including our department.

Benefits of the NDIS for children and young people

The NDIS takes a flexible, individualised approach that invests in children and young people with disability early to improve their outcomes later in life.

It provides certainty for children and young people who become participants in the scheme that they'll have access to support to meet their changing needs and goals over a lifetime.

The NDIS model of self-direction empowers participants and their families and carers by enabling choice and control over how, when and where their disability supports and services are delivered.

Access to the NDIS for children in foster/kinship care

In general, accessing the NDIS involves:

1. Gathering eligibility evidence and making an Access Request
2. Working with an NDIA planner or NDIS Partner to develop a Participant Plan.

Children and young people who are already receiving support from Disability Services will continue to receive their existing services until they have an approved NDIS plan.

The role of the Child's Representative

The NDIS Act 2013 requires that participants under 18 be represented by a parent or guardian*.

When the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women has guardianship through a child protection order, the Department will be the Child's Representative.

Where the Department has custody of the child but not guardianship, the child's parent or guardian is the Child's Representative and the Department will work with and support them through all stages of the process.

When an order grants long-term guardianship to another suitable person until the child turns 18, that person will be the Child's Representative.

Being the Child's Representative involves:

- providing consent for the child or young person to become a participant in the NDIS
- coordinating collection of eligibility evidence to support the NDIS Access Request
- acting as the contact point for the child or young person for the NDIS
- making decisions about the planning process, including who takes part.

**The Act allows for a child to represent themselves in certain circumstances as determined by the CEO*

Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) for children aged 0-6

The NDIA has engaged Partner organisations to work with children aged 0-6 as part of their Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) approach.

An Early Childhood Early Intervention Partner is the first point of contact with the NDIS for children aged 0-6 with emerging disability or developmental delay.

The ECEI Partner may:

- make connections for the child with relevant services in their area, like their community health centre or a local playgroup
- provide short-term early-intervention therapy support
- help request NDIS access and develop the NDIS Plan for the child if longer-term support is needed.

Foster/kinship carer involvement

Whichever person or entity is the Child's Representative with the NDIS, foster and kinship carers are key contributors when it comes to developing, implementing and monitoring their NDIS plan.

Foster and kinship carers are best placed to provide important information about the child's strengths, interests, goals and required disability supports.

During development of the plan, the Child's Representative can request funding for support coordination. The support coordinator will help with choosing and connecting with mainstream, community and NDIS-registered support services.

The Department is committed to a partnership approach with foster and kinship carers in relation to the NDIS and in all aspects of a child's care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

When the Chief Executive is the Child's Representative for the NDIS, an independent person may be involved to facilitate the child's and family's participation in decision making, where appropriate, regarding NDIS access, NDIS planning and sourcing of providers.

What will the NDIS fund?

The NDIS will fund reasonable and necessary supports that are specific to a child's disability or developmental delay and additional to the needs of children of similar ages in similar out of home care arrangements.

Reasonable and necessary support may include:

- skills and capacity building
- supports to enable sustainable caring arrangements (e.g. vacation care)
- therapy and behaviour support (e.g. speech, physiotherapy)
- aids and equipment, including mobility equipment and consumables
- home modifications and transport
- disability-specific parent and carer training programs
- support coordination.

Where the Department is the child's guardian, disability services for the child must be delivered by NDIS-registered providers.

If a child is not eligible for the NDIS, the Department will continue to meet their disability support needs.

Carer payments/allowances

The Department is responsible for meeting the needs of children in care and helping foster and kinship carers cover the day-to-day costs of the children they care for.

There will be no change to the fortnightly carers allowance or high support needs carers allowance as a result of the NDIS.

The complex support needs allowance will be individually reviewed and adjusted accordingly if disability support costs previously covered by the allowance are included in the child's NDIS plan and are no longer being paid by the carer.

More information

- www.csyw.qld.gov.au/NDIS
- www.ndis.gov.au
- Subscribe to the NDIS e-newsletter at: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/subscribe.html>
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