



The National Disability Insurance Scheme

Information for Foster and Kinship Carers

What is the NDIS?

The NDIS funds reasonable and necessary support to help children with disability or developmental delay reach their goals in a range of areas.

The NDIS helps eligible children, their families and carers access services and support in their communities and can provide funding for disability supports like early childhood intervention and other therapies, community access, wheelchairs and other equipment or communication devices.

Funding is provided through an NDIS plan and may be used for:

- support workers to enable skill and capacity building
- therapy e.g. psychology, speech, physiotherapy
- behaviour support
- aids and equipment, including wheelchairs and other mobility equipment
- consumables e.g. continence aids, PEG formula
- home modifications and transport
- disability-specific parent and carer training programs
- support coordination.

The NDIS may also fund supports to increase the capacity for families and carers to care for their children and young people for example, vacation care and respite.

The role of the Child Representative

The *NDIS Act 2013* requires that participants under 18 be represented by a parent or guardian. This person is known as the 'Child Representative', and they are responsible for:

- 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.

For children in foster and kinship care the type of child protection order determines who the Child Representative will be.

Order type	Child Representative
Custody to the Chief Executive	Parent
Guardianship to the Chief Executive	Senior team leader
Long-term guardianship to a suitable person	Long-term guardian
Permanent care order	Permanent guardian

Access to the NDIS for children in foster and kinship care

Access to the NDIS for **children under 9 years** is through the Early Childhood Approach (ECA) pathway which is delivered through an Early Childhood Partner.

Access to this pathway does not require a diagnosis. The Early Childhood partner is contacted directly where there are developmental concerns. Support provided may include:

- making connections for the child with relevant services in their area, like their

community health centre or a local playgroup

- providing short-term early-intervention therapy support
- helping to request NDIS access and develop the NDIS Plan for the child if longer-term support is needed.

For children over 9 accessing the NDIS involves:

1. Gathering evidence and completing an Access Request Form (ARF)
2. Working with an NDIA planner or NDIS Partner to develop an NDIS plan
3. Implementing and monitoring the plan

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

Foster/kinship carer involvement

Child Safety 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.

Foster and kinship carers are best placed to provide important information about the child's strengths, interests, goals and required disability supports and are key contributors when it comes to developing, implementing and monitoring the NDIS plan.

During development of the plan, the Child Representative can request funding for support coordination who will help with choosing and connecting with mainstream, community and disability support services.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

When the Child Safety is the Child Representative for the NDIS, an independent person can be involved to support the child's and family's decision making, where appropriate, regarding NDIS access, NDIS planning and providers.

Children and young people from Culturally and Linguistically diverse backgrounds

When Child Safety is the Child's Representative for the NDIS, we will engage an interpreter for the child, young person, and the family throughout the NDIS process.

Carer payments and allowances

Child Safety 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 an NDIS plan.

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.

Further information

- [NDIS website](#)
- [Caring for a child with an NDIS plan](#)
- [NDIS planning for children in care](#)