

# Supported school transport and the NDIS

Discussion paper

We want to know what you think

Easy Read version



## How to use this document



People who work for the Australian Government wrote this document.

There were people who work for state and territory governments who helped too.

When you see the word 'we', it means all the people in this big group.



This document is what we call a *discussion paper*. It gives people a chance to tell us what they think.



We have written this information in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



We have written some words in **bold**. We explain what these words mean. There is a list of these words on page 32.



This Easy Read document is a summary of another document.



You can find the other document on our website at [www.engage.dss.gov.au](http://www.engage.dss.gov.au)



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

## **What's in this document?**

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## About the NDIS



The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is changing how people with disability in Australia get the supports they need.



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



The NDIS gives people with disability choice and control.



The NDIS gives people with disability funding for supports that help them reach their goals.



We call children and young people with disability who take part in the **NDIS participants**.



## What is supported school transport?



Some children and young people with disability use **supported school transport** to travel:

- to school
- home from school.

Supported school transport services include:



- specialised school buses – from mini buses to large buses



- transport in smaller vans or cars



- travel training for young people so they can get to and from school on their own



- transport payments for parents who don't have many options.

## About this discussion paper



Governments across Australia are working together to decide if supported school transport could work as part of the NDIS.



We need to make sure supported school transport:

- is safe
- meets people's needs
- does not cost too much
- is reliable.



We also need to make sure supported school transport works in the same way across Australia.



Doing things in a new way could mean a big change from how things are done now.



We need to think carefully about things that:

- might cause problems
- would be good for everyone.



This discussion paper gives you a chance to tell us what you think.



There are questions for you to think about.



You can write answers to the questions and send them to us.



We tell you how to do this on page 30.



The things people tell us will help us decide whether supported school transport should:

- be part of the NDIS
- or stay the way it is now.



## Supported school transport and the NDIS



Some NDIS participants have transport to and from school in their NDIS plans.



The NDIA needs to think about how to:

- meet the needs of NDIS participants
- help NDIS participants reach their goals.



NDIS participants should travel to school in the same ways as other students as much as possible.



NDIS participants need to have supported school transport no matter where they live. This might be hard to do.

## The future of supported school transport



We have two options for how supported school transport can work in the future:



- keep things the way they are now



- do things in a new way.



We explain these options on the following pages.

## How does supported school transport work now?



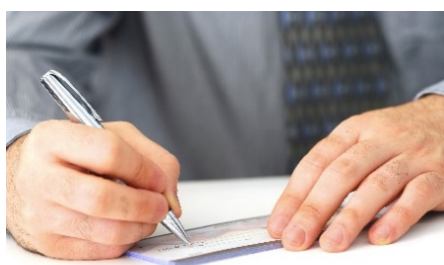
At the moment, state and territory governments pay for supported school transport.



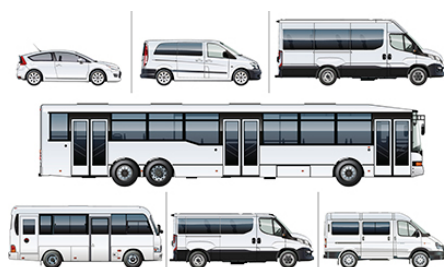
The state and territory governments all do things differently.



Some state and territory governments run their own services.



Some state and territory governments pay **transport providers** for supported school transport.



Transport providers are companies that offer different types of:

- transport – cars, vans or buses
- transport services.



State and territory governments:

- decide who can use supported school transport
- work out where the buses will go
- set the safety standards and make sure they are followed
- pay the transport providers.



Families need to make sure their child:

- gets on and off the transport they use
- is safe
- is on time.



Families need to contact the school or transport provider if there are any:

- changes
- problems.



Some non-government schools do things differently.



They might:

- have their own transport for students to use
- use school fees to pay for transport.



Some people may like the way things are done now.

### Questions to think about

How well does supported school transport work now?

How could supported school transport be made better?

Should we keep things the way they are now?





## A new way for supported school transport to work



Under the NDIS, participants could get funding to pay for supported school transport.

The funding might include:



- travel to and from school



- a support person or carer to travel with them



- travel training so they can learn how to get to and from school on their own



- changes to a car or van so they can be driven to school by their parents or a carer.





Participants and their families would have choice and control over their travel to and from school.



This would be a big change from how things are done now.



There are things that might:

- be different
- cause problems.

They include:



- there aren't many transport providers to choose from



- families may have a lot of extra work to do

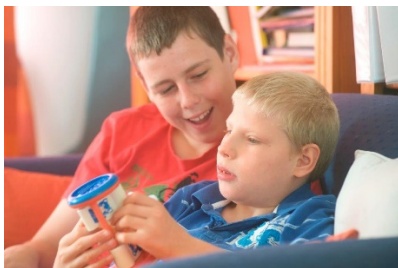


- transport brokers are a new service that we don't have yet
- We explain what transport brokers could do on page 19.



- we don't know how much things will cost.

There are things that would be good for everyone, including:



- participants and their families could have choice and control



- transport providers could grow their business



- supported school transport could get better.

## How will the new way work?



If we had a new way for supported school transport to work, there are things that would be different.



**The NDIA would decide how much funding participants will get for transport.**

The NDIA have rules about what is:



- reasonable – the right level of support for each person



- necessary – what each person needs.



The funding would be based on these rules.



Parents and carers would still:

- choose the right school for their child
- organise transport.



**Parents and carers would choose the transport provider.**



They might get help from a transport broker.

We explain what transport brokers do on page 19.

### Questions to think about

When you think about supported school transport, what parts of choice and control are most important for families?



What would be good about families organising their own transport?

What problems could families have organising their own transport?

What opportunities would this give transport providers?

How flexible would the supported school transport need to be for families?



**Transport brokers are a new service that might be offered by the NDIS.**

Transport brokers could help families to:



- develop travel plans



- find transport providers



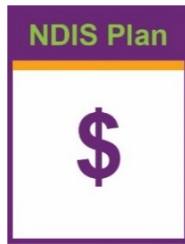
- work out service agreements with providers



- make bookings



- deal with some problems.



If families choose to use transport brokers, they will get funding.



There might be lots of transport brokers in some areas.

Other areas might have very few transport brokers, or even none.

### Questions to think about

How could a transport broker help you manage supported school transport?

What would be good about having transport brokers?

What problems might transport brokers cause?

What opportunities would this give service providers?

Should there be rules about what services transport brokers can offer?

What other options are there?







**Families and carers would work with transport providers to choose:**

- **pick-up and drop-off points**
- **which way to travel to and from school**
- **pick-up and drop-off times.**



Transport brokers could do this too.



Families and schools would need to work out what support the child needs to get on and off the transport safely.



Some transport providers might have a support person for their transport.



Some children might need their own support person.

This support would be part of their NDIS plan.



**The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission and state and territory governments would make sure supported school transport is:**

- **high-quality**
- **safe for students.**



The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is new.

It has a set of rules for keeping NDIS participants safe.



The service agreement between NDIS participants and transport providers would need to explain how the child's needs will be met.

The service agreements could include:



- any medical or behaviour support the child needs



- whether the child has a support person for travel



- safe ways for the child to get on and off the transport



- what to do if the child isn't dropped off or picked up on time



- emergency contact details



- action plans.



If parents are concerned about the safety of their child's supported school transport, they could tell the:

- transport provider
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
- police or other authorities.

## Questions to think about

How do we make sure children are safe when they use supported school transport?



What should transport brokers and transport providers do to keep children safe?

What should parents and schools do to keep children safe?

What other things could be done to keep children safe?



**The cost of supported school transport would need to be worked out.**



The costs need to be right for people who live in:

- regional cities or towns
- country areas
- remote areas that are far away from cities or towns.



The cost for transport might be higher in these areas because:

- there is further to travel
- less people need transport.



The Government and the NDIA need to think about:

- what the costs should be
- what different areas need.

## **Questions to think about**

What things do the NDIA need to think about when it comes to how much supported school transport should cost?

What do transport providers need to know to work out how much things will cost?







**Supported school transport would be paid with funding in the participant's NDIS plan.**



Transport providers registered with the NDIS would manage their payments online.



Families would use funding in the participant's NDIS plan to pay transport providers who aren't registered.



Transport brokers can help make sure families are paying for the services they use when they need to.

### Questions to think about

What would be the good things for families if they look after their own payments?

What support might families need?

What might be different for transport providers if things change?

What new costs might there be? What would be good about this?

What problems might this cause?







**Everyone involved would need to talk to each other about any day-to-day:**

- **changes**
- **problems.**



This could include:

- families
- transport providers
- transport brokers
- schools.



The service agreement would need to change if there were:

- big changes
- changes that will last a long time.



Schools might have to deal with extra traffic at drop-off and pick-up times.

## Questions to think about

How might extra traffic around schools at drop-off and pick-up times affect the:

- school?
- local community?
- local government?



**Any changes to supported school transport would need to make it:**

- **better quality**
- **safer.**

Some things might need to change, such as:

- laws about:
  - transport services
  - vehicle safety
  - choosing the right drivers





- ways to check if people are right for working with:
  - children
  - people with disability



- rules and guidelines in different states and territories



- rules about how people should behave



- the ways state and territory governments find service providers to work with.

## Questions to think about

How would the new way be better than the way things work now?

What else can you tell us about the new way for supported school transport to work?

What other options could we think about?



## How to tell us what you think



We want to know what you think about the new way for supported school transport to work.

You can tell us what you think by:

- writing to us



NDIS Transport  
Department of Social Services  
GPO Box 9820  
Canberra  
ACT 2601



- sending us an email  
[transport@dss.gov.au](mailto:transport@dss.gov.au)



- going to a workshop in your state or territory.



You can visit the website to find out when and where our workshops will be held.

[www.engage.dss.gov.au](http://www.engage.dss.gov.au)



We need to know what you think by 20 July 2018.

## What happens next



We will think carefully about what people tell us.



We will work out whether the new way for supported school transport will work.



We will tell you how things are going later in 2018.



Supported school transport will stay the same until governments across Australia agree about what to do.



If anything changes, we will make sure we tell:

- NDIS participants
- families and carers
- schools
- transport providers.

## Word list



### Participants

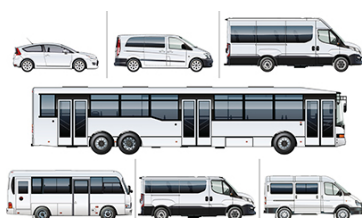
Children and young people with disability who take part in the NDIS.



### Supported school transport

Support for children and young people with disability to travel:

- to school
- home from school.



### Transport providers

Companies that offer different types of:

- transport – cars, vans or buses
- transport services.



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