



# CART BEFORE THE HORSE BUT THE HORSE HAS BOLTED!

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Reimagine Australia's response to the Department of Social Services  
Discussion Paper on Draft Lists of NDIS Supports

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# About Reimagine

**Imagine a world of unlimited possibility. A world without barriers, where opportunity is infinite. A world where we can be as responsive as we desire. A world where the benefit of effortless access enables profound social and economic dividends for children, families, community, business and government. A world where children have every opportunity to thrive. At Reimagine Australia this is the world we dream of.**

Reimagine Australia, formerly known as Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA), has been the leading Australian body for early childhood outcomes for very young children with disability, developmental delay and neurodivergence, and their families, since 1986.

As the singular national organisation that works with families, the practitioners who support them, government, service providers, and community to enable the very best outcomes for young developing children and their families, we seek to be courageous advocates for systems redesign and reshaped policy approaches, to ensure that responsive and inclusive supports and services are embedded as a cornerstone of Australian society.

Reimagine Australia's purpose is to ensure that all children, including those with disability, developmental delay, and neurodivergence, and their families, have every opportunity to realise their potential during their future-shaping early years.

For more than 38 years, Reimagine Australia has been leading the early childhood sector in embedding best practice and inclusive design at its core. We do this by working in continuous co-design with families and the practitioners who support them, to reimagine the future by enabling life-changing outcomes for their children

Reimagine Australia dreams of a tomorrow where the eco-system supporting families of young children provides them every opportunity to thrive, and where inclusion is not a goal, it's our way of life. Together we can change the future. Are you ready to Reimagine?

# Foreword

**I present this response to the Australian Governments consultation on draft lists of NDIS Supports, with a sense of urgency and caution.**

While Reimagine Australia are incredibly grateful for the Government's significant and genuine commitment to reforming the NDIS to better serve young children with disabilities, developmental delays, and neurodivergence, I must express our profound concern about the current trajectory.

The NDIS, a lifeline for thousands of families, cannot be reshaped to fit a political timeline or agenda without risking significant harm. The haste with which these reforms are being pursued, coupled with inadequate consultation and the fear generated among families, threatens to undermine the very goals the reforms aim to achieve.

Rushed processes, such as this one, are leaving families of young children who require support, feeling alienated and extremely fearful about losing access to the supports they desperately need, ultimately defeating the purpose of the NDIS. While this is certainly not the intent of the reforms, it is a product of the puzzling processes and pace at which the Government is proceeding.

Our report, titled "Cart before the horse, but the horse has bolted!", serves as a critical warning to the Government. It is more than just a response to the draft list; it is a call for thoughtful, measured, but continued, action.

Whilst we are grateful for a Minister committed to action, we urge the Government to slow down just enough to engage in genuine co-design with the communities who will rely on these supports, and to ensure that any changes are introduced in a way that families can understand and embrace at a pace that removes fear.

Furthermore, creating a draft list of services before defining the Foundational Supports that will fundamentally support the ecosystem of young Australian children in their early years, is counterproductive. We strongly advocate for a methodical approach that makes sense, and that prioritises the needs and voices of families, ensuring that reforms are not only effective but also inclusive and supportive of those who need them most.

In summary, while we support the Governments intent, we caution against the risks of moving too quickly. We urge the Government to reconsider its approach, to prioritise genuine consultation, and to ensure that the reforms are implemented in a way that truly delivers for the children and families who rely on the NDIS.



**Vonne Keane AM**  
Chief Executive Officer  
REIMAGINE AUSTRALIA



Reimagine Australia believes that Government should urgently prioritise reform to simplify the complex and confusing systems, policies and rules that families of young children with disability, developmental delay, and neurodivergence currently navigate.

Once again, we call for the establishment of a universal early childhood system, overseen by an Early Childhood Agency, that partners with the NDIS, Education, Early Childhood Education & Care, Health, Social Services and Justice to ensure that all of Australia's children have the opportunity to realise their potential during their critical early years.

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Every Child  
Every Possibility

# Exec Summary

**The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was created with a vision of hope and empowerment - a promise to support Australians with disabilities in leading full, independent lives. But as the system evolves, it is crucial that this promise does not falter.**

At Reimagine Australia, we have seen firsthand the profound impact the NDIS can have on the lives of children with disability, developmental delay and neurodivergence, as well as the challenges it can present when the system falls short. We come to you with a deep sense of responsibility and urgency, advocating not just for policy changes, but for the lives of tens of thousands of young children and their families who rely on these supports every day.

Decisions made now will echo across generations, shaping the futures of those who are most vulnerable. We urge the government to listen with openness to the voices of those affected, to recognise the real and pressing needs of Australian families, and to ensure that the NDIS is a beacon of hope, rather than a source of frustration and despair. The time to act with compassion and conviction is now.

In this report, we delve into the key concerns raised by our community through consultation and a targeted survey. We begin by addressing the widespread confusion and lack of understanding surrounding the proposed changes to the NDIS Supports Lists - a confusion exacerbated by the rushed and limited consultation process.

This report explores the deep fears held by families, who already find the NDIS overly complex and difficult to navigate, and who are now worried about the potential loss of

critical supports, and the further erosion of their choice and control. The report also highlights the lack of clarity around foundational supports, which leaves families uncertain and anxious about how these changes will impact their ability to access the services their children need.

We highlight the urgent need for flexibility to be designed into the NDIS early childhood approach, to ensure that families have access to services and supports that fall outside the rigid confines of the proposed lists, including essential respite and family supports.

We urge the government to embrace a vision for the NDIS that is not just a list of allowable supports, but that finds a balance between what must be legislated and a flexible and responsive approach that adapts to the unique and changing needs of developing children during their foundational early years.

We ask the government to act with urgency, and in-line with evidence-based best practice, and ensure that the NDIS fulfils its promise to provide genuine support, dignity, and opportunity for all Australians with disabilities, as it considers its position on the list of NDIS Supports.

# Introduction

Reimagine Australia's position on the proposed NDIS Supports Lists is grounded in our unwavering commitment to ensuring that every child with disability, developmental delay, and neurodivergence, and their families, has access to a support system that is easy to navigate, comprehensive, flexible, and responsive to their unique needs. The NDIS has undeniably transformed the lives of many individuals with disability across Australia. However, the ongoing success of the scheme hinges on the careful development and implementation of its support offerings.

Importantly, we believe that the way legislation is written and administered should be tailored to fit a desired purpose and outcome, rather than the legislation require a process of administration that frustrates and jeopardises the very outcomes it seeks to support. We are concerned that the legislation requiring a list of what is "in" and what is "out", will further exacerbate the critical issues around very young children that are succinctly highlighted in the NDIS Review.

For very young children and their families, the proposed Supports Lists are so much more than a mere administrative necessity. They are a critical lifeline for a child to realise their potential. Further, they represent a significant juncture in the NDIS's evolution, with the potential to redesign in a way that will either enhance or hinder the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of Australians, now and into the future.

Of primary concern, is the expedited consultation process. The limited timeframe for "consultation" has not provided a sufficient window for meaningful engagement from the community, particularly from parents and caregivers who are already stretched thin by the demands of navigating the NDIS. The short timeframe for feedback, brings the tangible risk of marginalising the very voices that are most impacted by these changes, and thereby compromises the participatory nature of policy-making that is essential for a fair and effective NDIS.

In addition to the shortened consultation process, we hold concern as to the potential for the proposed Supports Lists to deepen existing inequities, particularly for marginalised communities. Indigenous families, those living in remote areas, and culturally and linguistically diverse populations who have historically faced significant barriers to accessing NDIS services. The current draft lists do not sufficiently address these systemic challenges.

Without deliberate and targeted strategies to ensure that communities are not further disadvantaged, the proposed changes could lead to a widened the gap in service provision, turning the NDIS into a mechanism that deepens, rather than alleviates, inequity. Moreover, the complexity, lack of clarity, and inflexibility, of the proposed lists adds another layer of difficulty for families who are already overwhelmed by the NDIS system.

The Supports Lists should function as a flexible guide, capable of adapting to the diverse and changing needs of participants, particularly children. The exclusion of essential services such as respite care and family-supports is a significant oversight that could have serious repercussions for both participants and their families.

Furthermore, the omission of smart devices and telehealth technologies from the Supports Lists reflects a short-sighted approach that may lead to higher long-term costs, and lack of value, as families are forced to seek less effective, more expensive alternatives, using complicated pathways.

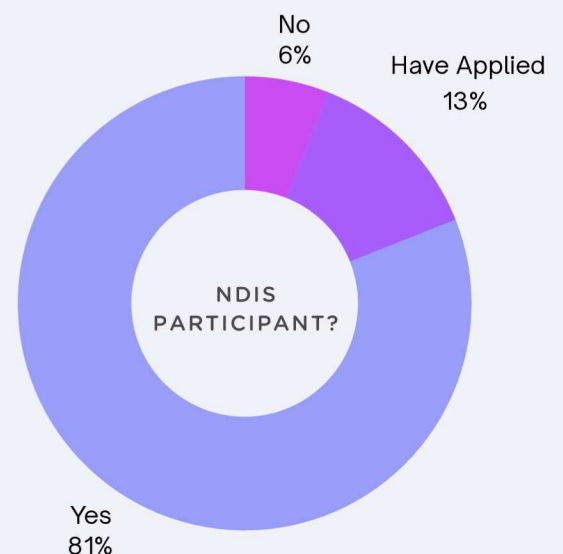
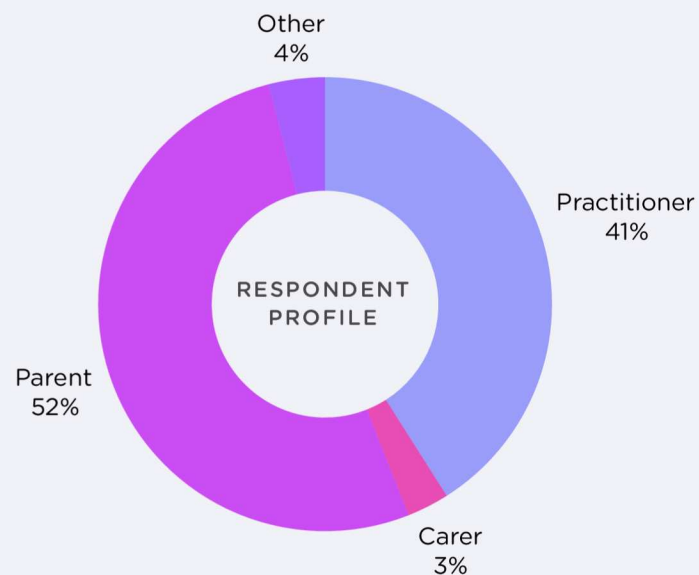
# Methodology and Results

**Given the contracted timeline for consultation, Reimagine utilised a targeted online survey as our primary method of data collection.**

Reimagine Australia works in continuous co-design with parents and carers of young children with disability, developmental delay, and neurodivergence, and the spectrum of practitioners who support them.

From the work, Reimagine Australia is privileged to hold detailed and valuable insights, that we complemented with the findings from the online survey to inform this response.

The survey was strategically designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative data from a diverse range of stakeholders, including parents, caregivers, and practitioners. The survey was disseminated through various digital channels, including via email and social media platforms, ensuring maximised accessibility and engagement across our wider community, in a shortened timeframe.





The survey was structured to elicit detailed responses on key aspects of the NDIS, particularly the proposed changes to the Supports Lists.

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on their understanding of the NDIS, their experiences with the current system, and their concerns regarding the proposed reforms.

The survey achieved a robust response rate, with 52% of respondents identifying as parents, 41% as practitioners, and 7% as carers or others. Among the parent respondents, 81% had a current NDIS plan, providing a well-rounded view of the current participant experience.

Upon analysis of the survey data, several common themes emerged. One of the most prevalent concerns was the perceived complexity of the NDIS, with many respondents highlighting how difficult it is to navigate the system and access necessary supports.

A significant portion of respondents also expressed anxiety over the rushed nature of the consultation process, fearing that it did not allow sufficient time for thorough consideration and input, particularly from marginalised communities.

Another recurring theme was the fear that the proposed changes could lead to reduced flexibility in accessing supports, with many respondents worried that critical services such as respite and family supports might be diminished or excluded entirely.

Additionally, there was a strong call for the inclusion of essential technologies, such as telehealth and smart devices, which many respondents felt were unjustly excluded from the Support Lists.

These common themes form the foundation of Reimagine Australia's response, ensuring that the feedback provided is directly informed by the lived experiences and pressing concerns of those most affected by the NDIS and its proposed changes.

# Our Findings

As we analysed the data and insights from our survey, eight clear key themes emerged, which are outlined in the pages below.



## Theme 1: Lack of understanding

The survey revealed several key insights into the community's perceptions and concerns regarding the proposed changes to the NDIS Supports Lists.

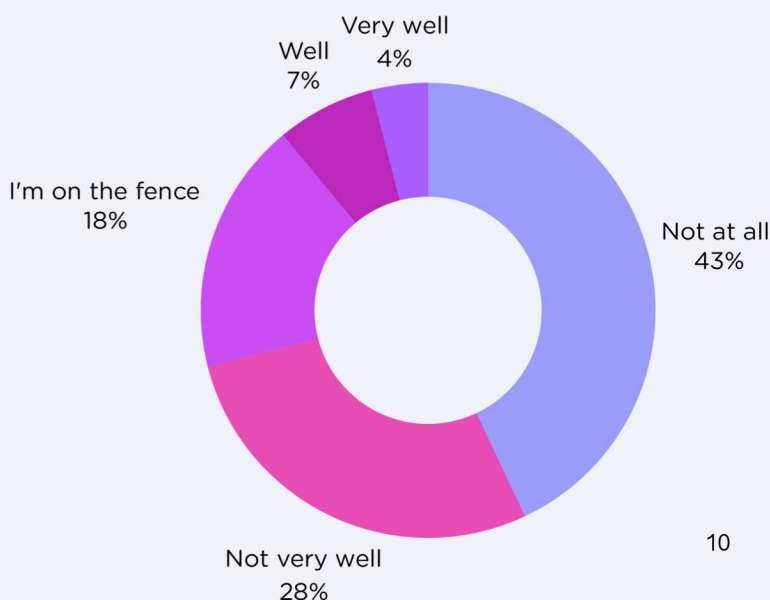
A significant finding was the widespread lack of understanding about the changes among respondents, with 71% indicating that they had either no understanding or very little understanding of the upcoming reforms.

This lack of awareness underscores a critical issue: the consultation and communication processes surrounding these reforms have not been sufficient to engage and inform the community effectively.

Many respondents expressed frustration at the rapid pace of the process, highlighting concerns that the reforms were being rushed without adequate consultation with the disability community.

Comments such as "Such important reforms are being rushed through with no regard for the long-term impact for children with a disability and their families" reflect a deep-seated anxiety among parents and carers who feel that their voices are not being heard in this critical process.

**WE ASKED RESPONDENTS HOW WELL THEY UNDERSTOOD THE CHANGES HAPPENING WITH THE NDIS. THESE ARE OUR FINDINGS:**





## Theme 2: The process is just too rushed

The survey results revealed a widespread concern among respondents regarding the rapid pace of the NDIS reform process.

Many felt that the reforms were being rushed through without sufficient time for thorough community engagement and input. Respondents expressed frustration that such significant changes, which have profound implications for children with disabilities and their families, were being implemented with little regard for their long-term impact. A parent noted that “We are already navigating a complex system and these changes mean we keep missing out on important supports,” highlighting the anxiety caused by the hurried process.

There was also a strong sentiment that the bill had been developed without meaningful consultation with the disability community, as one carer pointed out: “The NDIS new bill is not designed in consultation with the disability community. It is rushed and the Government has an urgency to pass the new bill without the significant involvement of the disability community.”



**The lack of adequate consultation and transparency has left many feeling excluded from the decision-making process, with calls for more time to properly review and understand the proposed changes. The brevity of the consultation period has led to concerns that the voices of those most affected - families with lived experience of disability - have not been sufficiently heard or considered in shaping these crucial reforms.**

# 3

## Theme 3: Fear that it's just getting harder and harder

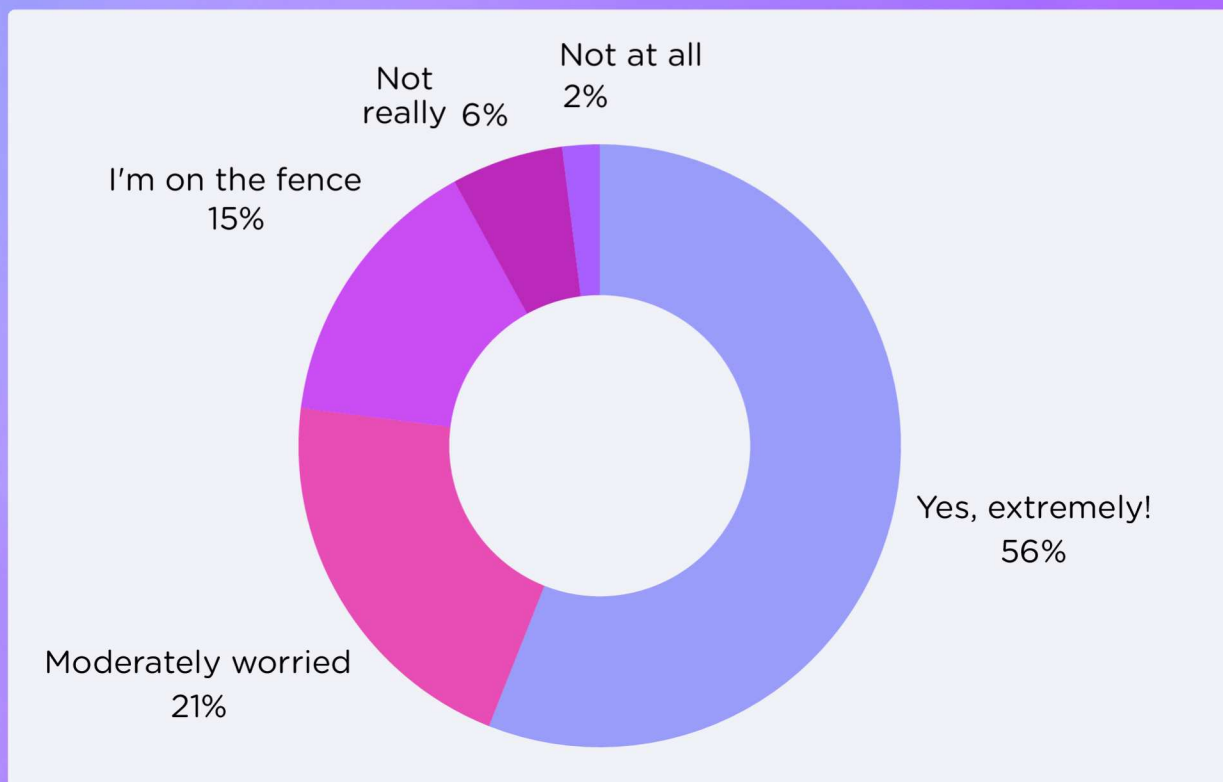
A pervasive theme that emerged from the survey is the deep fear and anxiety among families regarding the complexity of the NDIS and their ability to navigate it effectively.

Many respondents shared that they already find the system overwhelming, with 63% indicating that it is either far too difficult or difficult to find information that helps them understand and access NDIS supports.

This challenge is further compounded by the fact that 45% of respondents struggled to understand their child's NDIS plan, with only 17% finding it easy to navigate. These difficulties contribute to a broader sense of uncertainty and fear, particularly in light of the proposed changes to the Supports Lists.

Families are particularly concerned about the potential loss of critical funding and supports under the new NDIS proposals. A staggering 87% of respondents expressed worry that important funding would be stripped from their child's plan, with many fearing that this would lead to reduced access to essential services. Parents and practitioners alike voiced concerns that the proposed changes might shift responsibilities back to mainstream services that are ill-equipped to handle the specific needs of children with disability.

### WE ASKED RESPONDENTS IF THEY WERE WORRIED ABOUT THE UPCOMING CHANGES TO THE NDIS. THESE ARE OUR FINDINGS:

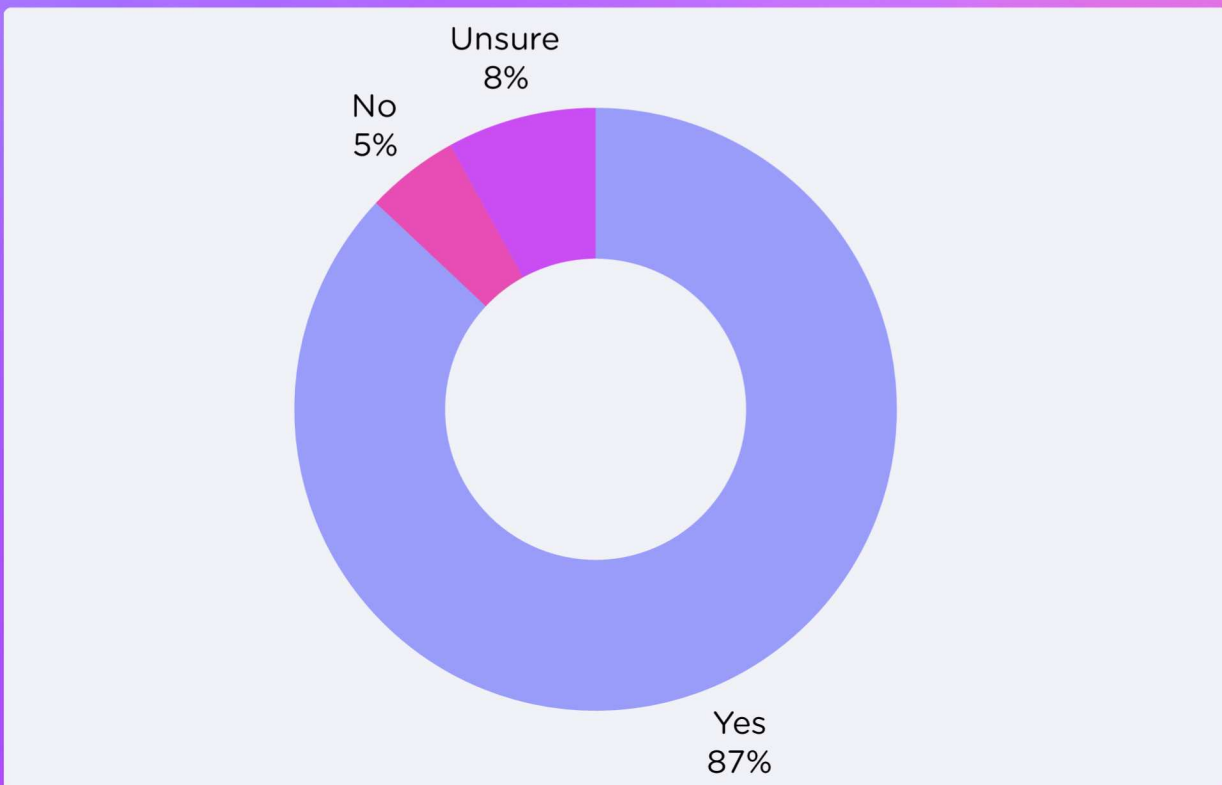


This potential shift to a new list raises alarms about the adequacy of support that would be available, with one parent expressing concern that “children currently accessing the NDIS will no longer be able to access funding and supports.”

The prospect of losing choice and control over their child’s care is another significant source of anxiety, as many families fear that the proposed changes will further limit their ability to make decisions that are in the best interest of their children.

The overarching fear is that the proposed Supports Lists will amplify the existing challenges families face, making it even harder for them to secure the necessary supports for their children. A combined total of 77% of respondents indicated that they are either extremely worried or worried about the changes to the NDIS, with 41% specifically concerned that the reforms will make it more difficult to support their child. This fear is rooted in the belief that the proposed changes will not only strip away crucial supports, but will also add layers of complexity to an already convoluted system, leaving families to navigate an increasingly inaccessible and unsupportive environment.

**WE ASKED RESPONDENTS HOW WORRIED THEY WERE THAT IMPORTANT FUNDING WOULD BE STRIPPED FROM THEIR NDIS PLANS. THESE ARE OUR FINDINGS:**





## Theme 4:

### Foundational Supports first, then a clear (but flexible) NDIS Supports Lists later

A significant concern raised by respondents was around the lack of clarity and understanding regarding foundational supports, and what will be included under their umbrella.

Many families and practitioners expressed frustration at being asked to agree to the proposed NDIS Supports Lists without a clear explanation of what foundational supports will entail. This has led to the perception that the process is putting the “cart before the horse,” expecting stakeholders to commit to changes without having all the necessary information.

Further, practitioners highlighted that critical aspects, such as the key worker model are not well explained or understood. This leaves families very unclear as to how these changes will impact their ability to access and coordinate essential services. In addition, parents have called for specific guidelines on what will and will not be funded under the new system, emphasising the need for more detailed and transparent information for an appropriate consultation process.

Respondents also pointed to the difficulties vulnerable families face in accessing NDIS services. Those without electronic skills, necessary identification documents, or adequate support often struggle to navigate the process, leading to delays and denied access to critical supports.

Practitioners echoed these concerns, noting that the lengthy process to apply, gain plan approval, and then secure provider services is burdensome, particularly when small changes to plans require excessive time to implement. The lack of choice and control for families in selecting therapists and services further compounds these issues, leaving many feeling powerless and unsupported by a system that should be designed to assist them.

The lack of a flexible mechanism for adapting to individual needs, outside of the current exemption process, has been identified as a critical flaw in the proposed Supports Lists. Without this flexibility, families fear that the system will continue to fail them, leading to time wasted, increased stress, and poorer outcomes for their children.

The overwhelming nature of the system navigations is further exacerbated by long wait times for plan approvals, with some families waiting up to 12 months for their child’s plan to be approved.

The complexity of the current system remains a significant barrier for families, who find the NDIS overwhelming and difficult to navigate. This complexity is not being alleviated by government consultation processes and communications, with only 5% of respondents indicating their trust in the government to provide adequate information to support their understanding of the changes.



**Such important reforms are being rushed through with no regard for the long term impact for children with a disability and their families. We are already navigating a complex system and these changes mean we keep missing out on important supports**



## Theme 5:

### Onus on families to navigate impossible and invisible lines of demarcation

A recurring and deeply concerning issue highlighted by respondents is the unclear lines of demarcation between the NDIS and other systems, particularly education. Families are finding themselves in an impossible situation where they must navigate intersecting and often conflicting responsibilities between the NDIS and other government systems. This lack of clarity creates significant stress and confusion for families, who are already overwhelmed by the demands of caring for a child with a disability.

The educational system frequently falls short in meeting the unique needs of children with disability, yet when families seek alternative solutions through the NDIS, they are often denied support on the grounds that it falls under the purview of education. This creates a frustrating cycle where neither system fully addresses the child's needs, leaving families without the necessary supports to help their child thrive.

The consequences of this disjointed approach are far-reaching. Practitioners have pointed out that the higher demand for therapeutic supports often requires families to remove their children from early learning environments to access necessary services. This not only disrupts the child's education and social development, but also places an economic burden on families. The need to attend multiple appointments can impact parents' ability to maintain employment, potentially leading to increased reliance on social services.

Furthermore, the minimal efforts made by both the NDIS and the Education Department to provide adequate support in early learning settings mean that children are frequently left without the intensive supports they need to engage fully in these environments. This lack of seamless integration between systems prevents children from receiving consistent, high-quality support that could be provided if these services were better coordinated.

# Key Advocacy

In response to these challenges, Reimagine Australia strongly advocates for the establishment of a Universal Early Childhood Developmental Support System overseen by an Office for Early Childhood. Such a system would provide a unified and comprehensive approach to supporting young children, removing the current complexities and intersections that families are forced to navigate. This system would ensure that all young developing children receive the necessary supports they require to thrive, regardless of whether they fall under education, health, or NDIS. A universal system would streamline complexity and remove red-tape to reduce the administrative burden that overwhelms families. By simplifying how families interact with government systems, we can also ensure that all children receive consistent and appropriate supports, when and where they need them. And, importantly, it would allow families to focus on what truly matters - supporting their child's development and well-being.

## 6

### **Theme 6: Marginalised communities will be further disadvantaged**

A significant theme that emerged from the survey is the concern that the proposed NDIS Supports Lists may further disadvantage marginalised communities, exacerbating existing inequities in access to support services.

Respondents underscored the critical importance of parenting groups and counselling supports for families already grappling with the complexities of raising a child with a disability. Many of these families, especially those from lower-income backgrounds or non-English-speaking communities, are at risk of falling further behind due to the lack of tailored services and supports.

This disparity not only hinders their ability to participate in community activities, which are crucial for bridging social gaps, but also increases the likelihood of long-term disability for their children.

Respondents from regional areas particularly noted the scarcity of service providers that cater to the specific needs of children with disability, highlighting a need for innovative supports and service provision to be included on the NDIS Supports Lists.

To address these issues, it is imperative that the NDIS consider the unique challenges faced by marginalised groups and conduct targeted consultation to ensure that all families, regardless of their socioeconomic status, geographic location, or cultural background, have equitable access to the supports they need.

## 7

### **Theme 7: Respite & family supports: Where are they?**

Another significant concern raised by respondents is the absence of adequate respite services and family supports within the NDIS draft list.

Parents emphasised the critical need for support for respite. Many families indicated that they are struggling to manage the day-to-day demands of caring for a child with a disability. The inability to access respite services would exacerbate this burden and disable the family unit from being able to support the child to realise their potential.

The need for support workers who can assist with everyday tasks and provide parents with much-needed respite was frequently mentioned.

Moreover, respondents highlighted the importance of parenting groups and counselling supports, which are vital for families dealing with the challenges of raising a child with a disability.

Family therapy, sleep consultant services, and palliative care were also identified as essential supports that should be included in the new NDIS Supports Lists.

In addition to concern about respite and family supports, there was confusion amongst respondents regarding the availability of supports that build family capacity.





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before the  
horse.

But, the horse  
seems to have  
bolted already!

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Yvonne Keane AM - CEO, Remagine Australia  
and parent of two children with disability



## Theme 8:

### Don't take away our choice and control - instead add speed and flexibility

A critical theme that emerged from the survey was the overwhelming need for a clear and time-sensitive 'break glass' mechanism to be built into the process, to provide families fast flexibility, as and when they might need it, to access services and supports that may be new, innovative, emerging, or that, although justified, may fall outside of the rigid confines of the proposed Supports Lists.

Many respondents expressed deep concern over the potential erosion of choice and control, which are fundamental to the NDIS's principles. Families feel that they are best positioned to understand and make decisions about their child's needs, yet the proposed prescriptive list seem to further curtail their ability to do so.

One parent highlighted the issue succinctly: "Choice and control is not equal" with access limited to prescribed services only. The lack of flexibility built-in, particularly regarding the laborious and impossible process to apply for an exemption, has left many families feeling disempowered.

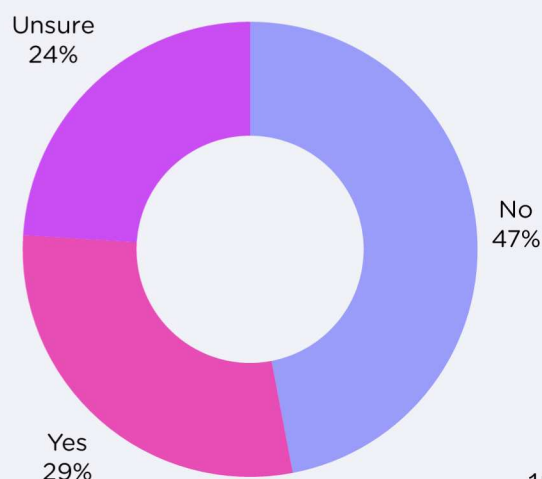
This concern is further underscored by survey results, with 47% of respondents finding the NDIS rules not flexible enough to support their child at different stages of development. In contrast, only 29% reported that the rules were sufficiently flexible to meet their child's needs.

The survey also revealed concerns about the potential loss of autonomy for self-managed and plan-managed participants, who currently have the ability to make purchases and select services that best meet their needs.

Practitioners echoed these fears, emphasising the importance of preserving this flexibility, especially in cases where specific items or therapeutic supports are essential for a child's development.

The ability to purchase approved items like sensory tools, as well as the flexibility to spend time on training in parenting strategies, are seen as crucial aspects of an effective support system.

**WE ASKED RESPONDENTS IF THEY FELT THE NDIS RULES WERE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO PROVIDE THE SUPPORT THEIR CHILD REQUIRES. THESE ARE OUR FINDINGS:**



There is a widespread fear that the proposed changes could restrict this autonomy, leading to a one-size-fits-all approach that does not adequately address the diverse needs of children with disability.

Furthermore, respondents warned that failing to provide adequate access to comprehensive supports, as and when required, could lead to a deterioration in the well-being of both children and their families, ultimately resulting in the need for more intensive and costly interventions down the line.

The need for timely access to services was another recurring concern. Many families emphasised the need for speed to be built into any requests to consider supports outside of the prescribed list. They had little faith that the NDIS could expedite such requests, pointing to the waiting times they experience for plan approvals, which they feel are excessively long, with some reporting that they often exceed 12 months. Such a delay can be disastrously detrimental for young children, who have a finite window for fundamental development that sets them up for the rest of their lives.

Practitioners stressed the importance of a system around the Supports Lists that allows for rapid adjustments, as new challenges or co-occurring conditions arise.

Additionally, there is a call for the NDIS to support alternative educational programs, such as homeschooling or school refusal programs, which are vital for children who are far too often failed by the traditional education system.

Overall, the responses indicate a clear demand for an NDIS process that is flexible, responsive, and tailored to the unique needs of each family, ensuring that no child is left behind due to bureaucratic constraints.

# Other identified issues:

In addition to the need for greater flexibility and support for families, respondents also highlighted several other critical concerns regarding the proposed NDIS Supports Lists.

## FALSE ECONOMIES

A major issue identified was the risk of false economies arising from the exclusion of certain items from the Supports Lists. Families and practitioners warned that ruling out specific goods and services could lead to more expensive and complex workarounds, ultimately costing more in the long run.

For instance, the exclusion of certain technologies, such as smart devices and telehealth services, was seen as short-sighted, particularly given their growing importance in enabling participants to live independently and manage their health. As one carer noted, without access to these technologies, participants might require more frequent in-home care or even need to move to a residential facility - both of which would be significantly more costly than providing the initial support.

## SIMPLICITY IS KEY

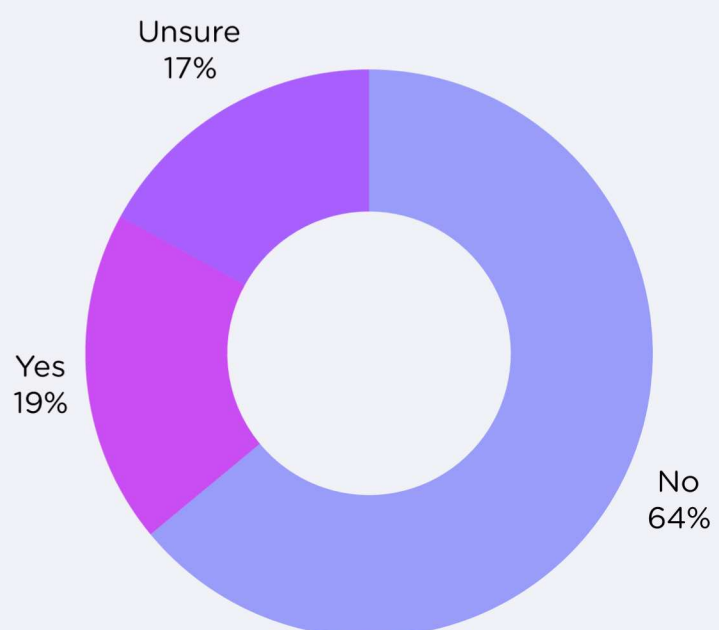
Another key point raised by respondents was the need to simplify and add clarity to the Supports Lists.

Many families expressed concern that the List will add to the complexity and difficulty they already encounter with the NDIS, with one parent commenting that it will be “too hard for the average person to understand how to apply this list.”

Moreover, 60% of respondents indicated that they either do not understand or are unsure if a support is considered “reasonable and necessary” under the NDIS rules, which adds to the confusion and uncertainty they face.

Additionally, respondents suggested that all supports applicable to children should be grouped into a separate, easily navigable list or guide. This would prevent families from having to wade through lengthy and confusing lists that do not apply to their situation, thereby reducing the burden on already overwhelmed families.

**WE ASKED RESPONDENTS IF THEY FOUND IT EASY TO FIND INFORMATION ON HOW THEY CAN SPEND THEIR CHILDS FUNDING. THESE ARE OUR FINDINGS:**



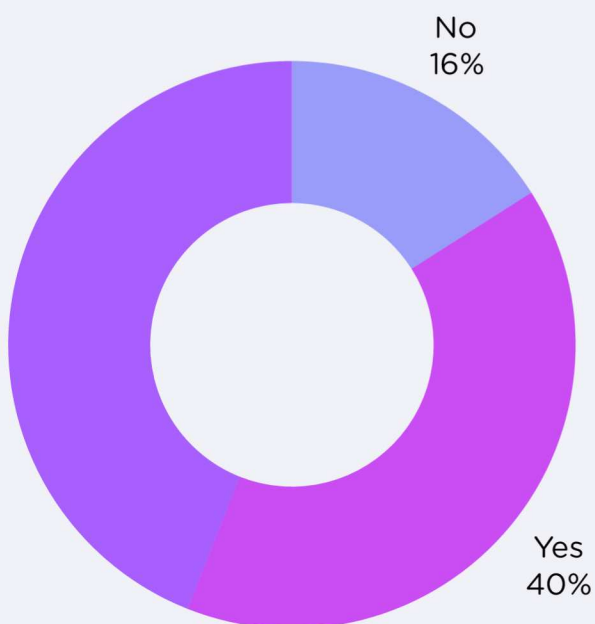
**SOME THINGS ARE SIMPLY BASIC & ESSENTIAL**

Access to essential services and supports was another critical area of concern.

Respondents argued that telehealth and access to technology should be considered basic supports, especially for children, and should be included in the NDIS Supports Lists. The exclusion of these items was seen as particularly problematic, as they play a vital role in enabling participants to access care and maintain independence.

This is particularly important when considering the needs of children and families in rural and remote communities, and those who are economically disadvantaged, in accessing services and supports with equity.

**WE ASKED RESPONDENTS IF THEY UNDERSTAND IF A SERVICE OR SUPPORT IS “REASONABLE AND NECESSARY” FOR THEIR CHILD, UNDER THE NDIS RULES. THESE ARE OUR FINDINGS:**



Practitioners also emphasised the importance of including items such as dietetics and nutritional supports for children.

Another point to note was the need to include education and training in assistive technology for both the child and their family, to better enhance the quality of life and outcomes for participants.

# Conclusion

**The consultation for the draft NDIS Supports Lists has unveiled critical concerns that strike at the heart of what the NDIS should aspire to be - a system that empowers, supports, and uplifts every individual it serves.**

The voices of our community have made it clear: the current approach to determining the NDIS Supports List risks leaving behind those who are already struggling the most.

The rushed consultation process raises the risk that too many who are already marginalised will remain in silence.

The overwhelming complexity of the NDIS continues to act as a barrier for trust that the supports that that families so desperately need will remain accessible and within reach.

We cannot afford to let marginalised communities be further disadvantaged by a NDIS Reform process intended to do the very opposite. The potential exclusion of essential services such as respite, family support, and vital technologies such as telehealth is not just a policy oversight - it's a profound risk to the well-being and future potential of countless children and their families.

For families of children with disability, developmental delay, and neurodivergence, this is so much more than items on a list. To them this is their lifeline that makes the difference between a family in crisis and a family supported - between a child whose potential is frustrated and a child whose potential is fully realised.

At Reimagine Australia, we advocate for a bold vision - one where we have flexible and compassionate approaches that adapt to

the diverse and evolving needs of every Australian child in every Australian family with equity,

The future of the NDIS must be one that honours its promise: to provide genuine support, dignity, and opportunity for all Australians with disability.

We stand ready to work hand in hand with the Government to ensure that this promise is fulfilled, and that no child and their family is left behind.

# Key metrics at a glance

We hope the data collected by Reimagine during this consultation is valuable. For your convenience we have aggregated the key metrics here:

01 **Families are extremely worried**

77% of survey respondents are extremely worried or worried about the changes to the NDIS.

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02 **Fear that the changes will increase difficulty**

61% of survey respondents are unsure about or concerned that the changes to the NDIS will make it more difficult to support their child.

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03 **Worry that their child's funding will be stripped**

87% of survey respondents are worried that important funding will be stripped from their child's NDIS plan. A further 8% are unsure.

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04 **Lack of trust in Government**

Only 5% of respondents trust the Government to provide the information about NDIS changes. They place the highest trust in Advocacy bodies (57%)

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05 **Good quality Information is too hard to find**

64% of respondents indicated that they don't find it easy to access information on how they can appropriately spend their child's NDIS funding.

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05 **Confusion around rules for reasonable & necessary**

60% of respondents either do not understand or are unsure if a support is 'reasonable and necessary' under the NDIS rules.

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# Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this response. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our findings further, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

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