



Australian Government



Foundational
Supports

Supports for children under 9 years old

What we heard from the community

Easy Read version



Acknowledgement of Country



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the First Peoples of Australia.



They have always looked after Country.

Country means the land, water, sky and everything within them.



We respect the important connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with Country.



And we respect their elders from the past and now.

How to use this document



The Social Deck wrote this report.

They wrote it for the Australian Government
Department of Social Services (DSS).

When you see the word 'we', it means DSS.

Bold
Not Bold

We wrote some words in **bold**.

We explain what these words mean.

There is also a list of these words on page 32.



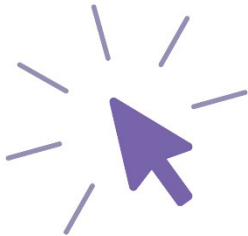
You can ask someone you trust for support to:

- read this document
- find more information.



This is an Easy Read summary of another document.

It only includes some of the ideas we heard.



You can find the other document on our website.

www.engage.dss.gov.au/foundational-supports/

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What we asked about

Supports for children

We asked the community about supports for:



- children under 9 years old



- families and carers.



When we talk about children, we mean children with disability.



We also mean children with **developmental delay**.

Developmental delay is when a child takes longer than usual to learn things like walking or talking.



We also mean children with **developmental concern**.

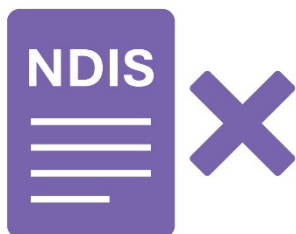
Developmental concerns mean families might be worried about how a child is growing and learning skills.

Foundational supports



We asked about a type of support called **foundational supports**.

Foundational supports are disability supports for all people with disability.



This includes people with disability who don't take part in the **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**.



The NDIS supports people with disability by helping them pay for supports and services they need.



There are **2 types** of foundational supports for children under 9 years old.



General supports help people with disability to manage their everyday lives.

They are for everyone.

General supports include services for:



- information



- advice



- **capacity building.**



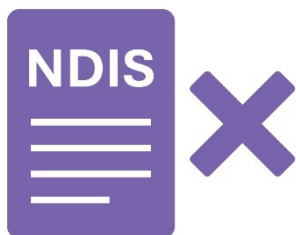
Capacity building means people with disability can build skills to:

- take part in the community
- make decisions
- speak up for themselves.



Targeted supports can help children with:

- developmental delay
- developmental concern.



Targeted supports are for people who don't take part in the NDIS.

Who we heard from



We heard from the disability community between
October and December 2024.



We heard from **1,020** people across Australia.

This included:



- families and carers of children with disability



- **providers.**

Providers support people with disability by
delivering a service.

Issues with supports



We heard about some issues that families and carers have with supports for:

- children with disability
- children with a developmental delay
- children with a developmental concern.

Finding information



People said it is hard to find information about the services families and carers need.



They said supports for children with disability aren't connected with other services in the community

People also said:



- it is hard to find support if you don't already use a service



- families don't have time to spend looking for information.



People said it can be hard to know where to get services.

For example, if they should get support through:



- the NDIS



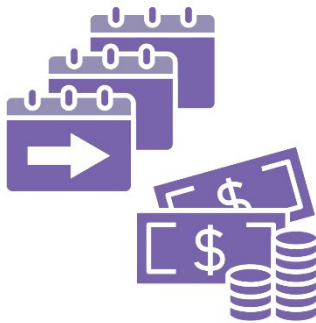
- **Medicare.**

Medicare is a service that helps pay for doctor visits and health care in Australia.

Waiting a long time



Children need to see a health professional before they can get some supports.



But this can:

- take a long time
- cost a lot of money.



This can mean some children aren't getting the support they need.

Not enough targeted supports



People said Medicare doesn't do enough to support children with:

- developmental delay
- developmental concern.



People also said other services don't do enough to support children with:

- developmental delay
- developmental concern.

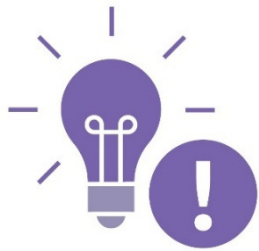
For example, services in places far away from cities and towns.



This means some families can't:

- afford some supports
- get enough support for their children.

Important ideas



We heard some ideas that are important to a lot of people.

How people get information



We heard that families want to get information in ways they can trust.

This includes getting information from:



- other parents, carers and people with disability



- health professionals



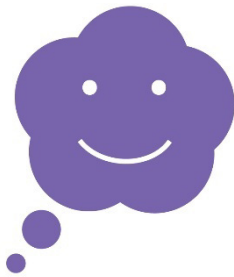
- groups of people who have similar experiences.

Health professionals working together

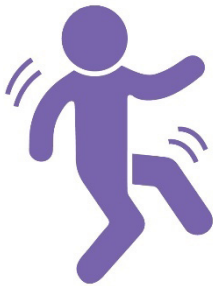


People want different health professionals to work well together.

This includes health professionals who support children to:



- explore how they think and feel



- move their body.

This will help families and carers to:



- get advice



- connect with all the services they need



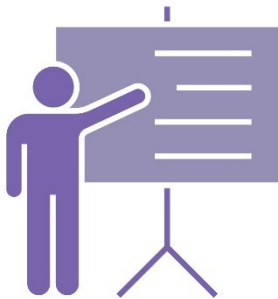
- get capacity building support.

Building skills for families and carers

People want more:



- groups where they can get support from people like them



- training to learn support skills.



For example, skills to communicate with children with disability.

People want to get these supports:



- where they live

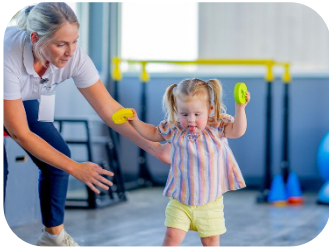


- in places they already go to, like schools



- online, like on Facebook.

Therapy as a targeted support



People want targeted supports to include different types of **therapy**.



Therapy includes different types of support that can help improve how:

- you think and feel
- your body moves.



People also want families and carers to be able to take part in different types of therapy.

This includes siblings, like brothers and sisters.



For example, therapy that uses sport to improve how your body moves.

Safe services from local organisations



People want safe services from local organisations.

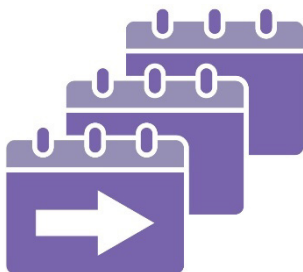
For example, services that are safe for:



- people from different backgrounds



- people who have different beliefs.



People also want local organisations to be able to provide services for a long time.

Find services online



People want an online list of services for children.



This includes services for children who live far away from cities.



People want to make sure the list helps people find services they can use.



This means the list needs to include information about:

- what the service is
- how to contact the service.

Where people need foundational supports



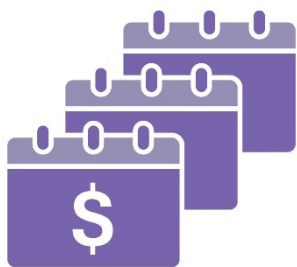
We heard ideas about where people need foundational supports.

General supports



People said general supports should work together as part of the care families get from their local services.

People also said general supports:



- need money to last a long time



- should be close to where families and carers live.



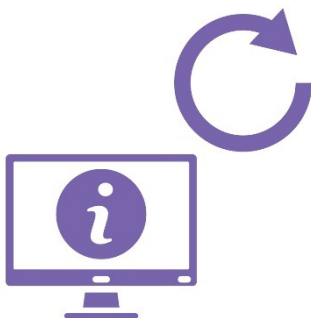
People said families and carers need someone to help them:

- find the services they need
- manage their services.



This includes support to find and use services that:

- are part of the NDIS
- are not part of the NDIS.



People said we need to keep updating information about services.

This includes information that is online.



This includes services that support people to:

- speak up for themselves
- make decisions
- take part in the community.

Targeted supports



People said children with developmental delay should get support as early as possible in their lives.



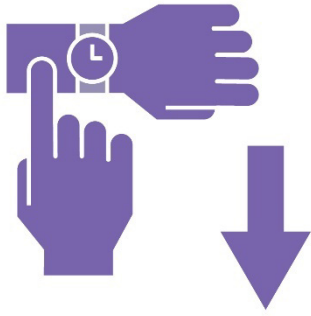
People said children with developmental concern should get support as early as possible in their lives.



People also said there should be services in places where young children are.

For example, in:

- hospitals
- childcare centres.



People said there needs to be more targeted supports so families don't have to wait a long time.



Peoples said health professionals should work together to make sure children and families get the supports they need.



People said there should be services in places where children:

- live
- learn
- play.

People said children should be able to get targeted supports:



- in groups



- one-on-one.

Places far away from cities and towns



People said foundational supports need to work well for children and families in places far away from cities and towns.



People said there should be services that go out into the community.

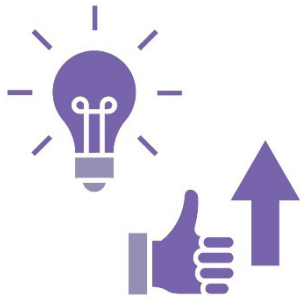


This means children and families won't have to travel far to get the support they need.



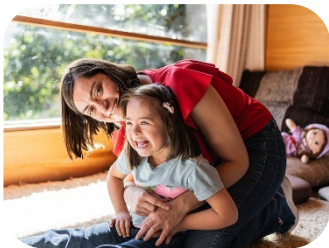
People also said children in these communities should be able to get support over the phone.

How to make sure foundational supports work well



We heard ideas about how to make sure foundational supports work well for:

- children with disability
- families and carers.



People said foundational supports should focus on what:

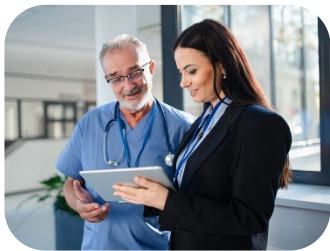
- each child needs
- their family needs.



This includes thinking about all parts of the child's life.



People said we need to work with the disability community when we create foundational supports.



People said different health professionals need to work together to provide foundational supports.



This will make it easier for families and carers to connect with different services.



People said there needs to be more support workers who have experience supporting children.



This includes having more support workers from different backgrounds doing support work.



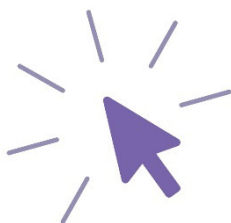
This is more important in areas far away from cities and towns.



People said that foundational supports need to work well with other plans we are already using.

For example, Australia's Disability Strategy.

Contact us



You can visit our website to contact us.

www.engage.dss.gov.au/foundational-supports

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.

Capacity building



Capacity building means people with disability can build skills to:

- take part in the community
- make decisions
- speak up for themselves.



Developmental concern

Developmental concerns mean families might be worried about how a child is growing and learning skills.



Developmental delay

Developmental delay is when a child takes longer than usual to learn things like walking or talking.



Foundational supports

Foundational supports are disability supports for all people with disability.

This includes people with disability who don't take part in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



General supports

General supports help people with disability to manage their everyday lives.

They are for everyone.



Medicare

Medicare is a service that helps pay for doctor visits and health care in Australia.



National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The NDIS supports people with disability by helping them pay for supports and services they need.



Providers

Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.



Targeted supports

Targeted supports can help children with:

- developmental delay
- developmental concern.



Therapy

Therapy includes different types of support that can help improve how:

- you think and feel
- your body moves.



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