

Leap in!

Understanding goals and achieving outcomes with the NDIS: A practical guide for success.

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As the Brand Ambassador for Leap in! I am excited to share this new ebook *Understanding goals and achieving outcomes with the NDIS:*A practical guide for success with you. Whether you're aiming to achieve small goals, short-term goals, life-changing goals or anything in between, this ebook is designed to help.

The passionate team at Leap in! has brought together loads of goal-related information in one place. There are practical tips, advice on goals and the NDIS, information about how to set goals and where to get support. We hope that this will be a handy companion in the lead-up to your first NDIS plan meeting or plan reassessment.

Not having goals is like being at the helm of a boat without a rudder. There is nothing to guide us in the direction we want to go. Working towards a goal that we have thought through and set based on our passions and what we want to achieve is empowering.

A friend once shared with me the poem *Invictus*. *Invictus* means "undefeated" in Latin. Every day, the poem reminds me "I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul." It reminds me not to bow down, not to give in. That I can choose how I feel. I can choose my destiny. And, I do this by setting goals.

Recently, I went skydiving, which is amazing. I'm going to learn how to fly – there's a plane that's adapted for people with spinal cord injury. I love trying different things, so I often have goals to do a new activity. The world is so big, full of experiences, and I want to squeeze every drop out of life. After all, we only get one shot at it.

Life though, is never a straight line. Sometimes, we have to change our sails and start heading in a different direction. Other times, we have to draw on different strengths to meet a challenge. Goals give us structure, a direction to build on our strengths, and help us refine our choices.

This ebook is a little like that *Invictus* poem for me. It's here to be a guide along the way and remind us that achieving our goals is within reach.

Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM



Introduction.

Setting goals can be a new and unfamiliar process for many people. However, when you set goals, you give yourself something to strive for, creating a sense of purpose and motivation.

The goal-setting process is an important part of the NDIS. Setting clear goals as part of your plan meetings means you're more likely to get the funding you need for supports to help you achieve your goals.

Leap in! created this ebook to help you navigate the NDIS goal-setting journey with confidence.

We believe that with the right guidance, everyone can benefit from setting clear and meaningful goals that align with their aspirations and needs.

In this ebook we explore what goals are, why they're important, and how you can set and track goals to help you make the most of your NDIS Plan.

You'll also find tailored advice to address specific life stages and transitions. We cover goal setting for early childhood, school-aged children, transitioning from school to further education and work, home and living goals, work-related goals and more!

Whether you're preparing for your first NDIS plan meeting or have a plan reassessment coming up, this practical guide will help you feel organised and empowered to set the right goals for you.



Setting goals is a powerful way to achieve fulfilment in life. Whether you have disability or you're supporting someone who does, goal-setting can be a valuable tool for planning and motivation.

In this chapter, we explore what goals are, different ways to explain or describe them and the importance of setting goals. So, let's get started!

What are goals?

Goals are like roadmaps that guide us towards our desired destinations. They provide a clear direction and purpose, helping us stay focused along the way. A goal can be defined as:

- A desired outcome or result that we want to achieve
- A specific target or objective that we strive to reach
- Something we aim for and are willing to work towards.

You can think of goals as being like building blocks that help us construct the life we want. Just like smaller blocks stacked together eventually form a building, each smaller goal achieved helps to create a foundation for bigger achievements.

Why is goal setting important?

Goal setting is empowering. It gives you more control over the direction of your life.

Goals are important because they can:

- 1. Create motivation: Give you something to strive for and help you maintain focus during challenging times.
- 2. Build confidence: Achieving goals boosts self-confidence and self-esteem. Each goal achieved becomes a stepping stone towards greater success.
- **3. Support decision making**: Knowing what you want to achieve can help you decide which paths to take and make better decisions aligned with your goals.

- **4. Help overcome obstacles**: Setting goals helps us identify and overcome barriers. It encourages problem-solving, resilience and adaptability.
- **5.** Assist you to measure progress: Goals provide a way to track and measure achievements. They allow us to celebrate milestones and evaluate our development along the way.

"As soon as you take ownership of your choices it becomes a whole lot easier to not just turn up but turn up with 100 per cent of you and that's what is going to make all the difference." – Madison de Rozario.

Common themes or topics for goal setting.

Goal setting can cover a wide range of themes or topics. Some common areas include:

- Education and learning: Studying, developing new skills or exploring areas of interest.
- Career and employment: Finding fulfilling employment, advancing in a chosen field, or starting a business.
- **Personal development**: Enhancing self confidence and independence or improving communication skills.
- **Health and wellness**: Physical and mental wellbeing, establishing healthy habits or managing chronic conditions.
- Relationships and community: Building better relationships with partners, friends and family; social and recreation activities; sports; music; volunteering; joining a group or meeting new people.
- Financial and budgeting: Saving money, budgeting for something you need or improving your money management skills.
- Living arrangements: Moving out of home, living independently or sharing a home with others.

You may have heard the saying "A goal without a plan is only a dream". Achieving goals is all about putting in place a plan of action so you know what you want to achieve and how you will get there.



The primary purpose of your NDIS funding is to provide you with the supports you need for your disability. Services and supports funded by the NDIS may help you pursue your goals and overcome any barriers encountered along the way.

A goal requires a plan, effort and action steps of how you'll get there. It's this type of goal that you set in your NDIS Plan. For an NDIS Plan to be approved, it must include at least one goal. Each goal should include details about the supports that will help you achieve the goal.

NDIS goals should be specific, measurable and usually time-bound which means you're aiming to achieve each goal in a certain time, such as three months.

How goals fit the NDIS Plan approach.

Goals are an important part of developing your NDIS Plan. They give the NDIS information about what's important to you and what you want to do in life.

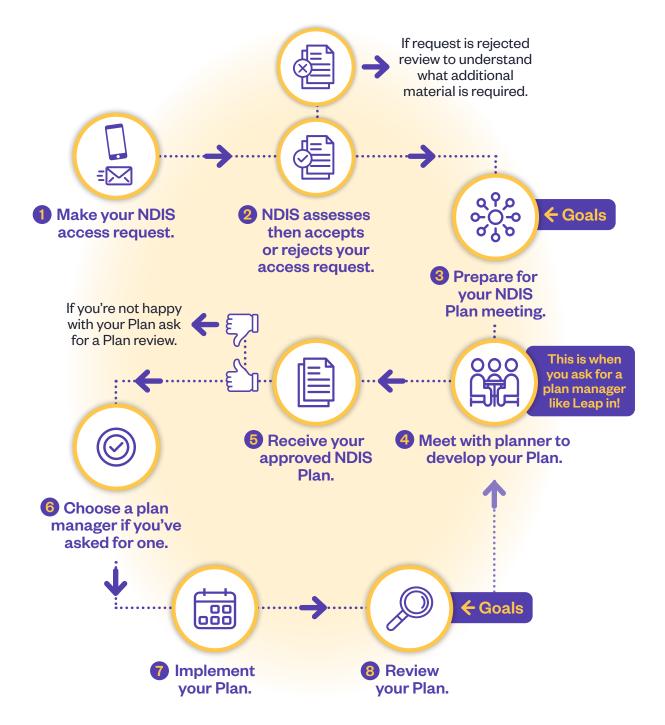
Once your NDIS access request is accepted, you'll begin to prepare for your first NDIS plan meeting. This is where the NDIS gathers information about you, your goals and any supports you receive now to determine what to fund in your plan.

If you already have an NDIS Plan, reviewing your goals and existing supports is a key aspect of preparing for your plan reassessment (when you get a new plan).

The better prepared you are going into your NDIS plan meeting or plan reassessment, the higher the chances you will get the right supports for your needs.

The NDIS will consider whether your funded supports enable you to pursue your goals and aspirations when it decides to approve your plan.

The NDIS journey.



The NDIS journey infographic (pictured previous page):

- 1. Make your NDIS access request
- 2. NDIS assesses then accepts or declines your access request
 - If a request is rejected, review it to understand what additional material is required
- 3. Prepare for your NDIS plan meeting (this is a good time to set goals)
- 4. Meet with planner to develop your plan (this is when you ask for a plan manager like Leap in!)
- 5. Receive your approved NDIS Plan
 - If you're not happy with your plan, ask for a plan review
- 6. Choose a plan manager if you've asked for one
- 7. Implement your plan
- 8. Review your plan (this is a good time to review your goals)
 - Meet with your planner again to review your plan.

Think about your daily life: Questions to ask yourself.

By understanding details about your life, what you do each day, who supports you and what you want to achieve, the NDIS has a clearer picture of the supports that can help you achieve your goals.

For example, you may want to build new skills, start a social activity or become more independent.

Think about your disability and how it impacts your daily life.

For example:

- How it impacts your ability to interact with others, including how you get around
- How you communicate your needs
- · If you need support with daily tasks
- Any activities you want to do but are unable
- · Whether you're able to see your family or friends
- If you can do the things you want to do.

We recommend thinking about your **strengths** as well as your needs.

- What are your strengths?
- How can you use your strengths to help achieve your goals?
- How can you build on those strengths to improve how you do things, become more independent or build momentum?

You can also be supported through informal supports like family and friends, and by mainstream or other community services.

Good to know.

- Your plan must have at least one goal. The NDIS can't approve a plan that doesn't have any goals.
- You can have as many goals as you like in your NDIS Plan there is no maximum number of goals.
- Setting a goal or providing detail about a support you might want in your plan doesn't mean the NDIS will fund it.
- Setting a bigger or more expensive goal doesn't mean the NDIS will fund it. The reasonable and necessary test applies.
- You might need support from the NDIS and other supports and services to help you achieve your goals.

Goal setting for your first NDIS plan meeting.

Your NDIS plan meeting will involve an in-person or phone meeting with an NDIS planner, early childhood partner (ECP) or a local area coordinator (LAC). The first meeting is usually the most time consuming.

Leap in! recommends spending time on goal setting in advance so you are clear about what you want to achieve and what you need to get there.

Your planner, ECP or LAC may not be able to see your NDIS access request so it's a good idea to have any background information to support your goals with you. Your goal or goals will be included in your participant statement as part of your NDIS Plan. Supports can be added or removed as your needs and goals change over time.



Top tip: Sometimes a planner, ECP or LAC may offer to write goals down for you, especially if your plan meeting is over the phone. Be sure to check that they have captured each goal correctly and it is written in your words. You can do this by asking them to read each goal back to you.

Goals and NDIS Plan length.

Longer NDIS Plans of up to three years may be available for people with stable support needs or who are focused on long-term goals.

Where major life changes or milestones are expected, such as for young children, leaving school or changes to a living situation, a shorter NDIS Plan is recommended.



Tips for getting your NDIS goals funded.

- 1. Be clear and specific: Ensure your goals are well-defined, specific and aligned with the NDIS eligibility criteria. Be clear on the outcomes you want to achieve and how the supports will benefit you.
- **2. Provide relevant evidence**: Back up your goals with supporting documentation, such as medical reports, assessments or professional recommendations.
- 3. Understand your funding category: Familiarise yourself with NDIS budget categories and the supports covered under each. Ensure your goals fall within the appropriate category to maximise your chances of approval.
- **4. Work with a support coordinator**: Their expertise can help you navigate the NDIS process and provide support with goal setting.
- **5.** Be prepared for planning meetings: Prioritise and communicate your goals clearly during planning meetings. Be ready to discuss how the proposed supports align with your needs and the NDIS.
- **6. Explore alternative options**: If your initial request for funding is not approved, explore other available options, such as Capacity Building funding or support from other government schemes.
- 7. Review your plan regularly: Regularly review your NDIS Plan to ensure it accurately reflects your changing needs and goals.
- 8. Seek advocacy support if needed: If you encounter difficulties with getting your goals funded, disability advocacy organisations or support groups may be able to assist.

Every support purchased with NDIS funds must meet the 'reasonable and necessary' criteria. Simply put, reasonable is something that is fair and necessary is something you need because of your disability. For more information, visit our article Reasonable and necessary: What it means plus a handy checklist.



Types of goals.

In this chapter, we will explore the different types of goals, including short-term and medium to long-term goals. We will also introduce the SMART goals process, which is a practical way to set goals.

How ambitious you get with your goals is a personal decision. Some people like to work with short-term goals that can be achieved in three or four steps. Or you might want to work towards something really ambitious.

Most NDIS Plans will have goals that are short-term and medium or long-term. Often the type of goal and the length of time you'll need to achieve it depend on your age and where you're at in life.

Short-term goals.

These are goals that you can achieve in a relatively short period of time – within weeks or a few months. Short-term goals help you make progress and build momentum.

If you can achieve your goals in under 12 months, then they'll be short-term goals.

Examples of short-term goals:

- This year, I want to learn to use public transport by myself, so I can go to the library or out with friends and not rely on my Mum
- In the next three months, I want to learn how to shop for, prepare and cook three different meals so I can cook them for my family.

Medium or longer term goals.

Longer term goals require more time and effort to accomplish, spanning several months or years. Medium to long-term goals provide a sense of direction and guide your actions over a more extended period.

It's important to identify the steps towards pursuing medium or longer term goals. Breaking larger goals into short-term goals makes them feel more achievable.



Examples of medium or long-term goals:

- By Christmas next year, I'd like to have completed my TAFE certificate and be working in a job I enjoy so that I can pay my own bills
- In two years, I want to live independently in an apartment and be confident to manage my household tasks, personal care and finances.

SMART goals.

The SMART goals process is helpful for people on the NDIS as it allows for clear, measurable and meaningful goal setting. SMART goals have five characteristics – they should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

Let's break down each component with relevant examples.

Specific

Clearly define your goal and focus on the desired outcome.

- Specific goal: I want to increase my mobility by becoming stronger and fitter and improving my balance.
- Not specific: I want to improve my physical abilities.

Measurable

Establish concrete criteria to track progress so you can demonstrate where you started and how you are improving, or achieving the goal.

- Measurable goal: Attend physiotherapy sessions twice a week for three months to improve my mobility.
- Not measurable: Attend physiotherapy regularly.

Achievable

Set goals that are realistic and attainable for you.

- Achievable goal: Develop skills to use a communication device by myself within six months.
- Not achievable: Learn a new language in two months.

Relevant

Align your goals with your interests, needs and aspirations.

- Relevant goal: Participate in a sports program to improve fitness and social connections.
- · Not relevant: Start a hobby unrelated to personal growth or wellbeing.

Time-bound

Set a specific timeframe for accomplishing your goal.

- Time-bound goal: Complete a self advocacy training course within six months be more confident to speak about my needs.
- Not time-bound: Do a communication training course.

Putting it all together: A SMART goal example.

By December next year, I will be living independently by developing essential life skills, finding an apartment and accessing necessary support services.

Specific: The goal clearly states the objective of transitioning to living independently in a self-contained apartment.

Measurable: The goal can be measured by assessing whether the person has moved into the apartment by the desired date.

Achievable: The goal is realistic and attainable within a specific timeframe. It acknowledges the need to develop essential life skills, secure somewhere to live and access necessary support services to assist the transition.

Relevant: The goal aligns with the person's desire for independent living and self-sufficiency. It addresses their specific needs and aspirations.

Time-bound: The goal has a specific deadline, providing a clear timeframe for achieving the objective.

"When making plans, think big. When making progress, think small." – James Clear.



In this chapter, we will dive deeper into the process of goal-setting and explore practical strategies for effective goal planning.

There are many different methods for setting goals. We find that it's best to keep things simple to avoid confusion and potentially overwhelm.

4 steps for goal setting.

It's good to know there's a link between what's important to you, your goals and the supports you need for achieving goals. With these elements in mind, the easiest way to approach goals is to break them down into the following four steps.

Step 1: Think about what's important to you.

When considering what's important to you, think about what you enjoy or what you'd like to try. Reflect on your values, aspirations and how you want life to look in the future.

For example:

- "I like participating in activities at my local community centre."
- "I want to improve how I communicate so I can chat about soccer with my friends."

Step 2: Work out your goals.

Once you decide what's important to you, think about what you might like to improve on or achieve in relation to that.

For example:

- If participating in local community activities is important to you, you
 might say "Be more active in my community by attending social
 activities."
- If you want to improve your communication skills, you might say "To improve my ability to speak clearly."

Step 3: Break each goal down into steps.

This helps to make your goal feel achievable. Up to four steps for each goal can be included in an NDIS Plan. These steps become your action plan and a roadmap to guide your progress.

For example, to increase your ability to access the community:

- Research and find some community activities where there are people with similar interests
- Organise a support worker to pick me up and accompany me to the activity

Step 4: Write down the supports you need.

Consider the challenges you face and the types of support which might help you to achieve your goals. Supports may be a combination of things the NDIS may fund and supports provided by the community, your family or another government organisation.

For example:

- Occupational therapy to build my muscle strength and coordination so I can learn to cook
- A support worker to help me get to my local community centre.

8 goal-setting tips.

- Be realistic. It's easier to stay motivated when your goals are achievable.
- 2. Give yourself a timeframe for achieving each goal
- 3. Set goals that align with your interests and strengths
- 4. Break goals into smaller steps
- 5. Reach out to friends, family or support workers for input, encouragement and practical assistance
- 6. Get a goal buddy, a friend, family member, support worker or mentor who can help keep you accountable (plus it's more fun!)
- 7. Be flexible and open to adjust your goals as circumstances change (see page 52)
- 8. Use the Leap in! app to help you keep all your goal information in one place and in a format that's ready for your NDIS plan meeting or plan reassessment (see page 50).



"Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible." – Tony Robbins

Questions to ask yourself.

The following are the sorts of questions you may be asked during your plan or plan reassessment meeting. Use these questions to start thinking about goals and how you can work towards them.

- What is working well in your life now? How can you keep these things happening?
- What is not working well in your life now? What needs to happen to change this?
- What are your future hopes for work or study?
- What is your stage of life? Are you looking for work? At school? Thinking about finding a job?
- Are you involved in social and community activities? Do you want to be more involved?
- Have you tried doing this thing before?
- What worked or what didn't work?
- Who helped you? What did they do?
- · What could stop you from doing this?
- Is there something you need from someone else?
- Can you access the places you need to go?¹



Goal setting for early childhood.

The national early childhood approach (ECA) provides support to ensure children with developmental delay or disability get the best possible start in life.

In this chapter, we provide a brief overview of ECA under the NDIS and the role of goal-setting at this stage of life.

We also explore the process of transitioning from ECA to the NDIS in terms of goal continuity.

The early childhood approach.

The NDIS early childhood approach is a nationally consistent approach for children with developmental delay or disability.

It provides specialised support and services that promote development, support the wellbeing of the family and child, and help the child participate in the community.

Until recently, the ECA was available for children aged younger than 7. From 1 July 2023, there will be progressive changes to expand the age range and include children under the age of 9.

For more information, check out <u>Changes to the early childhood</u> <u>approach</u>.

Working with an early childhood partner.

Early childhood partners (ECPs) are local organisations funded by the NDIS to deliver the early childhood approach. They have experience and clinical expertise working with young children with developmental delays or disability and their families.

They can:

- Provide information about supports in your community
- Connect you to early intervention, mainstream and community services
- Use observation and assessment, along with parent input, to understand the impact of the child's delay or disability
- Identify if your child will benefit from short-term early intervention and if so, provide appropriate initial supports
- Identify any long-term specialised support needs and help you request access to the NDIS if required
- · Monitor your child's progress.

An early childhood partner understands the unique needs of the child and works with the family to set goals based on the child's strengths and challenges.

The process starts by identifying goals the child and family want to achieve. This could include improving communication skills, enhancing social interactions or developing daily living abilities. The ECP will provide strategies and resources to help the child make progress and reach important milestones.

Early connections.

Early connections are for children younger than nine with delays in their development or disability, and for their families and carers.

Early connections are not the same as being on the NDIS. Children do not have to be eligible for the NDIS to access early connections. Early connections are also available for a wider range of children in the community regardless of citizenship or visa status.

7 goal-setting tips for early childhood.

- 1. Start with small, achievable goals. Make targets manageable by breaking goals down into steps. This way the child and family can achieve and celebrate regular progress, boosting confidence along the way.
- **2.** Consider the child's unique abilities and challenges. Take into account their strengths and limitations. Focus on areas where they can make meaningful progress.

- 3. Involve the child in goal setting. Depending on their age and abilities, encouraging their active participation can help them understand the purpose behind the goals and increase their commitment to achieving them.
- **4. Have short and long-term goals.** Short-term goals focus on immediate progress and skill building. Long-term goals define a broader vision for the child's development.
- **5. Collaborate with professionals.** Seek input from therapists, teachers and early childhood partners. They can provide valuable insights, suggest appropriate goals and offer strategies to support progress.
- **6. Track and monitor progress**. Use a variety of methods such as observation, checklists or progress reports to measure achievements. This helps to identify areas that may need adjustments or additional support.
- 7. See an ECP early. There are waiting lists for child therapy supports in many locations due to a shortage of qualified staff so you may have to wait for appropriate support.

You can search for an early childhood partner on the <u>NDIS website</u>. If there are none in your area, speak with your doctor or health professional, or contact your nearest NDIA office.

Transitioning from ECA to the NDIS.

If a child is eligible for the NDIS, an ECP will assist you to complete an access request. While diagnosis is not required for the ECA, the NDIS requires a diagnosis and evidence of significant and permanent disability. It's a good idea to get started on this process early to help speed up the NDIS access process when you're ready.

A child's first NDIS Plan is often quite simple and for a shorter period of time (6-12 months). This allows for earlier review to ensure they're getting the rights supports.



Top tip: Consider getting private assessments and diagnosis while receiving early childhood connections. Assessment reports are needed to submit an NDIS access request.



Goal setting for early school-aged children.

Setting goals during the school years is a powerful tool for supporting children with disability to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

By working together, parents and children can create a roadmap for success that fosters growth, builds confidence and maximises their potential.

In this chapter, we explore the significance of goal setting for schoolaged children and provide practical guidance for parents to set and achieve meaningful goals with their kids.

Note that the recent extension of the age range for the ECA ensures that children and their families receive continued support from an early childhood partner during and after their transition to primary school. If your child remains under the early childhood approach, the goal-setting tips in Chapter 5 remain relevant.

NDIS supports for school-aged children.

For children who have transitioned to the NDIS, it's helpful to have a clear understanding of relevant supports funded by the NDIS to align with goals.

- Therapy supports: Includes speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and behaviour support.
- **Transport**: Specialised transport required because of a student's disability.



- **Teacher training**: Specialised training for teachers and other staff about the specific personal support needs of a student with disability.
- Specialised equipment and aids: Funding for assistive technology devices and equipment tailored to the specific needs of the child.
- Social and community participation: Supports and activities that promote social and community participation, help children make friends and enhance wellbeing.
- Capacity building: Programs and activities to help the child learn new skills and become more independent.
- **Personal care**: Assistance with everyday activities, dressing, grooming, toileting and overnight care. Additional self-care at school related to the student's disability.
- Respite care: Overnight or short-term care offering temporary relief for caregivers and giving your child a change of scenery or opportunity to learn skills in a different environment.

Personal care at school.

If your child is school-aged, their NDIS Plan may include the item "Personal care in schools". This means that the child receives personal care supports at school paid for by the state or territory government.

The school organises and is responsible for delivering this service. The school sets out the supports provided, when they are received and how much support the child receives in the classroom.

The NDIS doesn't pay for this service and the funds do not come from your NDIS Plan. 2

Goal-setting tips for school-aged children.

- 1. Focus on strengths and interests. Identify the child's strengths and interests and align goals accordingly. This can help keep them motivated and engaged. For example, if a child enjoys music, set a goal related to music therapy or learning a musical instrument.
- 2. Prioritise functional goals. Consider goals that will have a practical impact on the child's daily life and education. For example, if the child struggles with handwriting, a functional goal might be to improve handwriting legibility for completing school work independently.
- 3. Foster a supportive environment for the child. Emphasise effort, growth and resilience rather than focusing solely on outcomes.
 Encourage the child to learn from setbacks and approach challenges with a positive mindset.
- **4. Work collaboratively with teachers.** Expertise and insights from educators and therapists can help you and your child set suitable goals in their NDIS Plan.
- 5. Promote self-advocacy. Encourage the child to advocate for themselves by expressing their needs, preferences and goals. Include self-advocacy as a goal to improve independence and confidence. If appropriate, set goals around effective communication with peers and teachers, and seeking support when needed.
- **6. Consider long-term goals.** While initial NDIS Plans may be more focused on a child's immediate needs, it's important to consider and set long-term goals as immediate support needs are met.

Goal setting during this time can also assist with transition preparedness, such as moving to a new grade, changing schools or moving house. This can help facilitate a smooth transition and achieve continuity in both education and personal development.



Top tip: The NDIS is designed to provide supports and services that are not funded by other mainstream or government services (including school programs). The NDIS does not fund school fees, uniforms, supports that assist with education or school work, everyday supplies that all students use such as pens and textbooks, school excursions or activities. See our story, Can the NDIS help my child at school?



Goal setting for teenagers and young adults.

When it comes to goal setting for teenagers and young adults with disabilities, the focus shifts towards preparing for adulthood, independence and a successful transition into post-school life.

There's so much to think about at this time of life. Setting goals allows young people to have a sense of control over their lives and their future.

In this chapter, we talk about setting teenagers and young adults up for independent decision making. We also explore the role of goals (and the NDIS) in supporting preparation for some of life's biggest transitions.

The NDIS and continuity of supports.

The NDIS aims to provide continuity of support throughout a person's developmental journey. As you progress through different stages of education and transition into adulthood, your NDIS Plan will change and adapt to include supports and services aligned with your evolving goals and needs.

This ensures you continue to receive the necessary support to work towards your long-term aspirations.

The NDIS can assist with transition planning, including preparing for changes in school settings, accessing further education or vocational training and connecting with relevant services and programs. This support helps ensure that long-term goals are considered and supported during critical transitions.

NDIS supports for teenagers and young adults.

There are some supports that may be relevant to consider for teenagers and young people when setting their NDIS goals.

- Developing independent living skills. Goals may focus on skills such as cooking, personal care, managing finances and travelling independently.
- Building vocational skills. Goals may involve vocational training, internships or work experience programs for a smoother transition to employment and career development.
- Accessing further education: Goals can include researching and applying for higher education or other courses, and developing study skills.
- Community participation and social skills: Goals might involve joining community clubs or groups, developing social networks and participating in recreational activities.

Goal-setting tips for teenagers and young adults.

As a young person, it's important you have the opportunity to actively participate in shaping your own path and have a say in your educational journey. This can enhance both self-esteem and self-confidence.

- 1. Set realistic and meaningful goals that are challenging, yet achievable can help you stay motivated.
- 2. Include long-term goals to build planning and decision making skills.
- 3. Align goals with major milestones and transitions such as education, training, employment, independent living and community participation.
- 4. Reflect on your achievements to reveal areas where you may want to improve or develop new skills.
- 5. Identify strengths and how you can use those to overcome barriers or weaknesses.
- 6. Refine and adapt your goals as circumstances, priorities or aspirations change. See page 52 for information on changing circumstances and the NDIS.
- 7. Learn from past experiences reflect on what worked well and apply those lessons to set new goals more effectively. Likewise, use challenges or setbacks as learning opportunities.



Goal setting and independence.

Every person has the right to make decisions about their own life. If a person with disability is able to set their own goals, they have the right to do so.

Under the law, a person's legal rights change when they turn 18. Parents or guardians no longer have parental responsibility and the person becomes responsible for their own decisions.

Parents, family members and support workers can set young people up for independent decision making by encouraging them to participate in setting goals and making decisions about their lives before they turn 18. This can include involving them in discussions, listening to their preferences and valuing their input.

The NDIS can also support building independent decision-making skills through capacity building supports. The NDIS may fund things like developing self-advocacy skills, communication training and mentoring.



Goal setting for school to further education and work.

This stage of life involves a lot of change. You may be planning to go from high school to further study or to work. Or you may be currently studying and preparing to enter the workforce for the first time.

Being aware of how the NDIS can assist during this time means you can set goals knowing what support may be available.

In this chapter, we'll explore the important decisions and steps you need to take as a young person with disability to make a successful transition into the professional world.

Achieving your study-related goals.

Supports to help you study can be complicated. Most study supports will come from service providers such as schools, universities and TAFE colleges.

By law, your place of study is responsible for removing any barriers so you can do your study on the same basis as someone without disability.

The NDIS will only fund study supports that are not funded through another program or service. NDIS study supports are the extra support you need because of disability to:

- · Study at school
- Study at university or TAFE
- Try things like volunteering or work experience.

You will need to pay for some resources yourself, such as textbooks that all students are required to buy.

What the NDIS may fund.

- · Extra supports that you need because of disability
- Supports to help you move from school to further study, training or work
- Personal care during study such as help with going to the toilet, eating or drinking
- Travel to and from study if you are unable to travel independently
- Training for teachers at school, university, TAFE or employers (during placements) about your support needs
- Support to participate in projects run by a university or other educational organisation for people with disability.

When you set goals related to further study, your NDIS Plan may include supports from the NDIS and from the education system.

Tips for getting NDIS support to achieve your study goals.

- Include a study-related goal in your NDIS Plan
- Be prepared to talk about your school, university or training provider and any support they give you at your NDIS plan meeting
- · Think about additional supports you might need
- · Gather together school reports or related assessments
- Get a letter from your place of study outlining any additional disabilityrelated needs.

Going from school or further education to work.

It's never too early to start thinking about your future and the career path you want to pursue.

The following general tips can help you start planning for the future while setting your NDIS goals.

Explore your interests.

You may have heard the saying, "Find what you like doing best and get someone to pay you for doing it." Keep this in mind while considering the type of work you want to do. Explore activities, hobbies and school subjects that genuinely interest you so you can embark on a career aligned with your passions.



Research different career options.

Use online resources, attend career expos and talk to people in jobs that may be of interest. Learn about the skills, qualifications and job prospects for various careers. This knowledge will help you make informed decisions and understand what it takes to succeed in your chosen field.

Reflect on your strengths and skills.

Consider both academic and personal strengths, identifying areas where you excel or enjoy developing. By recognising your abilities, you can align them with potential career paths that allow you to draw on your strengths.

Identify potential barriers.

Entering the workforce can present unique challenges for people with disability. Despite progress in promoting inclusivity, barriers still exist. Write down the barriers that may get in the way of achieving your goals. Be prepared to talk about them in your NDIS plan meeting. The NDIS may fund supports to help you overcome some of those barriers.

Talk to mentors and teachers.

Seek guidance from teachers, counsellors or professionals in your areas of interest. Networking with professionals in your desired area can also help build valuable connections.

Research inclusive employers.

Identify companies and organisations known for their inclusive practices. Evaluate their accessibility and policies. Seek supportive work cultures that foster your growth and success.



Gain some practical experience.

Gain experience in areas that interest you. Look for internships, a parttime job or volunteer work that can provide hands-on exposure. This experience will not only help you confirm your interest but also develop valuable skills.

Example goal and action steps.

Goal: In the next six months, I will actively explore activities, clubs and hobbies that align with my interests. By doing so, I aim to find potential career paths that resonate with my curiosity and passions.

Example action steps:

- 1. Research and identify three activities, clubs or hobbies that align with my interests. Attend introductory sessions or meetings.
- 2. Actively participate in the activities for at least one month each.

 Reflect on the aspects of each activity/club that resonate with me the most and ignite my curiosity.
- 3. Work with a career advisor to evaluate how these experiences can align with my long-term goals and aspirations.
- 4. Identify two possible career options for further research and organise work experience or volunteer work at each for one week.

School leaver employment supports.

NDIS school leaver employment supports (SLES) are designed to help students with disability find and start a job.

School leaver employment supports build a bridge between school and work, helping students understand their potential, develop skills and build confidence. They may be available throughout the last period of high school and immediately after leaving school for up to two years.

SLES in an NDIS Plan will be different for everyone and depend on your goals but covers all aspects of moving from school to work. You can get help each step of the way, from identifying the type of work you want to do and learning new skills to moving into the workforce and starting a new role.

Examples of SLES include:

- · Time management and communication skills
- · Work experience
- Job-ready skills, including travel preparation
- Personal development
- · Decision making and problem-solving
- · Computer literacy
- · Preparing a resume, submitting an application and interview skills
- Preparation for your first day
- Understanding rights and responsibilities in the workplace³

Other relevant NDIS supports.

While school leaver employment supports are only available for a specific length of time, other NDIS funding may be available to assist your school-to-work or school-to-further study journey.

- Personal care for while you're at school, training, TAFE or university
- · Capacity building programs and activities to help you learn new skills
- · Assistive technology specific to your disability-related needs
- Support to overcome barriers to inclusion such as transportation assistance
- A support coordinator to help you find the right providers, overcome challenges that arise and review progress along the way.



Brisbane's Jean-Paul (JP) is kicking goals in health, movement and social connection thanks to the sport of Boccia. After being introduced to the sport by his social worker, JP joined the Sporting Wheelies Inclusive Sports program and hasn't looked back.

The Inclusive Sports program gives participants aged six and over the chance to try a range of accessible sports such as wheelchair basketball, Boccia, wheelchair rugby and goalball.

Participants can experience many benefits such as improved physical health, increased mobility, learning new skills and making new friends.

JP joined the program 11 years ago and chose to focus on Boccia after becoming hooked during a try-out day. He says he was immediately taken with the precision and competitive nature of the sport.

"I saw first-hand the valuable impact the sport and community had on people just like me. Boccia introduced me to social engagement, a new sport and Sporting Wheelies to improve and maintain my physical wellbeing. This helps me to remain independent and live an active, healthy life. Boccia is also a highly competitive sport at the Paralympic level which very much appealed to me," JP said.

One sporting activity supports several goals.

Boccia is helping JP to achieve his social and community participation and general health goals. One of his NDIS goals is: to build global strength and mobility to ensure he can live independently for as long as possible.

"I have muscular dystrophy (FSH), a genetic condition that causes progressive wasting of the muscles. It's important that I exercise to keep my body physically and mentally strong," JP said.

In addition to regular Boccia training, JP works with the Sporting Wheelies exercise physiologists and a personal trainer once a week. You'll also find him working out regularly in the Sporting Wheelies accessible gym.



"Working with an exercise physiologist helps me with everyday activities and sporting participation as it improves my endurance, strength and muscle control. Working out regularly over the past three years has been a huge contributing factor in helping me lose over 27 kilograms," JP said.

"It's also improved my physical and mental wellbeing and confidence. Now, it's easier for me to transfer from my wheelchair to a car, or my bed, be more independent in my personal care needs and I can more physically and mentally put more into activities like Boccia. I'm proud of what I've been able to achieve."

JP has represented Queensland and Australia in Boccia, including competitions in Italy and Chile.

JP's approach to setting goals.

Goal setting is something JP has practised throughout his adult life - at home, in his studies, in sport and of course his NDIS Plan.

"Goals provide me with a vision and a guide to what I would like to achieve in all areas of my life. By more specifically breaking down these goals, either by myself or with others like the team at Sporting Wheelies, I can develop a plan to successfully achieve my goals and overcome life's challenges," he explained.

After returning to the Australian Boccia team late last year, JP wants to continue to compete in Boccia internationally, including at the Santiago World Boccia Challenger event in Chile in 2023.

The Sporting Wheelies Inclusive Sports program is available throughout Queensland, with additional programs coming soon at their newly launched Para Clubhouse in Milton, Brisbane. For more information visit Sporting Wheelies.



Your home environment plays a vital role in promoting comfort, independence and overall wellbeing.

Home and living goals encompass a range of areas related to living arrangements and daily life including where you live and who you live with, getting around at home, day-to-day living skills, safety and participation.

Setting and achieving home and living goals provides a path for shaping your home environment to meet your needs, be more independent and live the life you want to lead.

Types of goals related to home and living.

Personal care goals.

This includes goals related to your ability to manage personal care tasks such as bathing, dressing, grooming and eating.

The NDIS may fund:

- A support worker to help you manage personal tasks or improve your skills to manage things yourself
- Therapies such as occupational therapy and physiotherapy to build strength, balance or endurance.

Mobility-related goals.

These goals are related to how you move around and navigate the environment with independence. This could include building physical

strength or learning to use assistive or mobility devices. Other related goals could be learning to use public transport or independently accessing public transport to get to work or a community activity.

The NDIS may fund:

- · Mobility-related assistive technology such as a wheelchair or walker
- Supports to help you navigate the public transport system
- Motor vehicle modifications that are needed because of your disability (must be on a car that you own)
- Therapies such as occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

Your living environment.

These are goals connected to your living environment that may cover improving your ability to manage household tasks independently, including cooking, cleaning, laundry and maintaining a safe and accessible living environment.

The NDIS may fund:

- A support worker to help with tasks around the house, services such as cleaning, laundry and yard maintenance if you are unable to do those because of disability
- Someone to help you build capacity so you can do tasks at home yourself
- <u>Home modifications</u>, such as installing accessible tapware, grab rails and ramps, or widening doorways
- Supported independent living (SIL) if you live in a group home see information about SIL on page 37.

Where you live and who you live with.

Goals may include moving out of the family home, moving in with a flatmate or partner or living on your own.

The NDIS may fund:

- Support to help you decide where to live and what you need to make this happen
- · Help to set up and manage your home
- Capacity building to help you become more independent
- Training for people who support you.

Financial management.

Setting and achieving goals for handling personal finances allows you to make independent decisions about how to allocate and use your money. This may include developing skills in budgeting, banking and paying bills.



The NDIS may fund:

- A support coordinator to help you with money management
- Skill development and training such as a financial literacy course.

Individualised Living Options (ILO).

If your goal is to live more independently in a home of your choice, NDIS Individualised Living Options may be able to help!

ILOs are designed to support people on the NDIS living in a range of situations, like your own home, community housing or a rental property. You may want to live alone, with family, friends or other people with NDIS Plans.

ILOs come in two stages:

- Stage 1: Exploration and design. This stage is all about working out
 which supports are right for you and the steps needed to provide
 them. It involves completing a service proposal outlining your needs,
 the average weekly hours and total cost. If your goal is to be more
 independent at home, ILO Stage 1 can help you paint a picture of your
 ideal living situation and what you need to get there.
- Stage 2: Putting your supports in place. If the NDIS considers ILO reasonable and necessary for your needs, the funding will be included under 'Individualised Living Options Support model' in your NDIS Plan. This part of your plan will include primary supports such as personal care, cooking, cleaning and getting ready for work. It also includes other flexible supports not funded by the NDIS such as help from a neighbour or volunteer.



If you think home and living supports such as ILO may work for you, talk to your local area coordinator (LAC) or NDIS planner about including home and living goals in your NDIS Plan.

Supported Independent Living (SIL).

SIL may be ideal for an NDIS participant who requires extensive supports to live independently, such as 24/7 personal care, assistance with daily tasks and help to get around.

While SIL supports may be available to a person living alone, they are more commonly funded in shared living environments, with supports shared among residents.

SIL may be available when informal supports, such as the care of family or friends, are unable to meet your needs and you require more support than ILOs can provide.

For example, if you have a goal to move out of the family home into supported disability accommodation (SDA), a SIL package can support you to live more independently and get the help you need.



Social and community participation goals.

Getting out in the community and making friends is an important part of life. Achieving goals related to being active in the community can help create a sense of belonging and connection.

Participating in social activities, community groups, sporting groups or the arts is also a great way to learn new skills and build confidence.

In this chapter, we'll explore some examples of social and community participation goals and how the NDIS can help.

Types of goals related to social and community participation.

You've probably noticed that goals can overlap. For example, social and community activities can be connected to a lot of different goals. Sports activities are a good example. They can help you progress on many goals such as making friends, being more active in the community, building confidence, improving mobility and becoming stronger. You get the idea!

Doing activities that contribute towards multiple goals will help you achieve your goals faster. So if you have set a goal that has actions related to several of the chapters in this ebook, you know you're on the right track!

The NDIS has a dedicated funding category for Assistance with Social and Community Participation. It can fund things like support to attend community-based activities and assistance to participate in social groups. The activities may take place in a range of locations such as in the community, in a centre or at a sporting venue.

Below are some examples of types of things that this funding category may support and the associated goals.

Making new friends.

These goals can be connected to meeting new people, developing social networks, and participating in social activities and events. They can be achieved through things like trying new sports, joining a club or finding a group of people with common interests.

Learning new skills.

Learning something new is an ideal time for building social and community connections. What better place to find people who like the same things! You may like to explore workshops, community classes, education programs or volunteering..

Getting fit or trying a new sport.

Being physically and socially active through sport can provide benefit to your health as well as keep you connected to your community. If getting fit, building strength, trying a new sport or meeting new active friends is one of your goals, the NDIS may be able to fund disability-related supports to help you get there.

Arts and cultural experiences.

Attending events, concerts or exhibitions or participating in arts programs like music, dance or visual arts are ideal for learning skills and finding like-minded people. Goals could include trying a new hobby, developing a specific skill, finding your artistic tribe or working with others on a community art project.

Advocacy and leadership.

If you're keen to get involved in disability advocacy, disability rights or policy, it's a good idea to set some goals to help you get there. You might want to improve your communication or public speaking skills or learn more about how policy is made. This could be a first step towards an ultimate objective of joining a disability organisation board.



Top tip: When you're setting goals, it's a good idea to be broad and flexible so you're not accidentally locked into something you don't enjoy or that doesn't suit you. This approach also means you're less likely to need a change in your NDIS Plan if you want to try something different.

For example, if you love music and the arts and want to make friends with similar interests, set a goal that gives you flexibility to try different things.

Flexible goal: By the end of this year, I will be active in a music or artsrelated social activity where I can make new friends who share my passions and go to events with them so I feel less alone.

Inflexible goal: I'm going to join a singing group and learn to sing so I can meet new people.

What will the NDIS cover?

If you need extra help to participate in community, sport or recreation activities because of your disability, you may be able to use your NDIS funding.

The NDIS may cover:

- Short-term support to build skills to help you participate independently
- A support worker to assist with things like finding the right clothes to wear, changing into sports clothes or setting you up to join the activity
- Transport to and from the activity if your family or the community can't provide it and you can't use public transport independently
- Personal care while you attend an activity, such as assistance to use the bathroom or take medication
- Assistive technology, special equipment or equipment modifications to help you participate (eg. a customised bike)
- Training for instructors or coaches to help them understand your needs.

The NDIS generally won't cover the cost of club membership, course fees, standard equipment, uniforms, entry fees or participation at a professional or elite level.

Keep in mind that all supports you purchase with NDIS funds must meet the reasonable and necessary criteria.



It's often said that life is better with music. That's certainly the case for Marilyn from the Sunshine Coast, who has found her tribe in a local music group.

Marilyn, who has an intellectual disability, is a keen member of the Studio23 music program in the Queensland hinterland town of Maleny. Studio23 is a non-profit learning and social hub, a safe space where people with diverse abilities can socialise, connect and create.

Every Tuesday, Marilyn and around 15 of her musical mates get together under the leadership of Studio23 co-founder Craig Cole. Marilyn plays the ukulele and sings, bonding with other group members over a mutual love of making music.

Magical music brings a feeling of belonging.

Marilyn is a keen pianist who also takes regular singing lessons. So it made sense to seek out a creative program when it came to achieving her NDIS social and community participation goals. Marilyn and her support worker Tanjil, discovered Studio23 by accident two years ago. They heard music wafting from the studio one day when they were in Maleny. After a quick visit, Marilyn knew they'd found the right place.

"I've loved it ever since. I've made new friends and we get involved in singing together. It is absolutely magic just singing as a group. And playing is beautiful for the soul," Marilyn said.

According to Craig, being part of the group has steadily built Marilyn's self-esteem and connection to her community.

"We've seen a big improvement in Marilyn's confidence over time. She's been working hard on her ukulele playing and has a list of songs she loves to play. Initially, she was quite shy about singing in front of other people. Now, she will often get up and sing with the microphone and recently sang acapella solo accompanied by piano. It was amazing!" Craig said.



"Marilyn interacts and engages really well with other members. She's very encouraging to others and supports them to get involved. Being part of the group has helped her have a feeling of belonging in the community and a real sense of worth that she's contributing in a valued way."

Consistency is key to achieving goals.

The group is as diverse as the music played. Everyone gets a chance to choose what to play and the facilitators adapt the songs based on the participant's skill level. They now have a repertoire of three songbooks, with Geronimo by Sheppard a firm favourite.

Marilyn has found that attending consistently over time has been important for achieving her goals and making friends.

"It's the same people here every week. I love everyone in the group. Everyone supports each other whatever they're going through. It gets me into my happy place. The group builds me up a lot," Marilyn says.

Recently Marilyn joined another Studio23 program, volunteering at the local IGA supermarket every Wednesday. By working the registers and serving customers, Marilyn is taking steps towards achieving a mediumterm goal of improving her money management skills and becoming more independent.



employment goals.

Setting work-related goals can provide direction, motivation and a sense of purpose. Get ready to unlock your potential as we explore the benefits of setting work-related goals and how the NDIS can help.

Why set work-related goals?

- To empower you to make career changes
- · Give you a sense of purpose and direction
- · Build confidence and self-esteem
- · Expand your skills, knowledge and expertise
- Motivate you to grow, develop and overcome any barriers you face along the way
- Provide structure around which to seek NDIS employment supports.
- NDIS employment supports.

There are many steps on the journey to achieving your career goals. NDIS employment supports cover the entire journey, from preparing for work to getting help on the job to making your next career move.

We've already explored the types of supports the NDIS can fund for school leavers. Let's take a look at the assistance the NDIS can fund in the workplace.

NDIS Workplace assistance.

Workplace assistance is a support designed to build a career pathway and fulfil your career employment goals. It may be used in an open employment setting or with an Australian disability enterprise (ADE) by any working-age NDIS participant with an employment-related goal.

It may include:

- Support to discover what type of work you're interested in
- · Foundational and communication skills
- Managing complex barriers to employment
- Job customisation
- Career planning
- · Transitioning from an ADE into open employment.



Top tip: Workplace assistance can't be used to fund vocational education or TAFE courses.

NDIS Supports in employment – Specialised supported employment.

Supports in employment are designed for employed people on the NDIS who are less independent in performing work tasks. They can also be used to fund additional coaching in the workplace, such as help to stay focused, assistance with communication or job customisation.

Supports may be provided individually or in groups and include:

- On-the-job assessments related to the impact of your disability on your ability to work
- Job customisation program
- · On-the-job training
- Support with work tasks
- A support worker to assist with mobility and personal care at work
- Extra support to manage complex needs.

NDIS Employment-related assessment and counselling.

Employment-related assessment and counselling sits under the Capacity Building budget in an NDIS Plan. It's designed to fund services that assist you to successfully engage in employment. For example, helping people who need significant support to return to work after a traumatic injury.

Example goal and action steps.

Now you have a good understanding of the supports the NDIS can fund, think about how to connect your goals and NDIS Plan to create a path to career success. See below for an example goal and some action steps.

"I want to improve my leadership and communication skills in my current job over the next year to progress towards a second-in-charge position in my department."

Action steps:

- Work with my support coordinator and boss to find leadership training programs. Enrol in a course or workshops that focus on leadership, communication and decision making.
- 2. Find a mentor or coach with experience in my field who can give me ideas about what's needed to move into a management role. Develop strategies to overcome any obstacles or challenges.
- 3. Get a review of my workplace equipment and how I work to see if there are ways I could work faster or better while taking into account my disability needs.
- 4. Connect with professional organisations in my industry to attend conferences and events to expand my network and build relationships.

Not all of these action steps require NDIS support. That's ok. They provide a clear picture of how to achieve the goal so the NDIS planner can consider relevant items the NDIS can fund.

How to get employment supports in your NDIS Plan.

Your plan meeting or reassessment is an ideal time to discuss any employment challenges you face with your NDIS planner or LAC.

It is also helpful to have an idea of what you would like NDIS funding to cover. In the example, the NDIS could fund:

- A support coordinator to help find the right course and training program providers
- A mentor in the workplace to help with career advancement and breaking down barriers
- An occupational therapist to review workplace setup, work schedules and assistive technology needs related to your disability.



Top tip: Employers are responsible for making reasonable adjustments so people with disability have the same opportunities for employment, inclusion and promotion as other Australians.



An innovative career readiness program and an inclusive employer were the keys for Mikey to unlock his employment goals.

The ORCA Project is a Queensland career readiness program for people with disability aged 17–21. Participants gain new skills and work experience to help bridge the gap between school and employment.

As part of the project, Mikey landed a job with recruitment and executive search company Troocoo. He has now been excelling in his role for over 12 months!

The ORCA project was established by Wesley Mission Queensland to help young people achieve their employment goals. Over two years, participants progress through four phases to develop skills and prepare them for work – entry, learning, work experience and employment.

The program is funded by NDIS school leaver employment supports (SLES) in a person's NDIS Plan. It gives school leavers the opportunity to learn about themselves, their interests and the type of work that appeals to them.

Troocoo works with The Orca Project to place people with disability in meaningful job roles. As part of the project, Troocoo hired Mikey, a young man with physical and intellectual disability.

When he was just getting started The ORCA Project joined Mikey and his family at the Troocoo offices to share ideas and create a plan for Mikey's new job.

Mikey took to his new role quickly, increasing his level of responsibility over time. Now Mikey works closely with other Troocoo employees on a range of daily tasks.

Mikey has gained independence and confidence through his work and has continued to take on more work and bigger challenges as he evolves with the role.

Troocoo is leading the way in creating career opportunities for people with disability through inclusive workplaces. They're also founding members of the Inclusive Employment Movement, along with Leap in!

"When people and companies truly embrace diversity and inclusion, everyone wins," said Troocoo Director Scott Horton.



Having a knowledgeable guide who understands the NDIS can greatly simplify the goal-setting process and provide valuable assistance.

The right person will be able to explore options with you, make suggestions and help you determine the right goals based on your values, strengths and aspirations. You may even find a team of people who all have something useful to contribute.

Whether you're new to the NDIS or want to refine your existing goals, this chapter equips you with the knowledge to find someone who can help. Keep in mind that the goals you include in your NDIS Plan are your decision and should be written in your words.

Local area coordinator (LAC).

An NDIS local area coordinator (LAC) can help you create and work towards your goal, make decisions and access the supports you need.

When it comes to goals, an LAC can:

- Help you understand and access the NDIS
- Talk to you about goals and write them down in your words as part of your NDIS Plan or plan reassessment
- Connect you with relevant supports and providers needed to achieve to your goals
- Help you use the supports in your plan to achieve your goals
- Support you with any goal changes.⁴

Support coordinator.

A support coordinator is a person who connects people on the NDIS to organisations that provide supports and services including community, mainstream and government services.

When it comes to goals, a support coordinator can:

- Help you identify and describe your goals and the steps to achieve them
- · Monitor and track your goals
- Explain how to use the supports in your plan to achieve your goals
- · Connect you with relevant services
- · Assist with service agreements and bookings
- Support you to review your goals and prepare new goals ahead of your plan reassessment meeting.



Top tip: While a support coordinator can give you information and help you to make your own choices, they are unable to make decisions on your behalf.

Allied health professionals.

Providers who work closely with you regularly often get to know you well. That's why occupational therapists, physiotherapists or speech therapists can sometimes offer valuable insights into setting realistic and achievable goals.

They can:

- · Provide reports on goals you've achieved
- Identify any barriers and how they can be overcome
- Conduct assessments to identify your abilities, strengths and areas for improvement
- · Help you break broader goals into smaller, actionable steps
- Suggest adaptive techniques, assistive technologies or therapies that can aid in achieving the desired outcomes
- Assess whether goals need to be adjusted or modified based on your changing needs and circumstances.

Trusted friends and family.

Family members, friends or mentors who know you well can provide insights and perspectives on your strengths, interests and potential areas for growth. Their input can be super helpful when setting goals.

Other people in your support network.

Talking to other people on the NDIS about their goals, how they record and track them can provide a unique perspective. Often someone with



lived experience who has been through the process before will be able to share valuable tips.

Your support worker can also be a valuable source of advice and guidance. After all, they get to know you pretty well!

Get a goal buddy.

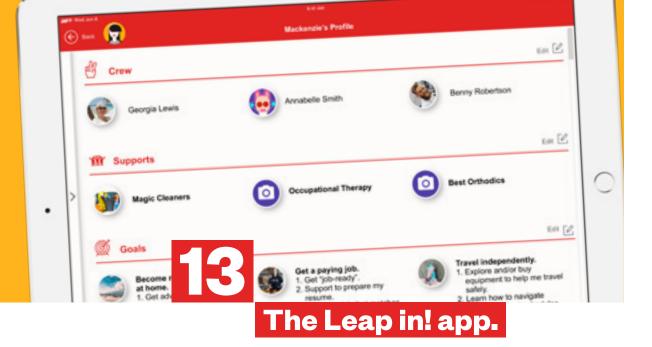
Sharing your goals with someone else can help keep you both accountable. Your "goal buddy" might be a friend, family member, support worker or mentor.

You could check in with each other every week or every month to share progress and talk about any challenges.

Supported decision making.

Some people with disability may require support when it comes to making decisions. "Supported decision making" is the term used when a person makes a decision by themselves with support or assistance from others. This provides an opportunity for the person to learn and build their decision-making capabilities.⁵

It's important to find a balance between independent decision-making and receiving the necessary support. Depending on the individual, some decisions may require guidance or assistance, like long-term education or employment goals, while others can be made independently.



Written goals are powerful. Recording your goals reinforces them and helps you to be more motivated. There's nothing like a constant reminder to keep you on track!

The Leap in! app is the perfect partner for NDIS goal setting and tracking. It allows you to record your goals somewhere that's always available and accessible - and track progress along the way.

In this chapter, we'll show you how to record your goals in the Leap in! app and use the app to prepare for your NDIS plan meeting or plan reassessment.

About the Leap in! app.

The free, award-winning Leap in! app has been co-designed with people with disability and their families to make accessing the NDIS easier.

With the app, you keep all your information in one, secure place and can invite members of your family, support coordinators, support workers, providers or support crew to read or add to your information. Keep everything you'll ever need for the NDIS in one place.

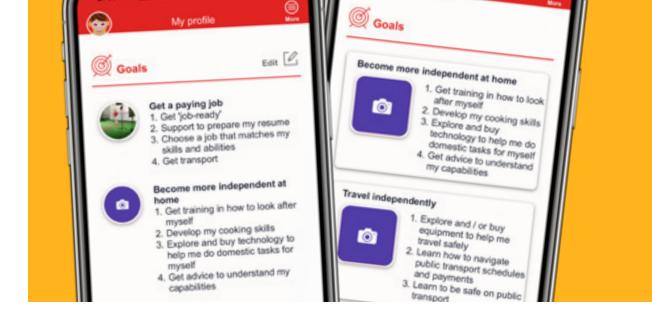
Using the Leap in! app to get goal-ready for your NDIS plan meeting.

By adding your goals and other information to the Leap in! app, you'll be one step closer to being prepared for your first NDIS plan meeting or next plan reassessment.

Once you have added all your details, you can view, print or download a copy of your Plan Ready Summary. And you don't need to be a Leap in! Member to access this feature of the app.

Follow the instructions to access the app and set up your profile.

Once you've created a profile and completed information about your favourite things, health and wellbeing, home and crew, you can have some fun with setting goals. The app even has hundreds of built-in goal ideas.



Here's how to add goals.

- 1. Go to the My Goals section of the app and select Add a new goal.
- On the Goal Detail page, enter your own goal or choose one of the goal suggestions. Goals more relevant to you will appear if you have included your Life Stage and Disability in the About Me section (under My Profile).
- 3. Save your goal and then use the Supports section of the app to plan the supports you need to achieve that goal.
- 4. Once you have added all your details, you can view or download your Plan Ready Summary ready for your meeting. See the <u>How to use the Leap in! app story for details.</u>

With all your information in one place, it's also easy to track your goals in the app and make sure you're heading towards achieving them. The app allows you to break down your main goals into smaller ones (goal steps) so you can see exactly what you need to tick off in order to achieve each main goal.

You can even give yourself a big thumbs-up when you have completed a goal and see all the goals you've achieved listed as 'Completed goals'.



It's a fact of life that things change. And changes can affect your goals, NDIS Plan and the supports you need. In this chapter, we explore how to tell if your goals have changed and what to do about it.

How to identify if your goals have changed.

Identifying if your goals have changed is an important step in ensuring your plans and aspirations remain aligned. Here are some questions you can ask yourself to work out if you need to change or update your goals.

- · Have my circumstances changed?
- Have my interests changed?
- Does looking at my goals make me feel overwhelmed?
- Are barriers or challenges preventing me from making progress towards my goals?
- Do people I trust think that my goals are unrealistic or need tweaking?

If you have answered yes to any of these questions, it may be time to change your goals. Goal updates are a natural part of personal growth and development so don't be concerned if your goals change. They're your goals after all!

How to change your goals with the NDIS.

Once you have identified that your goals have changed, take the necessary steps to update them. This may include wherever you have recorded them such as your NDIS Plan and the Leap in! app.

The good news is that you can change your NDIS goals at any time without changing anything else in your NDIS Plan.

The NDIS will update your plan with the new statement of goals and aspirations and send you a varied plan within seven days.⁶

However, if you change your goals and need different supports as a result, you'll need to ask the NDIS for a plan variation or reassessment which could result in a new plan.

When to update your NDIS Plan.

If changes to your goals result in changes to your support needs, it's best to ask for a plan reassessment. This may be needed if changes are made in some of the following areas.

- Significant changes in care or support provided by family or friends.
 For example, a family member who has provided informal support has a new job and you need to replace this support.
- Changes to your disability needs. For example, an increase or decrease in your support needs.
- Adjustments to educational goals like leaving school earlier than expected.
- Changes to your living arrangements. For example, you move into a new house or change your home and living goals.
- Your health and wellbeing have changed. For example, your disability is affecting your health in a different way.
- · Moving from full-time to part-time work.
- Children with changing goals and developmental needs whose support needs have changed.

What to do if your circumstances change.

It's important you let the NDIS know as soon as you know your circumstances have changed or are likely to change.

This can be done in several ways:

- By phone: 1800 800 110
- By email, along with supporting evidence to enquiries@ndis.gov.au
- · Completing a change of details or change of situation form
- Post a letter with supporting evidence to Chief Executive Officer, NDIA, GPO Box 700 Canberra ACT 2601
- Visit an NDIS office.

You can also complete the change of details or change of situation form to request a plan reassessment if your plan no longer meets your needs.

Once the NDIS receives your information, it will carry out any changes you requested and let you know once that's done. They may also contact you to discuss your options and whether a full plan reassessment is needed.

Good to know: If you don't let the NDIS know that your circumstances have changed and you continue to receive supports that aren't right for you, you may have to pay the money back.



Tracking goals and reflecting on your achievements.

It's helpful to review your goals regularly to check if you're on track and ensure you're taking steps to achieve them.

Reviewing your progress also allows you to make adjustments when needed, even if they're only minor.

Reflecting on what you have accomplished builds confidence. Celebrating the wins, no matter how small, encourages you to keep going.

Tracking your goals.

Deciding on timeframes when you set goals and when to review them can help you to stay on track. Tracking and reviewing your goals will also help you identify if you need to be more proactive to make your goals happen.

For example, if you put a 12-month time on your goal to find a part-time job, but you review and find that three months later you haven't finished writing your CV, you can then do something about that.

Tracking your progress can keep you motivated. Choose a way that works well for you. It could be:

- · Creating a timeline with key milestones
- Putting time aside every week to track progress and plan steps for the next week
- · Creating a chat, graph or vision board
- Using a goal journal or app
- · Getting a reminder from your goal buddy.

Reflecting on your achievements.

Celebrating goals is important for confidence and motivation. It reminds you of your capabilities and can give you a big boost.



It's important to stop and acknowledge your achievements, no matter how small they are. Do something you enjoy, grab your goal buddy or friend and spend some time celebrating you.

Here are some ideas.

Treat yourself.

Reward yourself with a small gift or treat that you've been looking forward to. It could be anything from buying a book you wanted or treating yourself to a favourite meal or movie.

Share with loved ones.

Celebrate with family and friends who have supported you along the way. Share your achievements and express gratitude for their encouragement and assistance.

Reflect and journal.

Take time to reflect on your journey and the growth you've experienced. Write in a journal, capturing your thoughts, emotions and lessons learned throughout the process.

Get visual.

Design a vision board or display to showcase your achievements and the progress you've made.

Treat yourself to a new experience.

Do something you've never done before like trying a new hobby.

Give back.

Celebrate by giving back to your community or supporting a cause close to your heart. Volunteering or making a donation can add a meaningful dimension to your celebration.

If you added goals into the Leap in! app, to tick off the goals you have achieved and feel good about seeing them listed as "Completed goals".



Reviewing your goals.

Even if you've been with the NDIS for a while, it's worthwhile being well prepared for your plan meeting or plan reassessment. Being prepared is also the best way to ensure you get the supports you really need.

Spend some time reviewing your goals, current supports and ideal future supports. The Leap in! app has a dedicated section where you can add all the information needed for your meeting so you feel organised and confident.

Some questions to ask yourself:

- Do my goals still meet my current aspirations?
- Do I need to adjust any of my goals due to changes in circumstances or priorities?
- · What are the actions or habits that helped me to achieve my goals?
- How close am I to achieving each goal?
- Is this a short-term goal I am likely to achieve in six months or less, or a longer-term goal that might take a year or more?
- · Am I spending all of my NDIS funds?
- Could my NDIS funds go further?
- · What barriers are in the way of achieving my goals?

Remember, goal setting is a dynamic process. It requires self-reflection, planning, action and the willingness to adjust as you progress. By following some of the tips in this ebook, you can set yourself up for success and make steady progress towards achieving your goals.

"Stay really true to your goals and what you want."

- Paralympian Madison De Rozario

Resources.

Here are some handy resources and practical tools to support your goal-setting journey.

NDIS goal setting.

Setting goals

Creating your NDIS Plan

What supports will help you pursue your goals?

Achieving your NDIS employment goals

How to set and achieve your goals

How to use the Leap in! app to prepare for your plan meeting

Setting my NDIS goals

Planning my future with goal setting

The trick to setting the right goals in an NDIS Plan

Goal setting for kids

Setting goals for your autistic child: What you need to know

Setting your child's NDIS goals

Goal-setting for kids - top tips

Goal setting and advocacy support

National Disability Advocacy Program

Local area coordinators

General goal-setting tips

8 tips for achieving your goals

Goal setting: a scientific guide to setting and achieving goals

Setting study, work and money goals for young people

Set goals like a boss infographic

References.

- 1. How do you identify goals?
- 2. Personal care in schools in kind supports
- 3. School leaver employment supports
- 4. LAC Partners in the community
- 5. People with disability and supported decision making: A guide for providers.
- 6. How can I ask for a change to my plan?

Goal worksheet.

Use this worksheet to document the goals you want to achieve.
The goal I want to achieve is
It's difficult for me to achieve this goal because
Therefore, the support I need is
What steps are required to achieve this goal?

Leapin





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Download the award-winning Leap in! app.











The Leap in! crew acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we work and live. We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.



At Leap in! we commit to being a safe and welcoming place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and gender diverse (LGBTQIA+) people to work and to live as their authentic selves, without judgement, without discrimination and free from harassment.