# SOURCEKIDS



Moving out of home

Preparing an emergency plan

Finishing school



It can be difficult to look to the future when you care for a child or young adult with disability. Everyday responsibilities can feel overwhelming, leaving little time to consider what the future might hold. Thinking about the future can also be emotionally challenging - a complicated mix of hope, planning, understanding, fear and anxiety.

But in the midst of all of this, taking the time to plan for the future, or at the very least be prepared for emergency situations, can really take the pressure off and provide some certainty.

This eMag has been developed in partnership with our friends at Leap in! to guide parents and carers through some of the key topics and important considerations and decisions associated with future planning for a child, teen or young adult with disability.

There's helpful information on goal setting and practical steps for planning a good life together. We delve into life transitions — starting and finishing school, preparing for further study, independent living, and the complicated area of employment. We break down all of the different NDIS supports and how and when to apply for them.

No matter where you are in your parenting journey, this eMag has information to help - a one-stop shop for thought provocations and conversation starters with your child or young adult, as well as their support network. We hope it helps you and your family to approach the future with a little more confidence.

**REBEKAH DEVLIN** 

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# A message from Leap in!

Future planning: what a weighty subject it can be.

Our thinking around the topic of this collaboration with Source Kids came from a common discussion we have with parents and carers... life is big and busy and a challenge to fit into a single day. And yet when you fall into bed at night exhausted from juggling it all, craving sleep, it's far too easy to lie awake thinking about the future and what will need to happen beyond getting through the week ahead.

With a range of information, ideas and insights around planning for the future, we hope this guide provides some productive thought-starters and will lead to some valuable conversations.

And, they're important conversations to have.

If you're interested in exploring other strategies for future planning or have questions on the areas of planning for progressive conditions, long-term care or legal and financial considerations, please feel free to reach out to our team of plan managers, we're here to help.

Trusting you find this issue valuable. Warm regards,

> Andrew Kiel **CO-FOUNDER & CEO** LEAP IN!

# Goals — milestones

Setting goals can be an effective way to take control and plan for your child's future in small, achievable steps

e tend to think of life in stages, with milestones that mark significant events, like the first time a child smiles, communicates or learns a new skill.

How milestones are defined and the path to reach them can be vastly different for each individual. This is where goals can come in handy. A goal is something a person wants to learn, develop or achieve... important steps on the road to reaching milestones.

# Benefits of goal setting with your child or young adult:

- Goals can help you take charge of the future by providing focus and direction.
- Empowers you to be actively involved in your child's development.
- Gives your child and family a sense of purpose as you work towards those goals together.
- Setting and achieving goals can build your child's motivation and confidence.

When setting goals with, or for, your child, it's important to identify a starting point, the actions and supports needed to achieve the goal and what goal achievement looks like.

Goals that are too difficult can feel unrealistic and out of reach, and can result in feelings of frustration or disillusionment. Goals that are too easy can be less motivating. There's no doubt, it's a delicate balancing act. The key is to try to build in flexibility to accommodate changes or curve balls encountered along the way.

# GOALS AND THE NDIS

Setting goals is an important aspect of developing an NDIS Plan. Goals help the NDIS know what's important to your child and family. They also allow the NDIS to consider what NDIS and other supports can be provided to help your child live as independently as possible.

When it comes to the NDIS, goals can be short-term or longer-term and are usually framed in a positive way, focusing on building skill, strength and potential.

Goals are recorded in the participant statement section and there must be at least one goal in your child's NDIS Plan.

### SHORT-TERM GOALS

- Are based on more immediate needs or plans that can be achieved in less than 12 months. For example, your child learning how to dress themselves.
- May only require one step or a small number of steps to achieve.

### MEDIUM OR LONG-TERM GOALS

- Take several years or longer.
- Usually take more steps or a series of short-term goals to achieve.
- Are an important aspect of meeting future needs and aspirations.

### GOOD TO KNOW

Goals are only one aspect of the NDIS planning conversation. Setting a bigger goal doesn't necessarily mean your child will get more support. However, the NDIS will consider supports that help your child to overcome barriers to achieving their goals.

While NDIS Plans can be up to three years in duration, often plans for children are shorter as their needs can change more often. §

# Decision 🖞 making and talking together

Some people are more comfortable talking about the future than others. But they're important conversations to have.

y talking together about what the future might look like, you have a better chance of creating a future that fulfils the aspirations, and meets the needs of the child or the person you care for. It can also take a lot of pressure off you.

### INDEPENDENT DECISION **MAKING**

Every person has the right to make decisions about their own life. It is important to approach future planning and associated decision making with an understanding of the rights of people with disability, which include the right to:

- 1 → Make their own decisions about every aspect of their lives.
- 2 → Receive help to make decisions.
- $3 \rightarrow$  Say what they want to do.
- 4 → Take risks.

At a time when your child can make their own decisions independently, they will have the right to do so and you will have the pivotal role of a decision making partner or guide.

For younger children, or children who need more support to make decisions, you will be able to take the role of a sounding board or guide as your child builds capacity to make their own decisions.

### 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. Supported decision making provides an opportunity for the person to learn and build their decision making capabilities.

Supported decision making can take many forms and the role you play will depend on the experience and abilities of your child, as well as the complexity of the decision being made.

### TIPS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD MAKE DECISIONS

- Provide information about the options available.
- Lescribe the prosecond cons of each option, or explore them together.
- K Use tools or visual aids to improve understanding.
- Support the person to try out different options.





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# Planning for good life

## An important question to consider in the future planning process is "What does a good life look like?"

he answer to this question will be different for each person. But most people would agree that having a home to live in, social connectivity, an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to society, and the ability to learn and grow are some of the important aspects of living a good life.

This can be a valuable guiding question for future planning that helps to ensure your child is at the centre of decisions about their future.

For people with disability who have the capability to be actively involved in decisions about their future, understanding what they perceive as a good life can guide both decisions and goal setting.

## Some of the things you might like to explore together include:

### **HOME SWEET HOME**

- · What are the main considerations for your child's home environment? For example, safety, support needs, equipment, accessibility, proximity to services, family and friends. How will these change over time?
- What are their goals and aspirations when it comes to the home environment? Do they want to improve self-care skills, learn to prepare their own lunch or

- reduce the number of hours of support provided by support workers? Will they eventually want to move out of the family home and if so, how can you start to build capacity now?
- Other significant things, such as space to learn and play, and privacy.
- What options for funding and financial support are available? Is there a financial plan that needs to be implemented now to ensure funds are available for future needs?

### LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Known as "capacity building", this is all about building skills to become more independent and helping someone reach their long-term goals. Think of it as the steps that can be taken along the way.

- What are the skills they can learn in the short-term that will help them reach longer-term goals?
- What support might be needed?
- · What are the goals associated with learning and development that can be included in their NDIS Plan and be supported by funding from the Capacity Building budget category?

### **MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS** AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

- What are your child or teen's goals when it comes to family connections and friendships?
- What programs, supports or community activities might be able to help?

- How can opportunities for building friendships and being connected with people in the community be incorporated into regular activities or routines?
- · Are there any barriers to meaningful relationships such as a lack of confidence, poor communication skills or challenging behaviours? Talk about how to overcome barriers or challenges.

### **MAKING A CONTRIBUTION**

Having the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to society has countless benefits including generating self-confidence, developing skills and building friendships.

While this won't be relevant for all children or teens, nurturing a sense of community can help them to find hobbies, passions and causes they connect with.

- Consider how younger children may want to give back such as joining a Junior Landcare program, donating unwanted toys, or helping raise money for charity.
- · How can their interests and abilities be developed to provide a pathway to that goal?
- For teens and beyond, what are their work goals? What training or education opportunities might help? Can volunteering, work experience or internships help to build skills? •





# ADULTHOOD

Moving through the teen years into adulthood can be a challenging time for young people, as well as parents or carers. It can be hard to know when to offer support and when to step back.



# YOU'RE NOT ALONE IF YOU'RE CONCERNED OR ANXIOUS ABOUT:

- Talking to children and teenagers about their bodies, boundaries, sexuality, safety and consent.
- Risky activities and behaviour.
- Using drugs or drinking alcohol.
- Extreme emotions or emotional swings.
- Self-esteem and social interactions.
- Social media, bullying and societal pressures.
- Signs of depression or anxiety.
- Future education, work or living arrangements.

The transition to adulthood can be particularly difficult for people with disability and their families as they navigate a changing landscape of emotions, relationships, decisions and desire for independence.

Finishing school and leaving things that are familiar, structured and safe can provoke feelings of anxiety, overwhelm or stress.

But research indicates that "youth with disabilities have reported that they have similar aspirations to their counterparts without disabilities". They're seeking independence, freedom and new adventures.

Teenagers with disability can feel frustrated by a lack of independence, especially if assistance is required for everyday tasks, self-care or transport. Early transition planning and clear communication are valuable strategies for managing this rite of passage and supporting teens to become more responsible and independent. §

# STEPS IN TRANSITION PLANNING

A transition plan can be a simple document that sets out the steps that support a transition. It not only gives you and your family an agreed plan of action, but it can also be a valuable document to refer to when completing an NDIS Plan.



### Step 1

Write down your child or teen's strengths, skills, interest and abilities.



Work together to develop some short and long-term goals.



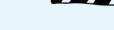
### Step 3

Write down the skills/ qualifications, practical requirements and/or support needs associated with achieving those goals.



### Step 4

Identify which skills your child or teen needs to develop or practice to reach their goals. The NDIS usually refers to learning new skills that increase independence as "capacity building".



### Step 5

Talk with people who might be able to provide advice or support such as teachers, support workers, allied health professionals, doctors, government agencies, family members and friends.

Research the funding available (through the NDIS or other programs).

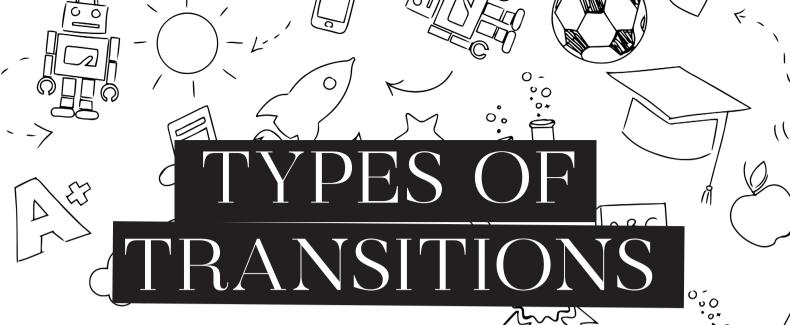


### Step 6

Review the plan regularly and adjust as goals and aspirations change. It is recommended that a transition plan cover the following four areas of life. Include those that are relevant for the person you care for:

Education, employment, independent living, social or community participation.





# **Early** learning

A fun, safe and accessible early childhood or day care program can give your little one a great start in life and set them up for school.

More day care and early childhood centres across Australia are introducing inclusive programs that provide additional support or customised services for young children with disability.

Some have also integrated allied health professionals and support workers into their programs to enable children who receive supports to work towards their NDIS goals.

### **NDIS EARLY CHILDHOOD APPROACH**

If you have a child younger than seven with disability or you're concerned about their development, the NDIS Early Childhood Approach (ECA) may be able to assist.

The ECA aims to provide specialised support and services that promote development, support the wellbeing of the family and child, and help the child participate in the community.

If your child has a developmental delay, developmental concerns or disability, your healthcare professional may connect you with an NDIS early childhood partner.

They can provide information about supports available, connect you with service providers and help you access the NDIS if required. Note: Early childhood partners do not complete assessments for diagnosis.

# **Starting** school

Choosing the right school for your child is a significant decision. While children with disability have the right to be fully included in school programs, in reality some schools do this better than others.

Be sure to do your research first - talk to the various schools, other parents, therapists or people in your networks. Are there other children with similar needs already at the school? What support programs are available? Attend an open day to see the school for yourself and gauge how your child feels in the space. Are the teaching staff flexible and keen to work in collaboration with parents?

Once you have chosen a school, you can begin preparing for the transition to "big school".



Many kindergartens and childhood development programs have a formal transition process to allow children to ease their way into primary school and will provide information to the school about children's needs, through conversations, activities and day visits.

### YOU CAN ALSO HELP YOUR CHILD PREPARE BY:

- Visiting the school to build familiarity.
- Allowing them to ask questions.
- Talking them through any supports that may be provided.
- Meeting the teacher (and any aides) before school starts.
- Preparing a social story with a photo of their classroom, play area, the school entrance, library, and of course, a picture of their new teacher. Some schools may be able to provide this for you, so make sure you ask.
- Practising the daily routine, especially getting ready. Help them to learn key tasks like dressing themselves and navigating any challenging zips or buttons on school uniforms. This will come in very handy for toileting and uniform changes at school.
- Make sure they can open the food you send along for lunch and recess. Help them learn to open lunchboxes and snack containers so they're all ready for their first day.
- Ensuring they know children at the school by setting up play dates. Some schools run playgroups, which are a great way to get to know other children, and parents.
- Letting them know it's OK to ask for help from their teachers and aides.





# DISABILITY STANDARDS IN EDUCATION

The national Disability Standards in Education require that choices and opportunities for students with disability should be the same or similar to other students, including enrolment, class participation and using facilities.

The standards define disability broadly and the student does not need to have a diagnosed disability to be covered by the standards.

Schools are required to make "reasonable adjustments" to help students with disability participate in the same way as their peers. Students should have access to specialised educational, medical or personal services that help them participate. For more information, check out Explaining the disability standards for education. education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005/students/english/explaining

# Transition from school to further education

As with primary and high school, students with disability have the right to participate in educational courses or programs, and use educational services and facilities, on the same basis as students without disability.

However, there can be additional barriers for people with disability – lack of accessible courses, inadequate on-campus support and financial constraints, to name a few.

# TIPS FOR FURTHER EDUCATION PLANNING

- Identify steps to improve the chances of securing a place such as understanding what grades or entrance scores are required to gain access, recognition of prior learning or industry experience.
- Research courses and delivery methods.
   Could online study be a more flexible or accessible option?
- Check out campus facilities and access it helps to visit in person.
- Get in touch with the university or TAFE Equity and Diversity Office and see what supports will be available.
- Explore financial assistance including equity scholarships, bursaries and loans. While the NDIS doesn't cover course fees, it can fund reasonable and necessary supports such as a support person to help with personal care.

Educational institutions receive government funding for disabilityrelated supports such as sign language interpreters, notetakers and screen reading software.

# TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL OR FURTHER EDUCATION TO WORK

TYPES OF TRANSITIONS

Working can help build confidence, skills, independence and social network but finding a job is another area to navigate.

It can be challenging to watch a person you love go through setbacks – your instinct may be to "fix" things for them. But the disappointment and knock backs are part of their personal growth into adulthood and ultimately assist in their development. It's important to encourage them to talk to someone they trust and ensure emotional support is in place throughout their journey to employment.

Adequate research and transition planning during high school years can help you both be more prepared for the next step into employment.

## SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Social and community participation is important to us all. Setting social and community participation goals and having individual steps to achieve them, are key to successfully navigating this essential area for your child.

### The NDIS can assist in two ways:

- 1. Increased Social and Community
  Participation Capacity Building budget
  covers development and training to
  increase skills to participate in community,
  social and recreational activities.
- 2. Assistance with Social and Community Participation Core supports budget may fund a support worker to assist participation in social and community activities. For example, driving the person to and from the activity if they are unable to drive themselves or catch public transport.



# Preparing for INDEPENDENCE



What independence means is different for each person and depends on age and ability.

# BECOMING MORE INDEPENDENT MIGHT LOOK LIKE:

- Being able to dress themselves.
- Eating and drinking without assistance.
- Becoming responsible for their own shopping, cooking and food preparation.
- Commencing study or getting a job.
- Taking control of their own finances.
- Moving out of home.

For parents, families and carers, there can often be mixed feelings about the shift to greater independence. It's natural to feel concerned for the person's welfare and whether they'll be able to manage a new situation.

Having to "let go" can also evoke a wide range of emotions, and changes in the family unit can affect everyone, including siblings.

In cases where a person with high care needs is moving out of the family home, it is not uncommon for families and carers to experience a degree of guilt that they are no longer primary caregivers as well as a deep sense of loss.

It's important to give yourself permission to feel these emotions and perhaps seek support from other parents, friends or even professional help, where required.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF TRIALS

For significant steps, it can help to have a transition period that involves trialling a range of different options. Depending on the goal, this could take place over several years.

# EXAMPLE: Goal – Independent living (moving out of the family home).

If the person's goal is to live independently, you might like to trial longer periods of respite where they are away from their usual place of residence.

It may also be worthwhile finding out their preferred living arrangements via a trial. Are they happiest living with another person with a disability? Do they prefer to live with someone their own age or gender?

What services or transport options do they need nearby?

### WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING AND HOW CAN THE NDIS HELP?

Capacity building and independence are closely linked. The NDIS Capacity Building budget is all about developing and improving skills needed to live more independently.

### This may include support to:

- Improve skills to participate in community, social and recreational activities.
- Access therapy to increase skills such as communication skills.
- Improve relationships through positive behaviours and interactions with others.
- Obtain training, advice and help for transitioning from school to further education such as university or TAFE. §

# 10 tips

# FOR SUPPORTING YOUR TEEN'S INDEPENDENCE

- **1.** Start early and build from there.
- 2. Begin with easy, day-to-day decisions and activities.
- **3.** Encourage interactions with others, especially outside the family unit.
- **4.** Let them choose their friends and who they spend time with.
- 6. Take the time to talk about sexual health including what sexual abuse looks like and how to speak up if something is not right.



- **5.** Work on developing a healthy lifestyle including eating well and exercising, where possible.
- 7. Set goals and use the NDIS Capacity Building budget to build skills.
- 8. Develop a support network of health professionals and providers.
- 9. Talk about what the future might look like and work together to address concerns or questions along the way.
- **10.** Research supports and funding so you can provide guidance as necessary.

# **Employment:**

Many young people have goals in their NDIS Plan to get job-ready or to find a job they enjoy. The NDIS plays a key role in helping people who are able to work to prepare for employment and obtain the supports required to study or work.

good place to start is by thinking about the type of work the person could do and their interests:

**Strengths** – things they're good at such as working with technology. **Preferences** – what they enjoy doing, whether they prefer to be inside or outside, whether they like to work with a team or on their own.

**Aspirations** – what do they hope to achieve?

Skills or qualifications they may already possess - what courses and extra-curricular activities have they already undertaken at school?

Let's talk about work (ndis.gov.au/ participants/finding-keeping-andchanging-jobs/lets-talk-aboutwork) is an NDIS booklet that covers all aspects of employment planning including setting employment-related

goals, planning for post-school and the types of supports available.

### NDIS SCHOOL LEAVER **EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS** (SLES)

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

They aim to build a bridge between school and work, helping students understand their potential, develop skills and build confidence. SLES support various pathways including further education, apprenticeships or traineeships, job seeking and volunteering.

SLES cover the last period of high school and immediately after leaving school for up to two years in total (up to the age of 22). They are designed to support each individual's unique pathway to employment, so are different for everyone.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED IN SLES?

SLES depend on individual goals but cover all aspects of moving from school to work from identifying work options and learning new skills, to moving into the workforce and getting started in a new role.

### Examples of SLES include:

- Money handling and time management skills
- Work experience
- Travel preparation
- Personal development
- · Decision making and problem-solving
- · Computer literacy
- Searching for a job, preparing a resume and submitting applications
- Interview preparation
- Self-motivation and personal presentation
- · Working independently and as part of a team

You'll find SLES as a Capacity Building support in an NDIS Plan as an annualised amount rather than a set number of hours.

Dedicated SLES providers help with the transition from school to work including overcoming any barriers along the way. Before signing up with a provider, find out if they have experience working with other people with the same disability and whether they have relevant local connections.



### **NDIS SUPPORTS IN EMPLOYMENT**

NDIS supports in employment fund daily assistance in the workplace for people who need frequent on-the-job support to achieve their employment goals. More info here: ndis.gov.au/understanding/ supports-funded-ndis/supportsemployment

Supports in employment provide practical help and guidance in a wide range of employment settings including private enterprise, not-for-profits, the public sector, self-employment, family business and Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs).

### Examples of supports in employment include:

- On-the-job training.
- Direct task supervision.
- Job customisation.
- Work-related assessments.
- Physical assistance and personal care at work.
- · Supports to manage disability-related behaviour or complex needs.
- Inclusive employment.

Participants who choose plan management or self manage their NDIS Plan can use a person of their choice to assist with these tasks such as a support worker or someone else from within or outside the organisation of employment.



### **DISABILITY AND THE WORKPLACE: WHAT THE** LAW SAYS

Equality of opportunity in employment is enshrined in federal and state legislation in Australia. Businesses that discriminate against a person in employment because of a disability may be breaking the law. This covers all aspects of employment, from recruitment through to career progression.

Australia is also a signatory to the UN

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which recognises the rights of people with disability to "work, on an equal basis with others".

This includes the right to an opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen, or accepted, in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disability. While the UN convention is not binding, many of its principles are enshrined in legislation.





# getting job ready

GET A SUPPORT CREW

Navigating the employment system can be tricky!

There are different government agencies, providers
and programs that may be able to assist.

NDIS school leaver employment supports are designed to help
with exploring options, making decisions, filling out forms

USE A VARIETY OF RESOURCES

Casting a wide search is important for any job seeker.

Here are some ideas for where to look for work:

- Online platforms and organisation websites.
- Disability support groups.

and preparing for meetings.

- Dedicated programs.
- Organisations or businesses in your networks.
- Personal connections such as family members and friends.

# ROLE PLAY TO PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS

Job interviews can be stressful, especially if you find meeting new people or communicating challenging.

We recommend practising role plays where an SLES provider, friend or family member acts as the potential employer and asks you some interview-type questions. Practising your answers ahead of time will help you feel more confident and prepared.

# BE WELL PRESENTED AT EACH STEP OF THE WAY

First impressions count! How candidates present themselves and dress are among the things an employer will consider when deciding upon a successful candidate.

Always have a tidy appearance, trim your nails, do your hair and wear clean, neat clothing when dealing with agencies or prospective employers.



# 5 IMPROVE THE CHANCES OF JOB SUCCESS

So, how can the young person in your life improve their chances of finding a job? The following factors can have a positive impact.

- Proactively seeking a job.
- Informal experience such as volunteer work.
- Developing a clear pathway to further education or work while still at school.
- Receiving formal support.
- Having employment-related goals and funding in their NDIS Plan.
- Being well-connected in the community.
- Completing further education.

### **DISCLOSING A DISABILITY**

An employee or prospective employee is only required to disclose that they have a disability if it will affect their ability to do their job or impact their ability or the ability of others to work safely. Otherwise, disclosure is completely at the discretion of the employee or prospective employee.

# If an employee does disclose a disability:

• The employer is obliged to keep

information about the disability confidential. Written consent is required from the employee before this information can be disclosed to others.

- The employer must consider appropriate responses including specific training or work adjustments.
- The employer cannot treat the person less favourably than a person without disability would be treated in the same circumstances.

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# MOVING: OF HOME

Ensuring your independent adult child has a safe and suitable place to live can be a genuine source of stress for family members and carers. What are the options for independent living and what assistance is available?

ith a few exceptions, people with disability are required to find their own housing. If the person is able to manage their own money and make decisions for themselves, this can usually be achieved with a range of supports available. There are also a number of NDIS supports for people with higher care needs to assist them to live independently.

# Types of independent living...

### PRIVATE RENTAL MARKET

Private rentals may be ideal for people with disability who are able to manage their own finances and decision-making. However, there can be drawbacks. Housing in the private rental market may be too inflexible or unreliable to provide for long-term needs or unsuitable for a person with high care needs.

### **SOCIAL HOUSING**

(Also called public or community housing)

An option for longer-term housing could be social housing, with many community housing agreements offering long-term security and affordable terms. The

opportunity may also arise to purchase the home in the future. Eligibility criteria do apply and there are often wait lists in many areas.

### **PRIVATE OWNERSHIP**

Not every family can afford to purchase a separate property. However, there are strategies that can make private ownership achievable for a range of people to offer a secure home for the person to live in perpetuity, like arrangements that can be specified in your will. Some families establish a Special Disability Trust, making the person a beneficiary of property where they can live indefinitely.

### **CUSTOM ARRANGEMENTS**

With a lack of suitable accommodation for people with disability, some families and communities are developing innovative solutions. Examples include investing in properties with friends and small-scale community-based housing.

### SPECIALIST DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION (SDA)

SDA is housing designed for people with extreme functional impairment or very high support needs. Funding is available through the NDIS for the development of specialised homes for a small number of NDIS participants who meet strict

eligibility criteria. SDA supports the concept of a "home for life".

### **PRIVATE DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

A number of independent housing cooperatives or organisations are popping up, offering a range of purpose-built investment opportunities and rental accommodation. While they are mostly connected with Specialist Disability Accommodation, some do not require SDA funding.

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Some of the other things that you might need to think about when considering independent living include:

- Ongoing care expenses.
- · Location suitability.
- Ability to accommodate changing future needs.
- · Strategies for overcoming loneliness and isolation.
- · Continued skill development and capacity building.
- Consideration of continuity of supports as the person moves from one location to another, such as maintaining the same doctor and allied health professionals.
- Ability to accommodate support worker preferences.



# NDIS home and living supports

### **INDIVIDUALISED LIVING OPTIONS (ILO)**

Individualised Living Options (ILO) are NDIS supports for people over the age of 18 to live in the home of their choice - on their own, with family or with friends. This option is best suited to people who need formal or informal help at home for at least six hours a day. It's designed as a more flexible alternative to traditional group homes, giving people more choice and control over where and how they live.

As ILOs are designed to aid independence, it is worthwhile considering whether it could be part of your future planning strategy.

ILOs consider each individual's preferences, strengths and support requirements as well as informal and community supports. Funding can be implemented in a rental property, a property the person owns or in the family home.

They are designed for people ready to explore their home and living needs and willing to invest time and effort in creating their future home.

### ILOs can fund supports in a variety of situations:

- Co-residency: support resides in the home.
- Host arrangements: participant resides full-time in the home of a nonrelated host who provides support.

- Living alone: support is provided in the home of the participant.
- Living together: the person lives with other people, such as family members, who may or may not be NDIS participants.

### What supports can ILOs include?

- Helping a person decide where to live and what is needed to make this happen.
- Support workers to assist with in-home support needs such as personal care, shopping, cooking or paying bills.
- Help to set up and manage the home.
- · Capacity building to improve independence.
- Connecting with other people.
- · Help with daily decisions.
- Support to manage emotions or behaviour.
- Training for support crew.
- Unpaid volunteers who can help regularly.

It doesn't cover mortgage payments, regular household expenses like food or utilities, activities outside the home or supports provided in another area of an NDIS Plan, such as assistive technology.

A provider works with the person to develop a customised support plan that suits their individual needs. The plan is implemented in stages and refined over time.



### SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL)

Supported Independent Living (SIL) is a package of home and living supports designed to help people with higher support needs who need some level of help at home all the time (24/7 care).

SIL provides assistance with, or supervision of, daily tasks, personal care, transport and skill development to help an individual to live as independently as

It may be available when family or



friends are unable to meet the needs of the person and they are living in a shared living environment of two to seven NDIS participants or alone.

SIL appears under Core supports – Assistance in Shared Living Arrangements in an NDIS Plan. Approved funds are stated and can only be used for SIL. They are not flexible like other Core supports.

# The types of things that may be covered by SIL include:

- 24/7 care and overnight support.
- Assistance with personal care needs such as getting into and out of bed.
- Support for household tasks like preparing meals.
- Participating in household activities like shopping.

• Managing challenging behaviours. Living expenses such as rent and day-today costs such as food are not covered.

SIL is most likely to be included in an NDIS Plan where the person has set a goal to live independently and has been working towards this goal for some time.

- It does not include items covered under other NDIS budgets such as transport or consumables.
- Individual and shared supports may be provided.
- Registered or unregistered providers can be used for SIL for people who are plan managed or who self manage. However, where supports or services are likely to include the use of regulated restrictive practice, a registered provider must be used.

# OTHER TYPES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

For children and teenagers under the age of 18 with disability, the NDIS may fund personal care supports.

### Other financial supports that may be available if eligibility criteria are met include:

- Disability Support Pension
- Newstart Allowance
- Mobility Allowance
- Essential Medical Equipment Payment
- Continence Aids Payment Scheme

Note: The NDIS does not provide income support. **S** 



# RESPITE CARE

Everyone needs a break from time to time. Respite care under the NDIS covers support and accommodation away from the person's usual place of residence for a short period of time.

management, many with lived experience themselves, are highly experienced in supporting families to make the most of their child's NDIS

Leap in! plan manager, Tabitha answers some common questions about respite care and the NDIS.

### How does respite care under the NDIS work?

Respite care allows for both a person with a disability and their carer to have a break or a change of scenery. It is the alternative care that is put in place while a usual caregiver is unavailable.

Under the NDIS, respite care is usually referred to as "Short Term Accommodation" and is designed to



support ongoing caring arrangements between participants and their unpaid carers.

For children, the NDIS may fund Short Term Accommodation if they require more support than other children their age. In some cases, the NDIS may fund alternative supports instead such as inhome support.

# What types of Short Term Accommodation/respite care does the NDIS fund?

Respite care is generally funded for up to 14 days at a time for a maximum of 28 days per year.

# It can be used for a variety of purposes including:

• A chance for the person to build independence.

- A place to make new friends or develop new skills.
- Giving informal supports (such as family members or carers) a break.

It is intended to be funded as a group support rather than an individual support.

# Does respite care cover food costs and provision?

The funding for respite care covers all basic expenses in a 24-hour period related to providing the service including:

- → Personal care
- → Food
- → Short-term accommodation
- → Overnight support
- → Negotiated activities

Keep in mind that the NDIS doesn't fund the cost of entry fees or spending money for additional activities.

### Is respite care available for short periods of time, such as overnight or a couple of hours?

Yes. If the respite care required is for less than 24 hours, it may be possible to negotiate a reduced rate with the provider.

Examples include dusk to dawn respite care or if the usual carer needs support for a few hours during the day that is not covered by other NDIS supports such as community participation.

These short-period respite arrangements are typically charged as an hourly fee and subject to the maximum hourly rates set by the NDIA for in-home and out-of-home assistance.

# Do I need to specifically ask for respite care at my child's planning meeting?

If your child has Core supports in their NDIS Plan, you can use it to fund Short Term Accommodation if it helps them to achieve their goals and meets the usual NDIS "reasonable and necessary" requirements.

If you're preparing for your child's first plan meeting or plan reassessment meeting, it helps to consider in advance how much funding may be needed for respite.

### Things to think about:

- Are there regular times when an informal carer is unavailable? If so, document these including the length of time and regularity.
- Does the carer have any holidays or breaks planned in the foreseeable future?
- Whether respite care can be used to help look after the long-term wellbeing of any family members or carers.
- How respite care might help your loved one achieve their goals (such as trying out what it is like to live with other people or developing their independence).

# What happens if something changes during my child's plan and we need additional respite time?

If there is funding in an NDIS Core budget, you can use this to pay for Short Term Accommodation where it relates to a person's disability needs.

If there isn't enough funding in your child's NDIS Plan to cover reasonable and necessary additional respite time, you can ask for a plan reassessment.

The NDIS may fund more than 28 days in a year for children at risk of going into residential care but will not fund more than 30 days at a time or more than 60 days a year.

# Will the NDIS pay for a holiday for my child?

STA is not intended for holidays and should be related to your child's disability, such as for respite or improving their skills. Other NDIS supports may be able to assist with providing support or care for holidays but it won't generally cover holiday accommodation or entry to attractions.

# BEING PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY



It can be hard to think clearly during an emergency. But when you care for someone with disability, planning ahead can reduce the stress associated with an emergency situation.

f you get sick and require emergency treatment, or are called away unexpectedly, having a plan provides confidence that the needs and preferences of your child or children will be considered.

Proactive planning also assists you to act swiftly if there is a sudden change in the condition of the person you care for.

### WHY PLAN AHEAD?

- It's easier for someone else to take over at short notice.
- It provides a chance to think through what is best for the person, in advance.
- The person you care for is more likely to be looked after according to their needs.
- It helps reduce the stress of unexpected situations.

# DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY PLAN

An emergency plan is a document that outlines important contacts, care needs and medical information that become a point of reference in an emergency.

Leap in! has created a handy Emergency Support Plan template which you can access here:

### leapin.com.au/wp-content/ uploads/2020/12/845\_Leap-in-Emergency-Support-Plan.pdf

The first step is to identify an emergency contact person who is willing and able to take your place if something unexpected happens. It's important to ask the person first and ensure they are comfortable with the tasks required, before nominating them as a contact on your emergency plan.



# WHAT TO INCLUDE IN AN EMERGENCY SUPPORT PLAN

### 1 Name and contact details of:

- Parent/s or primary carer/s.
- Person who the plan has been created for.
- Additional emergency contact people's details (i.e. phone, email).
- **2** | Details about the person's illness or primary disability.

### 3 | Care needs including:

- Things they need help with.
- Any special equipment used.
- Behavioural challenges and strategies.
- 4 | Contact details for organisations providing regular care, and a brief description of the care provided.
- **5** If the person is an NDIS participant, it is helpful to include a copy of their current NDIS Plan and any current service agreements.

### 6 | Medical information

- Allergies to medication as well as any other allergies.
- Medicines taken, dosage and timings.
- Health information including Medicare number, health care card number and health fund information.
- Contact details for doctors and specialists.

### 7 | Emergency respite contacts

It's a good idea to include the following details about who to contact for emergency respite care: Call the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre on 1800 052 222 during business hours or 1800 059 059 outside business hours.

Emergency plans should be signed and dated. Remember to update the plan if something changes (like obtaining new care providers or changing medications or dosages).

# INVOLVE THE PERSON YOU CARE FOR

Where possible, it's important to include the person you care for in discussions about what might take place in case of an emergency. Find out if they have any special needs, concerns or preferences for who might need to look after them. Also consider how your child or young adult may be able to assist. Once the plan is finalised, talk through it together so they know what to expect and can ask questions.

# WHERE TO KEEP AN EMERGENCY PLAN

Keep your Emergency Support Plan in a place that is safe and visible, like on the fridge or a family noticeboard. Carry a copy with you when travelling. Ensure your doctor and emergency contacts have a copy too.



### **EMERGENCY CARDS**

Emergency cards help other people to help you, regardless of whether you are a carer or a person with a disability. They can be carried in wallet or mobile phone case so you always have them when out and about.

"I am a carer" cards include your name, the name of the person you care for and your relationship to them. They also include contact details of additional emergency contact people in your plan.

"I have a carer" cards include the person's name, condition or disability, a brief outline of the care required and the carer's name and contact details.

Emergency Card Templates that can be downloaded and printed here: leapin.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Leap-in-Supporter-Emergency-Card\_Aug-2020-1.pdf



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