

SOURCEKIDS

ISSUE 01

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
Leap in!



Navigating the NDIS

INSIDE GUIDE 1.

Prepping for your plan

Life stages and
things to consider

Combination Plans

SOURCEKIDS magazine Welcome

Welcome to our first NDIS e-Magazine in partnership with Leap in!

The NDIS is in parts ground-breaking, wonderful and transforming and in others frustrating, confusing and intimidating. At its core it's a scheme with the potential to open a world of possibilities for families of children with a disability, giving us choice and control over the supports our children receive, not just as they grow and develop, but well into their adult lives.

But therein lies the rub; along with the choice and control provided to us, comes a whole heap of things we must get our heads around. The language used, the policies to understand, the administrative and paperwork requirements, the sense of responsibility and advocacy we need to take on, budget management skills, people management skills... the list of tasks and requirements that the NDIS adds into the mix of our already hectic lives goes on and on.

So, that's where this e-Mag comes in. With the help of our very good friends at Leap in! we'd like to introduce you to the first in a four-part series aimed at demystifying and simplifying the NDIS planning, management, and review processes to help you understand better what's involved, and to support you to make use of the different resources and information available to manage your child's NDIS access, implement their plan and help them reach their goals.

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A message from Leap in!

As Australia’s leading plan manager, we help thousands of parents and their children across the country to navigate the NDIS with confidence. And, we know that at times the NDIS can be challenging to understand, particularly when you’re new to it.

Every day we hear from our Leap in! Members about their wins big and small, the dedicated teams of providers that support them, and the exciting opportunities and options that are enabled by the NDIS.

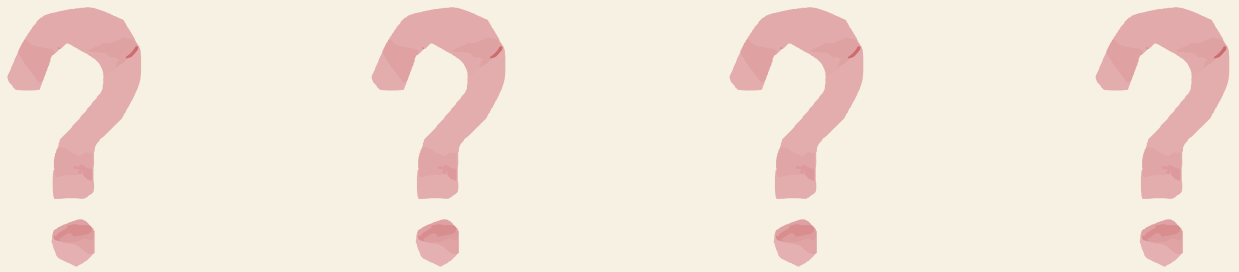
It’s a big, exciting and sometimes overwhelming space. However, the answers to your questions are always available: you just need to know where to look and who to ask.

It’s for this reason, and our belief in the wonderful work that they do, that we’re proud to partner with Source Kids on this e-Magazine, the first of its kind in Australia.

The information in this magazine is backed by our Leap in! crew experienced in the early childhood approach (formerly ECEI), NDIS transition and NDIS planning and budgeting, many with lived experience themselves. If the information here leads to other questions, give us a call on 1300 05 78 78 – we can help.

I hope you enjoy the read.
 Warm regards,

Andrew Kiel
 CO-FOUNDER & CEO
 LEAP IN!



WHAT

IS THE

NDIS?



The basics that you should know

Let's start at the very beginning and look at some of the key things to know about the NDIS and how to become a participant.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the way the Australian government provides support to its citizens with disabilities, their families and carers. Through the scheme, all Australians under the age of 65 who have a permanent and significant disability are provided reasonable and necessary supports they need to live an enjoyable life.

A permanent and significant disability is a disability that is likely to be lifelong and have a substantial impact on your ability to complete everyday activities. This can be intellectual, physical, sensory, cognitive or psychosocial.

The NDIS takes a lifetime approach to supporting people with disabilities, with early intervention giving them choice and control over their lives and helping them to achieve their goals.

How do I know if my child is eligible for funding?

For your child to enter the NDIS, you'll need to complete an Access Request. This is where you fill out some forms and provide background information so the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) that operates the NDIS can determine if you're eligible. Some of the important criteria within the access request is as follows:

Age requirements.

You may be eligible for the NDIS if you are aged between 7 and 65. See below for information for children aged 0-6 see the 'For Children Under Seven' info panel on page 6.

Residency requirements.

You must live in Australia and:

- Be an Australian citizen or
- Hold a permanent visa or
- Hold a special category visa (SCV).

If you spend a lot of time overseas, you'll need to demonstrate strong ties to Australia such as owning a home or having a long-term tenancy agreement, and having family in Australia. You might also have to provide information about how often you travel overseas and the duration of your trips.

Disability requirements *(for those over the age of 7)*

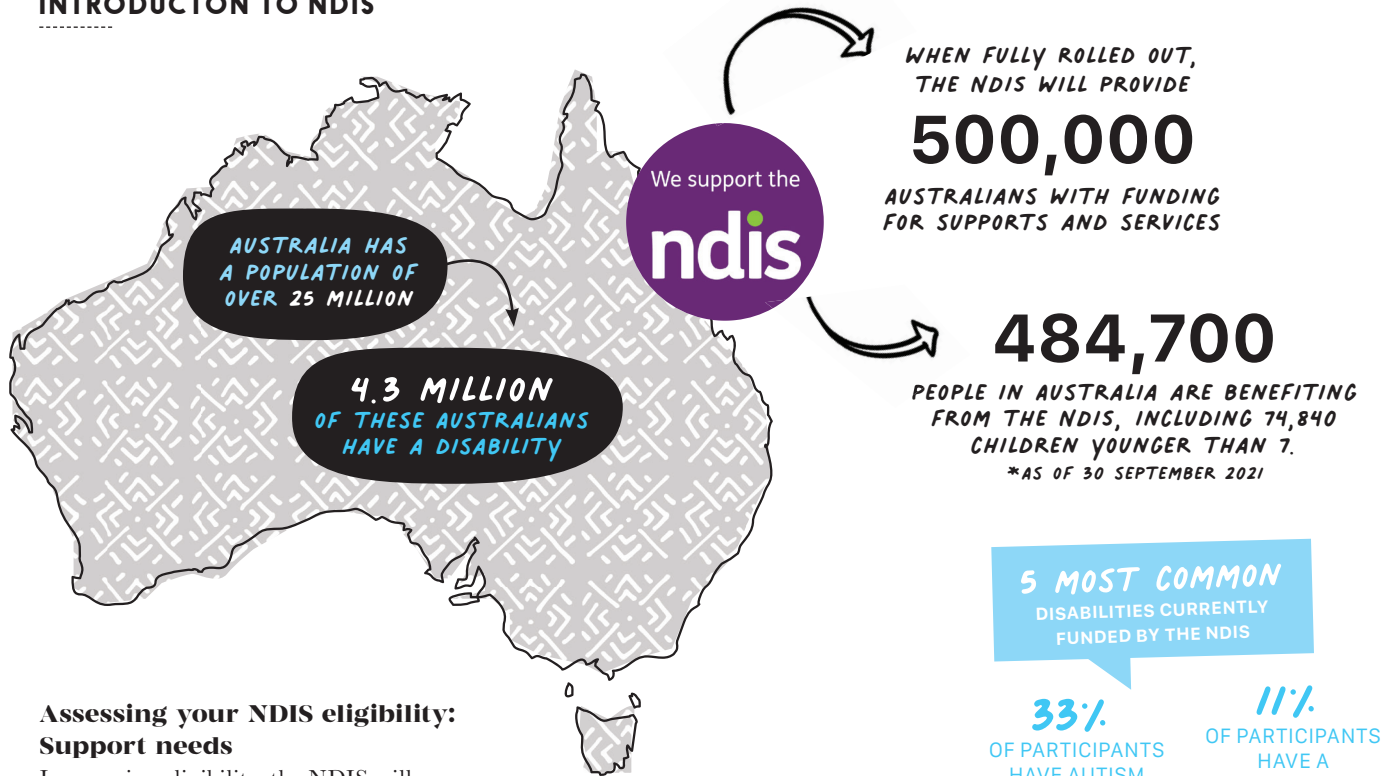
Your child must be able to meet each of the following criteria to be eligible for the NDIS:

- Have a disability that results in an impairment which affects ability to perform certain activities such as communication, learning, mobility or self-care.
- The disability must be attributable to one or more intellectual, neurological, sensory or physical impairments.
- Your child is likely to require support under the NDIS for the rest of their life.

If the impairment varies in intensity, such as experiencing chronic episodes, they may still be eligible.

More information about the disability requirements is available on the NDIS website.

INTRODUCTON TO NDIS



Assessing your NDIS eligibility: Support needs

In assessing eligibility, the NDIS will consider the following criteria in relation to a person's disability:

- Do you need support from a person because of a permanent and significant disability?
- Do you use special equipment because of a permanent and significant disability?
- Will providing some supports now reduce your future needs?

It's helpful to think about how you might address these requirements before completing an access request.

Providing information about your child's disability

The NDIS may require you to provide evidence of your child's disability. This can include information on what their disability is, how long it will last and how it impacts their life. If the information you provide initially is not enough, you may be asked to provide further details. Evidence of a disability could be a report from a GP, paediatrician, an allied health therapist, or a combination of these.

You can find out more about providing evidence of your disability on the NDIS website.

No income or assets test

The NDIS is not means tested and does not take into account your income or assets (such as a home) when determining eligibility.

For children aged under 7

The NDIS supports children aged 0 to 6 who have a developmental delay or disability under its Early Childhood Approach.

Early Childhood Partners throughout Australia deliver the Early Childhood Approach which supports families to help children develop the skills they need to take part in daily activities and set them up for the best possible outcomes throughout their life. This may include connecting you to supports in your area or providing short-term early intervention.

Your Early Childhood Partner will help you to request NDIS access if your child requires long-term early childhood intervention supports.

For more details, Leap in! has a useful overview of the Early Childhood Approach here at leapin.com.au/news/update-on-ndis-early-childhood-approach/

Once your child has been approved for NDIS access the next step depends on the age of your child:

- For children aged 0-6, the early childhood partner will use information about goals, assessments, and connections with community and mainstream supports to help create your child's NDIS plan.
- For children aged 7 years or over, you'll meet with an NDIA Planner or NDIS Local Area Coordinator (LAC).

In both cases, an individualised NDIS Plan will be prepared to provide the supports and services your child needs to meet their goals. 🎯

Read on through this eMag to find out more about preparing for your child's plan and other useful things to know.



**“Leap in! are legends!
I am so hard to please
but they continue to
impress me.”**

Cassie, L! Member.



**Not all plan managers
are the same.**

At Leap in! we put people first.

Leap in!

Australia's leading
NDIS plan manager.

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HOW DO I KNOW PLAN MANAGEMENT IS RIGHT FOR ME?

When you're plan managed, the NDIS pays someone you choose to help you manage your money and pay your bills. You won't have to worry about record keeping and paperwork, and the NDIS actually adds extra funds in your Plan to cover the cost of your plan manager.

THERE ARE MANY BENEFITS OF BEING PLAN MANAGED


- You still have complete control of your funds
- You can choose any provider to help you meet your goals, whether they are NDIS registered or not
- You have the power to approve each payment from your Plan to providers
- Billing issues and questions are all resolved for you
- No book-keeping or financial tracking
- No upfront costs
- No separate bank account required

When you are plan managed, you get all the good parts of being self-managed without having to worry about all of the above.

If you're wondering if plan management is right for you, we can help you arrive at an answer. Here are three questions to ask yourself, which will help you determine if plan management is a good fit.

ASK YOURSELF

1. Do you want to buy supports from non-registered providers (like a lawnmowing service, a local cleaner, your regular non-NDIS registered OT or an individual support worker or community group who hasn't registered for the NDIS)?
2. Would you like the freedom and control of self-managing your budgets without the paperwork and financial obligations?
3. Would you like someone to help you find supports, track your goals and make the most of your budgets and NDIS Plan?

If you answered 'yes' to all three questions, working with an NDIS plan manager like Leap in! will be a great option for your first NDIS Plan. 



HAVE I
CHOSEN
THE RIGHT
PLAN
MANAGER?



Looking for a not-for-profit

plan manager?



IF YOU'VE SIGNED UP FOR PLAN MANAGEMENT BUT YOU'RE NOT 100% SURE IF YOU'VE CHOSEN THE RIGHT PLAN MANAGER, ASK YOURSELF THESE 5 QUESTIONS:

1. Are they an NDIS registered provider?
2. Is my personal information secure and protected?

3. Do they have a digital platform where I can log on and check my claims, payments and service agreements?

4. Do they help me track my goals?
5. Do they provide me with a support team?

IF YOU ANSWERED 'YES' TO ALL THESE QUESTIONS, YOU CAN REST ASSURED THAT YOU'VE CHOSEN A PLAN MANAGER THAT WILL WORK FOR YOU.

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If your child is under seven years of age you will work with the NDIA and your Early Childhood Partner to come up with your child's first NDIS Plan. If they are over seven, you will work with an LAC (Local Area Co-ordinator) who will discuss all your child's needs and goals with you and present your information to the NDIA for them to finalise the Plan.

We know that this can be a daunting time but there are apps, services, people and heaps of info out there to help. Here are some pointers, lists and more to get you started...

STEP 1

Decide on the details for your NDIS Plan meeting.

- What type of meeting you would like: face to face or over the phone?
- Where would you like to be for the meeting: in your house, in your Local Area Coordinator's office or somewhere else?
- Do you have a preferred time for the meeting: morning, afternoon or evening?
- Who would you like to be involved in your Plan meeting: a family member, close friend, your partner or a person who supports you? It should be someone you know and trust.
- Do you need communication or assistive aids for the meeting?
- Do you need a translator?



PREPARING
FOR YOUR
CHILD'S
PLANNING
MEETING

STEP 2

For your Plan meeting.

Use the points below for helpful information to take to your meeting – you may not need all of these or have other ones you'd like to include as well.

Leap in!'s planning and budgeting app

You can use the Leap in! app to compile all the information you require for your Plan meeting. Once you've added in all the details the app creates a Plan Ready Summary that you can use in your Plan meeting. Check out our feature on pages 14 and 15 for how to use the app.

Do you have any of the following assessments or reports?

- Diagnosis from specialists
- Home modification assessment
- Medication charts
- Mental health reports
- Care needs assessments
- Occupational therapist and speech pathologist reports
- Neuropsychological assessments
- Incontinence assessments and management plans
- Physical condition/accessibility needs.

A note about reports:

When it comes to the NDIS, a report is a document containing information that supports a certain claim, usually to join the NDIS or obtain funding for a specific service or support. A report can also be referred to as a form or an assessment.

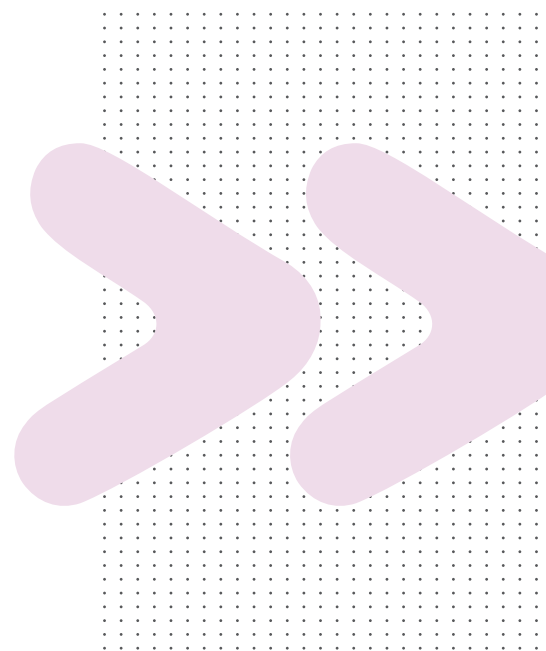
A report may include information such as:

- Name and contact details
- Information about a disability
- Detailed information about how a disability affects a person's ability to carry out daily tasks
- A professional opinion by a doctor or other health care professional
- Supports that are needed to help an NDIS participant to complete daily tasks and achieve their goals.

In most cases, reports are completed by a doctor or allied health professional such as an occupational therapist (sometimes both). They usually have a lot of experience in completing reports and should know the type of information to include.

It is important that reports are worded in a way that everyone can understand. If something written on a report doesn't make sense to you, don't be afraid to ask for it to be changed.

A report is also an important document to have for your Plan review meeting. Reports from your child's therapists can be key to providing the evidence needed for ongoing funding – these should not focus on what the therapist did, as much as what were the goals achieved. They will need to tread a fine line between reporting progress (if there's no progress made, why would NDIS keep funding that therapy?) and outlining the need for further funding.





TIPS

FOR ENSURING A REPORT MEETS NDIS REQUIREMENTS

- Make sure all the information requested is supplied
- Ensure the report is written in everyday language
- Be detailed. Give as much information as you can about the disability and its impact
- Give direct examples. This can include describing how the person's life would be without the funding or support and how receiving it will help them achieve their goals
- Be specific. When seeking supports or services, be clear about what is required. Provide a description, model number and quote
- If supporting information is requested, include that with the report. It will save time later.

Your child's community and mainstream supports

- Current support plan from your service provider/s listing all supports
- List of 'drop in' support services
- Quote from provider/s for supports or equipment that you would like covered in your Plan (this isn't compulsory, however can help during your meeting)
- All your unpaid/unfunded supports from family and friends etc.

Paint a picture of your child and their life!

It is also useful to produce a participant statement so that a planner can get to know a little more about your child. Prepare a short document that describes your child and how their disability affects them.

When allocating funding the NDIS planners will want to understand what daily life is like for your child, the things they do, the existing supports you use and any barriers to achieving their goals.

You may want to include information about:

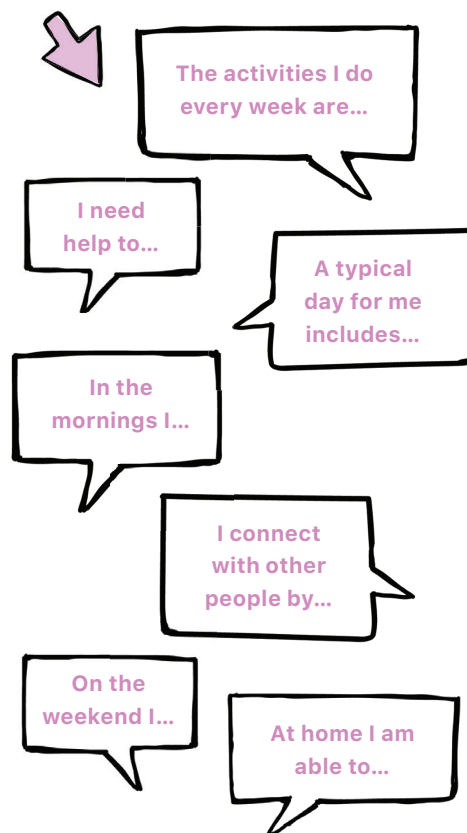
- Activities your child does in a day and in a week
- Where they spend their time (for example school, home, community groups)
- Any help you need to do things
- Activities that are difficult for them
- Their disability and how it impacts their life
- Regular interactions with family and friends.

Some tips for completing this information

1. Be detailed. You want to paint a picture of your child's life for someone who does not know you.
2. Be specific. If you need help with something, explain why and what the challenges are.
3. Include the things that they can do independently and areas they are working on.
4. Add details about weekdays and weekends to give a complete picture.
5. Write in "first person", using I and we.

SENTENCE STARTERS TO HELP YOU WRITE YOUR CHILD'S STORY

If you're unsure of how to describe your daily life, we've come up with some sentence starters to inspire you.



And don't forget you!

It is also very worthwhile to include a Carer Impact statement that outlines your abilities and inabilities to meet your child's disability support needs. If you are caring for more than one person, make sure you outline this, as well as your own disability or significant health concerns. Talk about the things you need to do for your child over and above that of a 'regular' child their age and the impact that this has on you and your family.

SET YOUR GOALS.

So, you've covered all the big questions – now it's time to set some goals! 🎯

Essential reading

**for every parent of a
child with a disability.**



Future planning:

A guide for parents and carers.

Leap in!

Download the FREE ebook today! 

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HOW TO USE THE LEAP IN! APP

TO PREPARE FOR YOUR NDIS PLAN MEETING

Are you preparing for your child's first NDIS Plan meeting or Plan Review? Well, we have good news! You can use the free Leap in! app to get everything you need ready for the meeting.

Using the L! app is the easiest and fastest way to prepare. Even better, everything you need is in one place. Once you have added all your details, you can view, print or download a copy of your child's Plan Ready Summary, which you can take to your meeting.

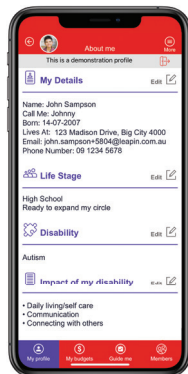
READY TO GET STARTED? HERE'S HOW...

STEP 1

Get the Leap in! app (skip this step if you already use the app).

For mobile devices, download the Leap in! app from the Apple App Store or on Google Play. If you're on a desktop, access the web version from leapin.com.au

Select Create an account, choose Crew and add your name, email address and a password. Now you're good to go!



STEP 2

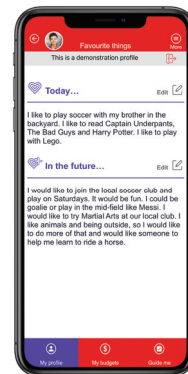
Complete My Profile – About Me

Click on My Profile at the bottom and select About Me. In this section of the app, you can put all your child's information in one place.

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

- **My details:** Add your child's address, phone, email, birthday, Plan Meeting date and NDIS number (if they have one).
- **Life stage:** Answer the question – How would you describe your child's life stage or current life transitions? The app includes some suggestions. Select the options that are right for your child.
- **Disability:** Add details about your child's disability. Choose from items in the dropdown list or type your own. Add any extra information.
- **Impact of my disability:** Add information about how your child's disability affects their life. It's important to be detailed. Complete each section for daily living/self care, communication, connecting with others, learning and independence.

Top tip: This is a big section with a lot of information. It's easy to record your answers using the voice to text feature on your device. Look under 'Settings' to turn this on.



STEP 3

Add information about your child's favourite things

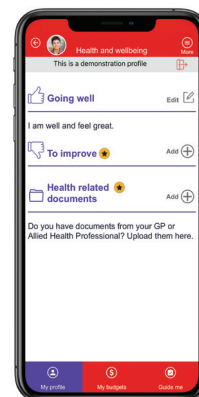
You will find this section under My Profile. This information helps your NDIS Planner get to know your child better. It gets you thinking

about things they might like to learn and how you'd like the future to look.

Top Tip: This section is also a great place to start goal planning.

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS FOR OR WITH YOUR CHILD:

- Today I would like to...
- In the future I would like to...



STEP 4

Health and wellbeing

This is a great place for giving a thumbs-up to what's going well with your child's health and wellbeing and recording what needs to be improved.

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

Going well: Add what is working for you now.

To improve: What would you like to improve in relation to your child's health and wellbeing? How does disability impact their health? What support does your child and family need?

Health related documents: Here you can upload assessments or statements from doctors, support workers or providers so your important documents are together.

Top tip: For more details on the first few sections, check out part 1 of the Leap in! App guide.

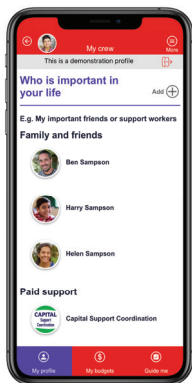
STEP 5

Home

Here you can add details about where the child lives and who they live with.

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

- **Home:** What kind of home do you live in? Who do you live with? How many people do you live with?
- **Who I live with:** Add people who you live with such as family members and siblings.
- **Home modification:** Add details about existing home modifications and whether anything needs to change.



STEP 6

Crew

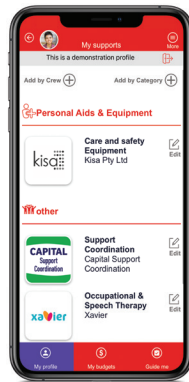
This is where you add information about the people who are important in your child's life such as family, friends, support workers or other professionals.

FOR EACH PERSON,

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

- Name
- Relationship to the child
- Organisation if relevant
- Any notes such as how they help you and whether this is going to change
- Phone and email address.

You can choose to give any of your Crew access to the app profile so they can help or add information. This is optional and you have control over what each person sees.



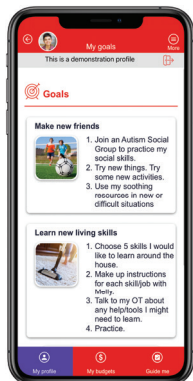
STEP 7

Supports

This is where you add supports your child and family receive and/or need such as NDIS supports or those provided by other organisations like supports at school.

How to add supports:

- Choose **Add by crew+** to connect supports to the people you have added as Crew
- Choose **Add by category+** to see support types you can choose from
- Follow the prompts to complete the information about each support
- If it's a new support you want the NDIS to fund, use the notes to write about why it's needed.



STEP 8

Goals

This is the fun part where you get to set some goals. The NDIS may be able to fund reasonable and necessary supports that help your child to achieve their goals. Not sure where to start?

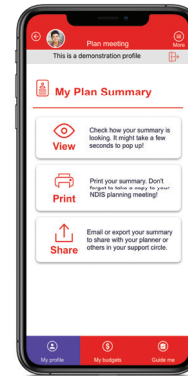
The app makes it easy:

- Go to **Goals** under **My Profile** and select **Edit**, then **Add a new goal**.
- Add what your child would like to achieve. Write your own information or choose from hundreds of different goal ideas. More relevant goals will appear if you have included your **Life Stage** and **Disability** in the **About Me** section (under **My Profile**).
- Save the goal and follow the prompts to add some steps and supports needed to help your child and family achieve this goal.

Top tip: For more details on steps 5-8, check out part 2 of the Leap in! App guide.



To book your free pre-planning session, call us on 1300 05 78 78 or email crew@leapin.com.au and arrange a time.



STEP 9

Get your Plan Ready Summary

Once you have added all the details, you can view or download a Plan Ready Summary ready for your child's meeting.

- Go to the "more"

section in the top right of the app.

- Select **My Plan Summary** from the menu.
- Choose **View** to check out how your summary is looking and identify areas that need more information
- Choose **Print** to print your summary ready to take to the NDIS meeting
- Choose **Share** to email or export your summary so it can be shared with a planner or others in your support circle.

GET YOUR FREE LEAP IN! PRE-PLANNING SESSION.

Preparing for your child's first NDIS Plan Meeting (or Plan Review) can be overwhelming. Luckily, the team at Leap in! HQ can help get you started with a free pre-planning session.

What does a pre-planning session cover?

Each pre-planning session is customised to your circumstances however, we can discuss things such as:

- How to give yourself enough time to be properly prepared
- What questions you need to ask yourself
- How to prepare your records
- How to involve your child in planning?
- How to communicate the specifics
- How to make the most of the pre-planning tools on the Leap in! app.

Goals



If you're not sure where to start when it comes to goals, don't worry! We've put together a quick guide to make sure you're ready for your Plan meeting.

NDIS funding revolves around the goals that are set for a specific plan period. For children under seven most plans run for a one year, but two-year plans are becoming more common for older participants.

A goal describes what your child wants or needs to learn, develop, or achieve in their life, and for a NDIS Plan to be approved, the supports requested should be related to the goals that have been set for your child. "Supports" means services, aids or assistance that help increase independence, do tasks more safely or live a more "normal" life.

The NDIS will provide funding for things that are reasonable and necessary for improving your child's wellbeing with their disability.

By setting goals, a participant is showing the NDIS how they plan to improve their wellbeing and achieve more in life with the supports being requested. Without goals, a Plan will not be approved.

IT'S ABOUT TIME

Goals can vary in the length of time it takes to achieve them. These are categorised by the NDIS as either short, medium or long-term goals.

SHORT-TERM GOALS

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

Short-term goals might look something like this:

- This year, I want to be more independent and able to dress myself

- This year, I want to join a community sport class and play football with my friends.

MEDIUM OR LONG-TERM GOALS

If it will take a number of years to achieve certain goals, then they'll be medium or long-term goals. It can be helpful to break these down into short-term goals as small steps towards achieving your bigger life goals.

Medium to long-term goals might look like:

- I want to learn to make my own breakfast and wash up my dishes after breakfast.
- I want to build the skills I need to learn better and complete school or a university degree.

WHERE TO START?

Think about your child's daily life and what each day, week and month looks like. Do they need any extra supports for everyday activities? You should try to be as specific as possible.

Also, consider each of the aspects of your child's life to determine which are most important.

These could include:

- Independence in daily living
- Improving relationships
- Finding and keeping a job (older children/young adults!)
- Doing more social and recreational activities
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Improving communication

IS

If your child regularly works with a therapist for speech, physio and OT then they can be a fabulous resource to use to help brainstorm goals. The same goes for your child's paediatrician or psychologist if you have areas of behaviour and social participation that you want to address.

NEXT...

It's good to know that there is a link between what's important to your child, their goals and the supports they need. With this in mind, the easiest way to set goals is to break the process down into three steps.

STEP 1

Think about what's important to your child.

- I like participating in activities after school with my friends.
- I want to improve how I communicate.

STEP 2

Work out your goals.

- To increase my ability to access the community for social activities.
- To improve my ability to speak clearly.

STEP 3:

Work out what you need to achieve these goals.

- Adaptive cutlery to enable me to be more independent at mealtimes.
- A speech pathologist to help me improve my communication. ⑤

5 goal setting tips

1.

Be specific. Record exactly what your child is aiming to achieve. For example, I will learn to pack my school bag independently.

2.

Ensure the goals are achievable. Some people choose to have a goal and a "stretch goal" (one that pushes you that little bit harder).

3.

Try to set no more than three goals so it doesn't feel overwhelming.

4.

Give a time-frame for achieving each goal. For example, six months.

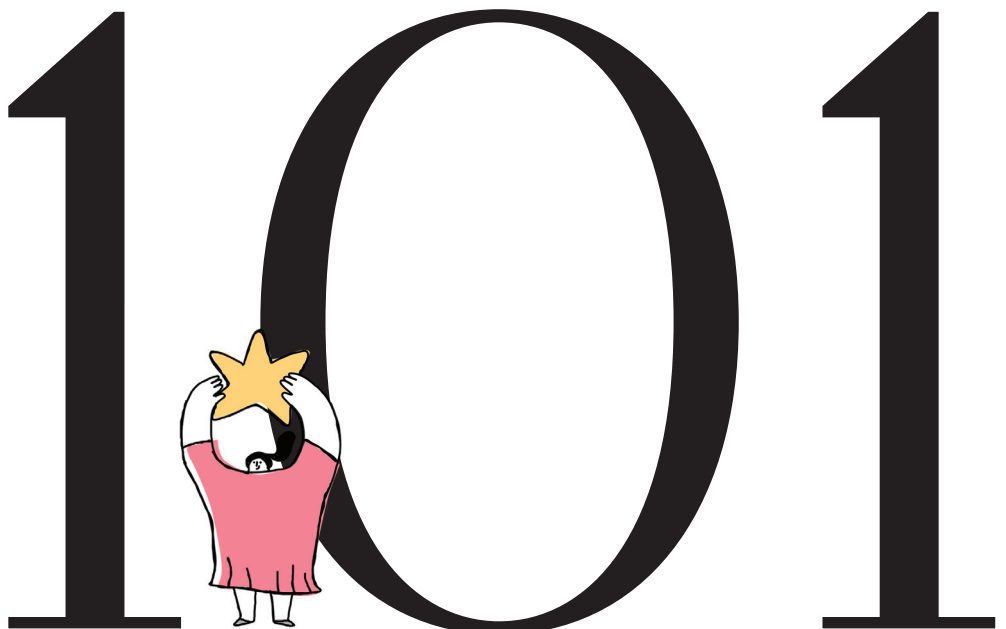
5.

Connect your goals to habits. What are the regular habits you can embrace that will help your child achieve their goals? For example, if your child wanted to pack their school bag independently, the habit might be reading a schedule together each evening to know what they need the next day.



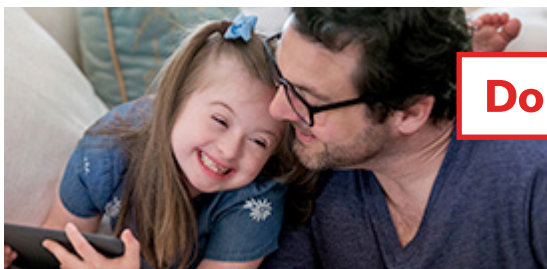
Need some inspiration?

Did you know that there's a special section in the Leap in! app which has a comprehensive list of Goals and Goal Steps that can be filtered to suit your condition and life stage



WHAT WILL THE NDIS FUND?

You'll most likely hear supports spoken about in terms of budgets and budget categories. They are the names the NDIS uses for the different supports it funds. The article on page 22 & 23 goes into detail on what these different categories mean.



Do you have questions about what

the NDIS will fund for your child?

All of this can be hard to understand if you are just getting started. So, on this page we've broken things down into everyday language to give you a clearer idea of what may be and will not be covered.

Important point! Supports funded by the NDIS must be “reasonable and necessary”. For a support to meet the reasonable and necessary test it should:

- Be related to your child’s disability
- Represent value for money
- Be likely to be effective
- Take into account other supports received such as help from family members
- Not include day-to-day living expenses not related to support needs.

For more on what reasonable and necessary actually means turn to page 23.

Your NDIS budgets should be used to fund items directly related to your child achieving their goals.

TOP TIP: *Some items need to be specified in your NDIS Plan and will require a quote prior to purchase.*

NDIS SUPPORTS IN THE HOME

May be funded

- Support to assist the primary carer with their child’s personal care such as assistance with showering and dressing
- Respite care
- Home modifications
- Costs related to daily living only if the cost is substantially higher because of your child’s disability. For example, a modified bed to help with positioning and prevent sores.

Not covered

- Rent, board or mortgage repayments to help provide accommodation for your child
- Emergency accommodation
- Household cleaning supplies
- Day-to-day costs for power, water, internet or phone.

NDIS SUPPORTS AT SCHOOL AND IN THE COMMUNITY

May be funded

- Support worker to help your child attend school
- Assistive technology to help your child learn in the classroom
- Personal care at, school (for example, to assist with eating and toileting)
- Activities that help your child learn new skills
- Transport to and from community activities

Not covered

- Course fees
- Other costs not related to a disability such as student union fees
- Entry to events, galleries, cinemas or other activities.

THERAPIES AND SERVICES

May be funded

- Support workers to help your child at home or in the community
- Allied health services such as occupational therapy, speech therapy, psychology and physiotherapy
- Support to achieve health and fitness goals
- Disability related nursing supports
- Early Childhood Approach

Not covered

- Diagnosis
- Supports covered by mainstream health services such as seeing a doctor
- Paying family members as support workers

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

May be funded

- Low cost items such as ramps, remote controls, vision and hearing supports, walkers
- More expensive items such as

wheelchairs, pressure mattresses, hoists and standers

- Complex communication devices
- Specific apps needed to support a disability
- Communication devices such as digital picture boards and speech generating machines
- Customised devices specific to your child’s needs
- Tablets or devices required to continue supports due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements (temporary – restrictions apply)
- Repair and maintenance

Not covered

- Rehabilitation supports
- Screen protectors
- Additional chargers
- Non-disability related apps

TOP TIP: *The NDIS will generally only fund the minimum necessary standard level of assistive technology required.*

EVERYDAY AND CONSUMABLE ITEMS

May be funded

- Supports to help with eating or nutrition. For example eating aids, pumps and syringes
- Adapted cups, spoons and cutlery
- Continence products, pads, pull-ups and nappies

Not covered

- Medicines or vitamin supplements
- General toiletries
- Food and groceries

SUPPORT TO MANAGE YOUR NDIS PLAN

May be funded

- Support coordination
- Plan management 

We can help. Call us today.



Leap in!

1300 05 78 78
 **leapin.com.au**

Preparing for your child's NDIS Plan?

ASK A PLAN MANAGER!

Our friends at Leap in! plan management help thousands of children who are on the NDIS and their families to manage their NDIS budgets and achieve their goals.

Navigating the NDIS for the first time can be confusing. There's so much information to take in!

We asked experienced Leap in! plan manager Melanie E. to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about preparing for your child's NDIS Plan.

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT MY CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT. CAN THE NDIS HELP?

If you are worried about your child, contact your doctor or maternal and child health nurse. If your child is under 7 and has a developmental delay, developmental concerns or disability, your healthcare professional may connect you with an NDIS early childhood partner.

They will take time to understand the child's needs, identify if short-term intervention may be beneficial and connect you to relevant community supports. Where long-term support is needed, they will help you request NDIS access.

HOW CAN I ACCESS THE NDIS FOR AN OLDER CHILD?

For children aged over 7, you'll need to complete an "Access Request" (an NDIS application). The child must meet the NDIS eligibility and disability requirements.

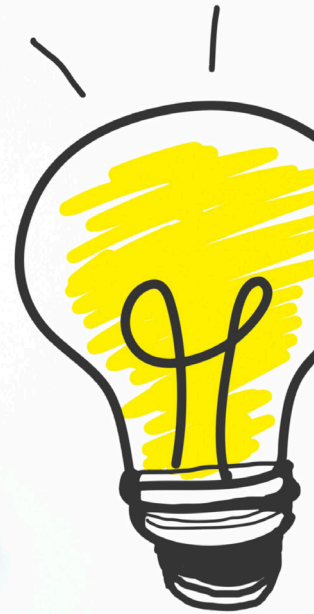
The child must live in Australia and be an Australian citizen or hold a relevant visa. They must also meet the "disability requirements" which means they have a disability causing an impairment that:

- Is permanent or likely to be permanent
- Results in substantially reduced capacity to undertake daily activities
- Affects their capacity for social or economic participation
- Means they are likely to need lifelong support.

Supporting evidence is required.

WHY ARE SOME CHILDREN WITH A CERTAIN DIAGNOSIS ON THE NDIS WHILE OTHERS ARE INELIGIBLE?

Great question! The NDIS determines eligibility based on impairment, not a diagnosis. Two children with the same



“The benefits of working with Leap in!

we're immediate and

life-changing for my son”

Julie-Anne, L! Member.



diagnosis may experience different levels of impairment which is why only some with a certain diagnosis may meet the requirements.

IS ADHD COVERED BY THE NDIS?

On its own, ADHD is not usually covered by the NDIS because it can be hard to meet the eligibility criteria and disability requirements. Where ADHD occurs alongside another condition such as an intellectual disability, the child may be more likely to obtain NDIS funding.

WHAT IS AN NDIS PLAN?

An NDIS Plan is a written agreement created for each person who receives the NDIS. It states the person's goals, needs, and the supports and funding the NDIS will provide. Plans run for 12 – 36 months and tend to be shorter for children as their needs change more often.

HOW DO THE NDIS BUDGETS OR BUDGET CATEGORIES WORK?

The funding in an NDIS Plan will likely be broken up into three main budget categories:

- Core supports (for everyday activities related to a person's disability)
- Capital supports (for equipment and assistive technology)
- Capacity Building supports (to help the child learn new skills).

A child may receive funding in one, two or all three.

WHAT TYPES OF SUPPORTS WILL THE NDIS FUND?

Supports funded by the NDIS are based on

individual needs but may include support workers, allied health like occupational therapy and assistive technology.

Any items or services purchased with NDIS funding must be reasonable and necessary, related to the person's disability, good value for money and likely to be beneficial.

CAN MY FAMILY GET RESPITE CARE UNDER THE NDIS?

The NDIS may fund respite in your home or at a respite centre for up to 14 days at a time if it is reasonable and necessary for your child and family. Respite care covers accommodation, assistance with self-care, overnight support, food and other negotiated activities.

WILL THE NDIS FUND AN ASSISTANCE ANIMAL?

The NDIS rules around funding assistance animals can be complex. You'll need to provide evidence to show your child meets each criteria and complete the Assistance Animal Assessment Template. NDIS funding cannot be used to train your own pet to be an assistance animal.

HOW CAN I GET SUPPORT TO MANAGE MY CHILD'S NDIS PLAN?

Leap in! can help you get the most from your child's plan and care of all the NDIS bookkeeping at no cost to you! Just ask for plan management when at your child's NDIS plan meeting, or switch to plan management any time by contacting the NDIS.

Do you have a question you'd like us to answer? We'd love to hear from you. Send your question to: mystory@leapin.com.au.



Leap in! can help you navigate the NDIS and get the most from your child's plan. We also take care of all the NDIS bookkeeping for you! Call us on 1300 05 78 78 to find out if plan management is right for you.

Call us to discuss if plan management is right for you and your child.

Leap in!
 1300 05 78 78
leapin.com.au

NDIS Plan budget categories

EXPLAINED!

You've got your NDIS plan but what now!? If you're new to the NDIS (and if you're not!) your child's plan may seem confusing and a little overwhelming to know what each budget category means.

To help you get to grips with it all, the team at Leap in! have provided us with a simple rundown of how your NDIS budget and Plan go hand in hand.

NDIS FUNDING CATEGORIES

Your NDIS budget will likely be broken up into three main budget categories or 'support purposes' which can all be planned to help you throughout your NDIS plan. These are:

- Core supports
- Capital supports
- Capacity Building supports

CORE SUPPORTS

NDIS Core supports are activities that help you in your everyday life. This area of your NDIS plan has four budget categories which can be flexible to accommodate your individual needs.

1 | Assistance with daily life includes things like looking after your personal care, cooking and cleaning.

2 | Assistance with social and community participation can include activities or

courses that help you connect and socialise with others. Art classes, sports coaching or vacation camps that have mentoring, skill development, peer support or capacity building components are covered here.

3 | Consumables helps you cover everyday items and services. These could include interpreting and translating services as well as continence and nutrition related items.

4 | Transport helps to cover costs associated with specialised schooling or education programs, reaching your place of employment or participating in recreational or community activities.

CAPITAL SUPPORTS

A Capital support provides funding for equipment, home or vehicle modifications, which are split into two categories. The NDIS is very specific in what this funding can be used for and it must be used as it is allocated.

Assistive technology (AT) covers any device that allows you to do something that you wouldn't be able to do without it or increase the ease or safety of things you do. AT is split into four levels to describe the complexity of the equipment so that you can identify, find and access the AT you need:

Level 1: Simple, low risk

Level 2: Standard AT

Level 3: Specialised AT

Level 4: Complex AT solutions.

Depending on the complexity of your AT, you may be required to undergo an AT assessment before you can access NDIS funds for the equipment.

Home modifications are any changes you need to make to the structure, layout or fittings of your home to ensure you can move around safely. These can range from simple handrails to complex structural changes.



WHAT IS REASONABLE AND NECESSARY?

If you're transitioning to the NDIS, you may find yourself wading through a sea of new information. On the way, you'll probably keep coming across the NDIS term "reasonable and necessary", but what exactly does this mean? Simply put, reasonable is something that is fair and necessary is something you have to have because of your disability.

BUT WHAT ARE REASONABLE AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS?

The NDIS funds "reasonable and necessary supports" relating to your disability to help you live an ordinary life and achieve your goals.

During your Plan meeting, your NDIS Planner will gather information on what supports are reasonable and necessary for your situation by evaluating whether a support request is:

- related to your disability and support needs
- good value for money
- likely to be effective and beneficial to you.

Your NDIS Planner will also consider the unpaid, informal supports you receive from family, friends and your support crew (including support workers, support networks and the community).

SOME EXAMPLES THAT MAY BE APPROVED INCLUDE:

- Support workers to help with personal care activities
- Therapeutic supports like behaviour support
- Aids and equipment
- Home modifications
- Mobility equipment.

THINGS THAT YOUR NDIS PLAN WON'T COVER:

NDIS funding doesn't cover general everyday living expenses that people without disability would be required to pay, such as train travel, rent, groceries, mobile phone or movie tickets. Every person is different so it's important that you are prepared to demonstrate why a request should be deemed 'fair and reasonable' in your situation.

CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORTS

Capacity building funding is set aside for activities that will support you in learning new skills. These skills may include achieving some of your goals like living independently, finding a job, or getting help with your NDIS Plan management.

There are nine sub-categories for Capacity Building funding:

- 1** | *Support coordination* – this is support funding that can be included in your NDIS Plan to help you get the most from your budgets and supports.
- 2** | *Improved living arrangements.*
- 3** | *Increased social and community participation.*
- 4** | *Finding and keeping a job.*
- 5** | *Improved relationships* – the aim of this sub-category is to provide funds for specialised assessment and supports

where an NDIS participant has complex or unclear behavioural needs. Behaviours of concern are different for each individual but are typically persistent behaviours that may limit a person's ability to have a good life or risk physical safety.

6 | *Improved health and wellbeing*

7 | *Improved learning* – if one of the goals in your NDIS plan is to get a certain job and you need to take a course to help you

get there, you may obtain funding in your Improved Learning budget.

8 | *Improved life choices* (includes plan management).

9 | *Improved daily living* – this is all about building skills for a better life. You may be able to utilise funding within this category to help build your skills, increase your independence, help you at home or receive treatment to improve your mobility. **5**



*THERAPY
AND THE
NDIS*

**Everything you
need to know!**



Whether your child is under seven and accesses the NDIS through the early childhood approach or they're older and a 'full' participant, it's highly likely that you will be requesting funds for therapy as part of your plan. So, what do you need to know about therapy and the NDIS? Read on as we cover off some of the basics for you...

HOW IS THERAPY REFERRED TO WITHIN THE NDIS?

Within your Plan there are three main categories of supports (the 'purpose' of the support) funded through the NDIS – Core supports, Capital supports and Capacity Building supports. Therapy is considered a Capacity Building support – a support that enables a participant to build their skills and independence. In the Capacity Building section of your Plan, supports are further broken down by category and therapy comes under the 'Improved Daily Living' category which is defined by the NDIS as follows: 'Assessment, training or therapy to help increase your skills, independence and community participation. These services can be delivered in groups or individually. Confusingly, in the NDIS myplace portal Improved Daily Living is referred to as CB Daily Activity.'

What therapies will NDIS fund?

To be considered for NDIS funding a support must firstly be considered reasonable and necessary. In the context of therapy, to meet this criteria the NDIS will be looking for information that the support is related to your child's disability and likely to work and benefit your child. It should represent value for money and importantly, be based on evidence. Evidence-based therapy is therapy that is proven to work in the wider community or based on scientific evidence and data.

CAN I USE FUNDS FROM OTHER CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORTS IF I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH IN MY IMPROVED DAILY LIVING CATEGORY?

Unlike Core support funding which is flexible and can be moved around the sub-categories, capacity building support funds cannot be moved from one support category to another. Funding can only be used to purchase approved individual supports that fall within that Capacity Building budget.



WHO CAN PROVIDE THERAPY TO MY CHILD?

The NDIS empowers you to choose the best provider to help your child achieve their goals. They refer to any person, business or organisation that delivers funded services or products to a participant as a Service Provider.

Providers who are registered with the NDIS are called 'NDIS registered providers'. They meet strict government quality and safety requirements. If your NDIS funding is NDIA-managed, you can only use NDIS registered providers to deliver your services.

Participants who self-manage or have a Plan Manager to manage their NDIS Plan, can use NDIS registered providers and non-registered providers. (see our article on page 29 for more information on the different management options).

If your child is under seven you will most likely have worked with an Early Childhood Provider to put your Plan together as they have been engaged by the NDIS to deliver the early childhood approach across Australia.

You can work with this provider to

utilise the capacity building funds for therapy in your budget or you can also identify other providers either through the myplace portal (to find registered providers) or independently if you are self or plan managed.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I PAY FOR A THERAPY SESSION?

NDIS registered service providers are bound by the maximum limits of the NDIS price guide which can be accessed here – ([ndis.gov.au/providers/price-guides-and-information](https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/price-guides-and-information)). You are free to negotiate a lower rate with an individual provider if you are self or plan managed. If you are self-managed and using a non-NDIS registered provider you are free to pay any price you wish. The NDIS will set funding based on the price guide so if you do pay more then be aware that your funds may not go as far as you need them to.

HOW SHOULD I REQUEST FUNDING FOR THERAPY IN MY PLAN MEETING?

Your request for therapy hours for your child should be backed up by evidence-



based reports from relevant professional therapists such as speech therapists, OTs, physiotherapists etc). Most importantly, the reports should be related to your plan goals and set out recommendations for how a particular therapy will help a participant to reach a goal or goals over a 12-month period along with the measures of success.

ADDITIONALLY, THE REPORTS SHOULD:

- Include a breakdown of how many hours of support are required to meet a goal within the Plan's 12-month period.
- Be in plain English and easy to read. An NDIS planner should be able to pick up a report and understand at the outset the content of a report and how this relates to the participant. Recommendations are one of the most important parts of a therapy report so a clearly labelled recommendations section will guide a planner to what is being proposed for the participant.
- Information should be included on how the diagnosis affects a child's day (what can't they currently do, what barriers are there that the therapy could overcome

etc.) and how the therapy will work to address any issues with a focus on how the support is reasonable and necessary and provides value for money. The report should also state the risk of not providing the recommended supports.

- If a therapist has previously been working with a child (especially important for Plan reviews) the report should include strategies that have previously been implemented and a history of outcomes. At an annual Plan review the report should state progress made against goals (is the therapy working?), goals for the

coming year and how strategies may differ from the previous year.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN REQUESTING FUNDING FOR THERAPY?

Along with the funding you are requesting for therapy hours, you should also consider the funding you may require for 'extras' such as therapist travel time, report writing and equipment assessments and fittings which also come out of the same budget section. ⑤

A NOTE ABOUT SUPPORT COORDINATORS

Support Coordinators provide independent and expert advice to help identify and engage supports for your child based on their goals. They help ensure you get the most from your NDIS Plan and can help you find the right supports for your child's needs. If you have questions about whether Support Coordination might be an option, speak with a Leap in! plan manager who can provide advice and connect you with the extensive network of Support Coordinators on our Provider Network Directory. Call 1300 05 78 78.

Different ways to manage your NDIS plan

During your NDIS planning meeting you will be asked how you wish to manage your plan once it is signed off. There are three different ways that your plan can be managed and it's important to know the difference between the three so that you can choose the option that best suits you and your family's needs and capabilities.

The options are self-managed, plan-managed or agency (NDIA). You can also use a combination of the three – a combination plan.

Here's an overview of the key differences between the different options and some of the pros and cons of each...

PLAN MANAGEMENT

When you have plan management, The NDIS pays someone you choose to help you manage your money and pay your bills... think of it like your own NDIS-funded bookkeeper or accountant with a support team.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

- All of the good bits of being self-managed without having to worry about budgeting, record keeping and paperwork
- The NDIS adds extra funds in your plan to cover the cost of your plan manager
- Your invoices can go direct to your plan

manager who coordinates claiming and payment direct with the NDIS and your providers.

PROS:

- You have complete control of your funds
- You can choose any provider to help you meet your goals (registered or not)
- You have the power to approve each payment from your plan to providers
- Billing issues and questions are resolved for you
- No bookkeeping or financial tracking
- No upfront costs
- No separate bank account required

CONS:

- You can't have services with prices set above the NDIS Price Guide.

SELF MANAGE

The hands-on option where you look after all your own invoices and keep all your own records.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

- You can use your funds for any providers or mainstream supports and services (they don't have to be NDIS registered providers or even disability specific providers)
- You'll need to open a new bank account just for the NDIS
- You'll need to use a computer or fill in forms to get the money paid back to your bank account for your supports
- You need to keep full records of all invoices and receipts

PROS:

- You have complete control of your funds
- You have the power to approve each payment from your plan to providers
- You can choose any provider to help you meet your goals
- You can pay higher rates for valued staff or negotiate lower prices for some things

COMBINATION PLANS

The NDIS gives you the flexibility to choose how you manage each budget in your child's NDIS Plan. A combination plan is when you choose more than one way to manage their plan - a combination of plan management, self managing and Agency managed.

The benefit of a combination plan is that you can manage each part of your child's NDIS budget in a way that suits your needs. It all depends on your circumstances, how involved you want to be...and how much admin you want to do!

Why choose a combination plan?

- You currently self manage and want to lighten the burden of administration
- You are juggling NDIS Plans for multiple family members and need support to manage the finances
- You would like the support of a plan manager to help you navigate the NDIS, help you manage your child's budget and pay providers on your behalf
- You want to pay providers (like therapists) above the rate set by the NDIS Pricing Arrangements
- Your child needs items that are difficult to obtain through registered providers.

A self manage/plan management combination is ideal if you want to engage a therapist directly and pay them at a higher rate than the NDIS Pricing Arrangements.

You could choose to self manage Capacity Building and use plan management for Core and Capital supports. That way you still get a plan manager to help you navigate the NDIS and assist with administration and bookkeeping for the other budgets.

AN EXAMPLE: Jasmine needs more time with her children.

Jasmine self manages NDIS Plans for her two young children. She really likes the flexibility of being able to choose providers to suit her children's changing needs. She has an occupational therapist with an hourly rate higher than the NDIS Pricing Arrangements. She'd like to free up the time it takes to do the paperwork and payments so she can spend more time with her children.

SOLUTION: Jasmine changes her children's plan to include plan management but keeps the Assistance with Daily Living component of her Capacity Building budget as self managed so she can continue to have her favourite support worker who is paid above NDIS prices.

Switch any time.

You can change the way you manage your child's plan at any time. If your circumstances change you can change the way you manage your plan to suit. This can be at a plan review or simply by contacting the NDIS on 1800 800 110.

CONS:

- You need to be good with finances and budgeting
- You may also have to pay upfront at times and wait to be reimbursed
- You need to be organised and keep good records
- You can be audited.

AGENCY MANAGED

When you're agency managed, the NDIS manages your plan for you and your registered service providers are paid directly after the services are provided.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

- You can only use NDIS registered providers for supports and services with your NDIS funds. Invoices are submitted direct to the NDIS after service has been delivered and then the NDIS pays them directly.

- You can check in on the MyPlace NDIS web portal to see how you're tracking with your funds, see what has been spent and what is remaining.
- Being agency managed offers the least amount of choice and control, however is a good option for people who don't require much flexibility and want to only use registered providers.

PROS:

- No bookkeeping or financial tracking

- No upfront costs
- No separate bank account required

CONS:

- No option to choose disability or mainstream providers who aren't NDIS registered
- Less control and choice for how to spend your funds
- Can be inflexible (registered support worker agencies may have less flexibility than non-registered ones). **5**



Get the most from your child's NDIS plan with Leap in! Plan Management.

- ✓ Fast payment for your providers
- ✓ Stay in control and track your NDIS budgets in real time
- ✓ Save time to focus on your child's supports and outcomes
- ✓ Access the providers you want (whether NDIS registered or not)
- ✓ Help to connect with the local supports you need
- ✓ Great advice from a team experienced in NDIS and the early childhood approach
- ✓ No cost to you or your family
- ✓ **PLUS** access award-winning NDIS planning & budget app that allows family sharing.

Proud partner of Source Kids.

Leap in!

Australia's leading NDIS plan manager.

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