

Strengthening supports for children and families 0-8 years strategy

What is the strategy?

All children should be part of their community and have the same choices, opportunities and experiences.

Children with disability may need more support to learn and develop, achieve their goals, and be part of their community.

The *Strengthening supports for children and families 0-8 years* strategy is about:

- helping children with disability and their families get support they need
- getting this support in places like, pre-schools, child care centres, schools, playgroups and community groups
- helping communities develop awareness and confidence to better support children with disability and their families.

The strategy is not about less supports for children with disability.

How will it be better for families?

Getting support early is important for children to have the best start in life.

The strategy will make it easier for children to get the support they need, when they need it by changing the way that supports are provided.

For example a child might get their therapy supports at their pre-school or child care centre rather than going to another place.

This makes it better for children and families because they:

- have the same experiences and opportunities as other children and families
- learn new skills and improve confidence
- have more choices about where and when services are provided
- spend more time with family and friends and meet new children and families.

What support is available for children aged 0-8 years?

All children can access support through services such as pre-schools, child care centres, playgroups, community groups and schools.

Specialist supports are also available for children with disability and their families. These include early childhood intervention, therapy and Early Links coordination services.

The strategy is helping specialist services to change the way they work to make it easier for families to get the supports they need in their community. It is also helping all services to better understand and support children with disability.



How will this happen?

The strategy is a change in the way that children with disability and their families are supported in their community. It may take some time for these changes to take place.

To support the changes, the NSW government is providing \$180 million in new funding over 5 years from 2011-2016 to increase supports for children with disability and their families. This is part of [Ready Together](#).

Key agencies like education, health and early childhood education and care are looking at how they can work together to make the strategy happen.

Services that currently work with children with disability are changing the way that they work to better support children with disability in their communities.

Where can I get more information?

More information on supports for children with disability is available from Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) teams who can refer you to local services in your district:

Hunter: (02) 4946 3722
Metro North (Sydney): (02) 9407 1855
Metro South (Sydney): (02) 8732 1300
Northern NSW: (02) 6621 1400
Southern NSW: (02) 6122 3600
Western NSW: (02) 6841 1594

You can find more information about the strategy and other services on the ADHC website at: http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/individuals/support/for_families_and_children/early_intervention_for_children

or by emailing the *Strengthening supports for children and families 0-8 years* mailbox at SSCF@fac.nsw.gov.au.