



Enabling families of children
with health and disability
needs since 1949

CHILDCARE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES: What support is available?

Information for Families



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Our vision

At Xavier, we have a vision for families of children with high support needs to have access to high quality inclusive environments in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). We believe that every child has the right to access mainstream childcare and benefit from inclusive and supportive learning environments. Children with disability who are exposed to ECEC develop skills like making friends, communicating in positive ways and developing behaviours like self-help skills.

We understand the vulnerability of children with complex needs and the challenges involved in accessing the supports necessary for providing high quality care for your child. This factsheet has been developed to support families in the decision making process by explaining the different kinds of supports that may be available for your child.

What is Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)?

For the purpose of this factsheet ECEC includes:

- Childcare
- Early Learning Centre
- Outside School Hours Care
- Vacation Care
- Kindergarten
- Family Day Care
- In-Home Care

What kinds of support do we need?

You know your child best. Therefore it is important that you take the time to consider what kinds of supports you believe your child might need while attending ECEC and communicate these to the service. An inclusive service will work with you to provide a combination of supports facilitated by Educators who are capable of ensuring that your child is genuinely included in all aspects of the learning environment. The service may request from you any documentation from Health Practitioners that will assist them in determining the levels of support and training needed to keep your child healthy, safe and included.

The ECEC service may access Inclusion Support via KU Children's Services as part of this process. If your child requires High Intensity Supports (more information below) they should facilitate access to an NDIA funded Support Worker to accompany your child for some or all periods of their day at the service.

How can Inclusion Support assist?

Inclusion Support is a subsidy, funded directly to the ECEC on application to assist with the costs involved in providing additional training, resources and additional Educators. All of which should assist with providing a fully inclusive environment for your child.

The additional Educator works as a member of the team of Educators to enable a quality inclusive program for all children. Their primary role is to increase the Educator to child ratios in order to facilitate more time and attention to the provision of an inclusive educational environment. They are not funded to provide one to one support; for an individual child, for respite care, to provide therapy or early intervention and supports, to attend state funded or Kindergarten programs or to provide medical/nursing assistance.

A good quality service will not use Inclusion Support funding for one to one care or to attempt to provide care for children with High Intensity requirements without the appropriate supports. If your child requires High Intensity Supports (more information below) they will aid you to utilise an NDIA funded Support Worker to accompany your child for part or all of the time your child is at ECEC, as required. A fully inclusive ECEC will not accept the enrolment of your child without undertaking the appropriate risk assessments and actions to ensure that your child will be cared for safely and will be included.



What does High Intensity mean?

Children who require support with the following are regarded as requiring High Intensity Daily Supports:

- enteral nutrition, especially naso-gastric feeding
- tracheostomy
- urinary catheter
- emergency post seizure medication
- mealtime management plans
- other specific health-related requirements.

It can also include management for diabetes, epilepsy, pressure wound and stoma care where there are other related risk factors involved. These support needs are regarded as high risk and therefore those who support these needs must have the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver high quality and safe supports.

Under the NDIS, a child who requires High Intensity Daily Supports must be assessed by a Health Care Practitioner who will complete a health care assessment and plan. The Health Care Practitioner will provide a Support Worker with individual training relating to the specific needs of the child and provide ongoing coaching and monitoring in each specific area.

How can an NDIA funded Support Worker (SW) Assist?

The role of the SW is to ensure that high intensity health requirements are met appropriately. It is not the role of the SW to educate or facilitate inclusion within the setting. The SW may attend for 1:1 support for the duration that the child is at the ECEC, for part of the time (eg. mealtimes) or may provide support on a 1:2 or 1:3 ratio depending on whether other children who attend have high intensity support requirements and it is safe to do so.

If your child does require High Intensity Supports, you should be eligible through your NDIA package to access funding for a Support Worker to accompany your child for some or all periods of their day at the service to facilitate their health and safety needs. An ECEC with good inclusive practices will manage the process of ensuring that this can be provided in a safe and collaborative environment.

Further Information

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