



## October 2024

Hi ,

It's always important to celebrate advocacy wins. Over the past couple of weeks, we've been pleased to see three positive steps forward:

1. The Australian Government has changed migration rules so that children with disability will no longer be discriminated against. This means children born and ordinarily resident in Australia are exempt from discriminatory health-related criteria that would have made them ineligible for a visa. Congratulations to all the families and Welcoming Disability who have advocated for this change.
2. Local councils across Victoria have responded positively to the ACD Local Government Action Plan. We are speaking up for disability confident maternal child healthcare, inclusive and accessible playgrounds, and more welcoming services from libraries to leisure centres.
3. The Productivity Commission recently released its report on early childhood education and care. ACD is quoted in the final report, highlighting the exclusion of children with disability from early learning. We're pleased these distressing experiences for children with disability and their families have been acknowledged.

Thank you to all the families who have shared their stories and expertise with us.

**Karen Dimmock, CEO**



If you have a young child with developmental delay or disability, you're probably trying to navigate lots of information and find out what supports are available.

This popular workshop has practical information to help you decide where to start and find what you need to support your child and your family. It includes topics such as:

- Rethinking respite: why it's important and how it may help
- Financial supports: what's available and what you can ask for
- Self-care and staying connected
- Supporting siblings

[Register now](#)

## NDIS changes

Earlier this month, new rules were announced about what NDIS funding can and can't be spent on. These are called NDIS supports.

Most things families currently use their child's NDIS plan for are all on the list of things you can buy. There's also guidance on what you can't buy with your child's plan.

It's important not to panic about the changes. Over the next 12 months, the NDIS will take an education approach to help participants understand how to use their plan.

ACD has a [dedicated web page](#) which provides a summary of the changes and where to find more information.



## ACD Support Line

Our Support Line is a free service for families of children aged 0 to 18 with any type of disability and developmental delay in Victoria.

Our friendly and knowledgeable Support Advisors can help you understand your child's rights and support you to advocate for your child and family on matters like school, the NDIS and more.

Professionals who work with children with disability and their families can also call our Support Line.

The Support Line is open Monday – Friday 9 am to 5 pm, and interpreters are available.

Call [03 9880 7000](tel:0398807000) or [1800 654 013](tel:1800654013) (regional callers).

## Have your say on foundational supports

ACD is working to make sure families can have a say on foundational supports.

The state and Commonwealth Governments are currently developing foundational supports for disability that will sit outside the NDIS.

There are two types of foundational supports: General and Targeted. General Supports include information, peer support, and capacity-building workshops for families. ACD services are an example of general foundational supports.

You can give your feedback on what information, peer support, and workshops have helped you and your family, and what else you think will help.

Feedback on General Supports is due 30<sup>th</sup> November.

Give feedback via a [fairly short survey](#).

Or enter a comment on the [Ideas Wall](#)



## Local Government Action Plan

In the lead-up to the Local Council Elections currently taking place, ACD has continued to strongly advocate for children with disability and their families.

The ACD Local Government Action Plan outlines ways local councils can ensure their communities are places where children with disability and their families feel a sense of belonging.

Our Action Plan is informed by families of children with disability and includes:

- Disability confident maternal child healthcare
- Accessible and inclusive playgrounds
- Welcoming libraries and leisure centres

[Read the Action Plan](#)

## School Saving Bonus

The School Saving Bonus provides a one-off \$400 payment to help Victorian families cover the costs of their children's school uniforms, textbooks, excursions, and activities.

All students in government schools will receive the bonus. Students at non-government schools who received the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund are also eligible.

Families will receive an email from their child's school in November letting them know how they can choose to spend the bonus.

[Find out more](#)



## Get ready for Years 11 and 12

Students with disability doing VCE or the Vocational Major in Years 11 and 12 can get special provisions with classroom learning and school-based assignments, as well as special examination arrangements. Adjustments can include:

- Using scores from assessments or work already completed by the student
- Extra time to complete assessments
- Rest breaks
- Separate rooms for individual students
- Use assistive technology
- Readers or scribes

Schools need to apply for special examination arrangements by Term 1, so speak with your child's school to get the process started.

More information on eligibility and arrangements can be found on [the VCAA website](#).

[Become a member](#)

You can join ACD as a Voting Rights Member to have a say in the governance of our organisation.

Our members include families of children with disability, people with lived experience of disability, and others who support ACD's purpose.

Voting Rights Membership:

- Gives you the right to vote at our upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 26 November
- Is free of charge and open to individuals who support the purpose of ACD

[Become a member](#)



## Planning an inclusive Halloween

With a little planning, it's possible to create an inclusive Halloween experience for your child, so they don't miss out on all the fun.

Our latest blog is full of ideas on how to create a Halloween experience for your family that includes everyone.

Our top ideas include:

- Choosing a costume that feels good to your child
- Planning a route for trick or treating in advance
- Having fun as a family!

[Read more](#)

## Best wishes

The ACD team

## Stay connected

Follow us on



Association for  
Children with a  
Disability

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ACD acknowledges the traditional owners of this land. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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