



## April 2026

Hi ,

The Minister for Health and Ageing, Disability and the NDIS, Mark Butler, has outlined proposed changes to the NDIS.

I want to start by acknowledging that these changes may affect many of us, and wondering what it might mean for our own children and families can weigh heavily.

At ACD, our starting point is always to provide families with accurate information, and we have produced a [short summary](#).

We then work with others to influence what happens next. We will be working in the weeks ahead to bring the voice of families to the table.

If you have questions, particular concerns, or suggestions for advocacy, I would really value hearing from you. Please feel free to get in touch at [policy@acd.org.au](mailto:policy@acd.org.au).

Finally, I hope you can take the time to look after yourself and your whole family. With so much media coverage, many of our children and young people may need extra reassurance.

Take care

**Karen Dimmock, CEO**

Free online workshop



## Teens and Beyond



Do you have a child aged 13+ with disability? If the answer's yes, then you're probably thinking about how best to support them with school and post-school options, puberty, and growing independence.

Teens and Beyond, our three-part workshop series has the resources and information you'll need to support your child now and into the future. **Workshops start from 4 May.**

### Topics include:

- Financial support
- Building your teen's independence
- School and post-school options
- Wellbeing: friendships, communication, behaviour support and good mental health

“The future doesn't have to be scary. There are real options and possibilities.” Parent

[Register now](#)

## Medicare support for speech-sound difficulties

Recent changes mean Medicare now helps cover the cost of speech therapy for children and young people who stutter or have speech-sound difficulties (including articulation disorder, phonological disorder, childhood apraxia of speech, dysarthria), and for those with cleft lip and/or palate.

Children and young people under 25 may be able to get Medicare rebates for

- Speech assessments (up to 8 sessions)
- Ongoing speech therapy (up to 20 sessions)

## Helpful tips for families

- A referral is required from a GP, specialist or consultant physician
- Medicare provides a rebate, so some families may still have a gap fee depending on the provider
- Not all speech pathologists offer Medicare-rebated sessions, so ask first
- Early support can make a real difference, but it's never too late to seek help
- NDIS and Medicare cannot be used for the same session



## School camps and excursions should include every child

For children with disability, camps and excursions can bring excitement and connection, but they can also come with extra questions and worries for families.

Our **School camps and excursions** fact sheet explains:

- Your child's right to be included
- What reasonable adjustments can look like
- How schools can support participation and safety
- Helpful steps for families to prepare and advocate

It's practical, clear and designed to support positive conversations with schools.

[Read the fact sheet](#)

## Free help with bills and debt

If you're feeling stressed about bills, debt or everyday costs, getting clear, free support can make a real

difference. The **National Debt Helpline** offers free and confidential advice from trained financial counsellors. They can help with things like:

- Understanding bills, debts and payment options
- Utility bills, rent or mortgage stress
- Credit cards, loans or Centrelink debts
- Negotiating payment plans and hardship support
- Speaking with companies on your behalf, where needed

#### **You don't need to be "in crisis" to contact them**

- You can reach out early, even if you just feel unsure
- The earlier families seek help, the more options there tend to be

#### **There are flexible ways to access support**

- Phone: **1800 007 007** (weekdays)
- Online chat (extended hours)
- Step-by-step guides if talking feels hard at first

[Learn more](#)



A free online support program for fathers of children with developmental delay and disability

# Working Out Dads

**ACD** Advocating for children with disability

**Working Out Dads**

*tivedale* child & family health service

The banner features a photograph of a man with glasses and a beard holding a young child with glasses. The text is overlaid on an orange and teal background.

## Making space for dads

**Working Out Dads** is a free six-week online program for dads raising children with disability, aged 0-9. It's a dads-only space to connect and talk honestly, with a unique mix of peer support and wellbeing. Each week includes time with other dads, plus simple, practical movement tips from a personal trainer, focused on staying active in everyday life.

The dads say it best:

"I was able to talk openly about the worries and concerns I have for my son, knowing the other dads would truly understand."

"It didn't take long to realise we're all in the same boat."

"The program really highlighted for me how important peer connection is. Having that support not only benefits our mental health and well-being, but it also helps us show up as better dads and partners."

"It was a space for honest conversations I've found difficult to have with my own mates."

The next group kicks off on **May 12**. Take the leap and join us.

[Register now](#)

## Share your ideas to help improve support for children who have experienced family violence

An independent research group, Whereto Research, is working with the Australian Government to help improve services for children and young people who have experienced family and domestic violence.

They are keen to hear from parents and carers of children with disability who have experiences of family violence. Taking part involves a one-on-one conversation with a trauma-informed researcher about what works, what doesn't, and what support children with disability need to feel safe and supported.

Consultations are taking place between now and mid-May 2026. Chats take about an hour, can be done by phone or online, and participants receive a **\$150 e-gift voucher**.

To ask questions or register your interest, contact Matt and Fiona at [youth@wheretoresearch.com.au](mailto:youth@wheretoresearch.com.au)



## Helping your teen build confidence with Supported Decision Making

As teens get older, having a say in their own lives becomes so important. Supported decision-making helps young people with disability learn to make choices with guidance from the people they trust.

On our **A Good Life** virtual hub, you'll find simple, practical tools like videos of young people talking about their own decisions and conversation cards to help you explore choices together.

Take a look at the supported decision-making section and discover resources to help your teen build independence in a safe, supported way.

[Explore the hub](#)

## Families' voices make advocacy stronger

Thank you to all the families who responded to our survey on experiences of Positive Behaviour Support. We have produced a report for the NDIS Evidence Advisory Committee, which highlights:

- challenges in finding quality Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) providers
- time it takes to get a PBS plan in place
- the work for families in implementing and coordinating the PBS plan

Thanks again to the families who shared their stories. Your voices help drive better, safer support for children

and families.

[Read the report](#)



## Celebrating inclusive Auslan storytelling

The ABC has dropped Auslan accessible versions of some of Australia's favourite preschool shows on ABC iView.

Children can enjoy Auslan versions of popular Bluey episodes, plus shows like Gardening Australia Jr, Ginger and the Vegesaur, Kangaroo Beach, Fizzy & Suds and Knee High Spies, with even more preschool titles on the way.

We love seeing the ABC make children's content more fun, inclusive and accessible for Deaf children and families.

[Auslan on ABC](#)

## How else can we help

**Join our community:** Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for daily tips and information.

**Stay informed:** You'll find a wide range of resources for all ages and stages. Families tell us what's important, and we provide easy-to-read, up-to-date information, available in 5 languages on our [website](#).

**Connect and learn:** Feeling like you need more practical tools or advice? Our Term 2 [workshops](#) are now open for

registration!

**We are here to listen:** If you are worried about school or feeling overwhelmed, our Support Line is open.

☎ **Call us:** [03 9880 700](tel:039880700) or [1800 684719](tel:1800684719) (regional) 9.00 am - 5.00 pm Mon-Fri

## Best wishes

The ACD team

Stay connected



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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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