

Getting your child started

Education and learning for children with disability in Australia

An Easy Read guide



How to use this guide



A group of people worked together to write this guide.

The group included:



- people with disability



- their families and carers



- Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)



- the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA).



They wrote this guide for the Australian Government Department of Education (DoE).



When you see the word 'we', it means the people who wrote this guide.



We wrote this guide in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold
Not bold

We have written some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of important words we use in this guide on page **6**.

There is a list of other words we use on page **28**.



This Easy Read guide is a summary of another guide.

This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other guide on our website.

www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005/information-resources-students-disability-and-their-caregivers



You can ask for help to read this guide.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What's in this guide?

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Words we use in this guide



We have some words we always use in this guide.

Knowing what these words mean can help you understand this guide better.

Disability



A disability can affect your:

- brain
- body
- **senses.**



You use your senses to understand the world around you.



When you have a disability, part of your body doesn't work:

- very well
- how it should.



A disability can affect:

- what you can do
- how much you can do on your own.

A disability can affect how you:



- communicate



- learn



- do things.

Education



When you get an education, teachers support you to learn:

- new skills
- knowledge.



Educational institution

An educational institution is somewhere you go to learn.

This could be a:



- pre-school or kindergarten



- primary school



- high school



- university



- training organisation, such as TAFE.



An educational institution might be public – this means it's run by the government.



Or it could be private – this means another organisation owns and runs it.



Reasonable adjustment

When something changes so you can join in, we call it an adjustment.

This is sometimes called an accommodation.



Adjustments can include:

- someone to support you
- doing things in new ways
- changing things.



When something is reasonable, it is:

- fair
- sensible.



Reasonable adjustments are things your educational institution must:

- do
- change.



Rights

Your rights are rules for how you can expect other people to treat you.

This includes educational institutions.

Standards



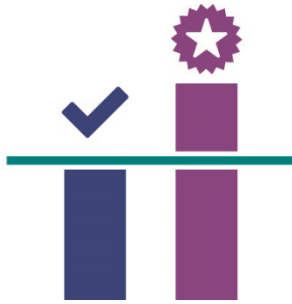
Standards are what we use to measure how well something is done.

We look at:

- what is done
- what the standard is.



Standards help us make sure things work well.



Educational institutions must:

- reach the standard
- try to do better than the standard.



Students

Students are people who learn with an educational institution.

This includes when they learn:



- in a classroom



- at home



- at work.



Students can be people:

- with disability
- without disability.

Who this guide is for



This guide is for anyone who supports a child with disability.

You might be a:



- parent



- carer



- **guardian** – a person who makes decisions for a child.

What this guide is about



This guide is about the education and learning of children with disability in Australia.



This guide also explains what you need to think about before you decide where your child will go to learn.

This includes information about your child's:



- rights

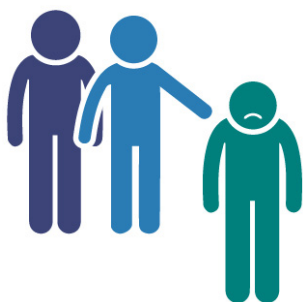


- learning options.

Laws that protect your child



There are 2 laws that protect your child when they go to an educational institution.



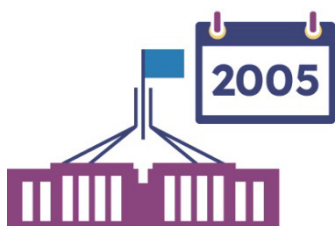
Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of something about them they can't change.



In Australia, we have a law called the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)*.



The DDA says it is against the law to treat people with disability unfairly.



In 2005, the Australian Government published the Disability Standards for Education (DSE).



The DSE are standards for the education of students with disability.

The DSE talk about 2 important things:



- the rights of students with disability



- what educational institutions must do.

We wrote an Easy Read document that explains the Disability Standards for Education (DSE).



You can find this document on our website if you need more information.

www.education.gov.au/en-x-er/disability-standards-education-2005/students/english/explaining

How the laws work together



The DSE and the DDA work together to protect students with disability.

This includes when they go to:



- pre-school or kindergarten

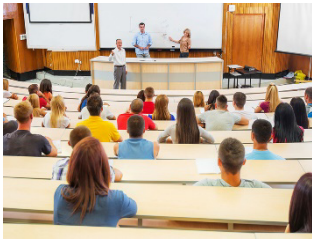


- primary school



- high school.

This also includes when they go to:



- university



- **Vocational education and training (VET).**

VET is a type of education.

It includes:



- TAFE
- **apprenticeships.**

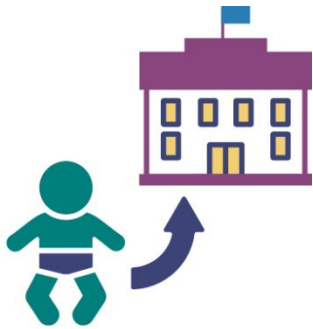


An apprenticeship is when someone learns how to do a job while they are at work.

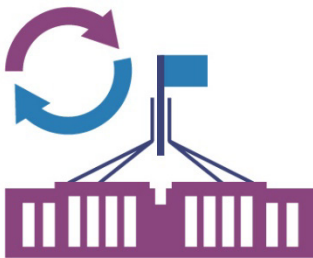
For example, as a builder or hairdresser.



But at the moment, the DSE doesn't cover your child if they go to child care.



Child care is for children from birth to the start of primary school.



The Australian Government are working on ways to include child care in the DSE.

Attitudes people have towards people with disability



Sometimes, people in the community can have negative **attitudes** about people with disability.

Your attitude is what you think, feel and believe.



These negative attitudes are not okay.

People in the community shouldn't make you or your child feel shame.



When your child goes to an educational institution, they should feel like they belong.

They should also feel like they can take part in:



- their learning



- the community.

Choosing where your child will learn



In Australia, children with disability have the same options as children without disability to **enrol** in an educational institution.



When you enrol your child, you:

- tell the educational institution you want them to become a student
- give the educational institution important information about them.



You need to decide where you want your child to learn.

Then you can enrol them into that educational institution.

You need to decide if you want your child to go to:



- a public educational institution

or

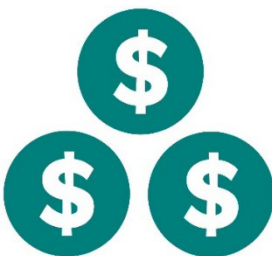


- a private educational institution.

To help you choose where you want to enrol your child, you can think about:



- how far away the educational institution is from your home



- how much money you can pay



- the type of support you have from family or carers.

You can also think about:



- if you want to send your child to an educational institution a religious organisation runs



- how **accessible** the educational institution is.



When something is accessible, everyone can use it.



This might be:

- a place or a building
- a service
- information
- a website.

Support for your child



Your child's educational institution should treat your child fairly.



They must also give your child the support they need to:

- learn
- take part.

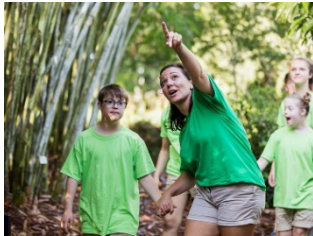


This means they must make reasonable adjustments if your child needs them.

Reasonable adjustments should be made:



- in the classroom



- for special events, like school camp



- for taking breaks, like playing at lunch.

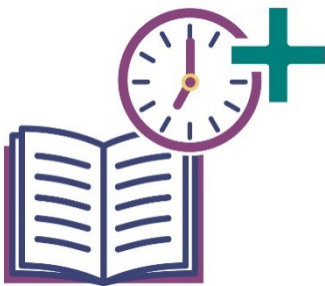
This could include:



- a person to support your child in class



- changes to the classroom, like ramps



- extra reading time during exams



- more rest breaks.

Your child should also be able to use support services.



For example, a school **counsellor**.

A counsellor is a person who works with you to:

- understand how you think and feel
- find ways to help you feel better.

You can also support your child as their:



- parent
- carer
- guardian.



You should not be treated differently because you have a child with disability.



You should be able to have a say in decisions that will affect your child.



You should also be able to make a **complaint** if something is not right.

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this guide mean.

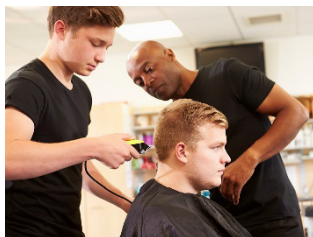
Accessible

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Apprenticeships

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For example, as a builder or hairdresser.



Attitudes

Your attitude is what you think, feel and believe.

Complaint



When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

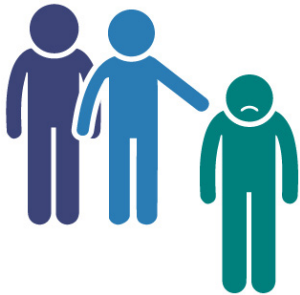
- has gone wrong
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Counsellor



A counsellor is a person who works with you to:

- understand how you think and feel
- find ways to help you feel better.



Discrimination

Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of something about them they can't change.

Enrol



When you enrol your child, you:

- tell an educational institution you want them to become a student
- give the educational institution important information about them.



Guardian

A person who makes decisions for a child.

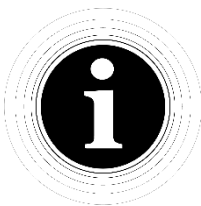
Vocational education and training (VET)



VET is a type of education.

It includes:

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- apprenticeships.



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