

Strengthening Parents Support Program

# Parent to Parent West

A newsletter for parents of children with a disability or developmental delay (0 –18) and living in the western region of Melbourne.

Oct – December Issue 2020

“We need to do a better job of putting ourselves higher on our own ‘to-do’ list.”

Michelle Obama

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## Carer Gateway Emergency Respite Call Carer Gateway 24/7

If you are a carer experiencing: an urgent, unplanned, and imminent event that temporarily restricts your ability to continue caring and when no other services are available.

**Call Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 for emergency respite.**

Welcome to this issue of the 'Parent to Parent West' Newsletter from the Strengthening Parents Support Program (SPSP) at MacKillop Family Services.

Spring has arrived and with it sunshine, warmer weather and more daylight which all helps a little during this time of COVID-19 and restrictions. I have spoken to many parents/carers of children with a disability over the last few months and have been humbled by the stories you have shared about coping including with remote learning and the stage 4 restrictions and isolation.

Hopefully, as we move towards an easing of restrictions and to a COVID Normal way of life in the coming months the stress for families caring for children with additional needs will reduce a little.

Staying connected with family and friends, community supports and/or reaching out for assistance continues to be important. Most agencies are open to provide support over the phone and online. The Strengthening Parents Support Program (SPSP) is open for assistance, and I can be contacted on mob 0448 015 023 or email: [spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au)

MacKillop Family Services will continue to offer Parent Support Groups online via Zoom in Term 4 until we are able to meet safely face to face again. I hope you may find some information in this edition of the Parent to Parent West Newsletter useful. Feel free to contact me with any issues, suggestions, or questions you may have.

The warmest of regards,

**Annette Jorgensen**

Ph: 0448 015 023

[spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au)

If you would like to receive the newsletter please email me on [spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au) or you can sign up on the MacKillop website [www.mackillop.org.au/programs/strengthening-parents-support-program](http://www.mackillop.org.au/programs/strengthening-parents-support-program)

# COVID-19 Information Update and Support

## Coronavirus Hotline Victoria 1800 675 398

- If you suspect you may have the coronavirus disease call the dedicated DHHS hotline – open 24 hours, 7 days on **1800 675 398**.
- Please keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only.
- If you need an interpreter, please call **131 450** first.

## National Coronavirus Line **1800 020 080**

For [National Disability Insurance Scheme](#) enquiries, including service requests, plan and support changes and assistance, complaints, escalations and review requests, call

- **1800 800 110** and select Option 5 for the special COVID-19 planners, open 8am -8pm Monday to Friday
- For the Disability Information Helpline call **1800 643 787**.

## COVID-19 Current Restrictions and How to Stay Safe in Victoria

Go to The Department of Health and Human Services [COVID-19 pages](#). The Department of Education and Training [COVID-19 webpage](#) provides a comprehensive overview of current advice and resources for education and learning.

## COVID-19 translated information

- DHHS COVID-19 translated information for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, health professionals and industry. Information includes factsheets and promotional materials. Access it [here](#).
- Ethnolink translated materials in over 80 languages. Access it [here](#)
- Home Affairs have resources. Access it [here](#)
- Multicultural Affairs DPC have their updated stakeholder pack with 55 languages [here](#)
- MyAus COVID-19: A new multilingual mobile App - Find out more about the app [here](#).
- MyAus COVID-19: A new multilingual mobile app. Find out more about the app [here](#).

## Family Violence during COVID-19

With people staying at home more than usual to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), there may be an increased risk for women and children experiencing family violence and abuse.

**If you or someone you know is in immediate danger call 000. Or if it is safe to do so, for help and support contact [safe steps 24/7 crisis service on 1800 015 188](#).**

**Or email [safesteps@safesteps.org.au](mailto:safesteps@safesteps.org.au). The safe steps web chat support service is available Monday to Friday, 9am to 9pm.**

## In-Home Testing

The Victorian Government is currently offering vulnerable Victorians in metropolitan Melbourne including people with an injury or chronic health issue; people with moderate to severe physical or psychosocial disability; people with moderate to severe mental health issues; and carers of a person with moderate to severe disability, with access to in-home COVID-19 testing.

To find out more about this service, visit the DHHS website [here](#).

## Who can get free Reusable Face Masks

DHHS has several Easy English Factsheets which outline the directions about wearing Face Masks and who is eligible to get free ones.

The information can be found here

- [Do I have to wear a face mask? Easy English Handout](#)
- [Who can get free face masks in Victoria? - Easy English](#)

## Expansion of Medicare subsidised psychological therapy sessions during COVID-19

The Australian Government will provide 10 additional Medicare subsidised psychological therapy sessions for people subjected to further restrictions in areas impacted by the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Patients will be required to have a Mental Health Treatment Plan and a review with their GP to access the additional sessions. This measure will commence on Friday 7 August and be available until 31 March 2021. More information can be found [here](#).

## Food and Basic Supplies for People with Disabilities

[ACD](#) have compiled a list of how to obtain food and basic supplies for people with disabilities. If getting to the shops is difficult due to your child with a disability, you can register for priority online delivery with [Woolworths](#) and [Coles](#). As a carer, you can also access Community Hour from 7am-8am Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

If you are experiencing financial hardship, you can get [emergency food relief](#) through services in your local area.

If you or your child has a chronic medical condition you can now get [prescriptions via free home delivery](#).

### **From the ACD Noticeboard Newsletter**

This is a social story and a video that explains the COVID-19 test to children [social story about the COVID-19 test](#) and a [child focused video](#) explaining the test. Sign up to the ACD Noticeboard Monthly Newsletter. [Subscribe to the ACD Noticeboard Monthly Newsletter](#).

### **Supporting children and families through telehealth**

This podcast episode, published by Emerging Minds, explores telehealth service delivery, including how to prepare and things to consider when engaging children remotely through video. Listen [here](#).



## **Carer Information and Workshops**

### **Association for Children with a Disability (ACD) – Notice Board Newsletter September 2020**

If your child is starting school in 2021, we are running a new Starting prep together workshop series in October. Follow ACD's [Eventbrite](#) and [Facebook](#) pages to find out when registrations open for this free, online workshop.

#### **Helping to make school work for your child**

Hear from other parents about their experiences and what helped to prepare their child for a positive transition to school. [Watch ACD's video >>](#)

#### **Funding for students with disability**

The Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) gives government schools extra funding to help support students with disability and complex medical needs. Your child's school is responsible for submitting the PSD application. [Read ACD's Fact Sheet](#).

#### **Starting primary school**

Planning ahead is the best way to make sure your child has the right supports from day one. Learn more about the transition to school, funding and reasonable adjustments. [Read ACD's Fact Sheet](#).

### **ACD workshop Starting Prep Together ONLINE**

**Brimbank** Starting Prep Together

Wednesday 21st October 10.30am

Wednesday 28th October - 10.30am

Wednesday November 4th - 10.30am

[Register for Workshop here](#)

### **AMAZE Webinar - Transition to secondary school webinar Wednesday 14 October - Online Webinar**

This FREE webinar will discuss how to prepare autistic students for a smooth transition into secondary school and is designed for both teachers and parents. We will be providing information about ways that schools and families can support autistic people to have the best possible experience starting secondary school.

[Book your place now](#)

### **Early Days and NDIS workshops**

We're continuing to offer Early Days workshops for parents of children under 6yrs who have a child who has received, or in the process of getting an autism diagnosis. Our Early Days workshops continue to be extremely popular - if the workshop you try to register for is full you can join a waitlist.

Our NDIS workshops are also being delivered online, including an upcoming workshop series to help newly diagnosed autistic adults navigate the NDIS.

[More information and book your place](#)

## Carer Information and Workshops

### Family Planning Victoria - Girls' & boys' business

These information sessions help children aged 8-16 years and their parents/carers to start the conversation about puberty. [Register to attend >>](#)

### POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS RESOURCES

Positive Partnerships - Working together to support school-aged children on the autism spectrum.

To help support families, carers and educators of children on the autism spectrum, Positive Partnerships schedule regular webinars which are free for to access. Each webinar runs for an hour and discusses a range of topics in greater detail. The webinars are recorded and can be viewed later on this website or on their [YouTube channel](#) and their [Vimeo page](#). [Positive Partnerships Free Webinars](#)

### Support for Fathers - new website

<https://supportforfathers.com.au/>

Support for Fathers is providing dads with options and information about fatherhood, the relationship with their partner and connecting with their kids.

<https://supportforfathers.com.au/resources/>

### Dad - a film about dads with kids who have autism

### Autism Dads Australia

A Facebook group of dads of kids with Autism. Offering support to each other, celebrating wins, consoling in losses and generally talking about the unique experiences as dads in a slightly different world.

[Visit the Website](#)

### DARU NEWSLETTER September 2020

Thursday 15 October, 11:am – 12:00pm

### DSP Help: A new online resource

*Social Security Rights Victoria*

Applications for the Disability Support Pension (DSP) are too often rejected due to the lack of sufficient medical evidence. DSP Help has a medical evidence bot that helps you to get the best supportive documentation from your medical specialist which gives you the best chance of having your application approved. **Dermott Williams** is a Community Lawyer at Social Security Rights Victoria who has been involved with the development of *DSP Help* and he introduces you to the many features of this exciting new online resource. > [Register](#)

### Wednesday 14 October, 11:00am – 12:00pm New Guardianship and Administration Act (2019)

*Office of the Public Advocate*

The new *Guardianship and Administration Act 2019* came into effect on 1 March 2020. The new Act includes a presumption that a person has the capacity to make decisions unless evidence is provided otherwise and recognises that a person also has decision-making capacity if they can make decisions with support. This is an important shift away from the best interest approach to one where it is acknowledged that decisions should reflect the person's will and preferences, unless it would cause serious harm to the person. Dr Norman Chia is an Advocate Guardian at the Office of the Public advocate and he will step us through the newly created Supported Decision Maker roles under the Act. > [Register](#)

### Understanding behaviour support arrangements

*Mental Health Coordinating Council*

This webinar was held on 27 August 2020 as part of the 'Embracing Change' series and is now available on demand. It was designed to guide you through practical examples that will assist in understanding behaviour supports under the NDIS, including behaviour support requirements and practical tools.

[Register for webinar on demand](#)

### Carers Victoria VOICE August 2020

**SAVE THE DATE: Young Carer Event Carers Victoria** will be holding a special event for young carers during National Carers Week on **Thursday**

**15 October at 5pm** featuring a secret special guest.

**Stay tuned for details, but for now save the date.**

**SAVE THE DATE.**

### ONLINE PARENTING SUPPORT –

### Triple P Parenting Program

### NOW AVAILABLE FOR FREE IN VICTORIA!

"Children may be feeling stressed or uncertain during this period of change. You can help your kids (or teenagers) stay calm and optimistic and keep being a positive parent while managing financial stress, working from home, helping your child cope with their feelings and staying emotionally resilient. And now these tips are all available to Victorian families in a FREE online program! Find out more at

[www.triplep-parenting.net.au](http://www.triplep-parenting.net.au)."

## Carer Support



### Carer Gateway

Who can use Carer Gateway? All carers can access Carer Gateway services.

You are a carer if you are looking after someone with disability, a medical condition, mental illness or who is frail due to age.

You do not need to be a new carer to use Carer Gateway services - any carer can use the services at any time in their caring journey.

**From April 2020, carers can call one number to be linked to a wide range of services including respite support and counselling. Call 1800 422 737 - [www.carergateway.gov.au](http://www.carergateway.gov.au)**

Caring for a friend or relative can be complicated. **The new carer phone counselling service** can help you manage daily challenges and ease stress and strain. Call to find out

**Welcome to the Carer Gateway Community Forum - Engage with other carers just like you.**  
[www.carergateway.gov.au](http://www.carergateway.gov.au)

### Carers Australia, Victoria

Carers Victoria, Level 1, 37 Albert Street, Footscray

Contact: 1800 514 845 for the Carer Advisory Line and the Support for Carers Program and all enquiries:

**<https://www.carersvictoria.org.au/> - Website by Carers Australia Victoria that provides a Carers Advisory Service and other supports.**

Carers Victoria membership is for carers, former carers, and Carer Support Groups. Interested persons and organisations are also welcome to join.

### Support for Carers Program – Carers Victoria

'Carers Victoria provides a range of flexible options to support you in your caring role and aim to help you live a fulfilling role. To access our service there is no formal referral process. It does not matter if the person you care for is receiving NDIS funding or a Home Care funding. You are still eligible. Call on 1800 514 845 to see what supports may be available.

### Conversations with Carers Victoria – Online Videocast

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 2.00pm we'll be online talking with carers about ways to tend to their wellbeing and even learn something new. The videocast is interactive and there will be the opportunity to communicate with the host via the chat function.

**[Find out more](#)**

### Music and Selfcare Online Workshop Free

A Free online workshop for carers by Carers Victoria  
Music can affect your mood, energy levels and physical health. The workshop will give you tools to choose music that makes you feel good and meets your needs.

When: Thursday 22 October 2020 - 10.00 -11.00am

Online Event via Zoom: Book your place on <http://www.carersvic6877.eventbrite.com.au/>

For more Information phone Education Services on 1800 514 845 and quote #6877.

### Strengthening Parents Support Program,

#### MacKillop Family Services

Support for parents and carers who have a child with a disability or developmental delay aged 0 - 18 years of age.

#### What the Strengthening Parents Support Program offers:

- Opportunities for parents to connect with other families in their local community on a regular basis for mutual support via parent support groups. (At the moment online only)
- Information sessions that support parents in their role to self-advocate (online)
- Quarterly 'Parent to Parent West' newsletter, informing the community in the West what is happening in the disability and inclusion sector
- One to one brief support for information and linking in with other services

**Contact:** Annette Jorgensen, Strengthening Parents Support Program Facilitator

E: [spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au) or P: 0448 015 023

## Carer Support

### Drummond Street Services Stress Management Group for Mums in the West

A free seminar full of tips and information on understanding why we can become stressed and how to manage it. Kids can be challenging and often mums take on too much - but with some new ideas you will find you feel better and can deal with difficult days.

Cost: Free

Duration: This group runs for 4 consecutive weeks, each session runs for 45 minutes

Dates: 4 weeks from 16 October 2020

Online via Zoom

### Moonee Valley City Council is holding its annual carers event during National Carers Week to recognise and thank our amazing carers for their contribution to our community.

Come along online and learn how to 'Care for the Carer' techniques to activate your heart's intelligence so you can feel more love, joy and compassion; which will transform your fears and worries, and will allow you to feel a deep sense of connection to oneself and to your loved ones. Enjoy many raffle prizes up for grabs including self-care hampers, dinner vouchers for the families to enjoy and lots more prizes from our local suppliers.

#### Event Details Eligibility: Carers residing in Moonee Valley

**When: Friday 16th October 2020, 5pm to 6pm**

Where: via Zoom

**To register and/ or for more information please contact Council's Disability Access and Support Team Leader on 9243 1036 or email [carers@mvcc.vic.gov.au](mailto:carers@mvcc.vic.gov.au)**

## Advocacy Support

If you are looking for support to resolve an issue with the NDIS, your child's school or access to other services you may want to engage an advocate.

### DARU (Disability Advocacy Resource Unit)

might be able to assist.

Contact them on

Call: 9639 5807 or go to the link below:

Find an Advocate from Daru website:

[www.daru.org.au/organisation-type/individual-advocacy](http://www.daru.org.au/organisation-type/individual-advocacy)

### ACD (Association for Children with a Disability)

Subscribe to the ACD Noticeboard Monthly Newsletter

[www.acd.org.au/support-line/](http://www.acd.org.au/support-line/)

#### Support Line

So many services are changing due to COVID-19 but Support Line is still open. Because of working from home, Support Line have changed

how to get in touch:

The easiest way to contact them is to:

- Email [acdsupport@acd.org.au](mailto:acdsupport@acd.org.au) with your preferred day and time for a call back
- Or text 0475 577 997 with your preferred day and time for a call back
- Or call 03 9880 7000 or 1800 654 013 (regional)

#### Support Line hours are Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

If you need a language interpreter, please let the team know and they will book one on your behalf. If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, call the National Relay Service on 133 677.

Support Line is a free service for parents and families of children with any type of disability in Victoria. They can help you to understand your child's rights and support you to advocate for your child and family. Professionals who work with

children with disability and their families can also call the Support Line.

### ADEC (Action on Disabilities within Ethnic Communities)

ADEC Services: Access and Support, Advocacy, Social Support Groups, NDIS, Aged Care, Disability Support, Capacity Building

#### Contact:

ADEC Preston Office

10:00 - 2:00pm

175 Plenty Road, Preston, VIC 3072

**Ph:** 1800 626 078 or 9480 7000

**Email:** [info@adec.org.au](mailto:info@adec.org.au)

ADEC Werribee Office

10:00 - 2:00pm

4A Watton Street, Werribee VIC 3030

**Ph:** 03 9480 7000

# NDIS

If you are a person with a disability or you care for a person with a disability and would like to join the NDIS, you will need to meet its Access Requirements and make an Access request to NDIA. To find out more, visit the [NDIS Access criteria](#) page and read the [evidence requirements](#) section.

## Access Request form

Download an NDIS Access Request Form - [Download NDIS Access Request Form Here](#)

You can also get an Access Request form from your Local Area Coordinator, Early Childhood Early Intervention partner (if your child is under 7), or your local NDIA office or you can call 1800 800 110.

The NDIS website has a lot of useful information, including translations in many different languages. <https://www.ndis.gov.au/lote.html>

The NDIS has released a [guide for Victorian families of school aged participants](#).

## If you live in Western Melbourne the Local Area Coordination (LAC) and Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) Partner is Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL).

### Contact Details:

Local Area Coordination (LAC) -  
Phone: 1300 BSLNDIS (1300 275 634)  
Email: [ndis.info@bsl.org.au](mailto:ndis.info@bsl.org.au)

Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) -  
Phone: 1300BSL ECEI (1300 275 323)  
Email: [ECEI.access@bsl.org.au](mailto:ECEI.access@bsl.org.au)

[www.bsl.org.au](http://www.bsl.org.au)

## NEWS FROM NDIS The Tune Review

In December last year, the findings of the review led by Mr. David Tune into what changes to legislation were needed to establish time frames for key NDIS processes such as access and planning were released. It also looked at what else needed to be done to get the NDIS working better for participants and their families. Mr Tune made 29 recommendations (you can find the full list in the [full report](#))

## Government and NDIS response to The Tune Review

At the end of August this year the **Minister Stuart Robert announced the government's response** to the Tune Review. The response included the following changes:

- NDIS Participant Service Charter <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/policies/service-charter>

The NDIS has introduced a Participant Service Charter to explain what participants can expect when they deal with the NDIS. The Participant Service Charter includes timeframes for processes - set out under the Participant Service Guarantee. The Participant Service Guarantee sets clear timeframes for key NDIS processes.

Access easy read information in 12 languages [here](#)

- Participant Service Improvement Plan

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/policies/service-charter/participant-service-improvement-plan>

The Participant Service Improvement Plan sets out what the NDIS is going to do over the next two years to deliver a Scheme that meets participants' expectations. Watch Auslan video [here](#) and access easy read summary [here](#).

- NDIS Independent Assessments

The Minister also announced that in 2021 independent assessments will be introduced to improve access and use for NDIS participants aged 7 and over. There is still work to do to design and implement these changes. The NDIS will work with participants, their families and carers as well as providers and the disability sector to ensure we get these changes right. Find out more [here](#).

## NDIA releases new Functional Capacity Framework

The NDIA has released a new NDIS Functional Capacity Assessment Framework. The Framework includes information about why a new approach is needed to assess a person's functional capacity and

how to use assessment tools for independent assessments. Find out more [here](#).

## Every Australian Counts website provides information about the Federal Government and NDIS announcement of changes.

<https://everyaustraliancounts.com.au/testing-times-in-the-ndis/>

## Disability Advocacy Resource Unit (DARU) also has information about the NDIS proposed changes.

<https://www.daru.org.au/resource-section/daru-update>

## NDIS Online Community Update Sessions

### The NDIS is inviting Victorian and Tasmanian participants, families, carers, people with a disability, and the disability community to attend online session about recent NDIS announcements and updates.

Sessions are offered over multiple dates in October to allow flexibility for attendees. Topics covered include participant service charter, participant service guarantee, service implementation plan, independent assessments, COVID-19 updates and participant check in. If you have any accessibility, interpreter, live captioning, or other requirements please advise when registering. Find out more and register [here](#)

### Carers Victoria 'NDIS Kids Connect' is back!

**NDIS Kids Connect** provides information and linkage to families with a child 0 - 7 with a disability, to successfully transition and connect to the NDIS.

Parents may have begun transitioning from other funding such as Better Start, seeking access to the NDIS or planning or implementing their child's first NDIS plan, and need some extra assistance.

**NDIS Kids Connect** can also provide information to service providers with clients in this target group who are experiencing barriers to effective NDIS pathways.

For more information please contact Michele Semmens at [ECEI.Advice@carersvictoria.org.au](mailto:ECEI.Advice@carersvictoria.org.au)

## **MacKillop Family Services**

MacKillop Disability Services is a registered NDIS provider and offer the following high-quality services.

- Support Coordination

**For more information or to refer to our services contact Glenn Turville, Disability Services Manager, mob:**

0428 484 703 or 9680 8444.

**E:** [glenn.turville@mackillop.org.au](mailto:glenn.turville@mackillop.org.au)  
[www.mackillop.org.au](http://www.mackillop.org.au)

## **Association for Children with a Disability (ACD)**

### **ACD FACT SHEETS: NDIS**

ACD has developed NDIS Fact Sheets cover the following topics and more:

- 10 tips for your child's NDIS planning meeting
- Getting ready for your child's NDIS plan review meeting
- Getting respite under the NDIS

There is information on Early Years, Teenage Years, and 'Help for you and your family'.

[ACD NDIS Resources](#)

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### **Contact:**

#### **ADEC Preston**

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#### **ADEC Werribee Office**

10:00 - 2:00pm

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03 9480 7000

## **Disability Loop**

In May 2020, the Australian Federation of disability Organisations (AFDO), held an online information session called Getting the Most Out of Your NDIS Plan. This webinar was recorded and is now available to view on AFDO's YouTube channel.

The session was conducted in two parts and runs for about 90 minutes

for each part. The videos have Auslan interpreting, captioning and a transcript for each video is also available.

## **[link to the Getting the Most Out of Your NDIS Plan videos](#)**

## **VALID**

Please contact VALID for information about their Training Courses such as

'Families as Planning Partners' starting in October and running over 4 weeks.

<https://www.valid.org.au/training-programs/training-for-families/>

**For more Information about the courses VALID offers contact -**

### **Maree Hewitt**

'Families as Planning Partners'  
130 Cremorne Street,  
Richmond, VIC 3121

M 0409965264

E [maree@valid.org.au](mailto:maree@valid.org.au)

W [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au)

## **Have you heard?**

Expansion of Medicare subsidised psychological therapy sessions during COVID-19.

In good news, the Australian Government will provide 10 additional Medicare subsidised psychological therapy sessions for people subjected to further restrictions in areas impacted by the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Patients will be required to have a Mental Health Treatment Plan and a review with their GP to access the additional sessions. This measure will commence on Friday 7 August and be available until 31 March 2021. More information can be found [here](#).

## **Carer Card – We Care**

All Victorian Carer Card ('We Care') holders are now eligible for concession fares, free weekend travel, free travel vouchers and free travel during Carers Week.

For further information visit the Public Transport Victoria website <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki/concessions-and-free-travel/dhhs-carer-card> or call 1800 800 007 (6am - midnight daily)

## **Multilingual Disability Hub**

Disability Hub is a national multilingual hotline and website that provides relevant and easily accessible information about disability and NDIS in your language.

The Hub has two components, both of which provide information in 14 languages:

**Hotline:** Phone lines are set up where people can call and ask questions directly to a disability specialist in their first language, without the need for interpreters. There is a different hotline number for each language, so calls go directly to a specialist who speaks that language.

**Website:** <https://www.multilingualdisabilityhub.info/language/>. The preferred language can be selected, and information and fact sheets can be accessed which is all in that language. This includes information on NDIS, service providers and the Disability Standards to just name a few.

## Have you heard?

### The AWETISM 2020 Expo

We are putting out an early call for Autistic young people across Australia (ages 9-20) who might be keen to share their passions, unique reflections or talents as part of this spectacular event. The AWETISM 2020 Expo will be the biggest and best I CAN event to date!

Scheduled for Friday, 20 November!

[Find out how to get involved here.](#)

### Sensory Toy Shop: Sensory Oasis for kids.

The inspiration for Jodie's shop, are her three brilliant and beautiful boys with Autism, Sensory Processing Disorders and Anxiety. Jodie has created a 'kid-friendly' shop where both children and adults can touch and play before they buy. Or if getting out is too tricky, you can shop online.

**Where:** Millers Junction, Millers Road: 36 Lobelia Drive, Altona North 3025

**When:** Mon - Thurs 9 - 5pm, Friday 9 - 4pm, Saturday 10 - 2pm

**Contact:** 9399 4783

**Website:** <https://www.sensoryoasisforkids.com.au>

### Kaiko Fidgets – Sensory Tools

<https://kaikofidgets.com/>

Hi I'm Kai & at 11 years of age I started making my own fidgets when I couldn't find anything age appropriate that I felt comfortable with. I have dyslexia & asperger's & struggle with anxiety.

FOR ADULTS & YOUTH ALIKE who struggle with fidgeting, anxiety, hair twirling, pen clicking, tapping, nail biting, picking, ADHD, ADD, ASD, learning & concentration difficulties or for those that want to keep their hands busy!

Discreet, noiseless & fit in the hand/pocket

### Art-making resource to support autistic children

NGV Kids and the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre, La Trobe University have collaborated to create a free art-making resource designed to introduce autistic children to art-making activities. Previous art-making experience is not required, and it's suitable to be used by children aged 5 to 12 years with the support of a parent, teacher or guardian.

For more information, [click here](#)

### ABC and SBS – audio description services launch

Great news! The ABC and SBS are launching audio description services, providing greater access to their programming for Australians who are blind or vision impaired. From 28 June, both broadcasters will each be providing around 14 hours per week of audio described programming across their channels.

If you or anyone in your household access audio description services, the ABC and SBS want to hear from you! You are invited to complete a ten-minute survey about your TV and viewing habits and preferences so they can tailor their services to best meet your needs.

[Take the survey.](#)

### Belonging Matters Inc

Please note: Due to the Covid19 pandemic our office is also closed. However, we're still available via phone, email, website and social media. We will continue to deliver training events online through webinars. Please visit <https://www.belongingmatters.org/events> for more information. We also have over 200 videos on Talks That Matter [www.talksthatmatter.net](http://www.talksthatmatter.net) Please feel free to connect! Take care during this time.

**Email:** [info@belongingmatters.org](mailto:info@belongingmatters.org)

**Web:** [www.belongingmatters.org](http://www.belongingmatters.org)

## Community Activities

### Yellow Ladybugs

Yellow Ladybugs is dedicated to improving the lives of girls and women on the Autism Spectrum.

Yellow Ladybugs is a volunteer community group who creates social events where girls can come together and have the opportunity to meet and bond over their similar journey.

#### Contact:

Email [info@yellowladybugs.com.au](mailto:info@yellowladybugs.com.au)

Facebook [www.facebook.com/yellowladybugs/](http://www.facebook.com/yellowladybugs/)

Website: [www.yellowladybugs.com.au](http://www.yellowladybugs.com.au)

### Discover Ballet

Discover the magic of ballet and watch a live performance from your living room or take an online ballet class with The Australian Ballet. Find out more [here](#).

### Meet the Penguins at Phillip Island

Phillip Island Nature Park is running nightly livestreams of the famous Phillip Island Penguin Parade. Watch the little penguins return to their burrows after many days of fishing at sea. Find out more [here](#).

### Visit your library (online):

Libraries are also a fantastic source of entertainment. A membership at your local library will give you access to a range of online resources including magazines and newspapers, films, music, and special events. Head to your library's website to sign up if you have not already.

### Joining the Dots e-update September 2020

You can find new ways to connect at [www.wyndhamtogether.com.au](http://www.wyndhamtogether.com.au) with free online events, classes and activity ideas to enjoy at home

### Be Mesmerised by the Fish at SEA LIFE Melbourne

If fish are more your thing, check in with the colourful schools at Melbourne's SEA LIFE Aquarium. Find out when the next livestream is scheduled [here](#).

Check in with your Local Council:

Many local councils have adapted well to delivering events online. Head to your local council's website for a range of events, from online exercise classes to informative workshops about reducing waste in your home and opportunities to virtually meet local artists.

# Parent Support Groups

## Tweddle MyTime

MyTime provides support for mothers, fathers, grandparents and anyone caring for a child aged 0-18 with a disability or chronic medical condition. MyTime provides a place to socialise, to discuss, to get information, and to support and be supported by other carers.

### MyTime Groups for Parents & Carers

Fortnightly MyTime Online Group Sessions are currently taking place according to the following timetable. Please contact us for a link to your local Zoom session.

#### Week 1

- **Avondale Heights** 10am Monday
- **Maidstone** 10am Tuesday
- **Point Cook** 10am Wednesday

#### Week 2

- **Tarneit** 10am Monday
- **Manor Lakes/Wyndham Vale** 10am Tuesday
- **Newport** 10am Friday

## PlayConnect at Home LIVE – Playgroup Victoria

We are now bringing PlayConnect to your homes LIVE via Zoom!

PlayConnect staff will be there to welcome you and the children into our interactive sessions. We will be offering activities specifically planned for the developmental needs of the children, that they can follow along with at home.

**Our PlayConnect at Home LIVE sessions run on Thursdays at 10am. Please register through link and check your email for updates. [To join in on these sessions please register HERE](#)**

**The next MyTime at Home LIVE session will run on Tuesday 6th October 8pm - 9pm.**

This will be a follow up session with the team from Rise and Thrive. This session will provide strategies and tips for when we feel overwhelmed. You do not need to have attended the first session to participate. Please register below and check your email for updates

[Register for MyTime at home live](#)

## MacKillop Strengthening Parents Support Program (SPSP) – Parent Support Groups

For parents/carers of a child with a disability or developmental delay aged 0 - 18years.

**Due to the COVID-19 situation the MacKillop Parent Support Groups will be meeting online for Term 4, 2020.**

### Pilates Classes MacKillop FamilyService Online

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**When:** Fridays 9/10, 23/10, 6/11, 20/11, 4/12/2020

**Time:** 10:30am-11:30am

**Cost:** Free (Bookings are essential)

**Contact:** Annette on 0448 015 023 or email: [spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au) to book in and receive the Zoom meeting link to join.

## Mandarin Parent Support Group – Online

A Parent Support group for Mandarin speaking families with children with a disability.

**When:** Mondays - 12 Oct, 9 Nov, 7 December 2020

**Time:** 10.30am - 12.00pm

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** Annette 0448 015 023 or email: [spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au) for more information or to book in and receive the Zoom meeting link.

## Wyndham Parent Support Group

For families living in the Wyndham area

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**When:** Thursdays - 8 Oct, 22 Oct, 5 Nov, 19 Nov, 3 Dec 2020

**Time:** 10am-11.30am.

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** Annette Jorgensen on 0448 015 023 or via email: [SPSP@mackillop.org.au](mailto:SPSP@mackillop.org.au) to book in and receive the Zoom meeting link to join in.

## Strong Parents Yarraville Parent Support Group – online

For families living in the inner West of Melbourne.

**When:** Monday - 26 October, 23 November 2020

**Time:** 10am -11.00am

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Contact:** Annette 0448 015 023 or email: [spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au) to book in and receive the Zoom meeting link to join.

## Online Parent Support Group North and West

An online group for parents/carers of children with a disability or developmental delay living in the North and West of Melbourne.

**When:** Tuesdays - 13 Oct, 27 Oct, 10 Nov, 24 November 2020

**Time:** 12.00 - 1.00pm

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Contact:** Thea on 0417 331 681

Annette 0448 015 023 or email

[spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au)

## Dads North West

A group of fathers who have children with a disability. Light-hearted, friendly and informative.

**When:** Once every six weeks,

7:30-9pm, dates may vary.

**Cost:** \$5 per week to cover group activities

**Contact:** Paul 0409 949 978 to find out whether the group is meeting online.

### **Vietnamese Families Special Needs Group Inc.**

A vibrant support group for carers of children with a disability living in the west.

**When:** Thursday weekly, 10:30am-12:30pm (except school holidays)

**Where:** meeting online

**Contact:** 0448 417 513 or

**email:** [vn.specialneeds@gmail.com](mailto:vn.specialneeds@gmail.com)

Annette 0448 015 023 or email:

[spsp@mackillop.com.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.com.au)

### **LGBTIQA+ Carers Support Group is now Online**

The LGBTIQA+ carer support group is back - this time sessions will be online. The program will offer carers who identify as LGBTIQA+ a space to relax, connect and get access to information and referrals. This program is a partnership between City of Melbourne, queerspace and Carers Victoria.

Call 9663 6733 or email to register or find out more about our session times and topics.

### **WynDeaf Support Group**

New group for support, friendship, learning and crafts in a safe place welcoming.

### **Deaf, Hard of Hearing, their families, friends, co-workers, carers**

**Meeting:** 10am - 1.00pm Mondays 1st and 3rd Mondays each month at Wyndham Park Community Centre

**Contact:** [wyndeaf.sg@gmail.com](mailto:wyndeaf.sg@gmail.com) or mob 0490 453 287.

Call before you attend to find out whether the group has started meeting again.

### **Melbourne's West ASD Network**

Melbourne's West ASD Network is a wonderful group of over 1000 parents and carers of Autistic children living in the western suburbs of Melbourne.

Join our online community

Our Facebook group is 'secret' so you will need to email us for an invite to the online group.

**Website:** [www.mwasdnetwork.org](http://www.mwasdnetwork.org)

**Email:** [info@mwasdnetwork.org](mailto:info@mwasdnetwork.org)

### **Sussex Autism Carers Support Group**

This support group meets on the 1st Thursday of the month at 10am to 12pm at Sussex Neighbourhood House in Pascoe Vale.

Contact Paula for more information via email to find out whether the group is meeting on line or face to face.

### **Cerebral Palsy Support Network**

Ask for the Care Centre to have your questions answered and be linked to other families.

**Contact:** 1300 277 6000  
[www.cpsn.org.au](http://www.cpsn.org.au)



## Information and useful websites

### You might like to look up activities on the following websites:

- Raising Children Network - The Australian Parenting Website <https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/activity> - guides low cost activities for children aged 0 - 6years.
- <https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism> - information about Children with autism spectrum disorder.
- <https://raisingchildren.net.au/disability> - information about children with disability

### ABC Video - What It's Like Living on the Autism Spectrum

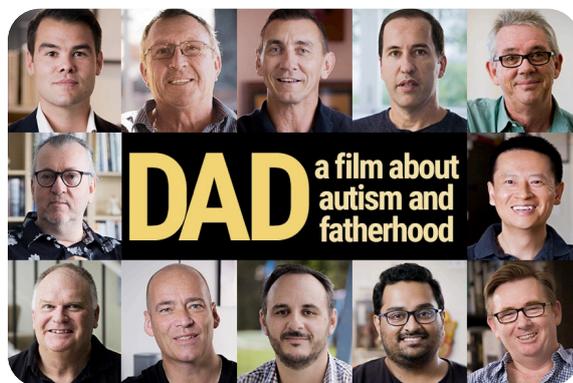
Children on the autism spectrum tell researchers about their strengths- and it may not be what you think

Many articles in media and research highlight the challenges experienced by children on the autism spectrum. Now in an Australian-first study, Griffith University researchers have explored the self-reported best attributes, strengths and favourite activities of 83 children on the autism spectrum.

Published in [Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders](#), the study by Dr Megan Clark and Associate Professor Dawn Adams from the [Autism Centre of Excellence](#), found many children identified strengths in being a good person or friend and having skills in specific areas. [Read the full story here.](#)

### Dad, a film about autism and fatherhood.

A new film about autism and fatherhood is available to watch in full and for free. It's a short documentary with deep dive segments into some of the topics covered in the film. Watch the film at [dadfilm.com.au](http://dadfilm.com.au)



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Annette

 03 9680 8444  [spsp@mackillop.org.au](mailto:spsp@mackillop.org.au)

## Contact Us

If undeliverable or if you would like to contact us please write or call:

### MacKillop Family Services Strengthening Parent Support Program

118 Commercial Rd,  
Footscray, Vic 3011

Mob: 0448 015 023

All returned copies will be taken off mailing list

*Not all events listed in this newsletter are run by MacKillop Family Services. If further event information is required, please call the hosting organisation via the contact details provided.*



[mackillop.org.au](http://mackillop.org.au)