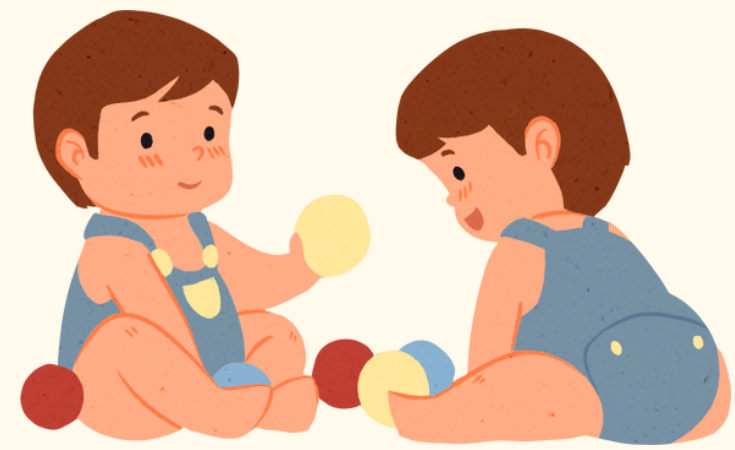


THESE EARLY DAYS ARE PRECIOUS



- **ENJOY YOUR BABY.**

What your baby needs more than anything at this point is the same as any baby: your closeness and love. Take whatever time you need to get to know this new member of your family. Everyone's experience will be different – some parents find it harder to relate to a new baby than others, and there will be days when you feel really close to your new baby and days when that bonding process seems remote. It is quite normal to experience mixed emotions in the early days or feel overwhelmed with all the new information.

- **LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY.**

Reassure yourself that all parents have good and bad days, and not all parents have to cope with the adjustment you are dealing with.

Go easy on yourself, rest whenever possible (sleep deprivation plays havoc with your emotions) and don't hesitate to seek support from others if you need it. Remember too that other family members – and siblings in particular – are also adjusting to this new family member. Take particular care not to lose sight of brothers and sisters in the first intense weeks of your new baby.

HEALTH MATTERS



Included in this pack is a checklist of recommended health checks for babies with Down syndrome. Remember that babies with Down syndrome generally grow and reach milestones at a slower rate than many other children.

- **MAKE CONTACT WITH YOUR LOCAL MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH) SERVICE.**

The nursing staff there will be able to support you with information and advice relating to general health and development of children from 0-5 years and can conduct regular routine health and development checks. In addition to a local GP, many families also find it useful to see a pediatrician regularly, to monitor health and development and to offer referral to any relevant specialists.

- **SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR CARER ALLOWANCE WITH SERVICES AUSTRALIA.**

As a parent of a child with Down syndrome, you are entitled to a fortnightly supplement and a Health Care Card for your child until they turn 16.

A claim form and further information is available from your local Centrelink Office on 13 27 17 or on the Centrelink website: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/carers-allowance>

The Carer Allowance form is in two sections:

- Part 1 is to be filled in by you, the parent
- Part 2 is to be filled in by your doctor.

This Carer Allowance is a provision made for you by the Australian Government – you are not depriving others by claiming an allowance to which you are entitled. There is no assets test for Carer Allowance but a \$250,000 annual family income test threshold does apply. Other payments your family may be eligible for (depending on your personal situation) are Carer Adjustment Payment and/or Carer Payment.

• ONCE YOU HAVE YOUR CHILD'S CENTRELINK NUMBER (CRN) AND A LETTER OF DIAGNOSIS YOU CAN THEN REGISTER FOR NDIS.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS): The Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) approach is available to children with Down syndrome under 7, provided they also meet residency requirement). The earlier you can sign up, the better. As soon as you receive a letter of diagnosis we recommend registering for the NDIS.

You can find your Early Childhood Partner by calling 1800 800 110 or by a postcode search

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/contact/locations>



SUPPORT WHEN YOU NEED IT, AT EVERY STAGE

We invite you to join Down Syndrome NSW. Membership is free. We provide information, services and supports at every stage across the lifespan. As a member, you become part of our connected community. You are not alone. Many of our staff are parents themselves, with mixed journeys all willing to listen, advise and support you where you are at in your journey.

As a valued DSNSW member, you have:

- Access to exclusive member only content
- Member discounts at events, training and workshops
- Access to Information and Support
- Access to Support Planning, Professional Training and Behaviour Management specialists
- Support and advice for NDIS pre-plans and planning reviews
- Borrowing rights to the Julie Cromer Library ResourceCentre
- Access to exclusive events, workshops and webinars hosted by DS NSW including play.gro.UP and new babies days
- Monthly newsletters
- Regular social media updates on items and events of interest to you
- The opportunity to add your voice to current debates and government reviews
- The opportunity to contribute as a board member
- Voting rights at our AGM