



About Your NDIS Plan and Work

This document has been produced by Down Syndrome Australia.

Down Syndrome Australia is the peak body for people with Down syndrome in Australia. Our purpose is to influence social and policy change, and provide a national profile and voice for people living with Down syndrome. We work collaboratively with the state and territory Down syndrome associations to achieve our mission. Our vision is an Australia where people living with Down syndrome are valued, reach their potential, and enjoy social and economic inclusion.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all of the people working and volunteering at the state and territory associations who have contributed to the development of this booklet.

The content of this booklet has been put together from the resources that the state and territory associations have developed over many years.

Last updated: February 2026

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our funders who made the development of this resource possible.

Contents

What this booklet is about	4
When to start planning your work goals	5
How your NDIS funding can help with work	6
How to start	7
What is an NDIS plan review?	8
Key words to show how your goals build independence	8
Things to think about for your work goals	9
Helpful phrases	10
Example NDIS Plan goals for getting ready for work	10
Example NDIS Plan goals for people who are working	11





What this booklet is about

This booklet tells you about different work options and how to get NDIS supports for your work goals.

Everyone wants to work in a job that they enjoy and that they are good at. You might need to try different jobs to see what you like and what you are good at.

You might work in a job in your community with people without disability. This is called open employment. You might work in supported employment, also known as ADEs (Australian Disability Enterprise). An ADE is a job or workplace that only employ people with disability.

Working in supported employment is only one choice. You should have choice and control about your employment and have the opportunity to work in the setting of your choice, be it open employment, a supported employment service, a social enterprise, or in your own business.

The NDIS can help you to look at where you would like to work and how to get a job. They can also help you to get support to do your job.

This booklet will help you learn how to talk about your NDIS goals for work.

When to start planning work goals

When you are old enough to work

You can start thinking about work when you reach the legal working age.

The age you can start work is different in each State or Territory in Australia. In many places you can start most jobs when you are about 15 years old.

Before big changes in your life

It is a good idea to plan for work when you are about to finish school or want to change jobs.

Planning early helps you get the right support.

At your NDIS plan review

When you have your NDIS plan review, you can:

- add new goals
- ask to change your supports
- ask for funding to help you get ready for work and learn new skills, or to be supported in a job.



How your NDIS funding can help with work

The NDIS funds work related supports in two main parts of an NDIS plan:

- **Capacity Building – Finding and Keeping a Job:** for building your skills, exploring what you want to do for work, or transitioning out of school.
- **Core – Supports in Employment:** for support in your work like job coaching or on-the-job training.

Your NDIS funding can support your work goals in many ways, such as:

- **Job coaching** – A person who helps you learn how to do your job.
- **On-the-job training** – a support worker to help you learn while you work.
- **Work experience or part-time job support** – Help to try a job or work a few hours so you can learn what you enjoy and what you are good at.
- **Building your skills** – This can include learning:
 - how to talk to people
 - how to manage your time
 - how to handle money
 - how to feel confident at work

Your funding can also be used for activities that help you be more independent and get ready for work, even before you start a job. For example, learning how to travel to and from work.



How to start

- Talk to a person you trust about what you like and what you are good at. This can help you think about what kind of job you might like to do.
- Talk to your NDIS planner or Local Area Coordinator about what work you want to do.
- Learn about all your work choices. You can do many types of jobs, not just work in an ADE. It is important that you know your options so you can choose a job that feels right for you.
- Tell them what job you want or what new skills you want to learn. Ask how your NDIS funding can help you reach your work goals. Ask for a plan review if your goals or needs change.

Ask your school or current employer for a letter of support. This letter should say:



- What help you get at school or in your job now.
- What help you might need when you finish school or do a different job.
- How this support will help you move into work or more training.

Ask your State or Territory Down syndrome Association for a letter of support. This letter can:



- Explain how they can help you build independent skills
- List any programs or activities you do with them to support your work goals.

This helps the NDIS see what support you already have and how it helps you grow.

What is an NDIS plan review?

The NDIS should tell you in advance when you are having a plan review meeting so that you have time to prepare.

A plan review is a meeting with your NDIS planner or Local Area Coordinator to:

- Look at your current NDIS plan.
- Talk about what supports are helping you and what might need to change.
- Make changes if your needs or goals are different now. Decide how your NDIS funding can best help you reach your goals, including your work goals.

Key words to show how your goals build independence

When you write your work goals, use key words that show how support helps you become more independent and learn life skills:

- **Capacity building** – learning new skills so you can do more things on your own.
- **Choice and control** – making your own decisions about work and life.
- **Building confidence** – feeling ready to try new challenges.
- **Social engagement** – connecting with other people and working in a team.
- **Skill development** – learning the skills you need for work.
- **Increased social and community participation** – being part of your community.

Use key words

Key words, are important words, to show how these supports help you build independence.





Things to think about for your work goals

By learning to be more independent for work, you might want to:

- Make good choices for your age and stage in life
- Choose what to study or what courses to do
- Find a job or try different work options
- Learn the skills you need for work
- Feel confident and comfortable at school, training, or work

Example goal in a plan:

"I'd like to find a job or build skills to explore appropriate employment options."



Helpful phrases

Example NDIS Plan goals for getting ready for work

1. Capacity building

- **Goal:** *"I want to learn new work-related skills so I can be ready for a job in the future."*
 - **Supports might be:** Training programs, volunteer opportunities, or work experience placements.
-

2. Choice and control

- **Goal:** *"I want to explore different types of work to decide what kind of job I would like."*
 - **Supports might be:** Career mentoring, trying a job programs, or workplace visits.
-

3. Building confidence

- **Goal:** *"I want to practice workplace skills like teamwork, time management, and following instructions so I feel ready for work."*
 - **Supports might be:** Role-playing tasks, group programs, or helped work experiences.
-

4. Independent travel and workplace readiness

- **Goal:** *"I want to learn how to travel safely and travel to work on my own."*
 - **Supports might be:** Travel training, practice the way to get there, or trips where someone helps.
-

5. Social and communication skills

- **Goal:** *"I want to improve my communication and social skills so I can confidently talk with colleagues and customers."*
- **Supports might be:** Social skills training, group activities, or communication coaching.

Example NDIS Plan goals for people who are working

1. Getting better at your job and learning new skills:

- **Goal:** *"I want to develop new skills at work so I can take on more tasks or a higher role."*
 - **Supports might be:** On-the-job training, mentoring, short courses, or skill-building workshops.
-

2. Finding and trying new job options:

- **Goal:** *"I want to explore different jobs and workplaces to find one that matches my skills and interests."*
 - **Supports might be:** Job coaching, career advice, or workplace visits.
-

3. Feeling confident and doing things on your own at work:

- **Goal:** *"I want to improve my confidence to speak with supervisors, ask for help, and take on new tasks at work."*
 - **Supports might be:** Confidence-building programs, communication coaching, or mentoring.
-

4. Learning skills to do your job well:


- **Goal:** *"I want to improve using my time well, teamwork, and problem-solving skills so I can perform better at my job."*
 - **Supports might be:** Skills workshops, supported mentoring, or organised workplace programs.
-

5. Support for changing or moving to a new job:

- **Goal:** *"I want to get the support I need to safely change jobs or start a new career path."*
- **Supports might be:** Job search support, help to write my resume, interview prep, and helping when something changes.

Helpful tools and resources

NDIS School Leaver Goals Worksheet:

 www.ndis.gov.au/participants/finding-keeping-and-changing-jobs/building-skills-and-getting-job


Work and Study Supports Guidelines:

 www.ndis.gov.au/our-guidelines



Disclaimer

The information in this resource is general in nature and does not constitute advice. Down Syndrome Australia will not be held responsible for any decisions made as a result of using this information. The contents of the resource do not constitute legal advice and should not be relied on as such.

 1300 344 954

 Level 8, 805/220 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

 info@downsyndrome.org.au

 www.downsyndrome.org.au



Down Syndrome
Australia