

Creating inclusive environments

6 tips for making reasonable adjustments in early years centre-based services

Under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA), children's education and care services must make reasonable adjustments to support children with disability to access and participate on the same basis as children without disability. Service leaders and educators should work together with children and families to make these reasonable adjustments.

Know

Reasonable adjustments can be easy and inexpensive to make.

Reasonable adjustments can be changes to the environment, the program, your teaching style, the design of activities and the use of resources. This might include changing the routine to be more flexible with fewer transitions throughout the day, using resources like sensory toys to support a child to feel calm and focused, moving equipment and resources to a lower height, or using a visual timetable to help children see what will be coming next in their day.

You can access external supports to help you make reasonable adjustments.

Accessing available supports such as professional development, additional resources or other professionals will help you identify barriers to access and participation, plan ways to remove them and build your capacity to include children with disability. Children's education and care services approved for Child Care Subsidy (CCS) can access support through the [Inclusion Support Program](#) (ISP).

Think

Think about how you can work as a team to make reasonable adjustments.

Consider the elements of your environment, program, teaching style, activities and resources that might be challenging for the child and think about adjustments that could be made to reduce these barriers. Research the external supports available to your service and plan strategies and your budget to help you make adjustments to support children with disability.

There are benefits of making reasonable adjustments for the whole service.

View any cost of making a reasonable adjustment as an investment, as it may benefit other children. Consider how it may better prepare the service to accommodate children with disability in the future.

Do

Collaborate with the child, family and other professionals to make adjustments.

Listen to the child and family and provide the opportunity for them to make choices about decisions that affect them. The child, family and other professionals can provide key information and perspectives to complement your knowledge of the child, the environment, the program and other children.

Monitor the adjustments and change if needed.

Children's needs change over time and there may also be times when adjustments don't work as planned. Monitor and evaluate the adjustments you have made with the child and family to see if they are still supporting the child or if changes are needed.

The DDA provides that an adjustment will not be reasonable if it would cause 'unjustifiable hardship' on the service provider. The service provider is required to demonstrate that providing the adjustment would cause 'unjustifiable hardship'. This needs to be considered in light of all the circumstances, including the availability of financial assistance to make the adjustment.



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