



Advocating
for children
with disability

Karen Dimmock - CEO

Family perspective:

Connecting and supporting
families raising children
with developmental delay
or disability



Acknowledgement of Country

ACD acknowledges the traditional owners of this land. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.



This artwork was created by Yorta Yorta and Wurundjeri artist Renee Jenkins.

To create the artwork she reflected on her own parenting experience, which she likens to a journey with stepping stones along the way.



**Advocating
for children
with disability**



ACD is the Victorian advocacy service for children with disability and their families.

We have a lived experience team and we are inclusive of all children and all disabilities.

We work in partnership with families to build skills, knowledge and confidence.

No diagnosis is needed for families to use our services.

Topics today

- **What families value about Maternal Child Health**
- **Changes that are underway**
- **While families wait.....**
- **Connecting families with each other**



Families value celebrating progress

Tracking delays in developmental milestones is emotional for families.

- Importance of a strengths-based approach
- Acknowledge and celebrate progress
- Explain the reason: documenting delays helps children get support
- Children always surprise us!



Families value reliable information

Families experience a bewildering lack of reliable information or mis-information about developmental delay, autism, and disability.

- Value of accurate, up-to-date information
- Clarity about what can and can't be answered
- Raising Children Network
- Better Health Network and Kids Health Info
- Autism what next
- MY CP Guide



Families value connection to local parenting support

Families are often overwhelmed by the number of healthcare appointments.

- Seeing families as a whole: parent wellbeing and siblings
- Connecting families to local parenting supports



'Run your own race.'

This is from Bluey, but it's a good message. Children do things in their own time and you should celebrate the wins.



Changes underway

- **Remains the same: eligibility criteria and NDIS early childhood partners are the entry point**
- **Change to the NDIS: what you can buy. NDIS support list includes all the main early childhood intervention therapies**
- **Wait times to get access to the NDIS are much longer**



Support while families wait

So much waiting for services: paediatricians, community health, NDIS, therapists.

Importance of universal services:

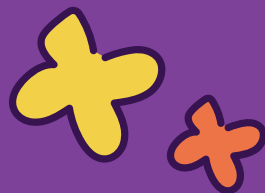
- Sleep: early parenting centres
- Toilet training: National Continence Helpline
- Behaviour: early parenting centres, Tuning into Kids, Triple P
- Talking: Supported Playgroups offering small talk and Parent-Child Mother Goose programs



'Learning about the importance of focusing on my child's strengths, not just her challenges, was a game-changer. It shifted my entire perspective and approach at home.'

Also, understanding the importance of consistent routines and adapting activities to her interests made a huge difference.'

- Parent



Connecting families to each other

Families raising children with developmental delay and disability can feel isolated and lonely.

- Best support often comes from other families in similar situations
- Eco-system of peer support: closed Facebook groups, diagnosis-specific groups, MyTime, playgroups, cultural-specific groups, face-to-face and virtual options
- ACD connects families to other families



ACD services

Our services are free and include:

- Telephone advocacy support
- Online workshops
- Information
- Peer support
- Statewide, all developmental delay and disability
- From birth to 18 years old

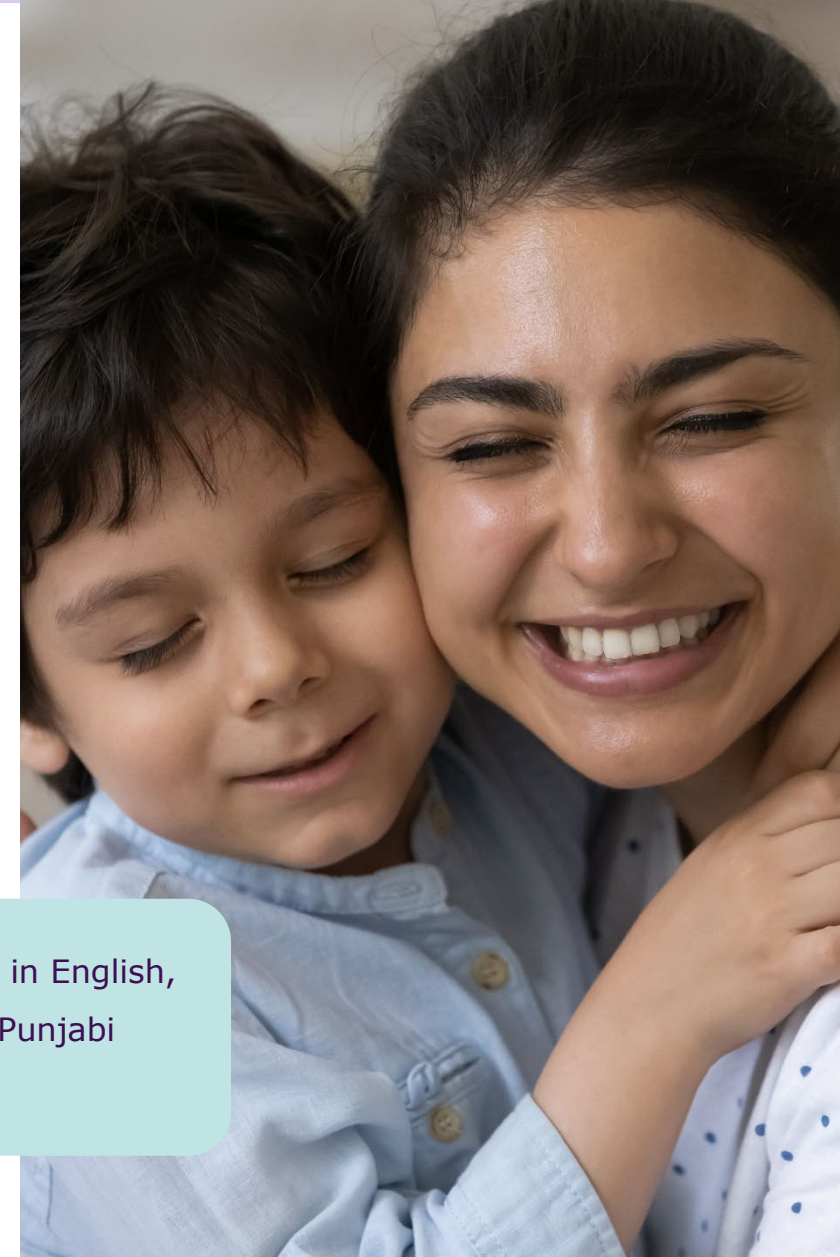


Information

Online information for families:

- Peer support near you
- Financial support and free counselling for families
- Getting a diagnosis
- Talking to children about disability
- Getting started with the NDIS
- Inclusion in early learning
- Practical help – accessible parking, MLAK key

Information is available in English, Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Punjabi and Vietnamese.



Workshops and peer support

ACD runs over 120 workshops each year for families.

Topics cover all ages and stages and include:

- Positive Start to Early Learning
- First Steps
- Starting Prep
- NDIS Good Evidence
- Virtual MyTime



Support Line

Telephone advocacy support

A FREE service for Victorian families and professionals who work with them.
No diagnosis needed.

03 9880 7000

1800 654 013 for regional callers

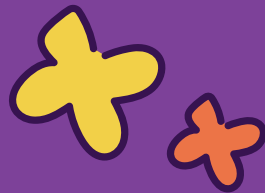
Monday to Friday 9 am to 5 pm



Subscribe to our online newsletter



'Find what works for your child, be flexible, and remember every child's journey is unique. Don't compare, just celebrate their progress.' - Parent





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Thank you

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to our free monthly newsletter.



You can also follow us on social media.



acd.org.au

