

Newsletter of IDEAS



JAN | FEB 2021

# Housing and Accommodation



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information  
so you can  
do life.

**Disability Information**  
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## Editorial - *Diana Palmer* *IDEAS Executive Officer*

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Welcome to this edition!

As we begin 2021, let's hope for a better year than last.

While we are in the height of summer and the ever-present threat of bushfire and possibly floods this year due to La Nina, I do hope you are able to have a bit of a break over summer to spend with family and friends. Albeit, keeping up our social distancing and other COVID safe practises.

The scene has already been set for 2021 to be another year of discourse and change in the disability space, with the DSS information paper out for consultation on the changes of the NDIS Act which are to be legislated this year to come into effect from the middle of the year. I do encourage you to engage with the conversation and have your say where you can. It is important that people with disability are included in the conversations of any changes proposed to supports and services that are in place to enable people with disability to live an ordinary life.

In NSW, the Government announced funds for the development of an ongoing advocacy program in the state and we hope to see announcements early in 2021 on how the Government plans to respond to the Ageing and Disability Commissioner's Review Report. Namely, what the future program will look like and how it will be implemented. Funding for currently funded advocacy services (including PossABLE Advocacy) has been extended through to June 2021 (at this point in time).

IDEAS had a very busy and challenging year in 2020. On behalf of DSS we managed the National COVID Disability Information Helpline in addition to our IDEAS Infoline and other channels of our information service. Demand grew during the year and at the end of the 2020 calendar year, we had already surpassed the level of activity we had achieved during the 2019-2020 Financial year. Planning for 2021 has been underway internally for sometime as we continue to navigate paths to diversify our income streams.

Best wishes to all for this new year ahead.

**Regards,**  
**Diana**

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# Bushfire Information Contacts.

In an emergency, call **triple zero** (000) or Teletype 106. If a fire is approaching, you should be ready to leave. Go to page 24 for our top tips on **Packing for an Emergency**.

## NSW

### NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)

Phone: 1800 679 737

Web: [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au)

Facebook: @nswrfs

Twitter: @NSWRFS

## ACT

### ACT Emergency Service Agency (ESA)

Phone: (02) 6207 8444

Web: [www.esa.act.gov.au](http://www.esa.act.gov.au)

Facebook: @ACTEmergencyServicesAgency

Twitter: @ACT\_ESA

## QLD

### Queensland Rural Fire Service (QRFS)

Call your local Rural Fire Service Area Office directly. Numbers are available at [www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au](http://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au)

### Queensland Fire and Emergency Service (QFES)

Phone: 13 74 68

Web: [www.qfes.qld.gov.au](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au)

Facebook: @QldFireandEmergencyServices

Twitter: @QldFES

## SA

### South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS)

Phone: 1800 362 361

TTY: 133 677

Web: [www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au)

Facebook: @countryfireservice

Twitter: @cfsalerts

Check with your local fire authority for the most up to date and reliable information, download the **Fires Near Me** app on your android or Apple device and listen to your **local ABC radio**. Live stream with the **ABC Listen** app.

## VIC

### VicEmergency

Phone: 1800 226 226

Web: [www.emergency.vic.gov.au](http://www.emergency.vic.gov.au)

### Country Fire Authority (CFA)

Phone: 03 9262 8444

Web: [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

Facebook: @cfavic

Twitter: @CFA\_Updates

## NT

### Bushfires NT

Phone: 08 8922 0844

Web: [www.nt.gov.au/bushfires](http://www.nt.gov.au/bushfires)

Facebook: @BushfiresNT

Twitter: @BushfiresNT

## WA

### Emergency WA

Web: [www.emergency.wa.gov.au](http://www.emergency.wa.gov.au)

### Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) WA

Phone: 13 33 37

Web: [www.dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfire](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfire)

Facebook: @dfeswa

Twitter: @dfes\_wa

## TAS

### Tasmania Fire Service

Phone: 1800 000 699

Web: [www.fire.tas.gov.au](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au)

Facebook: @TasmaniaFireService

Twitter: @TasFireService

## Tips to Keep Well in a Heatwave



- 1.** Drink plenty of water. Try keeping a couple of water bottles in the fridge and see if you can finish them during the day. If you're going out for the day make it a habit to take one with you.
- 2.** Stay cool by placing a damp towel or cloth over your shoulders, neck or wrists. Spraying your face and arms using a spray bottle can also help.
- 3.** Avoid the sun and avoid going out in the hottest part of the day. Plan your outings for when it is cooler. Get up early and do chores in the cool of the morning.
- 4.** Keep in touch with and check on family, friends and neighbours.
- 5.** Stay informed by tuning into the local radio or television station for warnings.
- 6.** Plan an outing to a public building like the library, gallery, museum, cinema or shopping centre which are all well air-conditioned.
- 7.** Have lighter and cooler meals like cold salads, fresh fruit and lean meats like fish or chicken. Homemade icy poles or frozen yoghurt and fruit pops also make for a cool treat.
- 8.** Contact your doctor and seek medical advice if you're feeling unwell. Make yourself aware of the symptoms of heat-related illnesses such as heat cramps, heat rash, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- 9.** Have a cool (not cold) shower or bath. Wetting or washing your hair and leaving it damp can provide some relief.

## Annual Health Checks



Regular health checks can identify any early signs of health issues. Problems that are found early can be treated more effectively. Factors such as age, health, family history and lifestyle choices can determine how often check-ups are required.

### Why are regular health checks important?

Even if you feel healthy it's still a good idea to visit your doctor regularly, say every six months. Regular visits allow your GP to:

- Check for current or emerging medical problems
- Assess your risk of future medical issues
- Encourage you to maintain a healthy lifestyle
- Keep vaccinations and medicines up to date

If you've gone to the doctor because you have a cold for example, many routine checks may be done while you're there. Temperature and blood pressure checks are common ones.

### Regular health checks for adults

Early warning signs of disease or illness can be identified through regular health checks. Heart disease, diabetes and some cancers can often be picked up in their early stages and treatment started quickly.

### Health checks that can be done at home

**Diet** - General health and well-being can be improved and maintained with a healthy diet. Two serves of fruit and five serves of vegetables is the daily recommendation.

**Skin checks** – Unusual spots, moles and freckles need to be checked regularly. People who do outdoor work or sport need a yearly examination by their doctor.

**Weight** – Longer-term diseases such as diabetes and arthritis can be prevented by maintaining a healthy weight range.

**Physical activity** – For mental health, heart and bones and to prevent many diseases, regular physical activity is highly recommended. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day, which could include a walk to the shops or the park, a gentle swim at the local pool or a game of social tennis.

**Alcohol** – Two alcohol-free days per week and keeping to 10 drinks or less a week and no more than 4 in one day will lead to better long-term health and well-being.

**Dental care** – Regularly cleaning your teeth, eating and drinking low sugar foods and drinks, and having regular dental check-ups can all reduce the risks of tooth decay, gum disease and tooth loss.

**Smoking** – Not smoking can help reduce the risk of many diseases such as heart disease, stroke, lung disease and thin bones.

**Contact your regular family doctor or GP for a check-up today!**

# Unpack, Unfold and Go

8 models to choose from including  
NEW Luggie TravelRider Powerchair:

- Folds flat for easy loading
- Lightweight IATA approved Li-ion batteries
- Carrying capacity up to 160 kg
- University tested for public transport
- Comfortable padded seat
- Puncture proof tyres

*Luggie*<sup>®</sup>  
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## CALD Community Connectors



IDEAS are providing services as part of the new **National Community Connector Program** (NCCP), developed as a response to the under-representation of many diverse population groups receiving and properly utilising National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funding, due to a combination of cultural, social, economic and discriminatory barriers.

### What is the National Community Connector Program?

The NCCP aims to support people with disability from 4 specific population groups to navigate the NDIS.

These include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) people
- People experiencing psychosocial disability
- Ageing parents and carers of people with disability

IDEAS are contracted to support 5 community connectors across 4 regions of NSW.

CALD Community Connectors will assist the above listed minority groups with disability and their representatives in understanding, accessing and using support through the NDIS. They will also support the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), Partners in Community (Local Area Coordinators and Early Childhood Early Intervention Services) and the local service sector to establish trusting relationships and more appropriate engagement.

**What do CALD Community Connectors do?**

- Improve awareness and knowledge about NDIS
- Assertive outreach to CALD communities in a culturally sensitive manner
- Provide transport and attend appointments and meetings, if support is required
- Assist in gathering evidence to support access request
- Organise interpreters for free translation and interpretation services
- Support during pre-planning, planning and plan review meetings
- For those who are not eligible for the NDIS, or who are exiting the NDIS, help them to access mainstream supports
- Work closely with Partners in the Community (PITC) to build their links with hard-to-reach communities and to build their capacity to engage with people from CALD communities more effectively
- When people are not eligible for NDIS, we can work with their PITC to link them to mainstream supports

You can contact our CALD Community Connectors by calling our **free Information Line** on [1800 029 904](tel:1800029904) and asking to speak to them, or by using the contact details provided below.

**Campbelltown**

**Himadri Deka**

**Email:** [himadrideka@ideas.org.au](mailto:himadrideka@ideas.org.au)

**Mobile:** 0407 616 168

**Wollongong**

**Deji Adiatu**

**Email:** [dejadiatu@ideas.org.au](mailto:dejadiatu@ideas.org.au)

**Mobile:** 0417 062 455

**Newcastle**

**Julie Duncan**

**Email:** [julieduncan@ideas.org.au](mailto:julieduncan@ideas.org.au)

**Mobile:** 0447 186 446

**Central Coast**

**Keiko Clements**

**Email:** [keikoclements@ideas.org.au](mailto:keikoclements@ideas.org.au)

**Mobile:** 0429 656 100

**Ana Parada**

**Email:** [anaparada@ideas.org.au](mailto:anaparada@ideas.org.au)

**Mobile:** 0427 583 945

 **IDEAS ID: 104808**



## NDIS: Changes to Transport Supports



An increase in transport funding will be made for National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants with high out-of-pocket taxi costs.

Budget checks can be made by participants either on the participant portal or by calling [1800 800 110](tel:1800800110).


The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has contacted participants with very high out-of-pocket taxi costs or complex needs, to review their transport funding.

Taxi subsidy scheme data has been used by the NDIA to identify participants with high costs.

This is an interim step while the NDIS works towards a long-term plan for transport supports, and will ensure participants continue to get the support they need.

Participants with disability that are unable to use public transport have transport funding available to them. Taxi subsidy scheme costs for NDIS participants are now funded by the NDIS.

### NDIS CONTACT DETAILS

 1800 800 110

 [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

 **IDEAS ID: 71366**

*Information sourced from NDIS website.*

## Disability Royal Commission



In October, the **Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability** (Disability Royal Commission) published its Interim Report which sets out what the Disability Royal Commission has done. The report says people with disability experience attitudinal, environmental, institutional and communication barriers to achieving inclusion within Australian society. It shows that a great deal needs to be done to ensure that the human rights of people with disability are respected and that Australia becomes a truly inclusive society.

The **Interim Report**, including an Easy Read version, can be downloaded from the Disability Royal Commission website at [bit.ly/drc-interim-report](https://bit.ly/drc-interim-report)

### Public Hearings

The Disability Royal Commission held three public hearings as 2020 came to a close. We've put information and resources (media coverage, recordings and transcripts) on our website so check [ideas.org.au/blogs/drc](https://ideas.org.au/blogs/drc) for more information.

#### 23-27 November 2020

**Public Hearing 8** was on the experiences of First Nations people with disability and their families in contact with the child protection system.

#### 7-11 December 2020

**Public Hearing 9** focused on the pathways and barriers to open employment for people with disability.

#### 14-15 December 2020

**Public Hearing 10** looked at education and training for health care professionals in relation to people with cognitive disabilities.

### DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION CONTACT DETAILS

 1800 517 199
  [disability.royalcommission.gov.au](https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au)
 IDEAS ID: 95338

*Information sourced from Disability Royal Commission website.*

## Aged Care Royal Commission




The **Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety** (Aged Care Royal Commission) held its final hearing to hear submissions from Counsel Assisting on 22 and 23 October 2020.

Senior Counsel Assisting, Peter Gray QC and Peter Rozen QC both presented submissions on behalf of the Counsel Assisting team over the two days. Counsel submitted recommendations for the consideration of the Commissioners, and for any response by interested parties, on all material aspects of the work of the Royal Commission save for long-term financing options.

The Commission heard there are around 50 sexual assaults a week of aged care residents.

After two and a half years of hearings, counsel submitted 124 recommendations to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Recommendations include mandated staffing ratios, compulsory registration of workers and a new independent watchdog. Refer to the Aged Care Royal Commission website listed below for full details.

### AGED CARE ROYAL COMMISSION CONTACT DETAILS

 1800 960 711

 [agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au](https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au)

 **IDEAS ID: 95383**

*Information sourced from Aged Care Royal Commission website.*



## Independent Living

Independent living is any housing arrangement designed exclusively for older adults, generally those aged 55 and over (not to be confused with Supported Independent Living, see page 16). While residents live independently, most communities offer amenities, activities and services. This style of living is ideal for individuals who can still live independently but enjoy having access to assistance when needed.

Independent living communities provide their residents with access to dining, medical care, entertainment and more. For someone with a disability who wishes to live in their own home, independent living is flexible and under the control of the individual.

A person's age, mobility and mental health all need to be considered when determining the requirements of a dwelling. For example, if the person is a wheelchair user then widening of the door frames will enable them to move around the house more independently. Likewise, the repair of uneven floors will decrease the risk of falls and provide smoother wheelchair use.

Other tips to consider are:

- Have adequate lighting throughout the house
- Install grab rails where needed
- Remove trip hazards such as rugs
- Attach grip treads to steps

***Seek professional advice from an occupational therapist before moving into a new place as there may be modifications that need to be done.***





## Short Term Accommodation



SUPPORT

### What is Short Term Accommodation?

Short Term Accommodation (STA) refers to supports previously known as 'respite'. STA describes supports provided for a limited period of time, typically delivered in a residential house, unit or flat. In some instances, the provider might book an apartment at a hotel.

STA can be provided as additional support in your own home by some organisations. Some organisations will only provide STA to adults, others only to children, and some offer services to both, though not at the same time.

### What if you do not have an NDIS package?

Some providers offer short-term accommodation for Fee-for-Service, which means that you pay a fee for services with your own finances rather than with the NDIS funding. This service will have a support ratio. It might be 1:3, and it might be 1:1 depending on the organisation.

### In an NDIS plan

The funding stream comes from Core Supports – Assistance with Daily Life.

### What does STA include?

- Around the clock support staff
- Medications and personal care
- Accessible environments
- Meals
- Social activities
- Overnight and short stays

*For more information, see our full article at [bit.ly/short-term-accommodation](https://bit.ly/short-term-accommodation)*



## Supported Independent Living



Supported Independent Living (SIL) is help with and/or supervision of daily tasks to help people with disabilities live as independently as possible, while building their skills. While mostly used in shared living arrangements, it is also available to a person living on their own.

SIL funding doesn't cover living costs such as rent, groceries, utilities like electricity, gas, water, telephone or internet. A full list of what is covered can be found in the Supported Living Operational Guideline located at [bit.ly/SIL-guideline](https://bit.ly/SIL-guideline)

SIL is one of many support options NDIS participants can receive. When considering if SIL is the best option for a participant, the following are considered:

- The participant's goals for their potential home and living arrangements, and the support required for daily tasks to assist in living as independently as possible
- If alternative supports may be a better option
- If the participant has significant support needs that require person-to-person supports, and what supports they already receive
- If the NDIA decides the support meets the "reasonable and necessary" criteria for SIL funding





The **Operational Guideline for SIL** explains how decisions are made about SIL supports, providing more clarity and transparency for participants and providers. Information about personal care supports, specialist disability accommodation and home modifications are also provided in this Guideline. The guideline is available on the NDIS website.

If SIL is included in a Plan then the next step is to work with a Support Coordinator, LAC, family or friends to work out the best way to use the SIL funding.

For further information, visit [bit.ly/community-supported-living](https://bit.ly/community-supported-living)

#### NDIS CONTACT DETAILS



1800 800 110



[www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)



IDEAS ID: 71366

*Information sourced from NDIS website.*

## Looking for an accessible classifieds website?

### Buy or Sell:



**Cars**



**Beds and Equipment**



**Wheelchairs**



**Accessible Properties**



[www.ebility.com.au](http://www.ebility.com.au)



1800 029 904



[sales@e-bility.com](mailto:sales@e-bility.com)



## Homelessness and Low-Cost Accommodation



### New South Wales

**Link2home** is the state-wide telephone service for homelessness enquiries in NSW. It helps people who are homeless or are at risk of being homeless by offering access to specialised support and accommodation services.

Between 9am and 10pm daily, Link2home provides information, assessments and referrals to homeless services. Between 10pm and 9am, Link2home provides information, assessments and referral to emergency services if required.

The Link2home contact number is [1800 152 152](tel:1800152152).

### Victoria

In Victoria, a **Statewide After Hours Service** is available from 5pm to 9am Monday to Friday and 24 hours on weekends and public holidays on [1800 825 955](tel:1800825955) (free call) or [03 9536 7777](tel:0395367777).

For women and children there is the **Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre** on [1800 015 188](tel:1800015188) (free call) or [03 9322 3555](tel:0393223555), 24 hours.

### Queensland

In Queensland there is the **Homeless Hotline** on [1800 474 753](tel:1800474753). This is a phone information and referral service for people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. For more information, visit [bit.ly/qld-homeless-hotline](https://bit.ly/qld-homeless-hotline)

### Australian Capital Territory

In the Australian Capital Territory, **OneLink** operates Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 8am to 6pm, and Saturday and Sunday 12.30pm to 5pm (Woden Community Service). OneLink provides support to those in need including accommodation. The contact number for this service is [1800 176 468](tel:1800176468).



## South Australia

**Homeless Connect South Australia** provides services that will assess a situation and work to find the best option to suit this situation.

The contact number for this service is [1800 003 308](tel:1800003308).

## Tasmania

In Tasmania there is **Housing Connect**. It provides assessment for emergency accommodation through to long-term housing and support needs.

The contact number for this service is [1800 800 588](tel:1800800588).

## Northern Territory

In the Northern Territory, **ShelterMe** includes services to provide information and support with accommodation whether that is overnight, weekly or more long term.

The contact number for this service is [08 8985 4389](tel:0889854389).

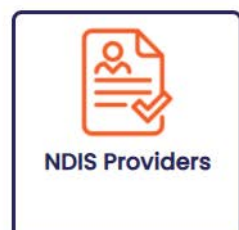
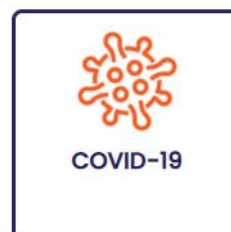
## Western Australia

**Entrypoint Perth** is a free assessment and referral service in Western Australia (includes regional WA) assisting people who are homeless or at the risk of homelessness to access accommodation and support options.

This service can be reached via [1800 124 684](tel:1800124684) or [08 6496 0001](tel:0864960001).

*You can also search the IDEAS directory at [www.ideas.org.au](http://www.ideas.org.au) to find other services and supports near you.*

## Search by Category





## Costs to Consider When Renting

The excitement of moving into a new place may be short-lived when there are additional costs to consider, so it is best to understand these costs before you make the decision to start renting.

### Upfront costs of renting

#### ***Rental bond***

When you agree to rent a property, the landlord or real estate agent will request a rental bond. This amount is usually equal to one month's rent although it varies from state to state. This money needs to be available when the lease is signed.

#### ***Pet bond***

This payment covers any costs incurred as a result of damage from your pet during your tenancy. Pet bonds are not applicable for assistance animals and are not legal in all states or territories. Contact your local tenancy authority to know your rights.

#### ***Rent in advance***

In most cases two weeks rent in advance will need to be paid as part of the security deposit.

#### ***Moving costs***

Depending on your situation, a truck, ute or trailer may need to be hired to shift furniture. You may also need to hire a removalist, especially if you have mobility issues or driving restrictions. Go to page 22 for Tips on Moving House.

#### ***Property basics***

For a first time move, you may need to purchase basic furniture, white goods (fridge, washing machine), bedding, cooking and cleaning equipment.

### Recurring costs

#### ***Utilities***

Utilities refers to things like electricity, gas, water, and internet. Depending on the lease, all or none of these utilities may be included in the rent. A good plan is to set



aside some money each week for these types of bills to avoid having large payments at the end of the month or quarter. Depending on your situation, you may qualify for discounts on some of these bills. If you have a concession card, let your supplier know when signing up so that they can apply any discounts.

### ***Renters' contents insurance***

Contents insurance is highly recommended as it can insure possessions and give peace of mind in the event of a fire or break-in.

### ***Food***

Fresh food and pantry staples is an ongoing cost. Special diet or health requirements may increase your costs.

### ***Pets***

If a pet is allowed, then food, grooming and vet bills need to be considered.

### ***Parking***

Depending on the location, renting with a car can pose problems. In urban areas parking may be limited or off-site parking may need to be paid or a residents parking permit acquired.

### ***Laundry***

This will require the purchase of a washing machine (one large outlay of money) or the use of the machines at a laundromat (smaller more regular spends).

### ***Transport***

Renters without cars will need to budget for public transport or taxi fares. Those with a vehicle will have to factor in maintenance, insurance, registration and running costs.

### **Additional costs**

Entertainment, clothing, phone costs and gifts will be additional costs that will need to be considered.

Information on rental assistance is available at [bit.ly/rental-assistance-info](https://bit.ly/rental-assistance-info)

## Tips for Moving House



Moving Day. It's not quite travelling, not quite a day out. Most people find moving stressful. Usually, the change coincides with a big life event. Like leaving home for the first time, going away to study, moving for work, or settling into a long-term relationship. Moving day can go as smooth as possible with a few helpful tips and a positive can-do attitude.

Rather than a how-to-pack, here we focus on the big day. Whether you have professionals or are moving independently, these tips can help you shift to your new space. Pack these articles in your vehicle. Have them wherever you will spend the night.

Before the move, arrange a connection or billing of essential services—gas, water, electricity, internet and telephone. The last 3 are very important if you have a personal alarm or vital equipment. Update or contact mail redirection and support or education services. Have new supports in place if you are moving to a new area. IDEAS can help you find them.

Social stories can help children prepare before, during, and after the move.

Decide if you need support workers on hand or stand by. If you end up exhausted, they can be a great help. It might be to start unpacking, or even to make beds ready for you to collapse in at the end of the day.

**Let's start with tips from travel.**

## ***Overnight bag***

Grab your overnight bag or suitcase. Pack it with a change of clothes, underwear, sleepwear, medication and toiletries. Add a towel, washer and hand towel. In packing your toiletries, add your toothpaste, brush, shampoo, conditioner and wash. If needed, also add shaving cream, razor, makeup or other toiletries. Remember to include toilet paper and hand soap as well so you can find them fast. Include anything essential for an overnighter, even if you are moving straight in. If a box goes missing, you have the essential items on hand.

Add clean bed linen and a pillow so you are ready for a good night's rest.

Add a first aid kit, remembering to include hand sanitiser and face masks. You never know when you might need a band-aid or antiseptic cream.

## ***Pack a picnic***

If kitchen goods are still packed away, having a picnic set will make it easy. Add the kettle, a full thermos of hot water if the move is a fair distance, extra tea, coffee or milo and don't forget cereal or breakfast for the next day. Use an esky and ice bricks to keep milk and fridge essentials cool. Pack a sandwich lunch, snacks and an easy dinner. Or, pre-plan to eat out (takeaway if you're likely to get a bit weary) or have a friend make and deliver a meal to you. If you are eating at home, plan an easy go-to meal that uses hardly any preparation equipment. Avoid sorting through boxes to find tongs or a pan.

A picnic-style cheese board platter is always a winner in our house on moving day, happily eaten on a picnic rug with our hands, no plates or cutlery needed. Still fun if there is no lounge furniture or table in place. If you like, put on your favourite songs and make it memorable. Add a kitchen sponge, detergent and tea towel to the picnic set and hopefully, you can find a volunteer to wash up.

## ***Essentials and the practical***

These are the things you need quickly and don't want to lose in the chaos, such as charging cords. The best storage option I've seen is to put the phone cords in a spare sunglasses case and pop them in your handbag or car glove box. Tape loose cords to their appliances so they don't get mixed up.

Garbage bag liners, tool-kits, and a general-purpose cleaner and rag are all useful.

***Remember, IDEAS are just a phone call or live-chat away if you need to find a service, supplier or support in your new community. We are here to help.***



## Packing for an Emergency

A 'go bag' is a bag you pack in advance for emergencies so you can quickly 'go go go'. A sturdy bag or a plastic storage tub can be useful to store supplies and the use of reflective tape on them will help to find them in the dark. It is ideal to have at least 3 days of supplies at the ready.

Remember that electricity and drinking water may not be available. Have some cash, including small change, and a pen and notebook.

### The Car

Keep fuel topped up to be able to leave without delay. It's a great idea to have a first aid kit (face masks, zip-lock bags, steriliser and disinfectant) in the car plus sun and insect protection. Have labelled zip-lock bags for clean and used masks. If the emergency is fire related, ensure you have P2 face masks available.

Pack water and snacks in case of traffic delays. A hi-visibility vest is a useful item to have on hand.

### Water, Food and Cooking

Have 2 litres of water per person per day for drinking, and allow extra for hand washing. If available, water purification tablets can be useful.

Have 3 days of non-perishable food, such as tinned, dehydrated or dried foods, muesli bars and dry biscuits.

Pack a portable gas cooker and matches for cooking and sterilising. A can opener (not electric), cutlery and crockery (picnic or camping set) or disposable items will also be useful. Include a saucepan or billy for cooking and boiling water.

An esky and ice bricks can help to keep medications cold.



## Shelter

Pack a tent, torch and batteries and remember to include bedding (pillows, sleeping bags, wool blankets, sleeping mat).

A plastic bucket with a tight-fitting lid can be useful for soaking clothes or as an emergency toilet.

Bring chargers for phones, radios and batteries. Solar power banks can be very useful if you are going to an area without electricity.

Include duct tape, whistle, extra batteries and a utility knife. For manual wheelchair users, bring heavy-duty gloves in case you need to push through debris.

Bring a list of emergency contact numbers, both a hard copy and digital version.

Pack printed photos or a USB with family members photos as these can be used in the case of missing persons.

## Basic toiletries

Pack insect repellent, sanitary products, shampoo and conditioner, soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste, sunscreen, toilet paper and medications.

## Clothing

Enough for 3 days, plus hats with excellent sun coverage and sturdy shoes/ boots. Ensure you have waterproof shoes if the emergency stems from flood warnings.

## Paperwork

Fire-proof and waterproof envelopes can keep copies of essential documents like bank details, forms of ID, immunisation records, house titles or mortgage documents and insurance details, prescriptions and microchip numbers of pets or service animals safe.

## Items for elderly or persons with disability

Assistive devices and adaptive equipment, incontinence products, hearing devices and batteries, mobility items, spare glasses, special prescription items and feeding products.

Writing or communication devices, boards and related batteries.

Wheelchair repair kit, battery information and spare battery if possible.

See our website for a full comprehensive printable checklist of what items to pack including for babies and children, and animals.  
Visit [bit.ly/packing-for-emergencies](https://bit.ly/packing-for-emergencies)

## Dine and Discover Voucher Scheme



The NSW Government launched the Dine & Discover NSW voucher scheme to encourage the community to get out and about and support dining, arts and tourism businesses and to stimulate spending in the economy.

In early December, the scheme invited customers to use their vouchers with participating COVID Safe businesses as part of a trial in The Rocks. This program will then be rolled out across NSW from late January 2021.

### How does Dine & Discover NSW work?

Every NSW resident aged 18 and over will be eligible for four \$25 vouchers worth \$100 in total. The vouchers can be used at participating NSW businesses who are registered as COVID safe.

The Dine & Discover NSW vouchers will be divided into two categories:

- Two \$25 vouchers to be used for eating in at restaurants, cafes, bars, pubs and clubs from Monday to Thursday
- Two \$25 vouchers to be used for entertainment and recreation, including cultural institutions, live music and arts venues, available 7 days a week


### How do I apply for the vouchers?

To participate in Dine & Discover NSW, you must have a **MyServiceNSW** account.

You can download the Service NSW app now and register for a MyServiceNSW account ahead of the vouchers becoming available from late January 2021.

Contact IDEAS for assistance with the MyServiceNSW account.

#### SERVICE NSW CONTACT DETAILS

 13 77 88

 [www.service.nsw.gov.au](http://www.service.nsw.gov.au)

*Information sourced from Service NSW website.*

## Talking Mats



Talking Mats are a researched-based tool to assist people with thinking about a topic or issue, and to communicate their opinions, ideas and preferences more effectively.

This framework may help in two ways:

- Making communication easier for people with communication difficulties
- Making situations where communication is difficult easier

The concept of Talking Mats supports the idea that everyone has the right to communicate and offer their opinions.

The 'thinker' creates a 'Talking Mat' around a topic, issue or question. The 'listener' uses specific strategies to provide a safe, non-judgemental context for the interaction. The use of symbol cards allows the 'thinker' to communicate and then for the 'listener' to respond.

Talking Mats uses unique, specially designed picture communication symbols that are attractive to all ages and communication abilities. They are used by clinical practitioners, carers and support workers in many health, social work, residential and education settings.

**TALKING MATS AUSTRALIA WEBSITE**

 [talkingmatsaustralia.com.au](http://talkingmatsaustralia.com.au)

## Telephone Priority Assist for Landlines

If you or someone you live with has a serious medical condition, you may be able to access Priority Assistance Service for your landline.

With priority assistance, your telecommunications company must:

- Connect to standard landline services faster than other customers
- Fix faults within 48 hours in remote areas, or within 24 hours in urban and rural areas
- Test the phone service if you have 2 or more faults in 3 months

**Telstra is the only provider that must offer priority assistance service to customers as a condition of its licence.** Other telecommunications services can choose.


You qualify if you have a landline and someone in your household has a medical condition and:

- The situation can get worse so fast that it is life-threatening
- Calling an ambulance or speaking on the telephone to a medical professional could save the life of the person
- You may also be eligible if you have another serious condition and live alone or in a remote area

You will need a medical certificate from the doctor to complete the application process. Telstra Priority Assistance examples of conditions that are eligible are:

- Severe asthma
- Risk of anaphylaxis
- Cardiovascular illness
- High-risk pregnancy
- Life-threatening hypoglycaemia
- Life-threatening epilepsy
- On respirators at home
- On dialysis at home
- Severe mental health disorders
- Technology dependent who are at high risk

### TELSTRA PRIORITY ASSIST CONTACT DETAILS

 13 22 00

 [bit.ly/telstra-priority-assist](https://bit.ly/telstra-priority-assist)

 IDEAS ID: 104807

*Information sourced from Australian Communications and Media Authority website.*

## Gratitude Journal



I never met a bitter person who was thankful, or a thankful person who was bitter.

- Quote by Nick Vujicic, author and motivational speaker

There is always something different about the start of a new year. It is like a fresh start, a new beginning, and it holds hope for the future. Let's not hide that 2020 was a rough year, but let's give ourselves a chance to hope again. Hope helps motivate us, and it can also help us when we have to wait. Nick Vujicic's quote above highlights the importance of being thankful.

As we do wait, and hope, we can remember that there is always something to be thankful about. It could be in something that nourishes, something beautiful, something meaningful, a friend, a book, a song, an improvement. Focus on your day in a way that opens your mind to new possibilities. Gratitude can help heal emotional hurts. It can help track improvements. A daily gratitude exercise is a way to focus on the good and the positive.

There are many ways to record gratitude – a journal, photographs, a list, on your calendar, in the digital world. Each day, think about

- What are you grateful for?
- Why are you grateful for it?
- Reflect on something good
- Remember it can be simple, not always something 'big' or even 'important'. It is something you are thankful for.
- It might be one thing or more

How you record your gratitude is up to you. Make it for your personality. If you love

photography, take photos, if you like to write, make a journal, use a printable, draw a picture, make it messy or neat - make it 'you'. Millennials and tech lovers might choose to use an app – there are plenty of gratitude apps to try. You can choose to keep it private or choose to share it. You can do it on your own, or take time each day with your family or friends. You can spend 1 minute, or 10.

Did you know it takes about 21 days to make a habit? So, 21 days would be a goal to keep up your gratitude journal and make it a habit. Take notice of things you are thankful for each day.

If you would like some prompts or to follow a plan, you can use the internet to search for 'gratitude challenges'. You can find prompts, templates, kids and teens versions.

Gratitude is a source of inspiration to tap into. The more you practice thankfulness, the more you notice the good in your life.

“  
Don't sacrifice the good to chase the perfect.  
”  
- Emily Ley, Author.

## Stay On-Time!

Utilise your NDIS funding to help you stay on-time with important medicines and personal care tasks.



Blister Pack Medicine Timers

Countdown Timers

Electronic Pill Boxes

Vibrating Watches

Vibrating Door Bells

Vibrating Clocks

Automatic Pill Dispensers

Talking Watches

Talking Clocks & Orientation Clocks



Contact TabTimer and we will help you stay on-time with Assistive Technology.  
visit: [www.TabTimer.com.au](http://www.TabTimer.com.au) or call: 1300 TAB TIMER (1300 822 846)

## What's On: Key Events in January - February

**Starting 4 Jan - Weekly every Monday - Empowered multicultural program - Basic computer course**

Wollongong Library

**Website:** [bit.ly/basic-computer-course](http://bit.ly/basic-computer-course)

**21 Jan - Youngcare Connect Live Masterclasses - Being creative and getting the most out of your NDIS plan**

Online event

**Website:** [bit.ly/ndis-plan-masterclass](http://bit.ly/ndis-plan-masterclass)

**4 Feb - Youngcare Connect Live Masterclasses - Support coordination**

Online event

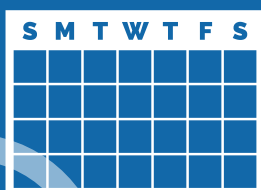
**Website:** [bit.ly/support-coordination-masterclass](http://bit.ly/support-coordination-masterclass)

**13-14 Feb - Source Kids Disability Expo (Melbourne)**

Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre, 1 Convention Centre Pl, South Wharf, VIC 3006

**Website:** [www.sourcekids.com.au/expo/expo-melbourne-2020](http://www.sourcekids.com.au/expo/expo-melbourne-2020)

***As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, events may be subject to change or cancellation. Please refer to the relevant website or contact details to confirm if an event is still proceeding before planning to attend.***



To find more events in your area, visit the IDEAS Website and browse the **Events Calendar**

[www.ideas.org.au/events](http://www.ideas.org.au/events)

A photograph of a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a black tank top, kissing a baby on the cheek. They are underwater, with bubbles around them. The background is a blurred green and blue, suggesting an outdoor setting like a pool or beach. In the bottom left, there is an orange speech bubble containing text.

**IDEAS does  
information  
so you can  
do life.**

**Disability Infoline  
1800 029 904**

**Text: 0458 296 602 - LiveChat: [www.ideas.org.au](http://www.ideas.org.au)**

**Disability Information  
Free, Accurate & Independent**

**IDEAS is a free telephone information service for people with disability, their family, carers and other supporters.**

**Ask us the questions, we give you the answers and you make the decisions.**

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