

# My child has developmental delay

Information for Queensland families of young children



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*A Parent Connect resource*

## Message from the Minister



Finding out your child is diagnosed with a developmental delay will raise many questions, especially about what supports and services are available for you, your child and your family.

Developmental delay is experienced by many families in Queensland. As parents, one of your first steps will be to understand what developmental delay is and what it means for your child.

*My child has developmental delay* provides your family with the information you may need to support your child's inclusion in family and community life.

The resource includes practical information about the services and supports available to a child with development delay, as well as how you, as parents, can best support your child's development.

During the early years, specialist services are critical for children with development delay — they establish a network of support that will enable your child to live a full and happy life.

The Queensland Government is committed to improving direct services to Queenslanders. Through initiatives such as Parent Connect, and by increasing the number of speech and language pathologists for all children with disability in Queensland schools, we are delivering more practical assistance to families.

By delivering these priorities, we will enable a better future for Queensland families of children with disability.

I would like to thank The Developing Foundation and Cootharinga North Queensland for their contribution to this guide, and for their ongoing support for Queensland families.

**The Honourable Tracy Davis MP**  
Minister for Communities, Child Safety  
and Disability Services

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# 1. About developmental delay

This guide is intended to answer some of the questions that you may have if you are concerned that your child has a developmental delay or your child has recently been diagnosed with a developmental delay.

Developmental delay is when a young child takes longer than other children to reach milestones in the area of movement, behaviour or learning.

All parents feel pressure about their child's development at some time or another. It's natural to compare your child's development with their siblings, other young children at playgroup or with your friends' children. Put a group of young children together and you will see that all children develop at different rates — children can develop quickly in some areas and slower in others.

For some children developmental delay may be temporary. For others it may be more permanent. This can be a sign that they have conditions such as developmental delay, global development delay or possibly an intellectual disability, or autism. These are often difficult to diagnose until a child is older. For this reason, children are often not diagnosed with 'developmental delay' until the age of six when another, more definitive, diagnosis can be made.

Sometimes a child's development appears to be delayed — that's when you need to seek advice from a health professional. Your doctor will be able to refer you to people who can start to help your child.

## What are the early signs of developmental delay?

While all children develop at different rates, a child may be said to be experiencing developmental delay when there is substantial limitation in one or more of the key developmental areas. These are:

- **gross motor skill development** — ability to use large muscles to sit, stand, walk, run, keep balance and change positions.
- **fine motor skill development** — using small muscles (specifically hands and fingers) to eat, draw, play and write.
- **cognitive development** — thinking skills including learning, understanding, ability to learn and solve problems, reasoning and remembering.
- **social and emotional development** — ability to interact with others, being able to have relationships with family, friends and teachers, cooperating with others and responding to the feelings of others.
- **speech and language development** — speaking, using body language and gestures, communicating and understanding what others say.

The term 'global developmental delay' is used when a child experiences difficulty in all these five areas of development.

The term 'significant developmental delay' is used when a child has difficulty in two or more areas of development.

Different signs of development delay become evident at different stages of a child's growth from birth to six years of age. For example, during infancy, medical problems may lead to developmental delays. During toddlerhood, children with developmental delay may be more reserved and tend not to explore their environment or take risks.

## What causes developmental delay?

Developmental delay can be due to many causes including:

- complications at birth such as premature birth or birth asphyxiation
- encephalitis
- brain trauma
- foetal exposure to toxins
- perinatal complications
- brain structure or chromosomal abnormalities
- genetic causes such as Down syndrome
- association with various syndromes, for example Asperger's syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, Down syndrome
- environmental factors where the child does not receive adequate stimulation to develop.

In many cases the specific cause of developmental delay is unknown. Since there are so many different conditions that can lead to developmental delays, there is no one 'right way' to prevent them.

Understanding why developmental delay has occurred might seem important at this time. However, the

key thing to remember is that you should seek a diagnosis as early as possible so that if your child is experiencing developmental delays, you can access the right services and ensure that your child has the best opportunity of building skills.

## How common is developmental delay?

Estimates of the prevalence of developmental delay vary. Australian research suggests developmental delay occurs in five per cent of children aged from birth to eight years. Other studies suggest that it can be about 10 per cent in early childhood.

Boys are more likely to be affected than girls. This is partly due to X chromosome-linked conditions, such as Fragile X syndrome, which are more common in males.

Not all children who meet developmental milestones a little later than their peers have a developmental delay. A physical delay can simply mean your child needs a few more weeks or months to catch up to his or her peers.

Remember, you know your child best and if you have any concerns about their development, it is always best to speak to your GP first.



## 2. Diagnosis

The early years are the most critical for your child's development. It is the time when your child's brain is still developing and is especially responsive to supportive environment and therapies.

Having your child assessed and diagnosed as having developmental delay will enable access to early intervention services which aim to improve your child's social and emotional abilities and provide information and support for you, as parents, about caring for your child.

### Who provides a diagnosis of developmental delay in Queensland?

In Queensland, paediatricians diagnose children with developmental delay. Diagnosis will be based on information about your child not reaching developmental milestones. Information may be sought from speech and language pathologists, psychologists or occupational therapists.

Your GP can provide a referral to a paediatrician. Paediatricians can be seen privately or through the public health system.

There will usually be a cost for a private paediatrician, however, waiting times for an appointment may be shorter. The consultation will be at no cost if it is with a paediatrician in the public health system.

Families living in rural and remote areas can access a visiting Department of Health paediatrician. Local Area Coordinators can provide information to families about this and

other key services to obtain a diagnosis.

### After diagnosis

It is not unusual to feel overwhelmed when you first learn about your child's diagnosis. Even if you have suspected for some time that your child may have developmental delay it is important to recognise you may need extra support. You may be supported by your family and friends, but also talk to your GP about local parent groups or professional support such as counselling.

When your child receives a diagnosis your paediatrician will discuss the types of supports and services that may assist your child and the services available in your local area.

### Parent Connect

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' Parent Connect initiative supports parents of newborns and children newly diagnosed with a disability. It is an early response service providing information and linking families to family support networks, community services and funding to access specialist services.

#### Tips for parents

Keep a diary or video of any concerns you have about your child's development. This information will help you in your consultation with your GP or paediatrician.

### **Child Health Services in the community**

Staffed by nurses and allied health professionals, free child health services are available at community clinics. Home visiting may also be provided. Child health checks are recommended at one, two, four, six and 12 months of age. Information is available on child health, parenting, child development, immunisation and nutrition. Families can be linked to local services and parent groups. For further information refer to your baby's Red Book (personal health record).

### **Carers Queensland**

Carers Queensland provides carers with information, education, training, advocacy, counselling and other support services that may assist them in their caring role. The organisation also raises awareness about the valuable role and contributions of carers.

### **Financial support**

If you live in a rural or remote area and need to travel to attend specialist medical appointments, you may be eligible for the Queensland Patient Transport Assistance Scheme. Ask your GP for further information.

Should your child's support needs mean that you are unable to enter paid employment, you may be eligible for a Carer Payment. Centrelink can provide you with more information regarding your eligibility and information on supplementary payments such as Carer Allowance and Child Disability Assistance Payment.

### **Tips for parents**

Encouraging your child's development through play and helping your child communicate and develop social skills is an important way you, as parents, can support your child at home.

### **Find out more**

#### **Child Health Services in the Community**

**13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)**

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

#### **Carers Queensland**

3900 8100

1800 242 636 (Advisory Service)

#### **Queensland Patient Transport Assistance Scheme**

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

#### **Centrelink**

132 468

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

#### **Disability Information Services**

13 QGOV

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

### Find out more

**Parent Connect** is provided by the following organisations:

**Cairns – The Benevolent Society**

4045 0003

[www.benevolent.org.au](http://www.benevolent.org.au)

**Townsville – The Cootharinga Society of North Queensland**

4759 2015

[www.cootharinga.org.au](http://www.cootharinga.org.au)

**Rockhampton – The Cootharinga Society of North Queensland in partnership with The Umbrella Network**

4928 6550

[www.theumbrellanetwork.org](http://www.theumbrellanetwork.org)

**Sunshine Coast – Sunshine Coast Children's Therapy Centre**

5441 4937

[www.scctc.org.au](http://www.scctc.org.au)

**Brisbane North – Mission Australia**

3828 9311

**Brisbane South – Mission Australia**

3713 2602

**Ipswich – Mission Australia**

3713 2602

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

**Gold Coast – The Benevolent Society**

5644 9400

[www.benevolent.org.au](http://www.benevolent.org.au)



# 3. Early intervention services

Early intervention services are important for children with developmental delay. They can help them to develop skills they need to participate in child care and kindergarten, and improve their overall readiness for school.

A range of early intervention services are available and include:

- information and planning
- advice on your child's developmental needs
- multidisciplinary therapy to support the child's development and help reach developmental milestones
- referrals to other specialist services and mainstream services
- support with transitioning to a kindergarten program and school
- counselling and linking families with other families and support groups.

## How will my child benefit from early intervention?

Early intervention is most effective and provides the best possible outcomes for your child when provided as early as possible after diagnosis.

Early childhood intervention services should be tailored to the individual needs of your child and family. It is important for you as a parent to have a good rapport with your child's therapists and feel able to ask lots of questions about their therapy and progress.

Early childhood intervention services can assist you and your family to develop knowledge and skills and provide support to meet the needs of

your child and family. It may optimise your child's development and increase their ability to participate in family and community life.

All services recognise the importance of working in partnership with families. Ideally services will be provided in a flexible way that meets the needs of as many families as possible.

Successful early intervention services may involve professionals working directly with your child as well as teaching you strategies to support your child to develop their potential.

Professionals should spend time with you working on goals that can be incorporated into your family routines and play activities.

### Tips for parents

Talk to your child's therapist about your child's interests and strengths and ideas for incorporating these into home activities.

## Where can I access early intervention supports?

Your child may receive supports and services from a range of professionals. For example, if your child has communication issues, their speech and language skills may be supported by occupational therapy, physiotherapy, exercise physiology and speech and language therapy. Your child's paediatrician will be able to advise you on what supports and services your child needs.

The Queensland Government also funds early intervention services for children with developmental delay in Queensland. This section details the main services available.

### Early intervention services

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services provides early intervention support to children who have a developmental delay or who are at risk of having a developmental delay.

These services can support your child in their play and independence, as well as develop their communication skills, and gross and fine motor movements.

The department also provides information on a range of topics and will support you to connect with other services such as playgroups, childcare and parent support groups.

Children are prioritised for services according to their level of need and availability of places.

### Early childhood development programs and services

Early intervention education and therapy services are available through the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment for children from birth to prior-to-Prep age who have a suspected or diagnosed disability with significant educational needs. This includes children with developmental delay.

Programs and services may include playgroup session, outreach support in your home, centre-based sessions and support to transition to Prep. The program can also provide access to advisory visiting teachers, who have specialist knowledge and skills to support your child at school.

Contact your local Education Queensland regional office for information on how to access these programs and services.

### Child Development Services

The Queensland Department of Health provides early childhood intervention services to eligible children with a moderate to severe developmental delay or disability up to nine years of age.

Priority is given to children not eligible to receive services from other Queensland Government agencies.

Services include providing advice on your child's developmental needs and therapy services that encourage your child's development. Parent education and information sessions are also provided.

Contact the Department of Health for information on your nearest Child Development Service.

### Local Area Coordinators

Local Area Coordinators link children with disability and their families in regional, rural and remote areas with supports and services relating to their individual needs and interests.

#### Find out more

##### Early Intervention Services

Disability Services service centres  
13 QGOV

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

##### Early childhood development programs and services

Contact your local education regional offices

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

##### Child Development Services

13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

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

## Support for parents

As a parent, it can be a challenge to strike the right balance between supporting your child with developmental delay and the needs of the rest of your family. It is normal to feel overwhelmed from time to time, especially during times of change, such as when your child starts school.

Make sure you have a good network of people around you, and don't be afraid to ask your GP or early intervention service provider for information about formal support such as classes, self-help groups or counselling.

You may find the best support comes from other parents who know what you are going through. Early intervention service providers will be able to give you advice about how to link with other parents of children who have developmental delay.

### The Developing Foundation

This service provides information and support to families who have a child with developmental delay.

### The Umbrella Network

Is based in Rockhampton and is a network of support and information for families who have a child with disability, including developmental delay.

### Raising Children Network website

Is an Australian Government initiative that provides a web-based source of information about parenting and child development activities for children, including children with disabilities.

### Triple P — Positive Parenting Program

Triple P — Positive Parenting Program can help families who have a child with support needs to creatively problem solve and develop flexible and supportive family routines and

strategies to support their child's learning and development.

Stepping Stones Triple P has been specially tailored for parents of children with disability. It can help parents address their children's behaviour and emotional problems which may be more challenging at times (e.g. going to sleep, mealtimes, choosing what clothes to wear, dressing, toileting, going shopping and going to the doctors).

Stepping Stones Triple P can be accessed in different ways, including information seminars, individual sessions on specific issues, group sessions, online options, and tip sheets and workbooks for parents.

### Other parents

Parents often find the best support they have comes from other parents of children with a developmental delay. Other parents understand the joys and challenges of raising a child with a developmental delay and can share advice and information about local services and supports.

### Find out more

#### Local Area Coordinators

13 QGOV

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

#### The Developing Foundation

[www.developingfoundation.org.au](http://www.developingfoundation.org.au)

#### The Umbrella Network

[www.theumbrellanetwork.org](http://www.theumbrellanetwork.org)

**Raising Children Network:** the Australian parent website

[www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)

#### Triple P — Positive Parenting Program

3236 1212

[www.triplep-steppingstones.net](http://www.triplep-steppingstones.net)

[www.triplep-parenting.net](http://www.triplep-parenting.net)

### Find out more

Search for services or specialists in your local area through the websites of professional associations

#### **Australian Physiotherapy Association**

[www.physiotherapy.asn.au](http://www.physiotherapy.asn.au)

#### **Speech Pathology Australia**

[www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au](http://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au)

#### **Occupational Therapy Australia**

[www.otqld.org.au](http://www.otqld.org.au)

#### **Australian Psychological Society**

[www.psychology.org.au](http://www.psychology.org.au)

### Playgroups

Play is an integral part of all children's development, including children with disability. Through play, a child learns, builds confidence and develops a range of skills in readiness for childcare, kindergarten and school.

Playgroups nurture children with play-based learning experiences during key times of growth and development in their early years.

Playgroups offer a wonderful opportunity for young children to come together and play in a safe, relaxed and welcoming environment.

Playgroups are low cost and inclusive and all children under school age are welcome.

Playgroups also help families by providing social support for parents. It provides an environment where parents can discuss and share parenting experiences and get information on how to address parenting issues.

There are a range of playgroups available, including community playgroups, supported playgroups, PlayConnect and the Playgroup Plus Program.

### MyTime groups

Provide local support for mums, dads, grandparents and anyone caring for a young child under school age with a disability or chronic medical condition.

MyTime gives parents the chance to socialise and share ideas with others who understand the rewards and intensity of the caring role. Parents can meet with people in similar circumstances to have fun, hear from others and find out about available community support. Research-based parenting information is also available at group meetings.

Each group has a play helper who can lead children in activities such as singing, drawing, and playing with toys, blocks or sand so parents can spend time focusing on catching up with others.

### Baby Bridges

Is an innovative playgroup program for children with a disability from birth to five years. Parents and carers hear up-to-date information from carers and therapists while their child attends a playgroup taken by professional occupational, music or speech therapists.

### Find out more

#### **Playgroup Queensland**

1800 171 882

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

#### **MyTime Groups**

1800 889 997

[www.mytime.net.au](http://www.mytime.net.au)

#### **Baby Bridges**

Contact the Horizon Foundation  
3245 4266

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

## 4. Early childhood education and care

### What are early childhood education and care services?

Early childhood education and care services include child care and kindergarten services. Children can attend approved child care services from birth and all children are eligible to attend a kindergarten program in the year before they commence school (Prep). The Queensland Government provides funding support to approved kindergarten programs delivered in long day care or kindergarten services.

The early years of any child's life has a significant impact on their future health, development, learning and wellbeing. It is generally accepted that children who participate in early childhood education are likely to have better academic performance, better behaviour, and stay in education for longer. This includes children with developmental delay.

Participating in a quality early childhood education and care program can provide children with developmental delay opportunities to develop their social, communication and play skills from an early age.

### How will my child benefit from child care?

Child care provides all children an early opportunity to relate to peers and other adults. This is no different for children with developmental delay.

It can also be an opportunity for you to receive input from qualified early childhood professionals and try new approaches to supporting the development of your child.

As a parent, child care can also provide you with opportunities to return to work or study or have time with other members of your family.

### What supports are available for my child to attend child care?

The Australian Government supports children with disabilities who attend child care through the Inclusion and Professional Support Program. This support may be available to:

- subsidise the cost of additional educators or carers
- provide access to specialist equipment to assist inclusion
- provide professional development and resources for educators.

#### Find out more

#### Early childhood education and care services

**Early years centres** provide education, family support and health services for children 0–8 years.

[www.dete.qld.gov.au](http://www.dete.qld.gov.au)  
or phone 13 QGOV

## How will my child benefit from a kindergarten program?

All children benefit from participating in an approved quality early education program, including children with developmental delay.

Participation in a kindergarten program can help your child to develop skills in communication, social interaction and behaviour. It can also assist your child to follow routines and to be exposed to early literacy and numeracy concepts.

Participation in a kindergarten program will give your child a greater chance of successfully transitioning into Prep and then into mainstream schooling.

Kindergarten programs offer play-based learning in a fun and nurturing environment.

All children benefit from these early learning experiences such as:

- being involved and learning to interact with other children
- developing a desire to learn as well as ways of getting involved in learning
- understanding and managing their feelings
- learning about themselves, developing their identity, confidence and independence
- building communication skills.

### Tips for parents

Link your therapist or early intervention provider with your child's kindergarten teacher to help plan your child's program and identify the supports they will need, such as any aids and equipment being used by your child.

### Tips for parents

Learn about the activities and routine in the kindergarten program and introduce a similar routine at home. This will help your child become familiar with these activities and routines.

## How will my child be supported in a kindergarten program?

Kindergarten teachers in kindergarten services and long day care services can access support to assist children with developmental delay to participate in their programs.

Children with disability, including children with developmental delay, can receive additional support to participate in a kindergarten program. Kindergarten services can apply under the Disability Support Funding Program through the Department of Education, Training and Employment to receive additional funding to support your child's participation in their kindergarten program.

Additional support may include:

- equipment and play resources
- training and professional development for kindergarten teachers
- extra teacher aide time to support the child's inclusion in the kindergarten program.

Kindergarten programs in long day care services, may be eligible for the Australian Government's Inclusion and Professional Support Program. This provides professional development and other assistance to child care services supporting children with additional needs.



Kindergarten teachers can modify the kindergarten program to support the inclusion of your child. The wider kindergarten community can also be provided with information about developmental delay to encourage inclusion of your child and your family in the service.

## How do I plan my child's transition into a kindergarten program?

Starting in a kindergarten program involves a significant transition for children with developmental delay and their families.

Your child will most likely need a period of preparation before they start in a kindergarten program. For example, support to settle in and ongoing support to ensure their needs are being met and they are achieving educational goals.

Successful transition planning requires a team approach with your family and the kindergarten teacher, which should begin six to 12 months before your child starts in the service.

Transition planning for your child to start their kindergarten program involves a range of activities including enrolment, working with the kindergarten teacher to plan a suitable program for your child and help to identify the additional supports needed, such as training and educational and play equipment.

### Tips for parents

Visual supports may be useful to prepare your child for kindergarten, such as photos of your child's kindergarten teacher and their new kindergarten classroom and play area.

Other activities involved in transition planning for your child include visiting the kindergarten to become more familiar with the environment and routines, and gradually adjusting routines at home to be similar to those they will experience in the program.

### Tips for parents

Talk to your child's kindergarten teacher about your child's strengths and areas that may need development, as well as how your child may prefer to learn new things.

### Find out more

**Disability Support Funding Program, Early Childhood Education and Care Services and Kindergarten Services**

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

**Inclusion and Professional Support Program** (Australian Government)

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

### Tips for parents

Find out where the kindergarten programs are in your area. Talk to the kindergarten teachers and other parents to find out how they support the inclusion of children with developmental delay in kindergarten programs.

## 5. Starting school

Starting school is an important time for children and families. The transition to school may present challenges for your child, as well as for the rest of your family, and good planning is critical. It is important to start planning for the transition to school at least 12 months before your child is due to commence.

The choice of school is a decision parents will make depending on their child's needs and abilities and the resources available. It is best to seek advice from your local school before you make a final decision.

### Where can I enrol my child?

All children are able to enrol at their local state school. You will need to complete enrolment forms and may be asked to have an interview with a staff member.

It is best to talk to the principal of the school you are considering to check the type and level of support available for your child before completing enrolment forms. You may also be asked to attend an interview with a staff member as part of the process.

Choosing a school for your child is an important decision. It may also be useful to talk to other parents who have children at the school you are considering.

#### Tips for parents

Introducing your child to the concept of timetables is a good idea before they start school. It also provides an opportunity to work with your child to develop new vocabulary they will need at school.

### Is my child ready for Prep?

Prep is offered in all state schools as a full five-day-per-week program. To be eligible for Prep a child must turn five by 30 June in the year they start Prep. With the introduction of the Australian Curriculum, full-time attendance in Prep gives students, including students with developmental delay, the foundation they need for successful learning in Year 1.

If you are concerned that your child is not ready to start Prep at that time, you can choose to start your child a year later when they become of compulsory school age (six years and six months).

You should discuss the specific needs of your child with the principal of the school you plan to enrol your child in, before you make a decision on when your child starts Prep or school. The principal will help you determine the impact of delaying your child's entry into Prep.

Parents of compulsory school age children have a legal obligation to ensure their children are enrolled in school and attend every day of the educational program in which they are enrolled. Enrolment and full-time attendance at Prep fulfils this obligation.

#### Tips for parents

Check to see if the school you are considering has an open day that you can attend with your child.

## How can I prepare my child for school?

Starting school is a big step for all children and their families. Children develop at different rates and in different ways. It is important to tell your child you believe they are ready for school.

We recommend that you contact your local school in the year before you enrol your child to discuss your child's individual needs. This will give the school time for planning to ensure your child has a successful and positive start to schooling. If you are concerned about your child's readiness for school, discuss this with the school of your choice and your early intervention service provider.

If your child has been receiving services from an early childhood intervention service or a kindergarten program, staff from these services can provide information to the school about your child's strengths and support needs, which will assist with the transition process.

There are a number of things you can do to help prepare your child for the transition to school.

This should include visiting the school many times before starting school, initially during quiet times of the day (possibly before or after school hours) and later at busier times so your child becomes familiar with the school environment.

While some early intervention programs finish once a child starts Prep or school, other programs offer support during the transition period. Make sure you check what other supports your early intervention service can offer you during transition. In some cases your early intervention service may be able to attend planning meetings with you and your child's Prep or school staff.

### Tips for parents

Having good communication with your child's teacher will help your child to have a successful education experience. It will also help you to quickly sort out any issues that arise.

As a parent, you play a vital role in your child's education. By getting involved in the school, you can help your child make a smooth and happy start to their education.

## How will my child be supported to learn at school?

The Australian Curriculum Foundation Year has been developed to give students in Prep the important foundational learning they will need for successful progression to Year 1. No Queensland child can afford to miss out on this important year.

The Australian Curriculum started in Queensland in the 2012 school year. It aims to provide a high-quality curriculum for all, while understanding the diverse and complex nature of students with disability. It is shaped by the proposition that each student can learn and the needs of every student are important.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that all students with disability are provided with appropriate adjustments to enable them to access the curriculum.

When required, students who have developmental delay can be supported through appropriate adjustments made by teachers and schools in relation to:

- what a student learns
- how the student learns and instructional processes
- how the student demonstrates what they have learned
- the environment in which they learn.

### Student support services

Students who have developmental delay may require additional educational support so they are able to access and participate at school alongside their same age peers. In particular, specialist advisory visiting teachers provide support to the teachers of children with a disability in regular classrooms in state and some non-government schools.

Other supports may include assistive technology, specialised equipment, and special provisions for assessment. Students may also have access to speech and language pathologists, teacher aide support such as note taking, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and guidance officers. Talk to your child's school about these services.

### Equipment at school

The Department of Education, Training and Employment has an equipment loans service for students with disability who attend state schools. Schools can borrow specialised equipment and assistive technology from a regionally managed loans service to trial with students with disability. This helps schools to identify and make decisions about appropriate resources to support students' educational programs. The equipment remains the property of the Department of Education, Training and Employment.

### Tips for parents

Work out with your child's teacher how you are going to communicate, such as through regular face-to-face meetings, emails or using a communication book.

### Non-government schools

Catholic Education's Education Adjustment Program supports students who have disability in Catholic schools by identifying the educational adjustments required by a school to meet the learning and teaching needs of your child. Other non-government schools may have specialist services for children with developmental delay — check with the principal of the school you are considering.

### Find out more

**Local schools can provide:**

**Education for children with disability: a guide for parents**

**School Transport Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities**

**Support for children with disability at school**

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

**Delayed entry to prep**

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

**Australian curriculum**

[www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au)

## 6. Aids, equipment and assistive technology

If your child's disability affects their functioning across a range of areas, you may need to access assistive technology, specialised equipment or other aids to assist them in their daily living, communicating, learning, therapy and play. Professionals involved in your child's health, education and therapy will be able to give you advice regarding the most appropriate aids, equipment and assistive technology to consider.

This section details some services that may assist you to access support in this area.

### **Department of Health — Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme**

The Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) provides access to subsidy funding for the provision of MASS endorsed aids and equipment to eligible Queensland residents, including children with disability.

The range of MASS aids and equipment is aimed at assisting people to live at home and includes aids for mobility, communication, continence and daily living.

Aids and equipment are subsidy funded either on a permanent loan basis, private ownership or through the purchase of consumables.

### **Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services**

Assistance can be provided to purchase aids, equipment and assistive technology for eligible children if the item is related to the disability and encourages independence and community participation.

To access this assistance, a prescription from your child's therapist is required.

### **The Community Aids Equipment and Assistive Technologies Initiative**

The Community Aids Equipment and Assistive Technologies Initiative subsidises aids and equipment for eligible clients. Categories for aids and assistive technologies include community mobility, communication support, active participation and postural support.

### **LifeTec**

LifeTec Queensland provides information, consultation, and education on assistive technology which aims to help improve quality of life and increase independent living skills. LifeTec has offices in Brisbane and Townsville and has a mobile outreach team which offers services across the state.

### **All Abilities Playgrounds**

All Abilities Playgrounds are specifically designed to enable children with and without disability to enjoy fun and challenging play together, side-by-side. There are 17 playgrounds across the state.

There is also an All Abilities ePlayground which offers free online fun and games for children of all abilities.

## Department of Education, Training and Employment

Education Queensland has an equipment loans service for students with disability. This service provides specialised equipment for students with disability if it supports their educational program. The equipment remains the property of the school when a student leaves.

### Noah's Ark Toy Library

Noah's Ark Educational Resources and Toy Library has a wide range of toys and equipment, some of which are designed and adapted for children with disability.

To borrow from the Noah's Ark Educational Resources and Toy Library, you will need to be a member of Noah's Ark.

Membership is open to:

- families with a child with a diagnosed disability
- schools supporting a child or children with diagnosed disability
- community organisations supporting a child or children with diagnosed disability
- children's services supporting a child or children with diagnosed disability
- professionals (e.g. teachers, therapists) supporting a child or children with diagnosed disability.

### Find out more

#### Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme

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

#### Disability and Community Care Services

13 QGOV

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

#### CAEATI

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

#### Lifetec

[www.lifetec.org.au](http://www.lifetec.org.au)

#### Education Queensland

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

#### All abilities playgrounds

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

#### Noah's Ark Toy Library

3391 2166

[www.noahsark.net.au](http://www.noahsark.net.au)



For further information contact the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services:

Telephone: 13 QGOV (13 74 68)

Telephone: Typewriter (TTY): 133 677

Email: [disabilityinfo@disability.qld.gov.au](mailto:disabilityinfo@disability.qld.gov.au)

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

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service:

- TTY users phone 133 677
- Speak and Listen users phone 1800 555 727 then ask for 13 QGOV (13 74 68)
- Internet relay users connect to the NRS ([www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au)) and then ask for 13 QGOV (13 74 68)

Other languages and formats:

If you need the assistance of an interpreter, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service, TIS National, on 13 14 50 and ask to be connected to the Disability Information Service.

This document is available in alternative formats (including large print) on request. If you would like a copy in another format, please contact Disability Information Service on 13QGOV (13 74 68) or email [disabilityinfo@disability.qld.gov.au](mailto:disabilityinfo@disability.qld.gov.au)

\* Calls from mobile phones are charged at applicable rates.

Queenslanders now have access to disability related information at one easy online location. Visit [www.qld.gov.au/disability](http://www.qld.gov.au/disability) to find out about government supports and services for people with disability, their families and carers. The website includes links to information about support groups and counselling, education and where to access help.

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Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services  
GPO Box 806  
Brisbane Q 4001

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