

# Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP) – Factsheet for parents

## What is this factsheet about?

This factsheet is about the Early Childhood Development Program or ECDP.

## What is an ECDP?

An ECDP is a program the Queensland Government's Department of Education has provided for more than 40 years to support children with disability from birth to five years.

ECDPs aim to support children's early learning and help develop valuable skills children need to be successful learners now and as they transition to school.

There are 102 ECDPs based at state schools. Your child does not need to attend one of these schools in the future to attend an ECDP.

## Is my child eligible to attend an ECDP?

Your child may be eligible to attend an ECDP if they have a disability (diagnosed or suspected) in one of the following six categories:

1. autism spectrum disorder
2. hearing impairment
3. intellectual disability
4. physical impairment
5. speech language impairment or
6. vision impairment

You need to have evidence of the diagnosis or suspected impairment for your child to attend an ECDP. Your child's paediatrician or allied health professional could provide this.

Contact your local Department of Education regional office or ECDP if you have any questions regarding evidence required to support your child's ECDP registration process.

## How can an ECDP support my child?

If your child is eligible to attend an ECDP, a multidisciplinary team will work closely with your family to support your child to access and participate in education. Supports and services will vary based on your child's individual needs.

The ECDP team may include Department of Education early childhood educators, specialist teachers, guidance officers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, nurses and speech-language pathologists.

The ECDP team can also work with other providers supporting your child such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Early Childhood Early Intervention (NDIS ECEI) partners, paediatricians or allied health professionals.



A plan will be developed, in consultation with you, outlining your child's strengths, learning goals and the supports provided by the ECDP. It will also outline how ECDP staff will work with your child. For example, ECDP staff may work with your child at their early childhood education and care service or kindergarten (known as outreach programs), at the ECDP school site (known as centre-based programs) or at your child's future school.

ECDP supports will be different depending on your child's age. More intensive support will be provided when your child is three to five years old. During this time the ECDP will work with your child's future school and their kindergarten to ensure your child makes a successful transition to school.

### How do I register my child at an ECDP?

For more information about accessing an ECDP, contact your local Department of Education regional office or your local ECDP.

**Regional office**                      <https://education.qld.gov.au/contact-us/state-schools-regional-contacts>

**ECDP school sites**                <https://education.qld.gov.au/student/Documents/ecdp-directory.xlsx>

ECDP staff can assist you to complete the application form. The regional office will determine if your child is eligible to attend an ECDP.

### What other supports are available for my child?

Your child may be eligible for help through the NDIS and their Early Childhood Partners if they have disability or developmental delay. Children aged four can also enrol in kindergarten programs and may also access 15 hours a week of kindy for free.

#### National Disability Insurance Scheme Early Childhood Early Intervention or NDIS ECEI

NDIS ECEI is for children with disability or developmental delay under the age of seven.

Your child does not need a diagnosis to access NDIS ECEI services and supports.

The NDIS ECEI Community Partners provide information and advice about supports and services available in your local community; can work with your child to provide short term early intervention supports; and if needed, help you to access the NDIS and develop an NDIS plan for your child.

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/families-and-carers/how-ecei-works-step-step-process>

#### Kindergarten or kindy

Kindergarten or kindy, is a part time education program in the year before school.

Your child can attend kindy in the year they turn four years old by 30 June.

Attending a kindy program provides opportunities for your child to learn through play, make friends and prepare for the transition to school.

<https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/kindergarten-programs>

A combination of ECDP, kindy and NDIS ECEI supports can help your child have a great start to school.

