



Association for  
Children with a  
Disability

# Victorian State Disability Plan 2021-2025

Our vision for the State Disability Plan is that it supports the inclusion of children with disability from birth, and that the Plan reflects what inclusion looks like as a child grows.

The State Disability Plan plays a significant role in creating an inclusive Victorian community. The inclusion of children with disability begins with playgrounds and continues into kindergarten, school and employment opportunities.

ACD is the leading organisation advocating for children with disability and their families in Victoria. Our vision for the State Disability Plan is informed by the experiences of more than 5,000 families across Victoria. This is what families have said are the highest priorities for their children and family:

## Babies and toddlers

### **Inclusive support for new families gives children the best start in life.**

1. Provide tailored mental health support for families with young children with disability.
2. Ensure sleep support programs are suited to families with children with disability.

## Pre-schoolers

### **During their early years children develop faster than any other time in their life.**

Playing and learning alongside non-disabled children is essential for their development and inclusion.

3. Increase the number of children with disability who are assisted through the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program.
4. Define and promote accessible playgrounds, including universally designed play equipment that all children can use.

## School aged

### **Big investment is being made to make our schools more disability inclusive.**

The success of these reforms will depend on leadership, transparency and accountability. Schools also play a key role in changing community attitudes.

5. Embed the expectation that all students can participate in their local mainstream school.
6. Set ambitious targets to improve the education outcomes for students with disability.
7. Ensure transparency around use of restraints and seclusion, restricted attendance, suspensions and expulsions of students with disability.
8. Create accountability around the proactive processes that support students with disability, including Student Support Group meetings, Individual Education Plans and Behaviour Support Plans.

9. Provide disability rights-based training for school leaders. Good leadership results in good inclusive practices.
10. Ensure disability is a key component of school based anti-bullying programs and that mental health practitioners across all schools are disability inclusive.
11. Change attitudes by teaching disability is part of human diversity at school. Embed this in the curriculum and create high quality teaching resources. Include books by people with disability and that represent children with disability in the Premiers Reading Challenge.

## **Young people**

**Young people with disability have the same hopes and dreams as other young people: enjoying time with their friends, getting a job and moving out of home.**

12. Provide ambitious career education and high quality sexual health education.
13. Ensure youth mental health services are disability inclusive and able to integrate mental health support and disability support needs.
14. Support a better transition from paediatric to adult health care.
15. Tackle the big stuff! Create accessible public transport, housing and jobs.

## **Support for families**

**The evidence is clear - children do better when families are supported.**

16. Increase funding and expand disability advocacy. Supporting families to speak up for their child improves outcomes at school and assists families to access the NDIS support their child needs.
17. Increase accessible Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and school holiday programs. This is essential for supporting families to undertake paid work.
18. Increase understanding of a child's disability support needs for families in public housing.

## **Children with disability in out-of-home care, youth detention and those experiencing family violence**

**Children with disability are over represented in out-of-home care and children with disability experience higher rates of violence.**

19. Ensure children with disability are visible in the data that is collected and reported on children at-risk.
20. Invest in the child and family workforce and family violence services to assist families to access and implement NDIS support.
21. Prioritise disability support needs as a decision-making factor in assessing risk and identifying a good placement for a child in out-of-home care.
22. Extend the Community Visitor Program to include children with disability in residential care.

For more information, please contact:

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