



Easy Read

Families of  
children with  
disability aged  
0–7 years

# Starting school for children with disability:

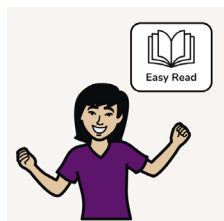
## Helpful things to know



Children and Young People  
with Disability Australia

  
**Take Charge  
of Change**

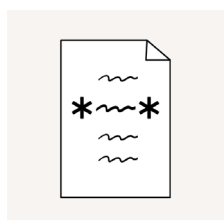
# About Easy Read



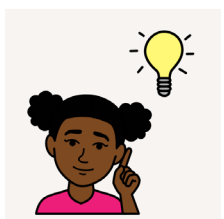
This is an Easy Read book.



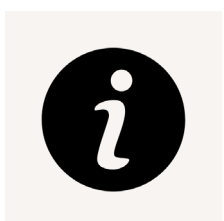
Easy Read uses pictures to explain ideas.



New words are **\*bold with stars\***.



We tell you what new words mean.

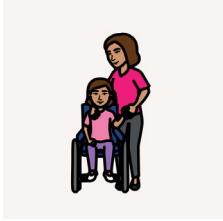


Easy Read includes key information.



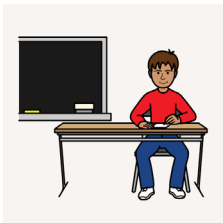
Get more information on our website  
[www.cyda.org.au](http://www.cyda.org.au)

# About this book



This book is for families of children with disability who are

- starting primary school



- at primary school.

## Before you start school

### Find the right school



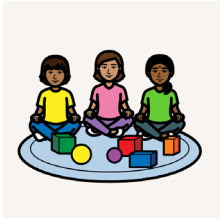
All children must go to school.



You should find a school that is a good match for your child and their disability support needs.

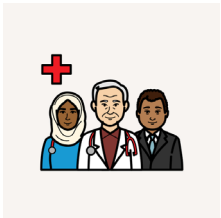


Talk to lots of people about different schools for your child.



Talk about schools with

- staff at your kinder or child care



- doctors



- other health workers you see.



Read reviews online about different schools.



Ask questions on social media.  
For example, Facebook parent groups.

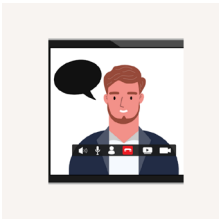


Read about school events to see if students with disability are included.

# School meetings



Use school meetings to learn more about the school.

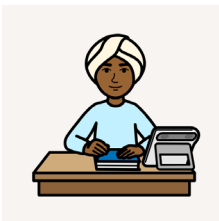


You might ask

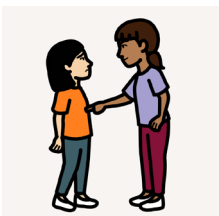
- How many children with disability are at the school?



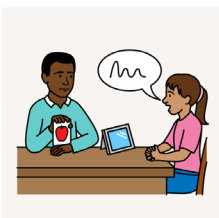
- What does inclusion look like at the school?



- Can the school meet the needs of your child?



- How does the school manage bullying?



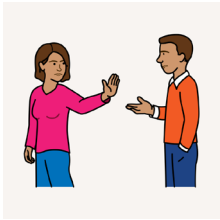
- Does the school welcome outside therapists?

# Signs the school is not a good fit



The school might **not** be a good fit if they

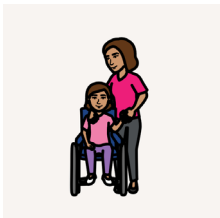
- did not make you feel welcome



- were not open to working with you



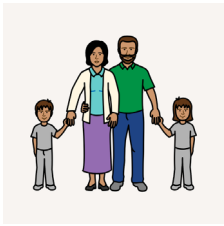
- did not seem very helpful or understanding.



You must ask yourself if you think your child will be comfortable at the school.

# School inclusion

## What does school inclusion mean?



Inclusion means

- families feel listened to



- teachers and school staff are open to change to meet your needs

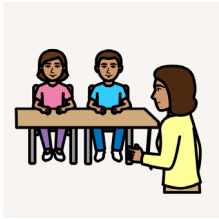


- students welcome disability

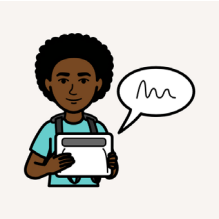


- students with disability take part in all parts of school life.

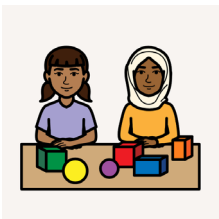
# Is the school really inclusive?



Check what the school is **doing** not just **saying**.



Make sure the school is making **\*reasonable adjustments\*** for students who need them.

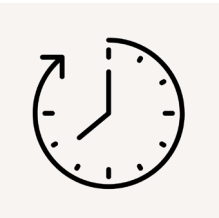


Reasonable adjustments are changes that your child needs to take part in a fair way.

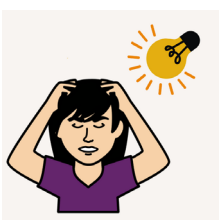


Reasonable adjustment might be

- help from support staff

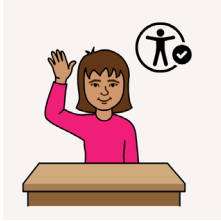


- different school timetables



- sensory help. For example, help to manage bright lights.

# Understanding reasonable adjustments



Reasonable means the change

- will help your child take part in school life

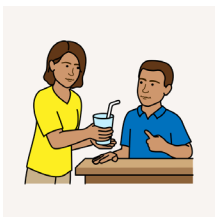


- will not hurt anyone else



- will not cost too much money.

## Adjustments examples



Adjustments might be

- longer lunch breaks so that a student can have meal support



- teachers communicate in different ways.  
For example, using a communication book.

# Things to do before school starts

## The 6 P's checklist



We made a checklist called the 6 P's to help you get ready for the start of school



**Prepare** means get ready early. Make sure your child meets their teacher before school starts



**Profile** means you write a short document about your child and how to help them.



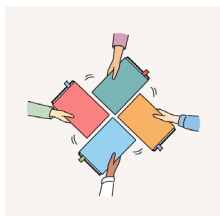
**Plan** means you ask the school to make a learning plan for your child.



**Process** means your school knows things your child needs. For example, ramps.



**Professionals** means you tell the school about support people who work with your child.



**People** means you ask the school how your child can connect with people to make friends. For example, book clubs.

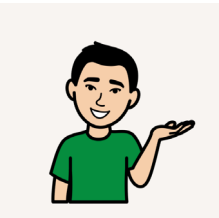
# Ableism



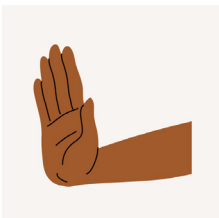
**\*Ableism\*** means people with disability get unfair treatment from people or systems.



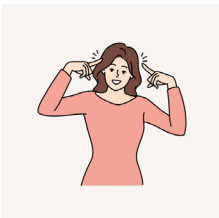
You can help stop ableism.



If you hear people saying the wrong thing, you can teach them about disability.



If someone says **your child does not look disabled**, you can say **that is not true**.



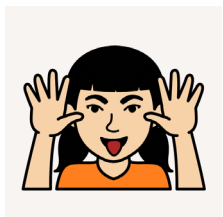
You can explain **disabilities can be invisible**.

# Types of bullying

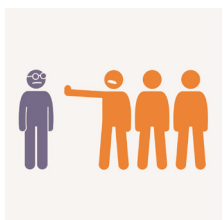


Some bullying is easy to see. For example

- slapping



- teasing.

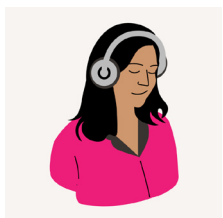


Some bullying is hard to see. For example when

- your child is not invited to a party  
all the other children go to



- your school does not let your child go to  
camp because they have strong emotions



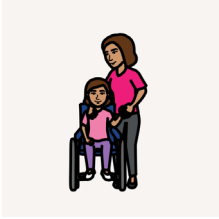
- your school hides **\*sensory items\***.



Sensory items help people feel calm.

For example, headphones that block sounds.

# What to do if your child is bullied



If your child tells you they are being bullied

- make them feel safe right away



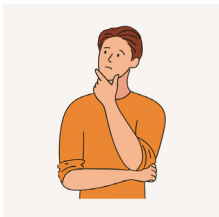
- tell them you are there for them



- remind them to be proud of their disability



- talk to the school.

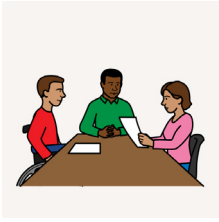


Changes in behaviour can be a sign your child is being bullied.

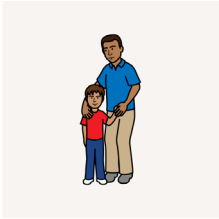


Changes in behaviour might be things like changes in sleep or eating.

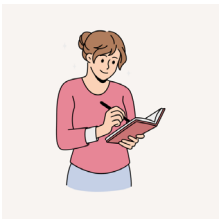
# What you should do about bullying



Tell the school as soon as you can.



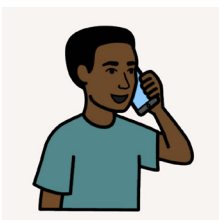
Include your child in meetings with the school.



Keep a record of all the information.



You might need legal help. For example, help from police if nothing gets better.



Be loud. Ask for help until you get it.



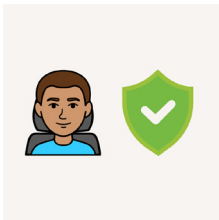
Talk to a wellbeing officer if the school has one.

# Know your rights



Laws protecting your child's rights at school are

- The Disability Discrimination Act or **DDA**



- The Education Standards



- The Australian Human Rights Commission Act.



The law says all schools must work with families to

- **stop** bullying



- meet the needs of students with disability to help them learn.

# Where to get help



If the school principal is not helping, there are more places to get help.



You can talk to the Education Department in your state if your child is in a public school.



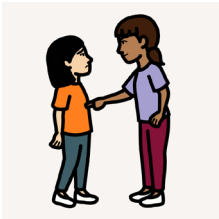
The Board if your child is in a private school.



The Catholic Education Office if your child is in a Catholic school.

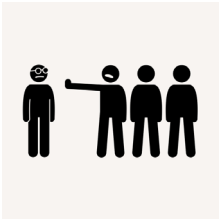


If you need more help contact the **\*Australian Human Rights Commission or AHRC\***.



The AHRC can give you free help to manage

- bullying at school



- unfair treatment by the school.

# Advocacy help

## PWDA or People with Disability Australia



Visit [www.pwd.org.au](http://www.pwd.org.au)



Call 1800 422 015

## DANA or Disability Advocacy Network Australia



Visit [www.dana.org.au](http://www.dana.org.au)



Call 1800 643 787

## Ask Izzy



Visit

[www.askizzy.org.au/disability-advocacy-finder](http://www.askizzy.org.au/disability-advocacy-finder)

## Equality Australia for Catholic schools



Call 03 9412 0412



Email [info@communityfoundation.org.au](mailto:info@communityfoundation.org.au)

# Legal help

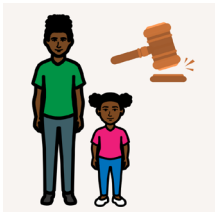
## Australian Law Reform Commission



Call 0436 940 119

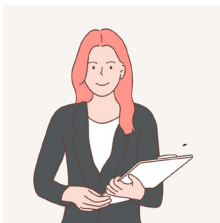


Email [info@alrc.gov.au](mailto:info@alrc.gov.au)



In your state or territory, you can also get free help from

- the Legal Aid Commission



- other community legal centres.

# Mental health support

## Lifeline



Visit [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)



Call 13 11 14

## Beyond Blue

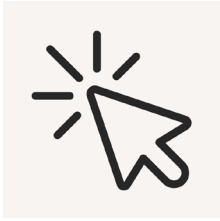


Visit [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)



Call 1300 22 4636

## **Bullying no way**



Visit [www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)

## **Raising Children Network**



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

## **Association for Children with Disability**



Visit [www.acd.org.au](http://www.acd.org.au)



Call 03 9880 7000 or 1800 654 013  
if you live in a regional part of Australia.

## Kiind



Visit [www.kiind.com.au](http://www.kiind.com.au)



Call 08 6164 9806

## Youth Disability Advocacy Service



Visit [www.yacvic.org.au/ydas](http://www.yacvic.org.au/ydas)

## CYDA

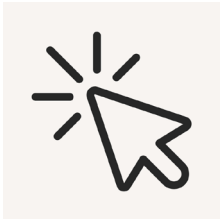


Visit [www.CYDA.org.au](http://www.CYDA.org.au)



Call 9417 1025.

## Carer Gateway



Visit [www.carergateway.gov.au](http://www.carergateway.gov.au)



Call 1800 422 737

## Kids Help Line



Visit [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)



Call 1800 55 1800

# Help to call



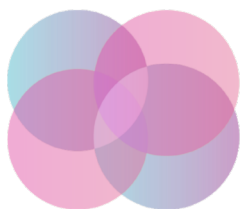
Call 131 450 for the Translating and Interpreting Service if English is not your first language.



Call 1800 555 660 for the National Relay Service if you have communication support needs.



Call 1800 555 677 if you use a teletypewriter or TTY.



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