Easy Read

Families of children with disability aged 8–12 years

Transitioning to high school:

What families need to know

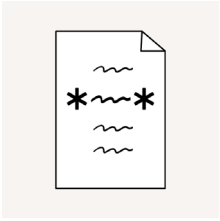
cyda
Children and Young People with Disability Australia

Take Charge of Change

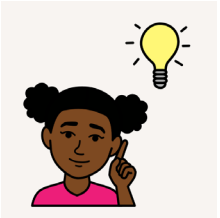
About Easy Read

This is an Easy Read book.

Easy Read uses pictures to explain ideas.



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

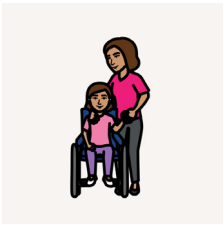


We tell you what new words mean.

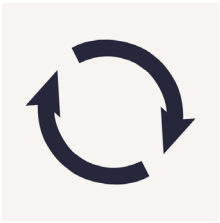
Easy Read includes key information.

Get more information on our website
www.cyda.org.au

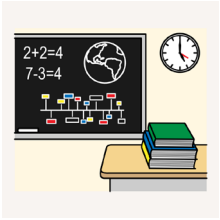
About this book



This book is for families of children aged 8 to 12 years.



This book can help you manage ***big changes***.



Big changes might mean your child moves to a new school.

Starting highschool

Relationships

You can help your child get the best start by meeting with the school early.

When you meet with your school, help them get to know you and your child.

Transition plans

You can talk to your school about a ***Transition Plan***.

A Transition Plan is a document that says how the school will help your child start high school.

Other supports

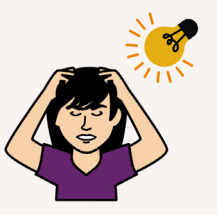
It is the law for schools to make ***Reasonable Adjustments*** for students with disability.

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

Reasonable adjusment might be

- help from support staff

- different school timetables



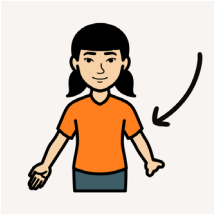
- sensory help. For example, help to manage bright lights.

You can talk to your school about an ***Individual Education Plan or IEP***.

The IEP is a planning document including goals for your child.

Understanding disability

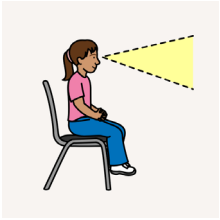
Disability is **not** a bad word. It is a natural part of life.



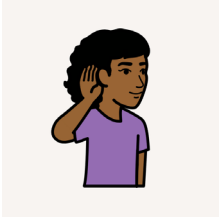
People with disability might do things differently. For example, how they

- move

- talk



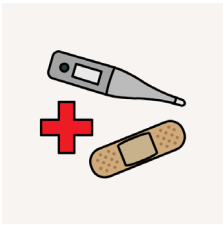
- see



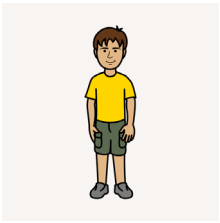
- hear

- understand.

Medical Model of Disability



A ***Medical Model of Disability*** means disability is seen as a problem that needs fixing.



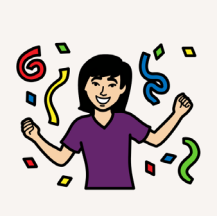
The medical model means the disabled child has to change or fit in.

Social Model of Disability

We follow the ***Social Model of Disability***.

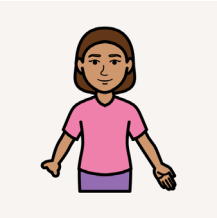
The social model says things are hard because of how society is, **not** because of your body.

Disability Pride



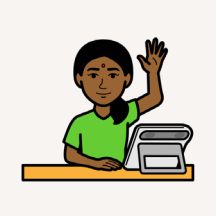
Disability Pride means we celebrate disability identity and our rights.

Your child should feel proud of who they are.

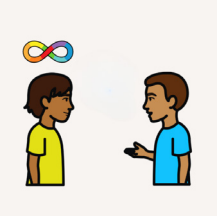


When your child is proud, they can

- feel good about themselves



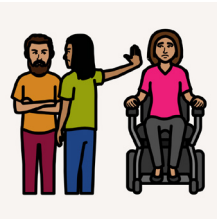
- ask for what they need



- make friends

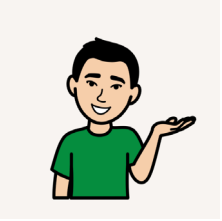
- stand up for what is fair.

Ableism

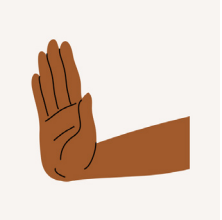


Ableism means people with disability get unfair treatment from people or systems.

You can help stop ableism.



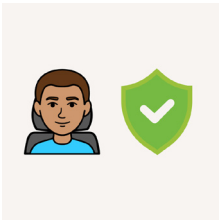
If you hear people saying the wrong thing, you can teach them about disability.



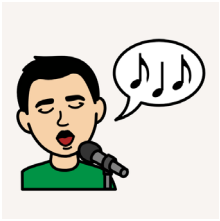
If someone says **your child does not look disabled**, you can say **that is not true**.

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

Focus on strengths



Using ***Strengths Based Language*** when you talk about disability is helpful.



Strengths Based Language means you

- talk about what your child is good at

- focus on what your child likes to do

- do not only focus on things they **cannot** do.

Do not say **she is stuck in a wheelchair**.
Instead, say **she uses a wheelchair**.

Using strengths based language can shape how we think and feel about disability.

Talking about disability

Talking with teachers and school staff

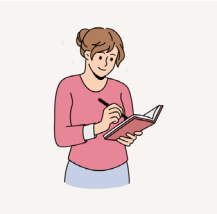
Be ready to talk about your child's needs when you have meetings with teachers.

When you meet with school staff

- bring reports and other paper work

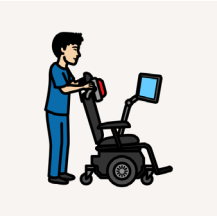
- talk about things that helped your child in the past

- know what questions you want to ask



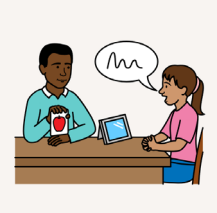
- take notes in meetings so you remember.

Talking with doctors and allied health



Allied health workers include people with training in a health area. For example

- Physio



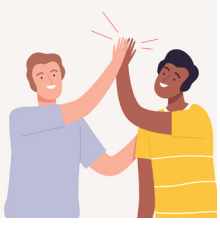
- Speech Pathology

- Psychology.

Be ready to talk about your child's needs and make sure you

- know what questions you want to ask

- take notes in meetings so you remember



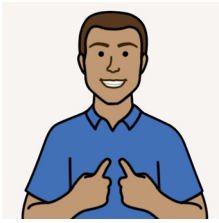
- bring a support person if you need one.

Talking with friends, family and people in the community

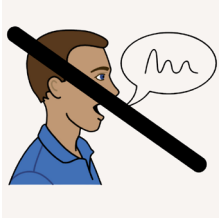
You might want to talk about your child's disability with other people in your life.

Some people might **not** know much about disability

Some people might say things that are **not** helpful even if they are trying to be kind.



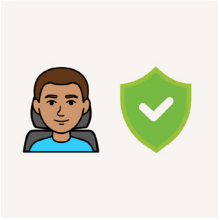
You choose what you share.



You do **not** have to explain everything.

It might help to tell people

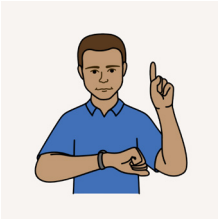
- what your child needs



- what helps your child

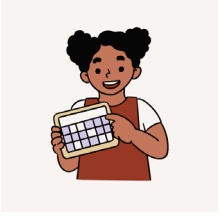
- what you want other people to do.

Telling people about your child can help them understand and include your child.



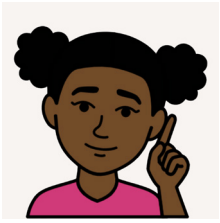
You could say things like

- **He feels better when things are calm. He needs time to settle.**



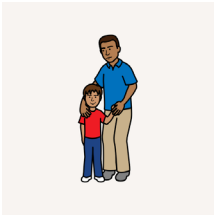
- **She uses a communication device. It helps her join in.**

Talking with your child



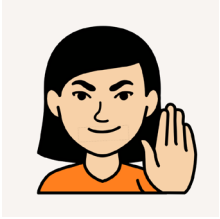
Talk about disability in a good way to help your child

- feel proud of who they are



- feel safe to talk with you.

Here are 3 things you might say to your child.

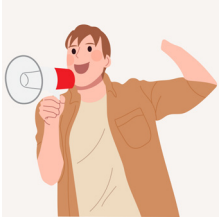


1. **Disability is not a bad word. It is nothing to be ashamed of.**

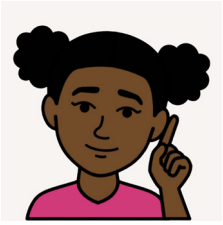
2. **Everyone is good at some things. Everyone needs help with other things.**

3. **It is okay to ask for help. I am proud of you.**

Standing up for your child



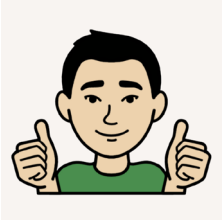
__Advocating__ for your child means standing up for your child and what they need.



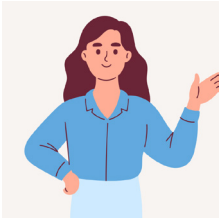
__Self advocacy__ means your child stands up for their own needs.

You can help your child with self advocacy by

- talking about their strengths



- talking about disability in a good way



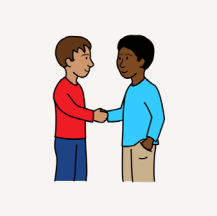
- also standing up for their rights.

Living in community

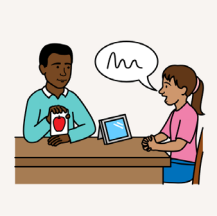
Making friends

Making friends helps your child learn and grow.

Find programs or activities that they like to do.



Invite friends from school to join your activities.



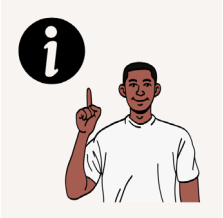
Find out what your child needs to join in groups.
For example, therapy that teaches social skills.

Finding the right activities and spaces

You can explore accessible

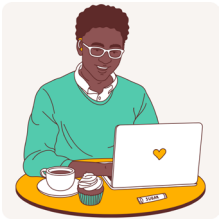
- sports programs

- arts and creative programs.



You can also find activities on your

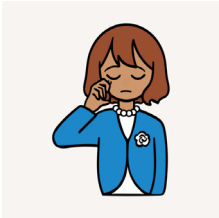
- local council website



- local library website.

All helpful links are at the **end of this book**.

Building your own network



Some families of children with disability say they feel lonely.

You can build your own support network by

- joining a support group to share stories and help eachother

- going to community events with your child

- finding families online through Facebook or other family and parent websites

- talking to other families from school, or who you see in your neighbourhood.

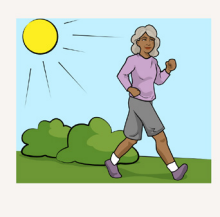
Look after yourself

What is self care?

Self care means you look after your mental health.

Self care activities might be

- sitting down with a cup of tea



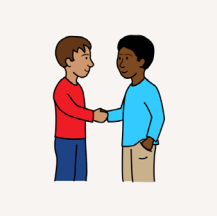
- going for a walk or run

- talking to someone who understands

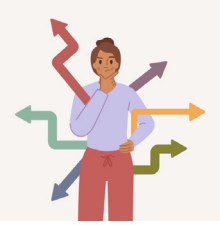
- watching a show or listening to music

- taking a break from social media.

Setting boundaries



__Setting boundaries__ is self care.

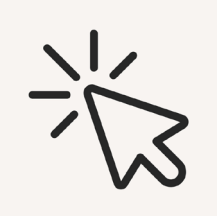


Setting boundaries means you say no to things you do not want in your life.

You have a right to say **no** when you cannot manage something by yourself.

Mental health support

Lifeline



Visit www.lifeline.org.au

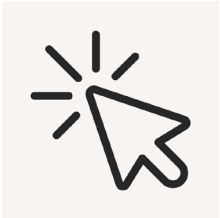
Call 13 11 14

Beyond Blue

Visit www.beyondblue.org.au

Call 1300 22 4636

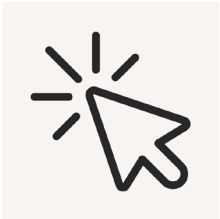
Carer Gateway



Visit www.carergateway.gov.au

Call 1800 422 737

Raising Children Network



Visit www.raisingchildren.net.au

Association for Children with Disability

Visit www.acd.org.au

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

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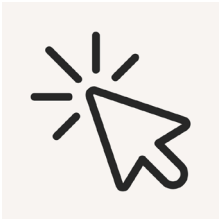
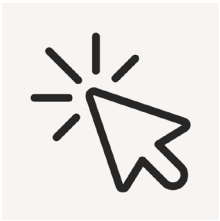


Visit www.kiind.com.au

Call 08 6164 9806

Youth Disability Advocacy Service



Visit www.yacvic.org.au/ydas

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.

Embrace Access

Embrace Access wrote this Easy Read book in October 2025 using CYDA's Take Charge of Change resources. CYDA's Take Charge of Change resources have been funded by the Australian Government created to support families of children and young people with disability to help manage key transitions throughout their lives. Information provided is intended as a general guide and may not contain the most recent information and updates. View the full set of resources at www.cyda.org.au. Contact the team at Embrace Access to create your own codesigned Easy Read book. W: www.EmbraceAccess.com.au E: info@EmbraceAccess.com.au M: 0433 759 535