



*Easy Guide to  
Accessing Early  
Intervention  
Supports*

For Families in the Northern  
Rivers, NSW



This guide is for parents, carers and families with a child under 9, who may have concerns for their child's, development, behaviour, learning, or social or emotional needs.

We'll help you understand:

- How the NDIS and Northcott support early childhood development
- What early supports might look like
- How to take the first steps
- Who to contact locally for help, and what to expect

**Important:** Northcott offers more than just NDIS access. Even if the NDIS isn't the right fit for your child right now, early supports through Northcott can still help.

*Bloom is an early intervention and behaviour support provider based in Kyogle, NSW. We are not affiliated with Northcott. This guide was created based on our experiences as local parents and professionals trying to navigate the system. We aim to offer a simplified starting point for families needing support to build their 'village'.*

# What is the Early Childhood Approach?

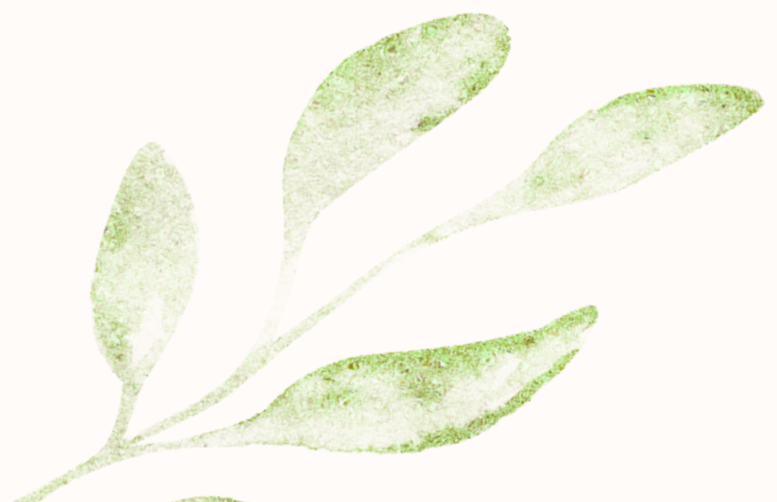
- The Early Childhood Approach is how the NDIS supports children under 9 with developmental delay or disability.
- For children under 6, a formal diagnosis is not required
- It's family-centred: supports build skills in play, daily life, and relationships
- Supports may be short-term or part of a longer journey into the NDIS
- Northcott (your local Early Childhood Partner) should walk with you

## Why Early Supports Matters

Some people, especially some doctors, may say "let's wait and see" when parents share their developmental concerns, which can be not only invalidating but harmful. The evidence says: acting now is critical! Why?

- Early years are key for learning, behaviour and brain development
- Getting support early can prevent long-term challenges for kids and their families
- Parents build confidence, skills and stronger connections

***YOU DON'T NEED TO  
WAIT FOR A DIAGNOSIS  
TO GET HELP.***



# Who Can You Talk to?

*You know your child best.*

If you're feeling unsure, this is your reminder to **trust your instincts**. You don't need a diagnosis to ask for support — and your concerns are valid, even if others try to downplay them.



## Your Local Early Childhood Partner (Northcott - Lismore)

 Suite 1, 36–38 Conway Street, Lismore  
 1800 118 481  
 [northcott@ndis.gov.au](mailto:northcott@ndis.gov.au)  
 [northcott.com.au](http://northcott.com.au)

*They can:*


- *Discuss your child's needs*
- *Guide you to early supports*
- *Help you decide if the NDIS is right*
- *Support you with access to other community services*
- *Offer a Key Worker to walk alongside you*



Still unsure if what you're seeing is 'normal'?

**Chat openly with a professional who knows your child:**

- Family GP
- Preschool/Kindy Educators
- Child Health Nurse

 *Share your observations and concerns — what your child does well, and where things feel harder than expected.*

**Prefer to explore from home first?**

On the next page, you'll find easy tools to check your child's development.

# Check Your Child's Development At Home

These tools can help you spot early signs that your child may need extra support. They're free, quick, and designed for parents to use at home — no referral or diagnosis is needed.

You don't need to have all the answers — these tools are just a gentle starting point to help you decide what to do next.

## The Survey of Well-being of Young Children (SWYC)

SWYC is a quick (5-minute) checklist for children up to 5½ years that screens developmental milestones, behaviour, and social-emotional wellbeing.



<https://www.teamupcenter.org/swyc/>

## Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

SDQ takes about 5 minutes and helps parents of children aged 2–17 identify emotional, behavioural, and peer-related concerns.



[https://sdqinfo.org/py/sdqinfo/b3.py?language=Englishqz\(Austral\)](https://sdqinfo.org/py/sdqinfo/b3.py?language=Englishqz(Austral))

## Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC)

PSC is a 3–8 minute checklist (depending on version) for ages 4–16 that screens for broader psychosocial and mental health difficulties.



<https://www.massgeneral.org/psychiatry/treatments-and-services/pediatric-symptom-checklist>

## Vanderbilt ADHD Parent Rating Scale

The Vanderbilt scale helps parents of children ages 6–12 years screen for attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.



<https://nichq.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/NICHQ-Vanderbilt-Assessment-Scales.pdf>

## Childhood Autism Spectrum Test (CAST)

CAST is a quick parent questionnaire for children aged 4–11 years that screens for social and communication traits linked to autism.



[https://psychology-tools.com/test/cast?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://psychology-tools.com/test/cast?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

## What to do With the Results?

These are only screening tools and are in no way diagnostic tools, they are just meant to flag anything that might need follow up.

- If "needs review" → See your GP or child health nurse
- If "on track" but you still feel unsure → Trust your instincts

Bring results when meeting with Northcott, Child Health Nurse or your GP.

# What Happens When You Reach Out to Northcott?



Here's a simplified roadmap of what happens when you contact Northcott:

Step	What Happens	What You'll Do
1	Give them a call to book a meeting	Share your concerns and goals
2	Observation & Screening	May involve bringing your child to their office or observing your child play at home or preschool
3	Early Supports (option 1)	Short-term strategies, group programs, therapy links
4	Access request (if eligible - option 2)	Help applying for the NDIS
5	NDIS plan	If approved, you get a tailored funded plan
6	Review & update	Progress is reviewed over time

Even if your child isn't ready for the NDIS, you may still receive non-NDIS early supports, including:

- Community therapy referrals
- Parenting programs
- A Key Worker to coordinate help

# Every Child's Journey is Unique



Here are just some of the supports that may be offered/suggested (NDIS or non-NDIS):

- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychology
- Behaviour Support/Therapy
- Play-based group programs
- Inclusion in preschool/kindy
- Assistive tech (e.g. visual supports)
- Parent coaching sessions
- Key Worker support (coordinated care)

## If You're Applying for the NDIS

### Gather:

- Reports from preschool, school, doctor or allied health services
- Blue Book checklists and any other screeners
- Notes about daily challenges

### Clarify:

- What are your child's biggest struggles?
- What do you hope they'll be able to do?
- Talk honestly and share your worst days as well as your best.
- When talking about skills and developmental milestones, make sure that you consider how much you're prompting/helping (often without consciously noticing), vs. how much your child does independently.

### Ask:

- Your Early Childhood Partner (Northcott) for help building your plan in the way you want



# What does Quality Support Look Like?

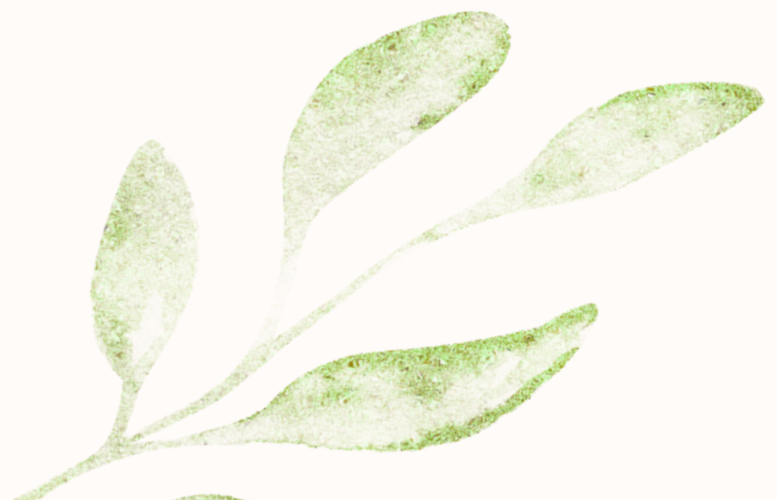
You should expect:

- Providers put your child's safety, wellbeing and best interests first
- Supports that are evidence-informed, child-centred, play-based and strength-oriented
- Transparent communication: providers should explain how they will deliver supports, how progress will be measured, and allow your feedback
- Respect for your family, culture, decisions, and privacy
- Ability to change provider / service if needed

## Questions you can ask providers:

- How will you tailor supports to my child's daily routines?
- How will you involve me (the parent) in goals and decisions?
- How do you measure progress?
- What will you do if a support isn't working?
- Do you have experience in early childhood intervention?
- How do you safeguard child safety, staff screening, and handling complaints?

(You can refer to the NDIS Commission's booklet: "Quality Support for Children in the NDIS" for more details.)



# Who Are We?

*Helping young people and families grow with the right support.*

Bloom is a Northern Rivers-based allied health practice offering behaviour support, therapy groups, and practical family guidance.

We use evidence-based strategies, play, and positive relationships to help children, young people and adults build confidence, skills, and independence.



*Our dedicated team provides flexible support for families, schools, and other support services.*

*Whether through NDIS or private consultancy, we help build skills, reduce stress, and create practical solutions that work in everyday life.*

## The Services That We Offer

### Behaviour Support

- NDIS-funded Positive Behaviour Support
- Plans & strategies to reduce behaviours of concern
- Coaching for families, schools & support workers

### Therapy & Groups

- 1:1 Therapy Assistant sessions (ABA-informed)
- Boss Skills groups (friendship, regulation, self-determination)
- Play, social & art-based groups

### Family Services


- Private Behaviour Consultancy (for non-NDIS families)
- Guidance to access NDIS & navigate funding
- Parent/carer coaching & practical home strategies


### Professional Growth


- Training & workshops for educators & teams
- Professional development in autism, ADHD & behaviour
- Supervision for practitioners & students

Our mission is to use the evidence-based science of behaviour analysis to assess and design personalised programs that build meaningful skills for children, teens, and adults. We prioritise what truly matters to each person – improving quality of life, relationships, safety, and wellbeing – through supports that feel relevant, respectful, and centred on them.

Contact us to discuss how we can help you:

 0493 336 946

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

 [office@bloombehaviour.com.au](mailto:office@bloombehaviour.com.au)



9.30am  
Wednesday

# Facilitated Play Group

*Numbers may need to be capped to ensure an inclusive and supportive environment, so please let us know if you plan to attend each week or not.*

- Facilitated by an early educator & therapy assistant
- Inclusive and welcome all children regardless of support needs. No diagnosis needed.
- This is a JUDGEMENT FREE ZONE.
- Connect with other parents
- Access professional and social support on the difficult journey of parenting!



1.5hrs  
Play & Coffee/Tea Provided,  
BYO Snacks!



Reach out for more details:

📞 0493 336 946    🌐 [www.bloombehaviour.com.au](http://www.bloombehaviour.com.au)    ✉ [office@bloombehaviour.com.au](mailto:office@bloombehaviour.com.au)

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