



“
Let's talk about
work”

This booklet covers:

- Planning for employment
- Exploring your employment goals
- Planning for when you leave school
- Finding employment providers

[ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)



How to use this booklet

The purpose of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is to support people with disability to achieve their goals, assist them to realise their full potential and exercise choice and control over their lives. Everyone has diverse skills, talents, knowledge and attributes, and it is important that you have the right support to achieve your work or career goals.

The NDIS would like to talk about your interest in employment and, if you are interested, your employment or career goal.

This booklet will:

- assist you to prepare for your planning conversation with the NDIS
- help you respond to the kinds of questions asked when you meet your LAC or NDIA planner
- once completed, inform your Local Area Coordinator (LAC) and NDIA planner so that together we can explore options and ways you could develop your work skills.

It is important to complete this booklet, even if you are unsure about work. The information you share in this booklet will help the NDIS to understand more about the work you are already doing, your interest in work, any employment goals you have and what supports you might need.

Please bring this booklet to your NDIS meetings and if you need help to complete it, ask your LAC or Support Coordinator to guide you.

You should complete the **Let's talk about work** booklet in conjunction with other NDIS resources available on the **NDIS website**.

- **Booklet 1: Understanding the NDIS**
- **Booklet 2: Planning**
- **Booklet 3: Using your NDIS plan**

Your LAC or Support Coordinator will guide you in using these booklets. You may have recorded their details in **Booklet 2: Planning**.

NDIS KEY WORDS:

Some words we use to talk about the NDIS might be new to you, so we explain them along the way.



How the NDIS can help with employment

You might have heard people talk about the NDIS improving opportunities for 'economic participation'. This means the NDIS has a key role in helping you think about work and understanding the supports required to help you find and keep a job or do other things, like volunteering.

The NDIS is here to help you plan and set goals so you can start your employment journey. Support from the NDIS may include funding in your plan or information about other services, supports and mainstream employment funding available to you such as:

- **Disability Employment Services (DES)**

- community programs
- **volunteering** opportunities.

The NDIS may fund reasonable and necessary employment supports, including:

- on the job support if you need assistance in the workplace including **Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs)**
- employment related assessment and counselling
- individual and group employment support
- School Leaver Employment Supports (SLES).

Other NDIS funding can also be used to build skills important for employment such as independent living or travel training.

For example, if you have community participation funding in your NDIS plan, think about choosing a provider who offers activities that will help you think about your steps to employment. That means a provider who offers opportunities to build good employment skills like catching public transport, meeting new people or learning how to manage your money. Getting out into the community is a great way to make friends and develop social skills. Gaining confidence in these areas might be your first step in the employment journey.

NDIS KEY WORDS:

Disability Employment Services (DES)

is funded by the Government to help people with disability find and keep a job. Visit the Job Access webpage for more information about DES at www.jobaccess.gov.au.

Volunteering is unpaid work. It can be a great first step to getting paid work. Being a volunteer has lots of benefits. It can help you gain work experience in the field you are interested in, can increase your work skills and general wellbeing. As well as having a positive impact on your community, volunteering can build important personal and work relationships. Talk to your LAC about opportunities to volunteer in your area.

Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs)

are not-for-profit organisations. They offer a wide range of occupations and training in industries ranging from packaging and printing to gardening and furniture assembly. ADEs can provide ongoing employment or they can act as a stepping stone, enabling people with disability to gain the skills and confidence they need to try other forms of employment.

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“A job really gives you something else. It gives you a bit of a purpose. It'll pay you. You can start setting goals for yourself and it'll help provide that motivation to go 'That's why I'm getting up in the morning'.”

MAX, NDIS PARTICIPANT



Planning for employment

Your planning meeting or plan review meeting is an opportunity to discuss your thoughts about work, or if you already have an employment goal, the types of support you need.

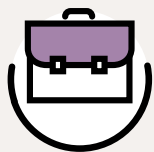
Checklist

Use this checklist before your planning meeting or plan review meeting to make sure you have prepared all the information you need:

- ☐ Complete this booklet and bring it with you to the meeting.
- ☐ Collect information, like letters or agreements about other employment supports you currently receive. For example, you may have one with DES providers or an ADE.
- ☐ Bring any reports or assessments, such as school reports or work assessments. If you are leaving school, remember to collect all of your information before you finish school.
- ☐ Bring the following school documentation along to your NDIS planning meeting:



school reports



work experience reports



career transition plans



discovery records

NDIS KEY WORDS:

Career transition plans are created at school, to define a student's learning goals and the work experience opportunities that they might pursue. Depending on what state you live in, career transition plans may be called something different.

Discovery records are a document that outlines the work environment that best suits the person. Sometimes it can be called a vocational profile.

ADAM'S STORY

Adam is from New South Wales and lost his job after 25 years but has since found a new job at a fast food restaurant and is a lot happier in himself.

"What I like best about working is the staff, they are so friendly and sometimes the customers are very nice people to talk to," said Adam. "The NDIS has improved my life so much. I didn't know there were options out there".

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"Since Adam received his NDIS plan, I've witnessed a huge transformation from a man who had lost the job he had worked in for 25 years and didn't know what to do with his days, to a man who's got a job, being out there in the community."

ADAM'S LAC, TANYA



Your employment journey

This section is for sharing information about where you are in your journey towards employment.

If you are already working or volunteering

Tell us about what you do.

- How many days per week do you work or volunteer?
- If you are working in an ADE, would you like to keep working there? Or would you like support to try something different?
- Is it paid or unpaid?
- Would you like to increase your hours?
- Do you have a support worker with you some of the time, all of the time or not at all?
- Would you like to find new opportunities?

E.g. I am volunteering at a clothes shop for three hours each Monday. I don't get paid at the moment but I would like to do some more hours and get paid, or, I work in an ADE three days a week but I would like to try working somewhere else, one day a week.

If you are ready to look for work or start volunteering

Tell us about what you would like to do.

- What sort of work or volunteering would you like to do?
- Is there a volunteer job you would like to try before applying for a paid job?
- Is someone already helping you, for example, your family, a friend, DES provider or ADE?

E.g. I would like to volunteer at my local library. I love books so it is ok if I don't get paid at the start, but one day I would like to become a librarian.

If you are not quite ready to look for work but want to learn more about what work might be right for you

Planning to work can feel like a big step. Your LAC, NDIA planner or Support Coordinator can help you think about some steps towards working. For example, you might use a part of your NDIS funding to do some work experience or volunteer work to find out what you enjoy and what skills you have.

Answering the questions in the rest of this booklet will help your LAC or NDIA planner to understand your goals, experience and the supports you might need to take the first steps towards working.

Getting ready to discuss employment

Your planning meeting or plan review meeting is between you, your LAC or NDIA planner and your nominated family member or carer if you want them there. It is an opportunity to talk about work, and new or existing employment goals. This is also a good chance to talk about any barriers you have faced with work or looking for work, or why you think you have not been able to find work in the past.

Your LAC or NDIA planner will work through this booklet with you and discuss what you have recorded.

Fill this section out before your planning or plan review meeting.

If you haven't thought about getting a job, can you tell us why?

E.g. I have not thought about work because I am not sure if I can work without a lot of help.

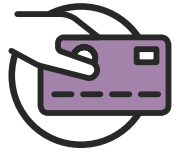
Do you have any specific work skills, qualifications or work experience?

- Have you done any courses?
- What level of education have you completed?

E.g. I did a little bit of work experience at school at a panel beaters business. I haven't got any qualifications but I am really good at working on cars.

Do you look after your own money?

When you start earning money, your LAC or Support Coordinator may be able to talk to you about building skills to manage your money.



- Do you have any financial or money saving goals that you would like to achieve?

E.g. My carer helps me manage my money so I don't spend too much at once, but I have my own bank account and bank card where I can withdraw money out of my account.

TIANA'S STORY

Tiana, now 21, was diagnosed with autism at the age of five. Tiana and her family have experienced many challenges, but since accessing the NDIS, Tiana has been getting the supports she needs to achieve her employment goals.

Through accessing supports, Tiana continues to make significant progress. Finding employment was something Tiana's mother, Marilyn, thought might never be possible, but Tiana is now working two days a week at a primary school.

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“It's been the best thing, she gets everything ready the night before and is up early ready to go. When I pick her up she's in a happy mood.”

TIANA'S MUM, MARILYN



What tasks do you do well? What do you love doing?

Tell us what you are already good at and if you need some help doing these things.

- Do you have any jobs you're responsible for at home?
- Are you involved in any sports, social activities or programs?

E.g. I am really good at reading but not out loud. I sometimes need help to talk to people I don't know. I love mowing the lawn and some people in my street pay me because they say I do a great job.

What transport do you use to get around?

- Can you drive a car?
- Do you use public transport?
- Do you have the right equipment to help you catch transport safely?



E.g. I can catch the bus into town and I can also catch it to my Grandad's house. I had a card that I carried in my wallet that told me the right stop to get off, but I don't need it anymore.

Exploring your employment goals

One of our key aspirations is to support you to achieve more independence, and social and economic participation. The NDIS can do this by giving you an NDIS plan, and support you to achieve your employment goals.

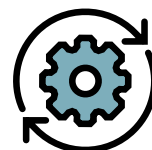
Setting an employment goal

Here are some examples of employment goals and how NDIS participants can use their funding to help achieve them.

Adrian's goal:

"I want to get a part-time job by the end of the year."

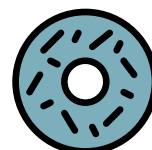
Adrian wanted a job but was not sure if he was ready, or what an employer might expect of him. Adrian decided he would like to start work at an ADE to help him learn more about his skills and working. Down the track Adrian might like to try something new. An ADE might be the right place for him to learn about his skills and interests.



Maevis' goal:

"I'd like to explore what type of jobs might best suit me and find work."

Maevis used some SLES funding in her NDIS plan to gain some supported work experience in a supermarket. She soon discovered she loved working in the bakery section and her support worker is developing her skills to work more independently. When Maevis is ready, she will start looking for work with the help of DES.



Mohammed's goal:

"I want to do some volunteer work with animals."

Mohammed used some of his Core Supports budget to pay for a support worker to assist him in his volunteer duties at the vet in his town. The owner of the vet practice said Mohammed keeps the place spotless and does a very reliable stocktake. Mohammed is now getting paid work at the vet one day per week and would like to increase to two days.



Lachlan's goal:

"I want to get a new job."

Lachlan has worked three days a week at a café for the last two years but he wants to work full time and learn some new skills. Lachlan and his LAC had a great conversation about how he works independently with minimal support but he might need some assistance to develop his skills further. His LAC helps Lachlan identify the supports he needs to take the next step.



If you have an employment goal, write it down here. If you are still thinking about work write down a goal that will help you decide if work is something you want to try.

If you need some help with this, ask your LAC.

E.g. I would like to start my own dog walking business, or, I am not sure about working but I would like to see what it is like to work and what skills I need.

Do you have some ideas about how the NDIS could help you achieve your goals?

You may wish to come back to this question after completing the rest of the booklet.

E.g. I don't think I need much help at work but I would like some help to get a better routine in my life.

JAMES' STORY

James, 24, has an intellectual disability and is described by his dad Ernie as a “lovely, loving kid, with good morals.”

Since joining the NDIS in early 2018, James' world has expanded. He didn't receive any support prior to becoming an NDIS participant. Now he has his forklift licence, and is working at an ADE. James also receives some support at home to help him build up his life skills, including things like cooking and budgeting.

Ernie's advice is simple, “Contact the local NDIS office!”

“

“In the past 12-18 months, he's changed a lot, he's opening up more than he ever has before, because he's going to work.”

JAMES' DAD, ERNIE



Planning for when you leave school

You may have had lots of conversations at school about work. You may have even done some work experience at school and know what you would like to do.

School Leaver Employment Supports (SLES) is an NDIS support available to students leaving secondary school that help them on a pathway to employment. SLES is for students who may not be ready to start looking for a job right away or who need help to understand the right sort of job for them.

How SLES works

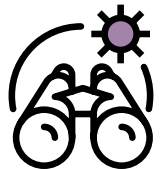
SLES is funding that can be used to develop a strategy to help you build your skills and confidence in areas where you need help. SLES may be funded by the NDIS for up to two years.

SLES is intended to build your ability and confidence to work with DES. Each person's SLES supports will be different, however the following can assist often in building employment readiness:

- money handling skills
- time management skills
- communication skills
- **discovery** activities
- extended work experience in open employment
- learning how to take instruction at work
- travel skills.

NDIS KEY WORDS:

Discovery is a planning process that involves getting to know a person through activities such as interviews and observations, before supporting them in developing a plan for employment.



DANIEL'S STORY

Daniel's work placements began when his mum approached local businesses and started conversations about his employment goals.

With SLES in his NDIS plan, Daniel has made great progress by participating in his community through work experience. Since using SLES supports, Daniel has won a Rotary 'Pride of Workmanship' Award.

“

“There are several barriers, including employer concerns relating to behaviour, training needs, insurance and policies. However, employers who have embraced SLES have said Daniel is a great team member and they have really enjoyed seeing him develop his workforce participation skills.”

DANIEL'S MUM, ANNETTE



Tips for choosing a SLES provider

- Think about what skills or experience you need to achieve your work goals.
- You can find a registered provider by searching the list of providers on the NDIS website – or talking with your LAC, NDIA planner or Support Coordinator.
- Don't forget you are a paying customer, so you get a say in who you choose and how your SLES supports are delivered to you.
- Remember you have the right to change providers if you are not happy.
- A lot of DES providers also offer SLES services. DES providers will have a STAR rating based on how well they perform. This can also be useful to help you choose a SLES provider.

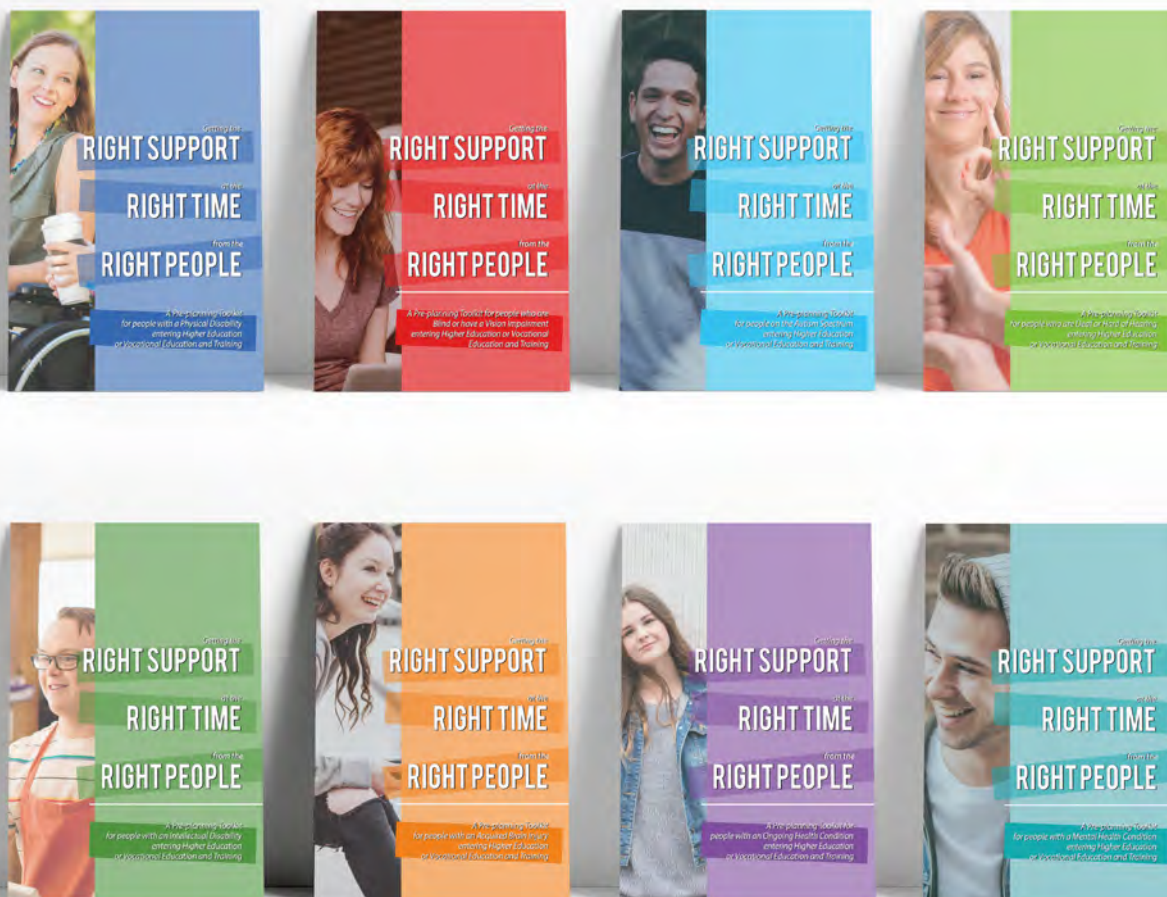
At the end of each NDIS plan you will have a plan review, to check how you are progressing towards your goals. Your LAC or NDIA planner will discuss your progress and if you need additional SLES funding to achieve your goals.

For more information on SLES and to find lists of registered providers, visit the NDIS website at www.ndis.gov.au.

The National Disability Coordination Office Program pre-planning toolkit

The National Disability Coordination Office Program (NDCO) have developed a NDIS pre-planning toolkit for people with disability entering Higher Education or Vocational Education and Training. These resources help to identify what supports you might need, who is responsible for providing them and how you can access them.

To access the toolkit go to the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on the Education and Training website at www.adcet.edu.au.



Finding employment providers

If you have an NDIS plan, you can use the provider finder on the NDIS participant portal to assist with finding providers in your area or visit www.ndis.gov.au to search for providers.

Once you have received your approved NDIS plan, it is time to choose the support and service providers that will assist you.

You might have some NDIS funded supports, or your Local Area Coordinator might have spoken to you about accessing your local DES.

To search for DES providers visit the Job Access web page at www.jobaccess.gov.au.

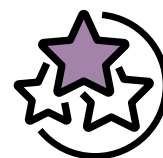
While DES is not funded by the NDIS, it will be written in your plan under the 'My services and community involvement' section, which is where non-NDIS supports are listed.

Here are some questions you might like to ask an employment service provider before choosing to use their services



- What supports would you recommend based on the employment skills I need to develop?
- Do you provide one-on-one or group support?
- What qualifications do your staff have?
- What types of businesses or companies have you placed people in and what type of jobs are they doing?
- What range of jobs do you offer and would I have the opportunity to learn new skills while I work for you?
- How many of your participants have gone on to get a job?
- How long do most of your participants stay in a job for?

TIP: If the provider is a DES provider you could ask about their STAR rating. A STAR rating is a measure of how good they are compared to other DES providers at helping people get jobs. 5 stars is the best and 1 star isn't so good.



BEN'S STORY

Ben is the front man of Ben & Co, a small business specialising in baked goods. Ben, aged 21, has Down syndrome and is someone who communicates without using words.

Ben had helped out in the canteen at school. One afternoon Ben's mother Carolyn arrived to collect Ben and he greeted her with a batch of scones. "He was just beaming," said Carolyn.

Ben did a course in cooking and found his passion and now supplies two cafes with his baked goods; and his business is growing.

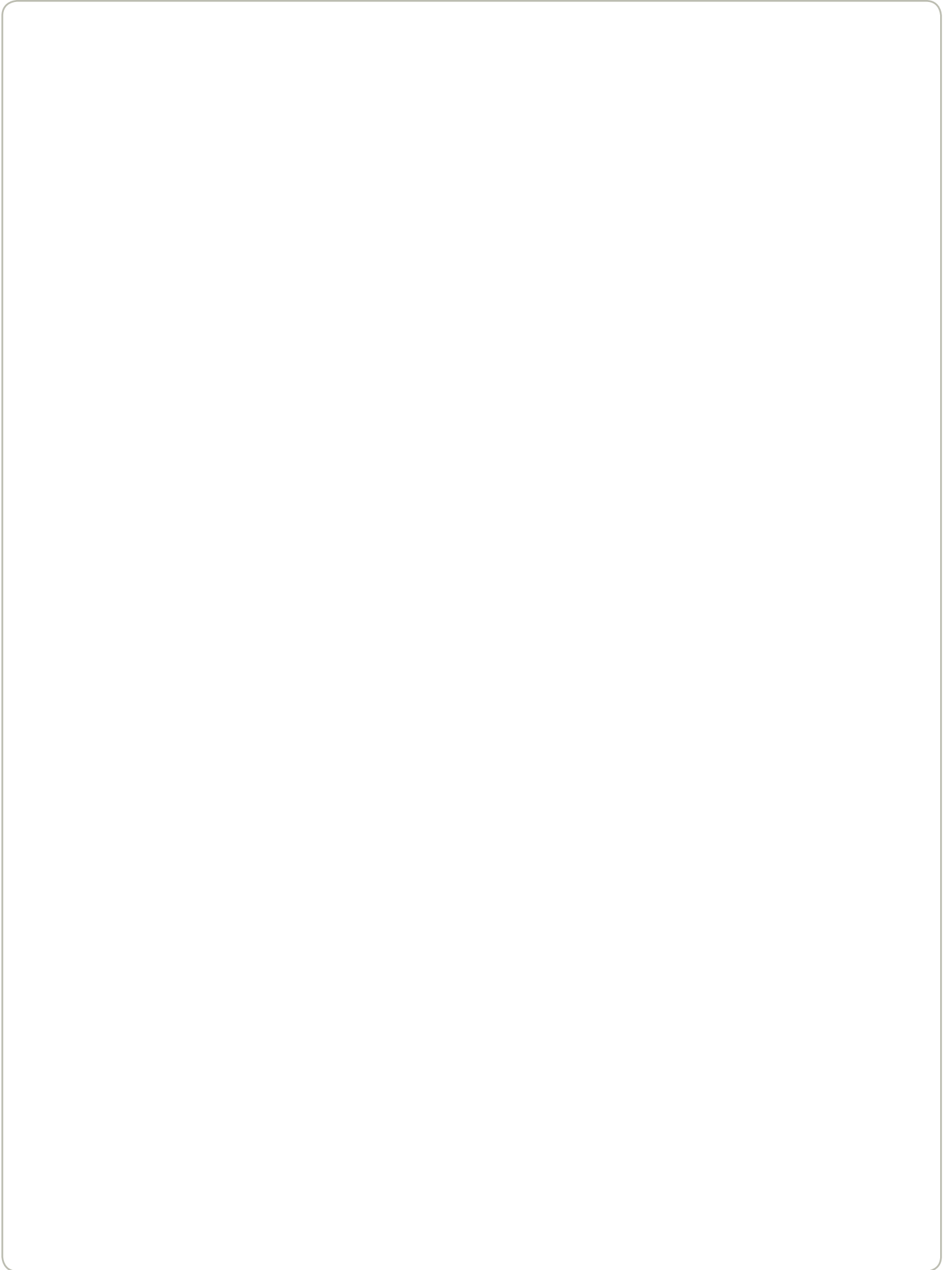
“

Ben does things I never thought I'd see him do. Every day he'll show me something different. I want to get to the point where he doesn't need me out the back (of the café) with him. He's going to make me redundant!"

**BEN'S CO-WORKER AND
SUPPORT WORKER, NANDI**



Notes

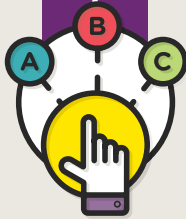


Congratulations



You have taken steps to consider employment.

- Your planning meeting is an opportunity to talk about work with your LAC or NDIA planner and think about your next steps.
- Your LAC or NDIA planner will work with you to create an NDIS plan with the supports you need to achieve your employment goals.



Start using your employment supports to access services.

- Once you have your NDIS plan, you will be able to decide how to use your funding to achieve your employment goal.
- You can start asking providers about the services they offer and choose a provider that is going to help you achieve your goals.
- If you need help to start using your NDIS plan, read **Booklet 3: Using your NDIS Plan**. Your LAC or Service Provider will be able to help you get started.

For more information about this booklet, please contact:

www.ndis.gov.au

National Disability Insurance Agency

☎ Telephone 1800 800 110

📘 Find us on Facebook/NDISAus

🐦 Follow us on Twitter @NDIS

For people who need help with English

👥 TIS: 131 450

For people with hearing or speech loss

📞 TTY: 1800 555 677

🗣️ Speak and Listen: 1800 555 727

💻 Internet relay: National Relay Service
www.relayservice.gov.au