



**Australian Government**

**Australian Government Response to the  
Senate Select Committee on Autism report:  
Services, support and life outcomes for  
Autistic Australians**



**Easy Read Version**

## About this document



This document is written in an easy to read way.

We call it **Easy Read**.



You might not know some words.

The first time we use those words they are blue.

We tell you what they mean.



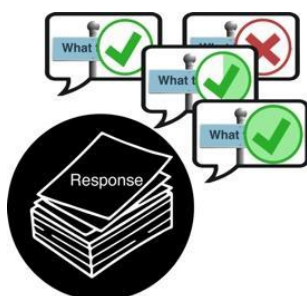
Words in blue are in a [list at the back of this document](#).

You can check what they mean there.



This is a **summary** of a **response** to a report.

A summary is a shorter version of something.



A response says what we think about each recommendation.



The response was written by the **Australian Government**.

It was published in December 2022.

The Australian Government makes decisions about what happens to all Australians.

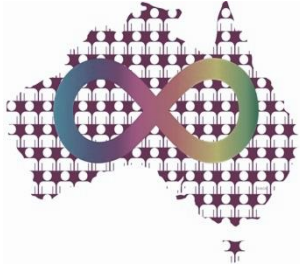


This Easy Read summary was also written for the Australian Government.



When we say we, we mean the Australian Government.

## 1. About this response



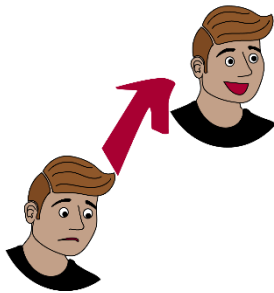
The Australian Government wants to help **Autistic** Australians.

Autistic people have a disability called autism.



Autism is a disability that may affect how an Autistic person:

- thinks and feels
- communicates and connects with others.



We want to **improve** the lives of Autistic Australians.

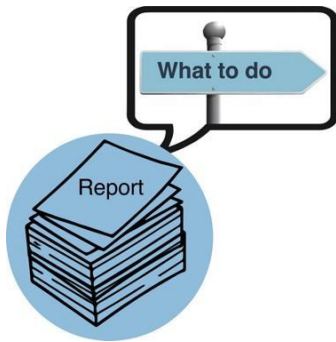
To improve means to make them better.

We asked for **research** into how to better help Autistic Australians.



Research is when people study a topic and they:

- Learn a lot about the topic
- Find out new information on the topic.



We have a report with **recommendations** to improve the lives of Autistic Australians.

It gives us ideas of:

- what we should do
- how we should do it.

The report was written by the Senate Select **Committee** on Autism.



A committee is a group of people who meet to:

- talk about  
and
- work on something together.



The Australian Greens Party also gave us recommendations.



We **support** many of the recommendations.

This means that we agree to do it.



We **partially support** some of the recommendations.

This means we agree to do part of it.



We support some recommendations **in principle**.

This means we think that it is a good idea.



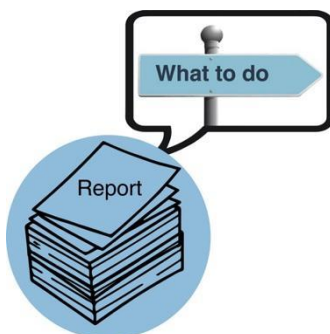
There are a few recommendations we do not support.



We wrote a response to the report.

This summary of the response tells you what we will be doing.

## 2. A National Autism Strategy



Many recommendations were about creating a National Autism **Strategy**.

A strategy is a plan of:

- what we will do
- how we will do it.



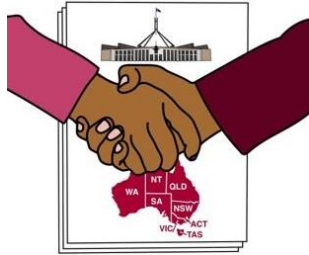
We will create a National Autism Strategy to **improve** the lives of Autistic Australians.





We will:

- create the Strategy



- work with state and territory governments



- say what is happening regularly



- check the Strategy to make sure it is working well.

The Strategy will **include** the needs of all Autistic people.



To include is to make sure everyone can be part of something.

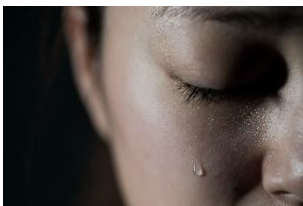


In the past, many people thought only young boys were Autistic.



The Strategy will also make sure there are supports for Autistic:

- adults
- women and girls.



We will include **vulnerable** Autistic people.

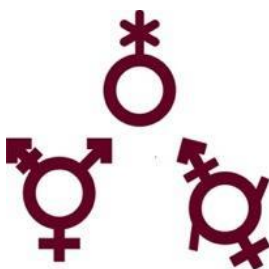
Vulnerable means they are more likely to be hurt.

They need more support to be safe.

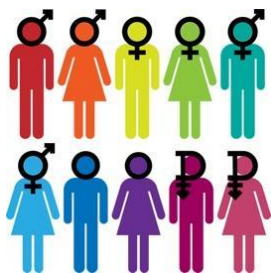


They might:

- live far away from cities
- have a different gender identity







- have a different sexuality



- have other disabilities.

### 3. Better information about autism



The Strategy will help everyone to understand and work with and support Autistic people better.



The information will come from:

- research



- Autistic people and their families and carers.



The information will be **accessible**.

Accessible means everyone should be able to use, read and understand something.

This includes:



- **First Nations People** of Australia

First Nations people are also called Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



- people from different cultures and languages.



We will help Autistic people with **advocacy**.

Advocacy is telling other people what you think and what you need.



Advocacy can be done by:

- you



- people connected to you

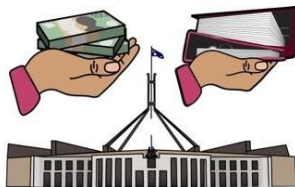


- **professionals** who support you

A professional is someone that has trained to do a particular job.



- advocacy organisations



We will keep giving **resources** to support advocacy.

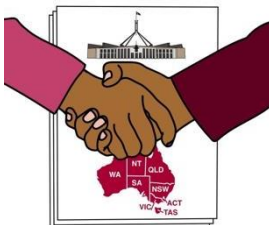
Resources are what you need to do something.

Like:



- money
- time
- people with the right skills
- information on how to do it.

We will write a plan to help people with disabilities to advocate.

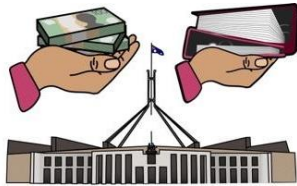


We will work with state and territory governments to write the plan.

## 4. Easier diagnosis for Autistic people



A **diagnosis** is when a professional writes a report saying you have a disability.



We will give more resources to:

- help more people be diagnosed
- make it faster to be diagnosed.



We agree that Autistic people should be diagnosed earlier.

This means they can get support earlier.



Young children have health checks.

These checks should be better at looking for autism.

This could mean earlier diagnosis.

## 5. More support for Autistic people



After diagnosis, many people and their families and carers do not know:

- what this means to them
- what they should do about it



We will help them have better information.



Autistic people need **skilled** workers to support them.

To be skilled is to know how to do something well.



There are not enough skilled workers.



We will write a plan to have enough skilled workers.

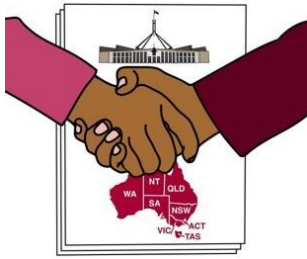


We will make it easier for skilled workers from other countries to come to Australia.

## 6. Autistic people included in schools



State and Territory Governments are in charge of their school systems.



We are working with them to better include everyone in Australian schools.



We want all people with disabilities to be able to go to school.

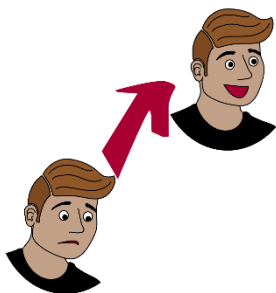
This includes Autistic people.

[Read about the Disability Standards for Education.](#)

## 7. Health of Autistic people

We want to improve Australian **health services** for Autistic people.

A health service helps people with their health.



Like:

- doctors
- hospitals
- pharmacies
- dentists
- and more.





The Strategy will include a plan to improve services for Autistic people:

- health services
- mental health services.



Medicare helps pay for health services.

You can find out more [on their website](#).



There are rules about what Medicare will pay for.

We changed the rules.

This includes the age for Autistic diagnosis.



In the past, Medicare only paid for Autistic diagnosis for people younger than 13 years old.



Now Medicare pays for diagnosis up to 25 years old.

The changes started on 1 March 2023.



## 8. National Disability Insurance Scheme

We help many people with disabilities through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Read more about the NDIS [in these booklets](#).

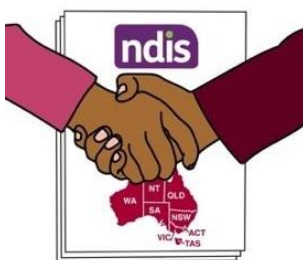


We will improve how the NDIS supports Autistic people.



We will

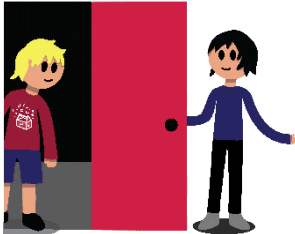
- listen to Autistic Australians
- support families and carers
- work with other services like schools and health services
- have staff that understand autism and
- know how to work with Autistic people.



## 9. Housing for Autistic people

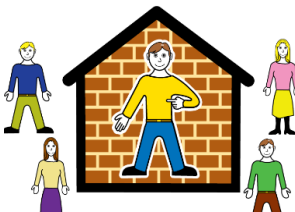


We support people who need help to find **housing**.



Housing is somewhere to live like:

- houses
- apartments
- and more.



We want to help Autistic people live **independently**.

Independently means they live alone or with people they choose.



We will check that Autistic people can live independently.



Many people who need a lot of support cannot find housing.



We will work with state and territory governments so there is more housing for them.

## 10. Justice and Autistic people



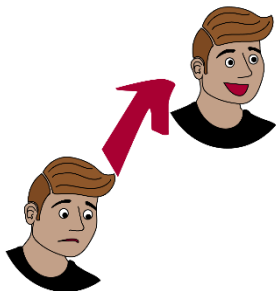
The **justice system** deals with people who break the law.

The justice system includes:

- police
- lawyers
- courts.



State and Territory Governments are in charge of their justice systems.



We want to improve how the justice system works with Autistic people and their families and carers.

We want them to trust each other.



We will ask justice services to help their workers:

- understand autism
- know how to work with Autistic people.

## 11. More inclusion for Autistic people

The Strategy will check if Autistic people are fully included in their community.



This means that Autistic people should:

- have jobs
- join activities and events
- have friends and people to connect with
- get support to do this.



It is hard to start work after you leave school.

We support people with disabilities to find their first job.



We want to help more people with disabilities find jobs.

We will keep working on a plan.



We want to support Autistic people to:

- meet other Autistic people
- and learn from each other.

## 12. National research into autism



We need more and better research to understand:

- how to work with and support Autistic people
- how to improve the lives of Autistic people
- how people with disabilities are supported through services, payments and programs.



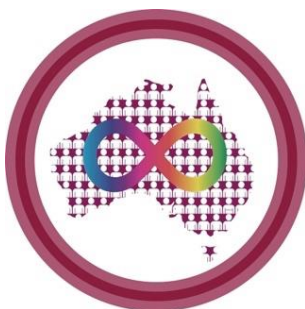
Good research needs good information.

We want to improve how we collect information about people with disabilities.



The **National Research Disability Partnership** will improve disability research.

They are also called the NDRP.



The NDRP will make sure that research about autism is:

- done with Autistic people
- done by Autistic people
- on topics that matter to Autistic people.





You can read [an Easy Read report](#) of the first 2 years of work on the NDRP.

## Word List



### Accessible

Accessible means everyone should be able to use, read and understand something.



### Advocacy

Advocacy is telling other people what you think and what you need.

You can advocate for yourself or someone can do it for you.



### Australian Government

The Australian Government makes decisions about what happens to all Australians.



### Autistic

Autism is a disability that may affect how an Autistic person:

- thinks and feels
- communicates and connects with others.



### Committee

A committee is a group of people who meet to talk about and work on something together.



### Diagnosis

Diagnosis is when a professional writes a report saying you have a disability.



### Easy Read

A document written in an easy to read way.



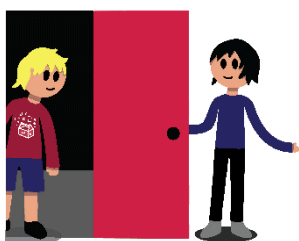
### First Nations

First Nations people are also called Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people.



### Health services

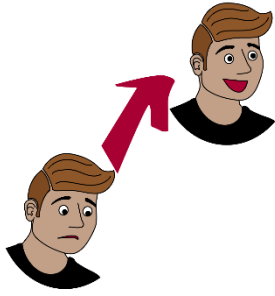
A health service helps people with their health.



### Housing

Housing is somewhere to live. Like:

- houses
- apartments
- and more.



### Improve

Make something better.



### Include

Make sure everyone can be part of something.



### Independently

Living independently means to live alone or with people you choose.



### Justice system

The justice system deals with people who break the law.

The justice system includes:

- police
- lawyers
- courts
- and more.



### Partially support a recommendation

To partially support a recommendation means we agree to do part of it.



## Recommendation

A recommendation is an idea of:

- what we should do
- how we should do it.



## Research

Research is when people study a topic and they:

- learn a lot about the topic
- find out new information on the topic.

## Resources

What you need to do something.



Like:

- money
- time
- people with the right skills
- information on how to do it.



## Skilled

To be skilled is to have learned to do something well.



## Strategy

A strategy is a plan of:

- what we will do
- how we will do it.



## Summary

A summary is a shorter version of something.



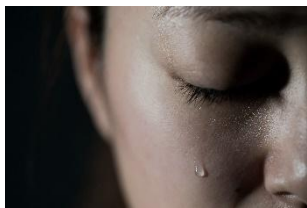
## Support a recommendation

To support a recommendation means we agree to do it.



## Support in principle

To support a recommendation in principle means we think it is a good idea.



## Vulnerable

Vulnerable means more likely to be hurt.

Vulnerable people need extra support and protection.

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Easy Read report written by Kathryn Carter, Karen Hedley & The Easy Read Toolbox for the Australian Government based on their report.

