



Return to on-site learning for children with neurodevelopmental disabilities

Information for educators

Consistent routines and additional supports can support children with neurodevelopmental disabilities when they return to early childhood education and care settings. AllPlay Learn have created stories, emotions cards and many other resources to support the return of children to long day care or kindergarten. To view these resources and other helpful information, visit allplaylearn.org.au/covid-support

Children with neurodevelopmental disabilities may benefit from consistent routines and structure when transitioning back to long day care or kindergarten.

- **Establish consistent routines and structure.** Having consistent routines or schedules can increase feelings of stability or security. Consider providing a visual schedule, and let children know if you will be transitioning to a new activity.
- **Clearly communicate any new routines and rules.** Short and clear instructions that are repeated are best. Consider modelling new routines and rules, providing visual reminders (such as posters), and lots of prompts.
- **Consider which changes could be a trigger.** Changes such as a different educator, new room layout, or new ways of doing things could increase anxiety. Communicate about these changes well before they occur, and consider what additional support may be needed.

Children with neurodevelopmental disabilities may need time and support to adapt to the changes in their normal routine.

- **Consider how you can support psychological well-being.** Various types of anxiety may be heightened in some children. Some strategies include using emotion cards or other tools to talk about emotions. Model positive coping and provide emotional support.
- **Provide breaks and access to safe spaces.** Children might require more breaks as they settle back in. Having a safe 'quiet' space where children can choose to go if they are feeling overwhelmed can be helpful for assisting some children to manage difficult feelings.
- **Recognise that children's needs may now have changed.** Some children may require similar supports to what they received previously, while others may now require different or increased supports.