



NDIS Access for PDA Families

Checklist and evidence guide

Navigating NDIS access for a child with PDA can feel overwhelming. This checklist breaks it down into manageable steps and helps you understand what evidence is needed and why. Use it alongside professional advice from your child's support team.

Important note NDIS policies change regularly. This guide reflects the general framework in 2025. Always verify current requirements at [ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au) or through your local NDIS office.

Step 1 — Confirm Eligibility

To access the NDIS, your child must meet three criteria: age requirements (under 65), residency (Australian citizen, permanent resident, or Protected Special Category Visa holder), and disability requirements.

For PDA, the relevant disability pathway is usually

- Autism Spectrum Disorder — a permanent neurological condition
- PDA must be understood within the autism framework for NDIS purposes
- Functional impairment must be demonstrated — diagnosis alone is not sufficient

Step 2 — Gather Diagnostic Documentation

- ■ Formal autism/PDA diagnosis report (from paediatrician, psychologist, or psychiatrist)
- ■ Reports should be recent — within 2 years where possible
- ■ Diagnosis report must name the condition and note permanence
- ■ If the report does not mention PDA by name, ask the diagnosing clinician for a supporting letter

Step 3 — Gather Functional Impact Evidence

This is the most important part of your application. The NDIS needs to see evidence of how the disability impacts your child's functional daily life. Diagnosis alone is often not enough — you need to show how it affects everyday activities.

- ■ Occupational Therapy report — activities of daily living, self-care, participation
- ■ Speech Pathology report — if communication is impacted
- ■ Psychological report — mental health impacts, anxiety, behaviour
- ■ School reports or support plans — education participation impacts
- ■ Parent/carer supporting statement — your own account of daily functional impact
- ■ Any medical reports relevant to co-occurring conditions



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Step 4 — Write Your Parent Supporting Statement

Your supporting statement is your voice in the application. It should describe your child's daily functional life — not the diagnosis, but what it means for getting through a typical day.

Cover these areas in your statement

- Morning routines — what does getting ready for school involve?
- Meal times — eating, food preferences, demand around meals
- Personal care — dressing, hygiene, toileting (if relevant)
- Sleep — demand avoidance around bedtime, sleep disruption
- School attendance — school refusal, meltdowns before/after school
- Social participation — peer relationships, community activities
- Safety — wandering, risk awareness, crisis frequency
- Family impact — sibling impact, parent employment impact

Step 5 — Submit Your Application

- ■ Submit via the NDIS website, by phone (1800 800 110), or through a Local Area Coordinator (LAC)
- ■ Request an Access Request Form if submitting by phone/in person
- ■ Keep copies of everything you submit
- ■ Note the date of submission and your reference number

Step 6 — If Your Access Request Is Refused

- Request a review of the decision — you have 3 months to do this
- Contact the NDIS Commission or an advocate if needed
- Gather stronger functional evidence — a refusal usually means more detail is needed
- The PDA Society of Australia can provide guidance on advocacy

Getting help

NDIS access can be complex. Ask your child's paediatrician or GP about a referral to an NDIS Local Area Coordinator. Many advocacy services can also help with applications at no cost to families.