

# Take the lead to help your child learn

Are you wondering how to make the best use of your child's funding? The NDIS is now putting parents in the driver's seat when it comes to choosing services for their child. But did you know that you can also be in the driver's seat when it comes to supporting your child's language development?

Research shows that children learn to communicate best during everyday interactions with the important adults in their lives, and that parents are in the best possible position to build their child's communication. They just need to learn how.

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## Choosing Hanen

When you choose to invest your child's NDIS funding in the Hanen approach, you're truly taking the lead in your child's early intervention by *learning how to help your child yourself*. When you do this, you no longer have to worry about the limited number of therapy hours your child is entitled to, and whether it will be enough. In fact, you remove the limit completely as you support your child's learning in his everyday life, extending the highest quality support throughout the day, every day.

## What is the Hanen approach?

There is clear and mounting evidence that when parents learn how to implement specific language-building strategies with their child, they can be just as effective, and sometimes even more effective, than a speech pathologist.

The Hanen Centre is a not-for-profit global organization that has been at the forefront of parent-implemented intervention for over 40 years. Speech pathologists around the world become "Hanen Certified" so that they can share the Hanen approach with the families on their caseload, either by offering a Hanen Program to groups of parents, or by offering one-to-one consultations with families. It's through these speech pathologists (nearly 10,000 around the world) that parents can access Hanen programs and strategies.



## How does the Hanen approach fit with NDIS?

1. NDIS is concerned with you and your child reaching goals and achieving aspirations

The Hanen approach supports your family in two main ways:

- Assisting you to set realistic and achievable communication goals for your child; and
- Helping you learn and apply specific language-building strategies to support your child to achieve those goals.

2. NDIS focusses on increasing your child's social participation

Hanen's evidence-based programs are aimed at building the social and communication skills that lay the foundation for successful interactions and long-term social success. Many families who attended Hanen programs reported that they and their children are interacting and communicating better together as a result, and that they're spending more time together and enjoying the interactions more.

3. **NDIS wants to ensure that goals are attained in a cost-effective way**

Evidence shows that parents learning how to assist their child's communication can be as effective, and in some areas more effective, than a specialist working directly 1:1 with the child. In the long run, parent-implemented intervention is more cost-effective because investing in a limited number of hours supporting parents' learning results in many more hours of support for the child. The speech pathologist is there to assist you to work out appropriate goals for your child, to help you learn the most effective strategies for attaining those goals (and why), and to show you how and when to fine tune them for your child's needs. If you opt for a Hanen group parent program, the NDIS dollars will stretch even further, and you will have the benefit of sharing ideas with and learning from other parents who are in a similar situation.

4. **NDIS wants to ensure that the services you choose are based on best practice and grounded in research**

The Hanen approach has a firm evidence base and uses best practice principles of adult education to support your learning. This ensures that you truly absorb the information and can apply it effectively with your child in different contexts.

Your speech pathologist will explain why s/he is suggesting a particular strategy for your child at any point in time, and how you could be using it in the situations where children learn language best – everyday conversations. Decision making about goals and strategies will be in consultation with

you, and align with your realistic goals for yourself and your child.

5. **The NDIS is keen to support what the child's family, carers and network can realistically provide**

The principle aim of a Hanen program is to help families support their child's communication goals during the everyday situations that are already happening in the child's life. In this way, parents aren't left feeling they have to 'carve out' extra time in their day to "do Hanen strategies". Instead, the strategies become a natural part of how those in the child's environment interact with him/her.

## **Remove the limit on your child's support**

Your child's funding may be capped, but the amount of support he receives doesn't need to be. When you work with a speech pathologist to learn the best techniques to incorporate into interactions with your child, you can make a bigger difference in your child's communication development than anyone else can.

Talk to your service provider and ask if a Hanen approach would be most suitable for your child.



For more information on The Hanen Centre and Hanen programs, visit [www.hanen.org](http://www.hanen.org)



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