

Children and Youth Services Eligibility Criteria

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does *Eligibility Criteria* mean?

Children and Youth Services (CAYS) for families is funded by the Disability Services Commission (DSC) who support people with disabilities. *Eligibility Criteria* states how DSC describes the people they support. A person needs to fit the *Eligibility Criteria* to be able to receive services and support from Therapy Focus or any of the service providers funded by DSC.

Therapy Focus CAYS *Eligibility Criteria* describes a child's circumstances as well as the area within which he/she lives, or attends school. These FAQs cover information to do with a child. To find out whether your child meets the criteria, refer to point four of the 'CAYS *Eligibility Criteria*'.

Are there different programs within CAYS?

CAYS has two programs for children.

1. **Early Intervention Program** for children who are aged 0 – 6 or haven't started year 1 at school.
2. **School-Age Program** for children who are enrolled in a school program years 1 to 12. This includes children who are home schooled or attend private schools.

Each program has slightly different *Eligibility Criteria*.

What are the eligibility criteria for the Early Intervention Program?

- A child must be aged between 0 - 6 years. A child may be a little older but not yet have started year 1 (for example if he/she is repeating pre-primary).
- A child must have a 'disability' (see *What is a disability?* section) or be 'at risk' of having a disability. A disability is usually diagnosed, or decided by a specialist doctor such as

a paediatrician. Sometimes a psychologist also decides a child has a disability. This decision usually involves the specialist doing some tests with the child and also obtaining information from family members.

- Sometimes a child can receive support from our Early Intervention Program based on information from other people such as therapists and teachers. This information will be about the difficulties the child is having and show the child is 'at risk' of having a disability.



What does 'be at risk of having a disability' mean?

- A young child may grow out of the development issues they are experiencing with some support. In this case, a child is described as having a Global Developmental Delay (GDD). GDD means a child is *at risk of having a disability*.
- A GDD is usually diagnosed by a specialist doctor such as a paediatrician. This decision usually involves the specialist doing a series of tests with the child and also obtaining information from family members.
- Sometimes other people such as teachers and therapists can provide information which suggests a child has a GDD.

How do I know if my young child has a disability or is at risk of having a disability?

- A family may take a child to see a specialist because they are worried that their child is not doing things that other children do at the same age.
- A family may be asked by the doctor, child health nurse, day care staff or kindy teacher etc. to take their child to see a specialist because the child is not doing things that other children do at the same age.

If your child has a disability or is at risk of having a disability and is aged 0 – 6 years, he/she may be eligible for our Early Intervention Program.

What are the Eligibility Criteria for the School-Age Program?

- When a child goes into year 1, a child may be able to receive support from our School-Age Program. The School-Age Program supports a child while he/she is enrolled fulltime in a school program. There is no need for a child to stay in the program all of his/her school years. A child may move in and out of the service throughout this time.
- A child **MUST HAVE** a 'disability'. A disability is usually diagnosed, or decided by a specialist doctor such as a paediatrician. Sometimes a psychologist also determines a child has a disability. This decision usually involves the specialist doing some tests with the child but also obtaining information from family members.
- The disability also has to affect how the child is able to do his/her day to day activities such as moving around, talking and getting on with people, and looking after him/herself (getting dressed, going to the toilet etc). This information usually comes in the report from a specialist describing the child's disability. If it does

not, another test may need to be done to look at how the child is doing day to day. There are a couple of tests that can be done which ask the parents and maybe teachers to answer questions. These tests are called The Vineland or an Adaptive Behaviour Assessment.

If your child is at school and has a disability that is impacting his/her everyday life he/she may be eligible for our School Age Program.

What is a disability?

There are many different kinds of disability. The Disability Services Commission (DSC) supports people who have at least one of the four types of disabilities described below.

The four main types of disability are:

1. **Intellectual** – a child has been diagnosed by a psychologist as having an IQ (intellectual quotient) and adaptive behaviour within the disability range.
2. **Physical** – a child has a disorder such as spina bifida or hypermobility of the joints. There is a physical cause for his/her need.
3. **Neurological** – a child has a disorder affecting his/her nervous system such as cerebral palsy. This may also include a child who has an autism spectrum disorder.
4. **Cognitive** – a child who has cognitive disability has had an injury to their brain and now has memory issues along with at least one of the four following things
 - language problems
 - difficulty with movement
 - not able to recognise familiar things
 - difficulties in planning, organising, carrying out activities in a sequenced fashion.

Therapy Focus | PO Box 20, Bentley WA 6982 | Ph: +61 8 9478 9500
Fax: +61 8 9451 5480 | Email: enquiries@therapyfocus.org.au
Website: www.therapyfocus.org.au