Child Care Services

Child Care Services such as Long Day Care, Family Day Care and Out-of-School-Hours Care are open to children from all families including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- families that have members with disability
- families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and with a non-English speaking background
- socially isolated families
- low income families
- single parent families

For information about priority of access to services go to Section 6.

1. LONG DAY CARE

Long day care is sometimes referred to as centre-based care and is generally provided in a building or part of a building that has been created specifically for use as a child care centre. Centres provide care for children under six years of age. Children can attend for a whole day or half-day, for a whole week or only part of the week, generally Mondays to Fridays, according to the family’s need and availability of places. Fees vary from centre to centre. Australian Government assistance to meet the cost may be available depending on the family’s income.

Families who have a child with disability are advised to discuss openly the needs of their child when seeking to enrol in a child care service. This includes providing information about any emergency or routine health and personal care needs.

Support is available to eligible child care services to provide a quality inclusive environment for children with additional needs through the Inclusion and Professional Support Program funded by the Australian Government.

In South Australia, this support is provided by Inclusive Directions (in metropolitan Adelaide, Riverland, Kangaroo Island and the South-East) and by Novita Children’s Services (in the north-west country region). Organisations providing this support are known as Inclusion Support Agencies (ISA). These organisations can be contacted by child care services to request support to assist with the inclusion of children with disability. Support is usually provided by Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISFs).

An Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) will work alongside educators to build their knowledge and confidence to be able to create an inclusive environment where children with additional needs can actively participate in the program and all children have opportunities to belong, develop and succeed.

The ISF will facilitate the development of a Service Support Plan with the educators, to reflect on the staff and environment needs and develop actions that will support all children’s inclusion within a room or environment.

The ISF can provide child care services with information about specific disabilities, provide support to educators to plan for individual children’s participation with their peers, and assist with professional development for staff teams.
The ISF can provide information to educators, and families, about the support available at child care services, local community health services and from specialist agencies. They can also support families and child care providers to link with agencies, providing services to children with disability, to share information about children's developmental needs and to support overall program development.

For children with ongoing high support needs, the ISF can assist services to apply for funding under the Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS), which is the responsibility of and approved by the National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider (NISSP), also funded by the Australian Government. If the child care service’s ISS application is approved, the funding is used to subsidise the cost of employing additional staff to increase the staff ratio. This means that there will be an increased number of educators for some of the time that a child with high support needs attends. This assists educators to provide education and care for all children in an inclusive manner. The ISS funding is not intended for one to one support. Specialised equipment (upon therapist’s recommendations) can also be provided to support a child’s participation.

A Request for Service form is available for downloading from the Inclusion support agencies websites or by contacting the agencies directly:

Inclusive Directions (www.directions.org.au ph. 8165 2900)
Novita Children’s Services (http://www.novita.org.au/inclusion ph. 8243 8243)

### 2. FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES

Family Day Care services support and administer a network of Family Day Care educators who provide flexible care and developmental activities generally in their own homes for other people’s children. To assist with this, each Family Day Care service receives operational support funding from the Australian Government. Both not-for-profit and for-profit Family Day Care service providers may operate a family day care service.

A Family Day Care service is responsible for the effective operation of all components of Family Day Care, including recruiting, training and supporting educators, monitoring care provision and providing advice, support and information for parents and carers. The service also assists parents and carers to select an appropriate Family Day Care educator for their child.
A Family Day Care service can provide flexible care, including all-day care, part-time, casual, before and after school care, and care during school holidays.

**DECD Family Day Care**

The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) Family Day Care is a network of registered educators across South Australia who provide quality care for children in their homes, supported by family day care staff. The network of educators and staff is called a scheme (sometimes referred to as a coordination unit). DECD Family Day Care is available to families whose children attend Catholic, Independent and Government education settings.

DECD Family Day Care provides a flexible service to meet the needs of families; including overnight and weekend care. Educators are able to care for a maximum of 4 children not yet at school with seven children in total (including their own children under 13 years old). Educators provide stimulating everyday learning experiences and activities with a daily routine that is flexible to meet the needs of individual children. As a child’s first and most important teacher, parents/carers are encouraged to work closely with educators to support their child’s development.

Individual educators set their own fees. As a general guide fees can range from $5.00 to $8.00 per hour, per child, depending on the type of care, for example care on public holidays or the weekend may be more expensive. Educators will have a Fee Schedule that details their fees. Ask your educator about this.

Child Care Benefit (CCB) reduces the amount of child care fees you need to pay. It is paid by the DECD Family Day Care Business & Customer Support Centre to educators on your behalf. All families using DECD Family Day Care can have up to 24 hours of CCB each week. Generally families using care for work, study or training purposes can have up to 50 hours CCB each week.

The Family Day Care Scheme is responsible for recruiting, supporting and monitoring educators as well as providing advice, support and information to families.

Educators are trained and experienced in providing care for children with disability and supporting children’s health care needs. If your child has a disability or health need, it is important to speak with your educator to ensure they have the necessary skills, knowledge and permission to provide the right care for your child. Some complex health needs may require your educator to receive specialised training, which can be arranged through the DECD Family Day Care Scheme.

Depending on the needs of your child, you may be eligible to receive Inclusion Support whereby your educator receives an additional payment and support through the National Inclusion Support Provider, KU Children’s Services.

“The Australian Government provide financial support for this child care service under the Community Support Program”.

**DECD Respite Care Program**

The Respite Care Program (RCP) provides respite care to families with children or young people with disability. With Government support, the RCP supports people with disability to participate more fully in the community. RCP is available to families whose children attend Catholic, Independent and Government education settings. Currently there is no cost for families within the RCP program except for extras such as meals and travel.

While children are at the centre of the RCP, the focus of the program is holistic care of both child and family. Care can be used flexibly — weekly, monthly, or in blocks of time e.g. overnight, depending on availability and need. Care can sometimes be provided in the family home.
The RCP is available across metropolitan and rural areas in South Australia. The RCP is sponsored by the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) and is jointly funded by Home and Community Care (HACC). The RCP, while operating alongside Family Day Care (FDC), is a very different service operating with separate policies and procedures. The RCP is accountable to the Community Common Care Standards.

Educators are trained and experienced in providing care for children with disability and supporting children's health care needs. Some complex health needs may require your care provider to receive specialised training which can be arranged through the RCP, at no cost to families.

The DECD Respite Care Program works in partnership with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). Before a child can be enrolled in the program they need to have met the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) requirements and have had an interview with a planner from the NDIA. Priority of access for the Respite Program is in line with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) guidelines. Families can log onto the NDIA website and complete My Access Checker (http://www.ndis.gov.au/my-access-checker) to see if their child's needs meet the requirements.

To view the access requirements for accessing assistance from NDIS during the launch period of the scheme (July 2013 to 30 June 2016) go to http://www.ndis.gov.au/my-access-checker-access-requirements.

Wait times to access the program may exist and will depend on a variety of factors, such as the availability of a NDIA planner, the availability of an appropriate care provider and if the care provider needs to complete any additional training to ensure that the child’s individual needs are met.

### Facts for Families

- Your child can access the DECD Family Day Care Program during all hours of the week.
- Care is provided to children from birth to 18 years of age in the homes of registered educators.
- Care is available for your child for up to 50 hours per week.
- Children with disability may also be eligible to access the DECD Respite Care Program via the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- For more information, contact the Family Day Care Business and Customer Support Centre.
  - Telephone: 08 8343 6533 or for country callers 1300 551 890 or visit www.decd.sa.gov.au/familydaycare.

### 3. OUT-OF-SCHOOL-HOURS CARE (OSHC)

Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC) provides care for children before school starts and after school finishes, and for the whole day during school holidays. In some services, care may also be provided on ‘student-free days’ and at times when school finishes earlier than usual. OSHC services provide child care mostly for school aged children, but can care for children who have not yet started school. However, when an OSHC service fills vacant places, it must give school children priority over children who have not yet started school. OSHC services are available across the Catholic, Independent and Government education sectors.

Most services are located in schools but some are located in community centres, recreation centres or child care centres. To find an OSHC or vacation care service near you visit www.mychild.gov.au or www.sa.gov.au/schools/advanced.
Fees are determined by each service and vary, according to which component a child attends. Parents of children attending an approved OSHC service may be eligible for financial assistance toward the part payment of child care fees through the Australian Government’s Child Care Benefit Scheme (CCB). Visit www.familyassist.gov.au or telephone 13 61 50 for more information.

To enable the service to provide for the needs of children with disability, families are advised to discuss openly the needs of their children when seeking enrolment. This includes providing information about any emergency or routine health and personal care needs. The OSHC director and the family can contact Inclusive Directions or Novita Children’s Services (depending on location) to assist educators to build their knowledge and confidence to be able to create an inclusive environment where children with additional needs can actively participate in the program, as well as to provide staff training.

With support from an Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) the service may identify that an increased staff ratio within the service will improve their capacity to include children with ongoing high support needs and the ISF will help a service to apply for Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS). If approved the OSHC service will employ an additional educator to increase the staff ratio to support all children’s participation. The ISS is not for one to one support.

The Australian Government Inclusion Support Agencies in South Australia are as follows:
- Inclusive Directions North Office (Marden): 8165 2900
  Riverland Office (Berri): 8582 3266
  South East Office (Mount Gambier): 8725 0211
- Novita Children’s Services: 8243 8243.

Children with a range of disability and additional needs participate successfully in OSHC and vacation care programs. In some cases, when the child’s needs cannot be met with the standard educator:child ratio and an additional educator is required. The Department for Education and Child Development provides Intervac funding. For more information visit http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/oshc/a8_publish/modules/publish/content.asp?id=inclusion&navgrp=default) or contact the OSHC Unit on 8226 6427.

### Facts for Families

- Many OSHC services are located on school grounds; others are located in community facilities or child care services.
- Your child can access care before school, after school, on student-free days and during school holidays.
- It is important to visit the service when enrolling your child, so that you can meet staff and become familiar with the environment. Make time for your child to have transition visits at the service, especially if it’s a new environment.
- Provide as much information about your child’s needs, strengths and interests at enrollment so that the staff can access the relevant support and resources to ensure the best start at the service for your child.
- For more information,
  - telephone the DECD OSHC unit on 8226 6427
  - (or visit www.decd.sa.gov.au/oshc ),
  - Inclusive Directions on 8165 2900 or
  - Novita Children’s Services on 8243 8243
4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Long Day Care, Family Day Care and Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC) services must be approved to operate under the requirements of the Australian Government’s National Quality Framework (NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care. An approved service is regularly assessed against the National Quality Standard. The standard sets a national benchmark for the quality of education and care services and provides educators and families with a better understanding of what a quality service is. The National Quality Standard has seven Quality Areas including:

- Educational program and practice
- Children’s health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing arrangements
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership and management.

For more information about the NQF and National Quality Standard visit the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority website at www.acecqa.gov.au or call 1800 181 088.

The Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board (the Board) is responsible for the regulation of the provision of education and care services in South Australia, ensuring quality services and maintaining high standards of competence and conduct by providers. The Board is responsible for approving early childhood services (http://www.eecsrsb.sa.gov.au).

5. PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR STAFF

Gowrie SA (Lady Gowrie Child Centre Adelaide) is funded as the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) under the Australian Government’s Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP) to provide professional development and support for eligible education and child care services and can link services with other funded programs under the IPSP.

For further information, contact Gowrie SA, the Professional Support Coordinator for South Australia on 1800 129 606 or 8234 5219. For general information visit the website at www.pscsa.org.au.

6. PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Child care providers with high demand and long waiting lists must refer to the Government’s Priority Access Guidelines when placing children. The staff of your preferred child care service should make you aware of these guidelines, if they apply, when you contact them about enrolment.

Services must ensure that their enrolment practices meet the Australian Government’s Priority of Access Guidelines:

Priority 1: A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
Priority 2: A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work, training, study test under section 14 of the A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999.

Priority 3: Any other child.

Within these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a person with disability
- children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or whose partner is on income support
- children in families with a non-English speaking background
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents.

For further information refer to the Australian Government Child Care Service Handbook

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To find more information about child care services in South Australia, including:

- finding child care services in your area
- Child Care Benefit
- child care fact sheets
- information on child care for families and carers


For more information on different types of early childhood services visit: