



## NDIS Funding Information

Attendance at Autism Camp Australia (ACA) camps will be subsidised with funding support from the NDIS, through your individual plan (Plan Managed and Self-Managed only - not NDIA/agency managed).

### Support Categories

There are three main support category options we can invoice for the camp from: **CORE** We can bill to **any category** in **CORE**.

Or

#### **CAPACITY BUILDING 09\_011\_0125\_6\_3 Increased Social and Community Participation - Participation In Community, Social And Civic Activities.**

This is a very specific category. It is not the same as some of the other categories which mention 'assistance with social and community participation'.

Or

#### **CAPACITY BUILDING 09\_008\_0116\_6\_3 Innovative Community Participation -**

This is also a very specific category. It is not the same as some of the other categories which mention 'assistance with social and community participation'.

**Please ask to have the camp funded specifically in one of the above three categories** when negotiating your new plan with your Local Area Coordinator (LAC).

We are happy to provide a quote for you.

**Many younger children have most of their funding in Capacity Building (CB) Daily Living. We CANNOT bill for the entire camp from CB Daily Living.** The most we can bill from CB Daily Living is \$7372.95. Any additional costs can be billed to CORE or paid as an Out-of-Pocket Expense. Out-of-Pocket costs attract GST.

### Goals

If your child receives NDIS support you may wish to consider including the following goals in your plan:

#### **Goal 1**

I would like to learn to recognise and manage anxiety (meltdown) triggers, so that I am able to better emotionally regulate at home and in the community.



### **Goal 2**

I would like to develop my communication skills so that I can increase my participation in social and community activities, and create and maintain new and existing relationships.

### **Goal 3**

I would like to challenge myself with new activities and develop positive self-esteem and confidence in my strengths and abilities, to enable me to be more independent.

### **Goal 4**

I would like to improve my social skills to increase my social and community participation and reduce my social isolation and vulnerability.

## **Why will the NDIS fund attendance at an Autism Camp Australia camp?**

- We are experts in the Autism field
- We are evidence-based
- We are Autistic-led - we pride ourselves on having significant neurodivergent representation at every level of the organisation, are informed by lived experience and engage in positive lived-experience role modelling
- We listen, engage and uplift Autistic voices, constantly evaluating and improving to be the best we can be for all Autistic and neurodivergent people.
- We are passionate about driving life changing outcomes for Autistic people around mental health and wellbeing, employability, economic participation, education, and ultimately life expectancy.
- Our results speak for themselves.

## **Qualitative Evaluation Data**

- We have developed the most comprehensive camp program in Australia, for families of Autistic young people.
- Our programs are tried-and-tested, and the results speak for themselves. Our existing evaluation data from the last 3.5 years shows families:
  - improved skills/knowledge (96%)
  - increased motivation and confidence (93%)



- had a boost to self-esteem, mental and physical health and resilience (91%)
- reduced social isolation and enhanced social networks (86%)
- achieved improved capacity and resilience in emotional and behavioural functioning (88%)

## Outcomes

It is advisable to discuss the outcomes and benefits of attending a camp with members of your key support team (Paediatrician, Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist etc) and, if they are happy to do so, have them endorse the benefits in terms of capacity building from your attendance at a camp in their report for your NDIS planning meeting.

## Short Term Outcomes

- Participants experience a 'safe' environment alongside other Autistic families and supported by specialised team members. They share stories and experiences with people who have lived experience of Autism or are living within an Autistic family.
- Participants feel a sense of relief from social isolation and form new valuable and reliable social connections with people from their Autistic community.
- Participants are able to 'just be' while at camp. The neuro-normative expectations of day-to-day mainstream life are put to one side, and they are encouraged to celebrate their Autistic identity and Autistic culture. Participants engage with positive role models and experience inclusion, acceptance and autonomy.
- Participants are engaged in therapies, education, skills development and peer-to-peer support as part of the program. They benefit from increased knowledge, understanding and training.
- Participants in the programs build capacity in confidence, self-reliance, independence and self-advocacy skills.

## Medium Term Outcomes

- Participants form long and lasting friendships. They meet with, and talk with new friends, and reach out to other members in their Autistic community. They have increased social supports. They foster a strong sense of belonging and increase their social cohesion, connection and functioning within their 'safe' Autistic community.
- This new sense of inclusion, acceptance and autonomy is empowering for participants. Their new approach is transformative, reducing anxiety and building self-worth. Participants experience an improvement in their mental health.



- Autistic young people are able to participate more at school. Their new found confidence helps them navigate the often confusing idiosyncrasies of neurotypical behaviour and social situations become easier.
- Siblings have a greater ability to maintain informal support of the Autistic young person, to advocate for, and support them to participate and contribute to community and enjoy an enduring and mutually sustaining relationship.
- Parents experience an increase in confidence and this enables them to explore new opportunities like volunteering, work placements, training and apprenticeships, as well as practical assistance and supports.

## Long Term Outcomes

- With their new Autistic family friends, participants feel supported to try new things. They have much higher engagement and participation rates in mainstream social and community activities. This results in a much stronger sense of connectedness in their broader community, and in turn, gives them the confidence and connections to access support networks, community services and other new opportunities of social, civic and economic participation.
- Participants experience a sustained increase in self-worth and wellbeing and improvements in mental and physical wellbeing. They regularly engage in self-care and are better able to care for and support themselves and their family members.
- Participants experience a cumulative increase in confidence, community connection, skills, knowledge, training and independence improving readiness for economic participation, employment and education. Reduced levels of welfare dependency in the long-term.

Ultimately, all of these factors will impact on life expectancy, which best-case scenario, based on three international studies, is currently 53 years of age.

The Autistic Young People Program combines group therapy sessions with adventure and art/craft filled activities. All activities are capacity building, encourage communication, teamwork, self-confidence, self-care, peer-to-peer relationship building, emotional regulation and most importantly, access to their Autistic community.

Individual activities and their direct benefits:

- > **Proprioceptive/Sensory Play** – supporting cognitive development, improvement in fine and gross motor skills and processing, boosting creativity and self-discovery, social competence, improved social interaction skills;
- > **Movement/Rhythm Therapy – integrative dance** – improvement in gross motor skills and



processing, connection, social and community participation, communication (especially for non-verbal young people), improved social interaction skills;

> **Social Skills Support & Learning – new friends** - social and community participation, improved family relations, confidence, social competence, improved social interaction skills; >

> **Equine Assisted Learning** – improvement in gross motor skills and processing, assertiveness, emotional awareness, empathy, stress tolerance, flexibility, impulse control, problem-solving skills. self-actualisation;

> **Art Therapy** — improvement in fine motor skills and processing, behavioural management, process feelings, emotional release, stress and anxiety relief, increased self- esteem, self-discovery;

> **Rock Climbing Wall** – improvement in fine and gross motor skills and processing, increased flexibility and muscle extension, encourages internal regulation, develops the vestibular system, problem solving, decision-making, ability to think sequentially, improved focus on cognitive tasks, cardiovascular exercise and general health and fitness;

> **Kayaking** – improvement in gross motor skills and processing, balance and mobility, problem-solving skills, independence, confidence gaining, cardiovascular exercise and general health and fitness;

> **Colour Play/Nature Craft** – improved cognition and fine motor skills and processing, social and community participation, confidence, develop interactive skills, stress and anxiety relief, increased self-esteem, self-discovery;

> **Coastal Birds and Kite Making/Flying** – reduced anxiety, improved cognition, fine and gross motor skills, social and community participation, confidence, develop interactive skills, increased self-esteem, self-discovery; and

> **Group Interaction Out of Hours** - social and community participation, improved family relations, daily living skills, choice and control, confidence, improved social communication and social interaction skills.

## Case Study

The following case study gives a good overview of the type of outcomes you can expect from your stay at ACA.

X who is 12 is socially isolated due to behavioural issues (anxiety and aggression) and sensory and communication deficits related to his Autism. His carer, Y, is a 54 yr old single mum who suffers from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and anxiety/depression related to her social isolation and burden of her caring role for a child with severe behavioural issues. The child is very attached to the mother and very dependent on her for all his needs even day to day care - dressing, eating, organising all his education, medical appointments, therapy, social activities as well as his NDIS supports and managing his team of support workers. The child's sibling Z is fearful of her brothers' aggressive behaviour, feels isolated, resentment about changes to family routines, about X getting all the attention, and guilt over her own abilities and successes. The family unit has broken down, which is common in Autistic families, and all



friends and extended family have been alienated over time due to the child's behavioural issues and demanding behaviours. Both X and his sibling Z, however, enjoy holidays in cabins and outdoor activities.

ACA would provide for this family:

**For the Autistic young person (X):**

- > **Social and community participation:** X will make and keep friends, interact with the community, learn to behave within limits accepted by others, learn to cope with feelings and emotions in a social context, develop communication skills;
- > **Learning:** X will improve his understanding and remembering of information, learn new things, and practice and use new skills;
- > **Independence and autonomy:** X will learn skills, and become more motivated to improve cognitive capacity to organise his life, to plan and make decisions, and to take responsibility for himself, including completing daily tasks, making decisions and problem solving;
- > **Sensory and emotional regulation:** X will learn how to perceive and discern other's emotions, and use that information to facilitate his own thinking, problem solving, acting and regulating his own emotions.
- > **Fine and gross motor skills:** improving his fine and gross motor skills are important for X's independence. Having good motor control will help X explore the world around him, and help with his cognitive development; and:
- > Will result in the opportunity for X to work towards attending an annual camp independently (with the assistance of specialised disability support workers).

**For the parent (Y):**

- > Y will experience temporary relief from caregiving responsibilities;
- > Peer-to-peer support – Y will boost her knowledge through information sharing and go home with insight into emotional, social and practical skills to enable her to function better day-to-day;
- > Y will have easy (logistical) access to educational/learning supports for the family;
- > Self-Care – Y will take a moment to look after herself - boosting her confidence and self-esteem, and giving her renewed energy to care for X; and
- > Reduced need for formal and informal supports: Y will be less reliant on NDIS and disability worker supports.

**For the sibling (Z):**

- > Z will feel a sense of relief from the burden of responsibility;
- > Z will have an opportunity to express her concerns about the future care of her brother; > Z will have a greater understanding of issues pertaining to her brother's disability;
- > Peer to peer support – Z will understand that she is not alone with her concerns and feelings;



- > Z will have support to express and deal with these feelings; and
- > Z will have an opportunity to develop strategies to deal with difficult situations.

## **Evaluation**

Activities at ACA programs are aligned with an individual's capacity building outcomes and their personal NDIS goals and aspirations. At ACA we will develop an Individual Capacity Building - Camp Plan for each participant and goals will be documented, actions monitored and success measured at the initial phone meeting and at the end of the camp. A comprehensive report is provided after attendance at camp.