

A Zoe Grove field guide

Thriving Kids

The speech pathologist's guide to Australia's biggest shift in paediatric support. What is changing, what it means for your work, and how to walk in ready.

Big change is coming, and you have adapted before. Here is the clear, plain-English picture, so you can meet it with calm and confidence.

The shape of the shift

Three dates that matter

Now



Plan and prepare

1 Oct 2026



Thriving Kids begins for under-8s, lower needs

1 Jan 2028



Full rollout; NDIS access changes for that cohort

By the numbers

\$4 billion

committed over five years to build it

8 & under

the children moving to Thriving Kids

Outside the NDIS

community-based Foundational Supports

What it means for your work

Three shifts that change the job.

01

From
Doing therapy



To
**Building
capacity**

Less therapy time, more
equipping their everyday
world.

02

From
Clinician-led



To
Parent-led

Coaching parents is now
the core skill, not the extra.

03

From
Working solo



To
**Working as a
team**

Deliberate teamwork
across the disciplines.

And the NDIS is tightening too

For the children who remain on it: CPSP-delivered therapy, funding released quarterly, and a new planning framework. The throughline is the same, show that your support is the **right amount, delivering real outcomes.**



Future-proof your skills

Five moves that pay off in either system.

01

Get genuinely good at parent coaching.

Coach the parent well, and you are indispensable in either system.

02

Sharpen your outcome and goal-writing.

Functional, measurable, and defensible at review.

03

Build capacity-building into every session.

Make 'what will you try at home this week?' standard practice.

04

Strengthen your transdisciplinary fluency.

Know enough about OT, physio and psychology goals to collaborate well.

05

Do not go it alone.

Coaching and community help you navigate change faster, and stay steadier.

Talking your families through it

When parents ask, what does this mean?

- ✓ Reassure them support is not disappearing. It is changing shape.
- ✓ Explain the difference: Thriving Kids for lower needs from October 2026, continued NDIS for higher needs.
- ✓ Be honest about what is not yet known, and point them to official sources.
- ✓ Frame their growing role as a feature, not a downgrade.
- ✓ Reassure them you will keep your skills current through the transition.

Policy is still being finalised. Always check [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au) and [ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au) for the latest. This is a plain-English orientation, not official advice.

Where to from here?

Walk in ready, not just aware.

This guide gets you oriented. **Thriving Kids Ready** gives you the parent-coaching scripts, goal-writing templates and frameworks built for the new model.

Founding members save 20%

zoegrove.com.au/thriving-kids