

Urban design to support children with disabilities (plain language)

Do Australian policies
help kids with disabilities?

Children with disabilities often face more challenges than other kids. This is not just from their disability, but also from being left out. Neighbourhoods can make life easier or harder. We looked at policies to see if they help.

What we did

- We checked policies from all parts of Australia.
- We asked: do they make neighbourhoods better for children with disabilities?
- We used eight simple measures of what makes a good neighbourhood.

What we found

- Seven of the eight measures were in some policies.
- Education and housing were the main focus.
- But most policies were too small and missed big changes. Urban planning was almost never used to help children.

Why it matters

- Good neighbourhoods can help kids stay healthy and feel included.
- We need stronger action, linked to world goals like the UN Sustainable Development Goals and UNICEF's Child-Friendly Cities.

Where can I find out more?

Badland H, Villanueva K, Dearn E, Alderton A. (2025). Do Australian disability policies support accessible and inclusive neighbourhoods for children with disability and their families? Urban Policy & Research. DOI: 10.1080/08111146.2025.2541172



We have used person-first language. Person-first language puts the person before their disability – for example, ‘children with disability’. We recognise that identity-first language is important to the many people with disability who have advocated for the use of this language.

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