

3. Participants from birth to before starting school: Has the NDIS helped?

3.1 Results across all participants

For participants who have been in the Scheme for approximately one or two years as at 30 June 2019, Figure 3.1 shows the percentage of parents/carers who reported that the NDIS has helped with outcomes related to each of the four domains, after one year in the scheme (first review) and after two years in the scheme (second review).

Figure 3.1 Percentage who think that the NDIS has helped with outcomes related to each domain

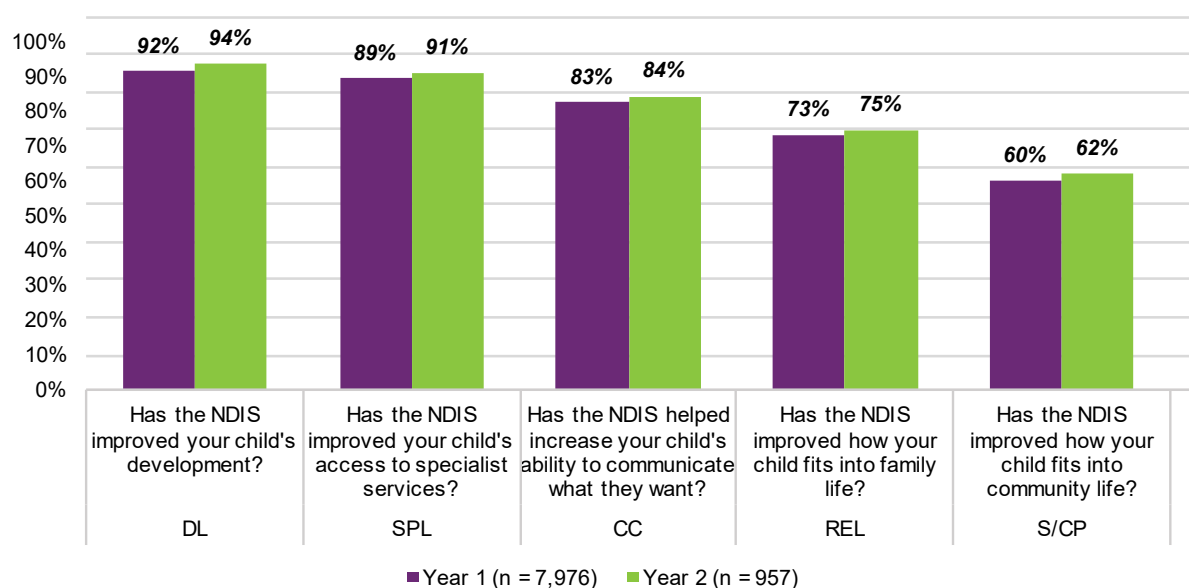


Figure 3.1 shows that opinions on whether the NDIS has helped vary considerably by domain for the youngest cohort of participants. After approximately one year in the Scheme, there is widespread agreement that the NDIS has helped in areas related to the child's development (91.5%) and access to specialist services (89.4%). A slightly smaller percentage (82.5%) feel that the NDIS has helped improve their child's ability to communicate what they want. Percentages are lower for integration into family and community, with 73.3% thinking that the NDIS has helped with how their child fits into family life, and 60.2% thinking that the NDIS has helped with fitting into community life.

Across all domains, the percentage who think the NDIS has helped is slightly higher for participants who have been in the Scheme for two years, compared to those who have been in the Scheme for one year.

3.2 Results by participant characteristics

3.2.1 Year 1 'Has the NDIS Helped?' indicators – participant characteristics

Year 1²¹ (first review) indicators have been analysed by participant characteristics using one-way analyses, revealing the following key findings:

- For all five domains, participants with higher baseline plan utilisation are significantly more likely to give a positive response. The likelihood of a positive response starts out low for those with less than 20% utilisation. It increases strongly as utilisation increases from 0-20% to 20-40%, and at a more modest rate as utilisation increases above 40%.
- The likelihood of a positive response also varied by disability. Parents/carers of children with another sensory/speech disability²² were much more likely to say that the NDIS had helped after one year in the Scheme, across all domains but particularly community participation (73.6% compared to 60.2% overall) and communication (90.9% compared to 82.5%). Parents/carers of participants with a hearing impairment, developmental delay/global developmental delay, or autism also had slightly more positive opinions. On the other hand, participants with visual impairment were much less likely to think that the NDIS had helped after one year in the Scheme (13.5-18.1% lower than overall for the five questions). Parents/carers of participants with a physical disability, cerebral palsy or another neurological disorder were also slightly less likely to think that the NDIS had helped.
- Participants entering the Scheme for early intervention were slightly more likely to think that the NDIS had helped than those entering due to disability.
- Parents/carers tend to be more positive where the participant's plan is self-managed.
- For areas related to communication, fitting into family life, and fitting into community life, parents/carers of participants with low level of function tended to respond less positively than parents/carers of participants with either medium or high level of function. For these areas, the likelihood of a positive response also decreased with annualised baseline plan budget.
- The percentage of positive responses tended to higher for participants living in major cities, and to decrease with increasing remoteness.
- Respondents from SA, NSW and ACT tended to be more optimistic that the NDIS had helped, and those from NT and TAS less positive.
- Responses also varied according to other measured outcomes. For example, parents/carers of children who have friends they enjoy playing with are more likely to respond positively.

²¹ This includes participants with a baseline and first review only.

²² The "Other sensory/speech" category includes sensory disabilities not included in other categories (hearing impairment, visual impairment), for example sensory processing difficulties, as well as disabilities related to speech or language disorders.

3.2.2 Longitudinal ‘Has the NDIS Helped?’ indicators – participant characteristics

Analysis of longitudinal indicators by participant characteristics has been examined in two ways:

1. A comparison of the percentage reporting that the NDIS had helped after two years in the Scheme with the percentage reporting that the NDIS had helped after one year in the Scheme. The difference (percentage after two years minus percentage after one year) is compared for different subgroups.
2. Multiple regression analyses modelling the probability of improvement / deterioration over the participant’s second year in the Scheme.²³

Some key features of the analyses are summarised below.

The NDIS has improved my child’s development

The percentage of parents/carers reporting that the NDIS improved their child’s development increased 4.8%, from 89.6% to 94.4%, between the first review and the second review. Of those who responded negatively at the first review, 60.2% responded positively at the second review (improvement). Table 3.1 sets out the breakdown of the movements.

Table 3.1 Breakdown of net movement in longitudinal responses

Longitudinal Period	Number of first review responses		Improvements: No to Yes		Deteriorations: Yes to No		Net Movement
	No	Yes	Number	%	Number	%	
Review 1 to Review 2	88	758	53	60.2%	12	1.6%	+4.8%

While modelling was performed for this question, due to the small sample sizes, no factors were found to be significant predictors of improvement or deterioration.

The NDIS has improved my child’s access to specialist services

The percentage of parents/carers reporting that the NDIS improved their child’s access to specialist services increased 3.8% from 87.9% to 91.7% between the first review and the second review. **Table 3.2** sets out the breakdown of the movements in responses between first review and second review.

Table 3.2 Breakdown of net movement in longitudinal responses

Longitudinal Period	Number of first review responses		Improvements: No to Yes		Deteriorations: Yes to No		Net Movement
	No	Yes	Number	%	Number	%	
Review 1 to Review 2	102	739	52	51.0%	20	2.7%	+3.8%

²³ Regression models for improvement include all participants who answered “No” at review 1 and model the probability of answering “Yes” at review 2 (between 88 and 363 participants, depending on the domain). Models for deterioration include all participants who answered “Yes” at review 1 and model the probability of answering “No” at review 2 (between 457 and 758 participants).

The main drivers of the likelihood of improvement or deterioration are as follows:

- Participants living in an area with a higher Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) were more likely to improve.
- Participants who were not receiving disability supports prior to entering the NDIS (were not a part of an existing State or Commonwealth scheme upon entry to the NDIS) were less likely to deteriorate.

The NDIS has increased my child's ability to communicate what they want

The percentage of parents/carers reporting that the NDIS increased their child's ability to communicate what they want increased 5.6% from 79.9% to 85.6% between the first review and the second review. Table 3.3 sets out the breakdown of the movements in responses between first review and second review.

Table 3.3 Breakdown of net movement in longitudinal responses

Longitudinal Period	Number of first review responses		Improvements: No to Yes		Deteriorations: Yes to No		Net Movement
	No	Yes	Number	%	Number	%	
Review 1 to Review 2	167	665	76	45.5%	29	4.4%	+5.6%

While modelling was performed for this question, due to the small sample sizes, no factors were found to be significant predictors of improvement or deterioration.

The NDIS has improved how my child fits into family life

The percentage of parents/carers reporting that the NDIS improved how their child fits into family life increased 5.9% from 69.4% to 75.3% between the first review and the second review. Table 3.4 sets out the breakdown of the movements in responses between first review and second review.

Table 3.4 Breakdown of net movement in longitudinal responses

Longitudinal Period	Number of first review responses		Improvements: No to Yes		Deteriorations: Yes to No		Net Movement
	No	Yes	Number	%	Number	%	
Review 1 to Review 2	254	575	87	34.3%	38	6.6%	+5.9%

The main drivers of the likelihood of improvement or deterioration are as follows:

- Participants with a higher level of function were more likely to improve.
- Participants living in NT, TAS, WA or ACT were less likely to improve.
- Participants living in an area with a higher Index of Economic Resources (IER) were more likely to improve.

The NDIS has improved how my child fits into community life

The percentage of parents/carers reporting that the NDIS improved how their child fits into community life increased 7.7% from 55.7% to 63.4% between the first review and the second review. Table 3.5 sets out the breakdown of the movements in responses between first review and second review.

Table 3.5 Breakdown of net movement in longitudinal responses

Longitudinal Period	Number of first review responses		Improvements: No to Yes		Deteriorations: Yes to No		Net Movement
	No	Yes	Number	%	Number	%	
Review 1 to Review 2	363	457	109	30.0%	46	10.1%	+7.7%

The main drivers of the likelihood of improvement or deterioration are as follows:

- Participants with a higher level of function were more likely to improve.
- Participants living in New South Wales or Queensland were more likely to improve.
- Participants living in an area with a higher Index of Education and Occupation (IEO) were more likely to improve.
- Participants with a higher level of NDIA support through the participant pathway were more likely to deteriorate.
- Participants who were not receiving disability supports prior to entering the NDIS (were not a part of an existing State or Commonwealth scheme upon entry to the NDIS) were less likely to deteriorate.