



School transition checklist

A resource for parents, guardians

Transitioning into a new school environment can be a challenge for many children living with epilepsy. Parents and guardians can help this process by working with the new school to ensure that all necessary adjustments and supports are in place before they start.

If your child has additional or complex needs, check with the school transition guidelines provided by your state or territory government.





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About this resource

This resource is designed to help parents and guardians ensure that their child has a smooth transition into the next stage of their education journey. Whether your child is starting school, changing schools, or transitioning to a secondary school environment, the following information can help you ensure that the school transition process is positive.

Important steps for parents/guardians

School transitions can be stressful for children and their families. If you are the parent or guardian of a child with epilepsy, the following checklist is a good place to start:

- Read *Epilepsy Smart Schools – A practical guide* and share it with key staff at the school.
- Provide the school with an Epilepsy Management Plan (EMP) and an Emergency Medication Management Plan (EMMP).
- Contribute to your child's Student Health Support Plan (refer to list of Education Departments below)
- Consider the impact that epilepsy may have on your child's learning. Information on this topic can be found in the *Learning conversations about epilepsy* guide.

Communication

Positive school transitions start with great communication. Before your child starts at their new school, be sure to do the following:

- Identify the staff member who is coordinating your child's transition.
- Identify the staff member who can help you with any concerns or issues that may arise.
- Check that the school has procedures in place to ensure that all relevant teachers are advised of your child's epilepsy and any additional needs that they may have.
- Ensure that you have communicated any known risks or considerations that are relevant to your child, such as:
 - fatigue management
 - sport participation
 - testing and exam conditions
 - lighting
 - heating
 - learning difficulties
 - social issues.
- Confirm that you understand how information about the following topics will be communicated between home and the school:
 - seizures or other medical concerns
 - learning issues
 - social issues
 - homework
 - upcoming events
 - camps or excursions.
- Establish how the school will ensure your child is included in school events such as school sports, excursions, and camps.



Epilepsy and teachers

- Ensure that teaching staff have had epilepsy training specific to your child. This can be organised through your local Epilepsy Smart Australia organisation. Remember, this training is in addition to a teacher's standard first aid training.
- If your child has been prescribed an emergency medication (such as Midazolam or Clonazepam), ensure that your child's teachers have received specific emergency medication training conducted by a recognised Epilepsy Smart trainer.

Epilepsy disclosure

Talk to your child about whether they want to disclose their epilepsy to their peers/school friends. The *Disclosing your epilepsy* resource is a great place to start.

If your child wants to disclose their epilepsy to their peers, you might like to ask:

- How will the school support your child in disclosing their epilepsy?

If your child does not want to disclose their epilepsy to their peers, you can also ask:

- How will the school protect your child's privacy?

Other things to discuss with your child's school

Targeted supplementary funding programs are available for government schools.

Resources are provided to schools for a defined number of students with moderate to severe additional needs. Resources can be used in several ways to support students with epilepsy. Note: These programs differ from state to state.

Student Support Service Officers are available in government schools and include many professionals, including psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers. They can assist students who have additional needs, including those with epilepsy.

Catholic and independent schools provide services and support for students with additional needs. Speak to the school Principal to find out more information.





School transition checklist

Government Departments – Education

ACT www.det.act.gov.au
NSW www.dec.nsw.gov.au
NT www.education.nt.gov.au
QLD www.education.qld.gov.au
SA www.decd.sa.gov.au
TAS www.education.tas.gov.au
VIC www.education.vic.gov.au
WA www.education.wa.edu.au

Other resources

To find out more about Epilepsy Smart Schools and how you can access education and training for educators in your state or territory, contact the **National Epilepsy Support Service** on 1300 761 487.

This fact sheet is part of a suite of resources targeted to both parents and teachers to assist students with epilepsy in school settings.

The *Epilepsy Smart Schools – A Practical Guide* and supporting resources provide information on how a school can embed inclusive, safe and educationally sound practices for students with epilepsy and, in so doing, become 'epilepsy smart'. The guide and supporting resources can be accessed via www.epilepsysmartschools.org.au

Epilepsy support

The National Epilepsy Support Service is available Monday – Saturday, 9.00am – 7.00pm (AEST) to provide support and information across Australia.
Phone: 1300 761 487
Email: support@epilepsysmart.org.au

Lived experience

We recognise all people living with epilepsy and the impact it has on their lives. We take a moment to acknowledge the lived experience they have shared with us. In sharing their stories, we acknowledge the strength and resilience people living with epilepsy have shown in the face of not getting a fair go.

A medical note

The information contained in this publication provides general information about epilepsy. It does not provide specific advice. Specific health and medical advice should always be obtained from a qualified health professional.

Epilepsy Smart Australia Program National Epilepsy Support Service 1300 761 487 Website epilepsysmart.org.au



Australian Government
Department of Health

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