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As a child gets closer to turning 18, we know their ability to make decisions and do things for themselves may increase. This means they may not need a child representative anymore. As much as possible, we want to include them in decisions about their own care and supports.

If a child would like to represent themselves, they should discuss this with their My NDIS Contact. Only child participants can represent themselves. Children who are accessing community connections or applying to be a participant can't represent themselves.

## When doesn't a child participant need a child representative?

Sometimes a child participant can make decisions for themselves. It may not be appropriate for them to have a representative. In those circumstances, they may not need a child representative to act and make decisions about the NDIS on their behalf. A child participant may be able to communicate with us and make decisions about the NDIS on their own, or with some support.

When we decide to remove a child participant's representative, we need to be satisfied that:

- the child participant can make their own decisions
- it's appropriate for the child participant to represent themselves.

When deciding if a child participant can make their own decisions and it's appropriate for them to represent themselves, we must talk with them and their representatives. We talk about whether the child participant would like to make their own decisions about the NDIS.

When deciding whether a child participant can make their own decisions, we think about whether:

- the child participant can understand the information they need to make decisions about the NDIS, including decisions about their plan
- the child participant can use that information to make decisions about the NDIS
- the child participant can understand the consequences of their decisions and what it means in their life
- the child participant can communicate their decisions in some way
- there are people in the child participant's life who are happy and able to support them to make their own decisions
- family relationships can continue
- any existing arrangements are in place under other Commonwealth, state and territory schemes, for example, the child participant's arrangements with Services Australia.

## Example

Ebony is 16 years old and she's an NDIS participant. She would like to make her own decisions about the NDIS. Ebony's family is happy to support her and help her make decisions. She's happy for her family to help her when she needs it. They also know that she has done a lot of work to develop her decision-making skills. Ebony doesn't need a child representative because we are satisfied that Ebony is able to make decisions for herself.

We make this decision based on:

- Ebony's ability to identify and use information to make and communicate decisions about the NDIS.
- Ebony's ability to understand the consequences of her decisions.
- The support Ebony will receive when making decisions.

In Ebony's circumstances it's appropriate for her to represent herself. When we made this decision we considered:

- Ebony's wishes and the views of her child representatives.
- The effect of our decision on Ebony's family relationships.
- The arrangements under other Schemes for Ebony.

Ebony also gave us her [consent for us to share information](#) with her parents.