

High level Summary

The Minds at Play Minecraft Social Program is designed to provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive virtual environment for neurodiverse children, youth, and adults. The program runs for 2 - 2.5 hours weekly and is facilitated by experienced Games Masters. The Minecraft platform provides a unique opportunity for participants to develop their social-emotional, cognitive, and communication skills. The constructive nature of Minecraft enables participants to develop spatial reasoning, creativity, and aesthetic sense. The program has shown that players develop effective altruism and empathy.

All our programs focus on building the specific program/game skills, communication, confidence, social growth, collaboration, conflict resolution, emotional development, communication and literacy skills. Reporting on these outcomes are available. Recently one of our programs was reviewed by the NDIA Internal Reviews & Complaints Branch and stated "*funding has been approved in line with our guidelines "reasonable and necessary supports"*"

Four different Minds at Play staff roles support the program. The program delivery is performed by Games Masters, supported by Guild Masters, Quality controlled by Masters at Arms, and administrated by the Manager of Multitasking. The program runs 4 times a year for a 9/10-week period, based around NSW School Term. The program costs are:

\$470 for a 10-week term, which is 20 hours, and for ages 6 to7, which is 15 hours.

\$625 for a 10-week term, which is 20 hours, and for ages 13 and above, which is 25 hours.

The Activity

We use the popular computer game Minecraft in our servers, players will need to work together to build up their village, and after setting some collective goals, work together to make it grow. Players go on quests that need them to communicate and work together to succeed and win rewards. This offers participants the opportunity to engage in creativity and problem solving while also being collaborative.

Program Objectives

All Minds at Play Programs are social programs that focus on the following for our players:

- Build Program/Game Skills - by engaging in the program, we build the players skills and confidence in the program's steps, languages, routines and "behavioural norms" to use these skills in the community.
- Verbal and non-verbal communication - using language and text skills to express ideas and feelings
- Build Confidence - supporting players decision making, encouraging positive collaborative behaviours and actions, developed through peer activities
- Social Growth - helping the player make friends, greet others, and develop sharing and turn-taking skills
- Collaboration - by working as a group to achieve a common goal
- Problem Solving - sharing, taking turns in different roles and working together
- Conflict resolution - working through differences for a shared aim
- Emotional Development - learning to understand and talk about emotions (their own and other people's) and problem-solving skills.
- Communication and literacy skills - expanding vocabulary around social and emotional development, increasing literacy skills and language development through peer activities.

Reporting is available on the progress of the above at the end of term or yearly if requested.



Program delivery and Support

Delivery of above stated program is performed by our **Games Masters**, supported by our **Guild Masters**, quality controlled by our **Masters at Arms** and administrated by our **Manager of Multitasking**. These 4 staff roles support the player as follows:

Games Masters are skilled at the programs they run and have been comprehensively trained in the [Game to Grow Method of Applied Gaming](#) for Minds at Play.

They are trained on applying international social flourishing model and managing neurodiverse players on their behaviour and are the primary player's support.

A Guild Master is always operational and available for immediate support during the program for escalated player behaviour support and management. They also handle, summarise, and communicate issues and strategies with players, parents, and carers.

Our Master at Arms checks the Quality control of our program delivery by our Games Masters and ensures our Games Masters are trained in all the tools and techniques required for seamless player engagement and support. They are also available for immediate player support if required.

Our Manager of Multitasking manages the players registration and gaming schedules, organises them into appropriate groups, sharing relevant medical conditions and communication strategies with the Games Masters. They also organise and manage session reminders for players, and handle queries from parents, Support Coordinators and Plan Managers and write Players Progress reports based on the data collected with support of Games Masters and Guild Masters.

Player's Safety and Feedback

Minds at Play understands the communities it serves and operates with player safety as a priority. To achieve this, we have the following protocols in place:

- All staff have relevant Police and Working with Children checks.
- Players are verified prior to being added to our video chat system. They are required to be manually onboarded by the operational team and their access is limited to only the groups they have registered to attend.
- Our gaming system requires multiple points of verification before a player can be given access to the system.
- Guild Masters can remotely monitor the game sessions to identify when players and Games Masters are online, on camera and on voice chat.
- Games Master reporting is performed at the end of each session, with the details of the players interactions with the program content, other players, and the Games Master.
- Incident reporting for our Games Master is available. If an incident is triggered, members of the operational team will respond accordingly with player management strategies organised with the players, parents, and carers.
- Players have the option to provide anonymous feedback at the end of each session using an online survey. The results are monitored by Guild Masters which may result in them following up with Games Master or Players.
- Parents have the option to provide anonymous feedback at the conclusion of the program through an end of term survey. These results are provided directly to the Management team.
- Minds at Play also call parents and carers to obtain insights on our programs, processes, and staff to obtain qualitative feedback for improvement.
- Players, parents, and carers can contact Minds at Play operational staff via phone, email, and video chat system to raise issues and provide feedback at any time.

The above stated protocols make us compliant with the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) [Code of Conduct](#) enforced by NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.



Minds at Play and the NDIS

Minds at Play is not a registered NDIS provider and has been featured on the NDIS Media twice since 2021 for our [innovation](#) and [programs](#). In 2022, we were invited by the NDIA in the Thin Market Trial Evaluation in Berri-Barmera to assist regional and remote NDIS participants obtain social support. In 2023 we were a finalist for best regional, rural, and remote Service/Program at the Australian Disability Service awards and in Feb 2023, our Dungeons and Dragons Program was reviewed by the Internal Reviews & Complaints Branch, NDIA for one of our autistic players. The outcome of the internal review advised the following:

*"The support letter demonstrates how engaging with the [Minds at Play] **Dungeons and Dragons program** will help with [The Player] and his disability. I acknowledge that this will help him build his capacity regarding social relationships with his friends."*

*"This funding has been approved in line with our guidelines **"reasonable and necessary supports"***

Group Size

- Young Children aged 6 to 7 – up to 4 players
- Children aged 8 to 12 – up to 4 players
- Teenagers 13 to 15 – up to 5 players
- Young adults 16 to 18 – up to 5 players
- Adults 19+ – up to 5 players

4 different Minds at Play staff roles support the program

Funding Required:

The program runs 4 times a year for a 9/10-week period, based around NSW School Term.

From July 2024, the cost of the program is \$625 (\$470 for Young Children) for a 10-week term.

From Ages 6-7, which is 15 hours, the per hour cost for this program is \$31.33.

From Ages 8-12, which is 20 hours, the per hour cost for this program is \$31.25.

For Ages 13 & above, which is 25 hours. The per hour cost for this program will be \$25.0.

Reporting is available on the player's progress at the end of term and/or yearly if requested at \$150 per report for each program.

Funding required for a participant to access this program and receive 2 progress reports for a full year is **\$2,800**, per program.

Depending on the person's NDIS objectives or goals, funding is required under Core or Capacity Building.

Listed below are the most appropriate categories to use:

1. Increased Social & Community Participation - Category 9
2. Improved Daily Living - Category 15
3. CORE - Assistance with Social, Community & Civic Participation - Category 4
4. Improved Relationships - Category 11

Please include the above funding as a **stated/listed support** in the person's NDIS Plan, with approval for **pre-payment**.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Minds at Play on 0484 125 963 or email info@mindsatplay.com.au