



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



How we can improve our family and children programs

We want to know what you think

DSS3510.11.24



Easy Read version

How to use this document



The Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) wrote this document.

When you read the word 'we', it means DSS.



We wrote this document in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold
Not bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



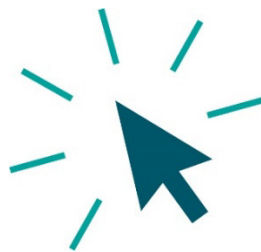
We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page **34**.



This is an Easy Read summary of another document.

This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other document on our website.

www.engage.dss.gov.au/families-and-children-fac-activity-children-youth-and-parenting-programs-discussion-paper

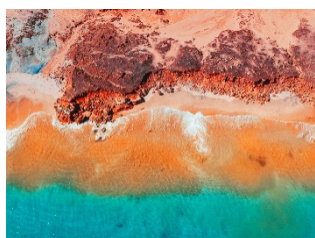


You can ask for help to read this document.

A friend, family member or support person might be able to help you.



We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of the land we live on – Australia.



They were the first people to live on and use the:

- land
- waters.

What's in this document?

Share your ideas about our programs	5
Support the needs of different families and children	8
Be more inclusive for people with disability	15
Work with the Early Years Strategy	17
Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families	19
Support people who have experienced violence	21
Improve how grants work	23
Support communities	25
Support people as early as possible	30
How to send us your ideas	33
Word list	34

Share your ideas about our programs

We have 3 programs that support children and their families with:



- how they grow and develop
- parenting
- their mental health
- their wellbeing.

Our 3 programs are called:



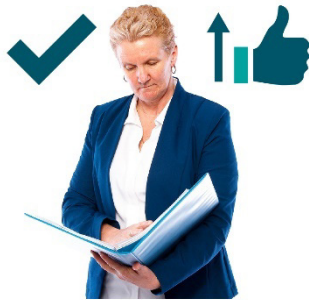
- Children and Parenting Support



- Communities for Children Facilitating Partners



- Family Mental Health Support Services.



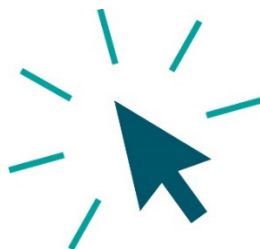
We looked at these 3 programs to find out what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



We want to know your ideas about:

- what we learned
- how you think we can improve these programs.



You can learn more about what we learned on our website.

www.engage.dss.gov.au/families-and-children-fac-activity-children-youth-and-parenting-programs-discussion-paper/evidence-paper

How to answer our questions



We have included some questions for you to think about.

You can answer:



- all of our questions



- some of our questions



You can find out how to send us your ideas on page [33](#).

Support the needs of different families and children



We learned that different families have different needs.



We want to make the programs easier for all types of families to go to.



For example, we could make it easier for people to get services at times that suit them.



How do you think we could make sure the programs support the needs of different families and children?

You can write your answer in the box below.



We learned that most people find out about the programs:

- from people they know
- by searching online.



We also learned that parents often don't use the programs even when they know about them.



How can we support families to find and use these programs more?

You can write your answer in the box below.



We learned that **culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)** people are less likely to use the programs.

CALD people:



- come from different **cultures** and backgrounds
- speak languages other than English.

Your culture is:



- your way of life
- how you think or act now because of how you grew up
- your beliefs
- what is important to you.



How do you think we could change the programs to support more CALD people to use them?

You can write your answer in the box below.

We want the programs to be more **inclusive** to all families.



When something is inclusive, everyone:

- can take part
- feels like they belong.



For example, we want the programs to be inclusive for parents and children who are **LGBTIQ+**.

The letters LGBTIQ stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning.

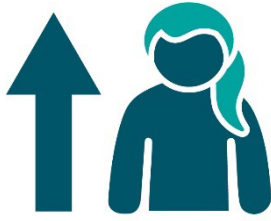


The '+' is for people who are part of the LGBTIQ+ community but don't talk about themselves using a word from this list.



How do you think we could change the programs to be more inclusive for all families?

You can write your answer in the box below.



We learned that women are more likely to take part in the programs than men.



How can we support more men to take part in the programs?

You can write your answer in the box below.

Be more inclusive for people with disability



We learned that programs need to be more inclusive for children and parents with disability.



We also learned that programs need to be more inclusive for children with **developmental concerns**.



When a child has developmental concerns, they might not develop in the same time as other children of the same age.



How can we make the programs more inclusive for people with disability or developmental concerns?

You can write your answer in the box below.



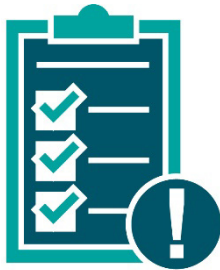
If you have a family member with disability or developmental concerns, what services do you want the most?

You can write your answer in the box below.

Work with the Early Years Strategy



The Early Years Strategy is a plan to support children in Australia from before they are born until they are 5 years old.



The Early Years Strategy includes important goals we want to achieve.

We want children to be:

- safe
- supported
- healthy
- learning.



We want children to:

- feel good about who they are
- be able to play and imagine
- have what they need to live.





We want:

- families to be connected and supported
- communities to be inclusive.



**How can the programs support the
Early Years Strategy to achieve these goals?**

You can write your answer in the box below.

Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families



We learned that some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers want the programs to:

- respect their culture
- help them feel safe.



How can we change the programs to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children?

You can write your answer in the box below.



We learned that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prefer services from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs).



ACCOs are organisations that:

- support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- are run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



How can we increase the number of ACCOs supporting children and families?

You can write your answer in the box below.

Support people who have experienced violence

The programs often deliver services to families and children who have experienced **violence**.



Violence is when someone:

- hurts you
- scares you
- controls you.



How can we change programs to feel safer for people who have experienced violence?

You can write your answer in the box below.



Children and families that experience violence might need support from other services.



How can we change the programs to better connect families to other services when they need more support?

You can write your answer in the box below.

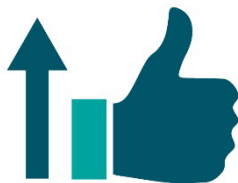
Improve how grants work



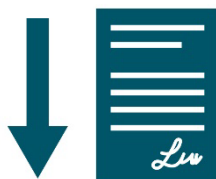
A **grant** is money from the government to pay for important work that helps others.



Organisations can apply for grants to run the programs.



We want to improve the way grants work to support the community better.



For example, we could make organisations do less paperwork.



What changes could we make to grants so organisations can focus on delivering services to the community?

You can write your answer in the box below.

Support communities



One of the programs is the Communities for Children Facilitating Partners program.

It works to support parents and children in their communities.



The program provides different supports based on what each community needs.

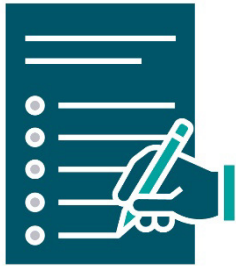


We want communities to have more of a say about what supports they need.



How can we make this program work better to support what each community needs?

You can write your answer in the box below.



There are activities in the Communities for Children Facilitating Partners program that are not measured by the government.

For example, making a plan for the community so that parents get the help they need.



We want to find a way to measure all the activities in this program.



How can we measure all the work people do through this program?

You can write your answer in the box below.



Organisations can choose from a list of services that we know work well to support families and children.



There is a rule that organisations must spend half of their grant money on these services.



But we heard this rule doesn't always work well.



We might change the rule to help organisations to choose services that are more suited to their community.



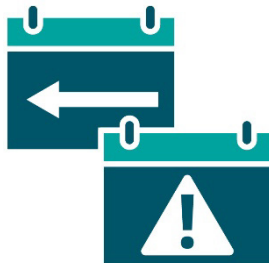
Should we change this rule, so organisations don't have to spend half of their grant money on these services?



Do you have any ideas about how to change it?

You can write your answer in the box below.

Support people as early as possible



There are 2 programs that are meant to support people as early as possible.

This could be:

- before a problem
- as soon as there is a problem.



One of the programs is the Family Mental Health Support Services program.

It works to support children's mental health.

Another one of the programs is the Children and Parenting Support program.



It works to support:

- children to develop in healthy ways
- parents and carers to build their skills and find resources.

We learned that lots of people are using these programs when:



- they have high support needs



- other services aren't available.



This means sometimes services can't give people all the support they need.



How can the Family Mental Health Support Services program focus on delivering mental health support to children early?

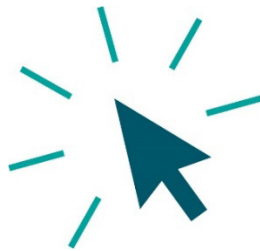
You can write your answer in the box below.



How can the Children and Parenting Support program focus on helping children and families early?

You can write your answer in the box below.

How to send us your ideas



You can share your ideas on our website.

www.engage.dss.gov.au/families-and-children-fac-activity-children-youth-and-parenting-programs-discussion-paper/make-a-submission



You can email us your ideas.

families@dss.gov.au

You can send us your ideas in the mail.



Family Policy

GPO Box 9820

Department of Social Services

Canberra ACT 2601



Please share your ideas before 24 January 2025.



You can email us if you have any questions about this document.

families@dss.gov.au

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)

CALD people:



- come from different cultures and backgrounds
- speak languages other than English.

Culture

Your culture is:



- your way of life
- how you think or act now because of how you grew up
- your beliefs
- what is important to you.



Developmental concerns

When a child has developmental concerns, they might not develop in the same time as other children of the same age.



Grant

A grant is money from the government to pay for important work that helps others.



Inclusive

When something is inclusive, everyone:

- can take part
- feels like they belong.

LGBTIQ+



The letters LGBTIQ stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning.

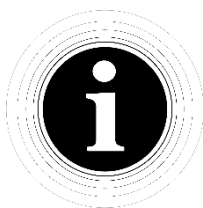
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Violence



Violence is when someone:

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