



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



**Easy
Read**

A new approach to programs for families and children

Discussion Paper



About this booklet



Australian Government

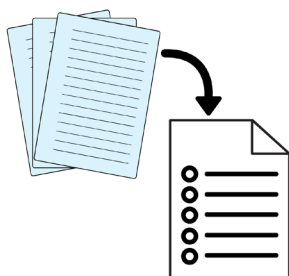
Department of Social Services

This booklet is from the
Department of Social Services.

In this booklet we will say **the department**.



This booklet is written in a way that is
easy to understand.

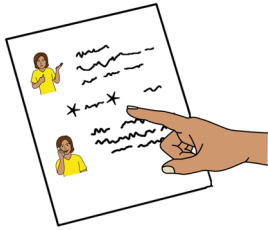


This is an easy read summary of another document.

This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can read more information about this on
the [website](https://engage.dss.gov.au/a-new-approach-to-children-and-family-programs)
engage.dss.gov.au/a-new-approach-to-children-and-family-programs



We add a star before and after ***hard words***.
Then we explain what the words mean.



You can ask someone to help you read and
understand this booklet.



Contact information is at the end of this booklet.

About the changes

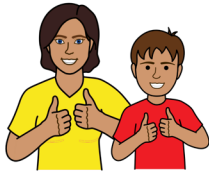


The department wants to hear ideas about how to make programs for children and families better.



For example, programs to

- help families care for young children
- improve the wellbeing of families.



The department wants to

- deliver programs that children and families need

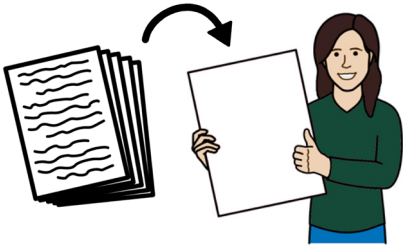


- make it easier for people who deliver services



- give more support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

A new program



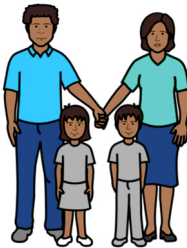
The department has 5 programs that support children and families.

They want to make 1 program instead.



The new program will support children and families with

- parenting programs and supports



- relationship services



- child development and wellbeing services.



The new program will help providers deliver services that make things better for children and families.



Ideas for the changes have come from what you have told us before.

How the new program supports children and families

The department wants to achieve 2 outcomes.



1. Help parents and carers raise healthy and strong children.



2. Help children grow into healthy and strong adults.



The new program will give money for services across 3 different groups.



When service providers apply for money they must say

- what service they will deliver
- what group the service is part of.

Group 1

Programs and information services



Programs and information services

- happen all across Australia



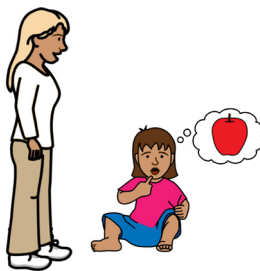
- are for all types of families.



Services might be information you can access online.

Group 2

Prevention and early intervention



Prevention and early intervention means early actions to keep people healthy and well.



These services help families support children and young people's development and wellbeing.



For example, parenting support classes.

Group 3

***Intensive* family supports**



Intensive services support families for a short time when they need it most.



Intensive supports are for families that are having a hard time with events in their lives.



Services might be counselling or mental health support.

New program funding decisions



The department will think about important outcomes when they decide who gets funding.

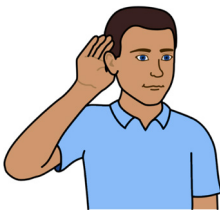


The department will make sure

- families get services early to stop the need for actions later on
 - for example, to stop the need for out of home care



- services work together in areas where families need them the most



- services listen to what the community wants and needs



- there will be more First Nations organisations funded to give help to First Nations families.

Funding agreements



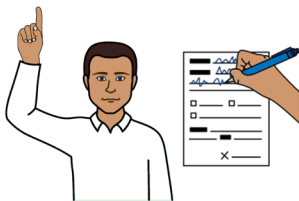
Funding agreements mean the department gives service providers money to deliver good programs to children and families.



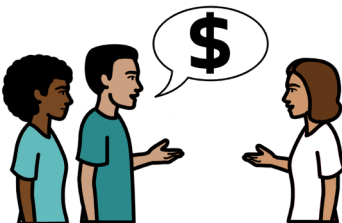
The new program will give funding agreements that last up to 5 years to service providers.



To get the funding agreement, service providers must report to the department about their programs.



Any organisation can apply for a funding agreement through a ***grant process***.



Grant process means the department invites organisations to ask for money to help them deliver their programs.

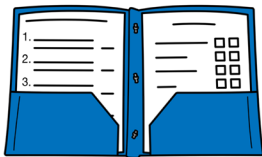
New program reporting



The new program will have easy reporting rules for service providers.



Easy reporting rules will give service providers more time to deliver the best services to children and families.



Service providers who deliver many different activities in their funding agreement will report for all activities in 1 report.



This is instead of a report for each activity.



Service providers must report on whether their activities have made things better for children and families.



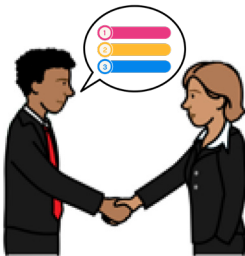
Reports must include information and stories from the children and families who have used the services.



The department will work with service providers to tell the community about the support services they can get.



The department may tell the community through social media ads or Ministers' speeches.



The department will also work with service providers to make sure there are agreed goals to meet the needs of children and families.

Have your say



The department wants to hear from service providers about the ideas for their new program.

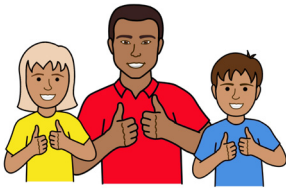
Questions you can think about



Will 1 program help make things easier for service providers?



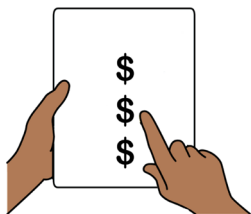
Are there other services children and families need?



Will the new program make things better for children and families?



Are there other changes to the program that will make things better for children and families?



Are the department's outcomes a good way to decide who gets funding?



Do you think there are other important ideas the department should think about when deciding who gets funding?

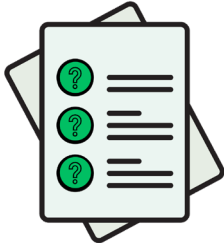


Do you have ideas about how support services can work together?



Do you have ideas about how make things better for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families?

How to share your ideas



There are different ways to share your ideas with the department.



The department follows all privacy laws and will keep all of your information private.



You can go to an online information session.



You can do a survey on the

[DSS Engage website](https://engage.dss.gov.au)

engage.dss.gov.au



You must share your ideas by
5 December 2025.



More information



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

For more information contact the
Department of Social Services.



Website

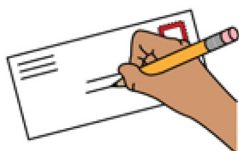
[DSS Engage website](https://engage.dss.gov.au)

engage.dss.gov.au



Email

families@dss.gov.au



Write to us

Families

GPO Box 9820

Department of Social Services

Canberra ACT 2601

Help to speak and listen



If you need help to speak or listen, the National Relay Service can help you make a call.

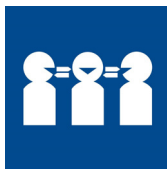


Call 1800 555 660



Website [NRS Helpdesk](https://www.accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs/nrs-helpdesk)
www.accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs/nrs-helpdesk

Help in your language



If you need help with other languages, contact the Translating and Interpreting Service.



Call 131 450



Website [TIS National](https://www.tisnational.gov.au)
www.tisnational.gov.au

Easy Read Australia created this Easy Read document in October 2025 using Picture Communication Symbols (PCS). PCS and Boardmaker are trademarks of Tobii Dynavox LLC. All rights reserved. Used with permission. You must ask for permission to use the images in this document. For more information, please visit the [Easy Read Australia website](http://www.easyreadaust.com.au). www.easyreadaust.com.au

