

# Getting support

## – it's okay to ask for help

All parents need support. As a parent you will face new and different challenges. You do not have to have all the answers, all the time.

One thing you can do as a parent is ask for help when you need it and accept it when it is offered. Sharing concerns or questions you have with family, friends, and health or child care professionals is the first step in getting the support you need.

### Why support is important

Parents who seek and accept support:

- are healthier and more relaxed, making it easier to look after their children
- are leading by example. Children who see their parents asking for support know that it is acceptable for them to ask for support when they need it
- show other people they are valued and needed. This is an important step in making and keeping a connection with others. Asking people for help shows they are special to you.

### Types of support

As a parent, you'll need different types of support at different times. All parents need three kinds of support: practical, personal and information.

#### Practical support

This is help with the day-to-day realities of parenting and functioning as a family. It is most commonly provided by people who are close at hand, for example, family, friends, teachers, neighbours and parents of your children's friends. Babysitting, transportation, household tasks and help in emergencies or with money are examples of practical support.

#### Personal support

This is support for you as a person. It comes in the form of adult friendships and relationships and is most valuable when you find someone who is available and willing to listen and share positive and non-judgmental ideas and advice. This support is even more beneficial if that person is in the same position as you or shares your interests. First-time parent groups and your children's kindergarten or school can be a good source of personal support.

## Information support

Parenting involves on-the-job learning so getting good information is important. Whether you're wondering about breastfeeding, changes to your body, managing your time or watching your child's development, you can look to your support network for help. You can also find information in books, magazines and articles, and online on a multitude of parenting and health websites.

Information support is available from:

- parenting and family support organisations
- child health and wellbeing centres and organisations
- parenting groups and playgroups
- schools
- babysitting clubs
- libraries
- government departments.

**Gratefully receive everything that is offered and feel confident as you use your instincts to judge whether the advice is right for you and your children.**

## Seeking professional help

As a parent, there will be times when you should seek the advice and support of a professional. For example, you should contact a professional if you:

- have a serious concern or are worried about any aspect of your children's health, development or behaviour
- have tried strategies suggested in parenting brochures and books and are still having trouble
- are having persistent feelings of depression, anger or resentment towards your child
- are frequently fighting with your partner, having fights that are not resolved, or if there is violence in your relationship.

Start by phoning Parentline on 1300 30 1300 (calls from mobile phones are charged at applicable rates). Parentline offers free parenting advice 8am–10pm, 7 days a week. Alternatively, visit your community health centre or speak with your maternal and child health nurse or family doctor.

## More information

The Queensland Government provides families with up-to-date information about approved early childhood education and care services in their local area, and has parent tip sheets on a range of topics.

To access the latest information or to find an early childhood education and care service call 13 QGOV\* (13 74 68) or visit [www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au](http://www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au).

For service ratings visit the MyChild website at [www.mychild.gov.au](http://www.mychild.gov.au) or the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au).

### Other languages

If you need an interpreter, phone 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

### Assistance making a call

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment:

- TTY users phone 133 677\*, then ask for 13 74 68\*.
- Speak-and-listen users should phone 1300 555 727\*, then ask for 13 74 68\*
- Internet relay users should connect to the National Relay Service at [www.iprelay.com.au/call/index.aspx](http://www.iprelay.com.au/call/index.aspx) then ask for 13 74 68\*.

### Acknowledgement

The information in this publication was sourced from the Raising Children Network at [www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)

### Disclaimer

This publication is offered as a guide and should not be considered an exhaustive statement on the subject.

*\*Calls from mobile phones are charged at applicable rates.*

