

Family Support Funding Scorecard

July 2018 – December 2018

To promote and protect the health and wellbeing of children and their families.

Outcomes for children and families



19

family support services

95%

↑ Percent of parents/carers report an improvement in their parenting practice. (parents report improvement in parenting practice / # parents surveyed)

74%

↓ Percent of parents/carers who report the funded service assists them in accessing the support services they require. (parents who report funded services assists them accessing support services / # parents surveyed (better off))

77%

↑ Percent of parents/carers report their child/children made progress towards achieving their agreed goals. (parents report child made progress achieving their goals / # parents (better off))

17%

○ Percentage of parents/carers who receive intensive support. (parents receive intensive support / # parents surveyed (how well))

66%

↓ Percentage of parents/carers who have completed the relevant/agreed activity. (parents have completed agreed activity / # parents (how well))

83%

↓ Percent of parents/carers who would recommend the funded service. (parents recommend service / # parents surveyed (how well))

Story behind the data

Data

For newly funded family support services, this is the first time that qualitative data has been collected to report performance and outcomes. While data collection methods have been enhanced through improved client records, identifying appropriate survey techniques (including individual questionnaires, group yarning circle and online tools) and collecting data regularly, further work is required to ensure that services and activities remain responsive to the needs of children and their family. Defining outcomes and developing performance measures that are meaningful to clients, the organisation and the community/stakeholders will improve the number and quality of survey responses, ensuring that data is not skewed from one reporting period to the next.

Parental engagement

Acknowledging the role of parents as their child's first teacher and providing services and supports to build their parenting capability and confidence has been a key component in achieving improved outcomes

for children. Family support services have worked collaboratively with parents/carers to identify specific family/child needs and develop respectful strategies to address these needs for improved and sustained outcomes. Some services used the Parents as Teachers framework for home visiting content and delivery while others focussed on parent and child play-based activities such as dad's playgroup, music therapy sessions and 'read and feed' reading program to improve the parent-child interactions whilst also developing practical parenting skills. It has been noted that families experiencing vulnerability benefit from additional time to build trust and rapport with staff and may temporarily disengage from the service due to crisis or changes in circumstance.

Evidence-based early learning and development programs

Family support services have identified and implemented a range of evidence-based programs to support the learning, social and emotional development of children up to 8 years of age. Many of these programs combine teaching and learning strategies that

can be applied within group settings (such as playgroup) and on a one-to-one basis with children and parents/carers in their home. Programs such as the Abecedarian Approach Australia (3a), Bringing Up Great Kids, Circle of Security and Sing and Grow have achieved positive outcomes for children and their parents/carers including increased understanding of child development needs, positive parent-child interactions and attachment, improved cognitive, emotional and communication outcomes and school readiness behaviours for children.

Partnerships

Effective partnerships have enabled family support services to strengthen referral pathways across the service system and deliver programs and services that support the needs of children and parents/carers in their community. Based on their expertise and experience, some of the critical partners engaged to support families included:

- **Health and medical services** – child and maternal health support at playgroup, referral to health and wellbeing specialists, immunisation clinics, child

development assessments, medical diagnosis, and treatment plans.

- **Family support networks** – access disengaged families, collaborative case management, referral to counselling and in-home care services, and delivery of parenting programs.
- **Allied health professionals** – support children to access speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, audiology and oral health services.
- **Early Childhood Education and Care services** – early childhood development information, advice and support, transition support, collaborative case management, enrolment support and educator and practitioner support.
- **Community partners** – transport solutions, free or low-cost child-focussed activities and events, DFV referral and support, co-facilitated group workshops.

Services report that managing partner expectations and role uncertainty and negotiating structures, content and processes is essential to support and sustain effective partnerships across agencies.

Partnerships

Parents/Carers
Local kindergartens and schools (including School of Distance Education)
Early childhood education and care providers
Local health and medical services (including Aboriginal Medical Services, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Bush Kids)
Early Childhood Early Intervention service providers

Activities

Supported playgroups
Home visiting
Telephone support
Visiting allied health services including speech and language therapy and occupational therapy
Online information and support including social media messaging, email, and webchat
Visiting health education and services including immunisation, health checks, and dental
Parenting programs
Transition support
Family support, counselling, case-management
Domestic and family violence referral and support

Feedback and observations

What has been the most significant change –

"It's nice to be able to talk to someone that understands and that I don't feel like I'm being judged".

Mother at home visit

"Some days can be long and hard... living 100km from civilisation. Sometimes, the playgroup is the only chance to see someone."

Parent attending outreach playgroup

"I'm looking at why my child is acting the way they are, which has created a more relaxed relationship between my child and I".

Outcome of parent attending parenting program.

Continuous Improvement

Family support services will:

- implement assessment and screening tools to identify needs, monitor progress and measure outcomes
- continue to build relationships/partnerships with key stakeholders to deliver targeted programs and services that focus on early childhood learning and development
- promote their service and enhance visibility through local networks, inter-agency meetings, community events, marketing campaigns and pop-up playgroups
- develop and implement reflective practices and evaluation strategies for continuous improvement
- improve surveying and data collection methods to ensure consistent and accurate reporting.

The Department of Education will work with family support services to:

- identify and share evidence-based programs and professional development opportunities
- facilitate links with departmental regions to support engagement with ECEC services, networks and provide transition support
- promote services through publication of stories and case studies in the EYS News, QKindy and early childhood magazine and Early Years Count website
- enhance service capability and confidence to embed cultural perspectives and practices to improve engagement with families from diverse backgrounds
- continue to support the development of effective surveying tools and data collection strategies.

Qualitative data has not been reported for four family support services, including one service that reports annually.

Family Support snapshot



1680
Total # of children participating

6%
Children with disability

7%
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse children

17%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children



988
Total # of parents/carers participating



Queensland Government