

Family Support Funding Scorecard

July 2017 –
December 2017

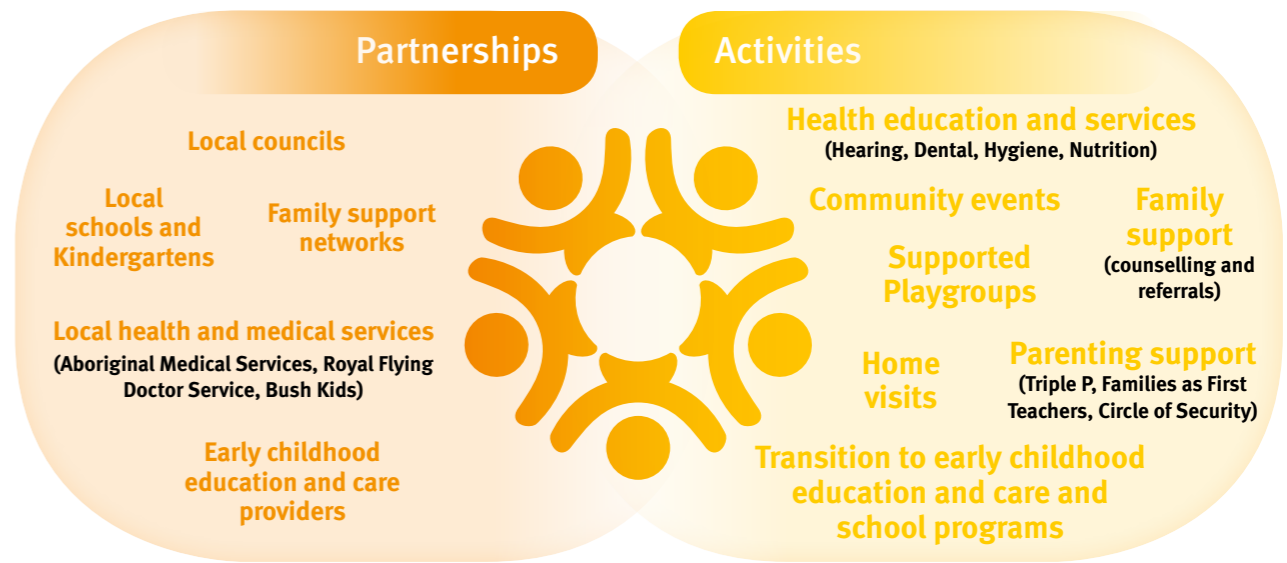
To promote and protect the health and wellbeing of children and their families.

Outcomes for children and families



6
family support services

- 91% ↓ parents/carers report the funded service assists them in accessing the support services they require.
- 65% ↓ parents/carers report their child/children made progress towards achieving their agreed goals.
- 27% ↑ parents/carers receive intensive support.
- 69% ↓ parents/carers have completed the relevant/agreed activity.
- 99% ↓ parents/carers would recommend the funded service.



Feedback and observations

What has been the most significant change –

“It’s good to come to playgroup. It’s good for the kids to be out of the house and it’s good for me too. My kids always have something to play with when they come here. They’re learning too.”

“I feel better when I have talked to you and you explain things to me.”
(Parent to Early Years Educator)

68% ↓
parents/carers report an improvement in their parenting practice.

Continuous Improvement

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

- build their capacity to ensure appropriate data collection and reporting processes are embedded into service’s practice
- establish linkages/partnerships with stakeholders including regional early childhood officers, schools, early childhood education and care providers and other funded services
- identify and share evidence-based practice and professional training opportunities
- host a professional networking event to establish a community of practice focussing on child development and parenting capabilities

Family support services will:

- develop and implement strategies and processes to improve data collection and reporting
- review the client referral process to/from schools, health professionals and other service providers to improve continuity of service and support for families
- strengthen and formalise key partnerships to improve access to and delivery of services
- implement communication strategies to increase awareness and presence in the community
- provide professional development opportunities and mentoring support for staff, focussing on evidence based programs.

Story behind the data

Data
In July 2016 a new reporting regime was introduced to Early Years Service funding. The regime focuses on the outcomes for children and families. Services under the Family Support category are continuing to refine assessment processes and data collection methods to ensure data integrity. This has included the introduction of verbal surveying, anonymous surveying and online group surveying.

Home visiting support
Providing home visiting support to families, particularly those that are geographically or socially isolated, has helped parents gain a better understanding of their child’s early learning and developmental needs and what services are available to assist them. During home visits, educators are able to observe family interactions in an informal and practical way and parents feel more comfortable talking about their children’s developmental needs and/or concerns. During home visits staff can also identify support/referral options and plan for future service delivery. The whole family is encouraged to engage in conversations and activities that promote early childhood learning and development

(e.g. learning games, positive parenting, reading to children, healthy eating).

Partners at playgroup
As a result of parental feedback and partnership development, other service providers including Child and Maternal Health Nurses, Audiologists, Teachers and Wellbeing Counsellors, have visited playgroups to provide information, education and direct support to children and parents/carers, both individually and as a group. Services found that this model assists them in establishing relationships with families and offering advice and referrals in a gentle and non-stigmatising way. It also enables families, particularly those with limited transport, to access multiple services in one location.

Community and engagement
Family support staff and educators continue to promote the benefits of playgroups to families. However, participation of children and parents/carers in playgroups is not always consistent. There are several reasons for this, including transient populations, barriers to transport, unstructured programming, staff turnover and community events (e.g. Sorry Business). Service providers have identified and implemented several strategies to increase awareness of and participation in playgroups, including advertising on social media, offering targeted playgroups (e.g. young mothers group), providing transport, hosting groups at community events, and engaging facilitators that have strong connections in the local community.

Embedding cultural perspectives
Embedding cultural perspectives into activities and programs has been fundamental to the ongoing engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. During the reporting period, three new playgroups were delivered on Country. Ceremonial activities were incorporated, and learning frameworks such as ‘Foundations for Success’ and ‘8 Aboriginal Ways of Working’ were used to strengthen service delivery. Other services are building their cultural capability by initiating conversations to partner with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to consider culturally appropriate service delivery, activities and resources. Engaging local Indigenous workers has also been a key to success within many services.

5 out of 6 services provided data. Survey sample is at least 30% of the total target group across the funding category.



1569 Total # of children participating

4% Children with disability

25% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children



969 Total # of parents/carers participating