

Early Childhood Programs and Services Guide

December 2015



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This document is also available on the internet at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/evgroupprogguide.aspx>

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO AGREEMENTS

About this guide

The *Early Childhood Programs and Services Guide* is designed to assist organisations funded by the Department of Education and Training (the Department). It provides an overview of early childhood key programs and services and outlines service activities, performance measures, data collection requirements, service standards and guidelines.

This guide will be reviewed annually or as information changes and updates are required.

Relationship between policy and funding plans and service agreements

Service agreements are the main way the Department formalises arrangements for the funding provided to organisations and the services to be delivered. It is a formal requirement that funded organisations abide by the funding terms and conditions documented in this guide.

Budget and Funding

Budgets are allocated to the Early Childhood Development output.

Funding levels detailed in this guide may vary over the year for a range of reasons, including, but not limited to, the application of indexation, changes in service requirements, budget allocations and the implementation of government policy.

The following table lists funding arrangements for all services and programs, by project activity code.

Funding Arrangements

Project Activity Code	Activity/Project Name	Funding Basis	2015–16 Funding Level/Unit Cost	Comments/Explanations
718323	In Home Support and Home Based Learning programs	Number of families	Location-based funding	N/A
718014	Indigenous Kindergarten Services – KPSA	Number of hours	\$ 20.88 per hour	N/A
711301	Children’s Facilities Capital Program	Application based during funding rounds	N/A	N/A
718360	Early Childhood Intervention Services	Number of places	\$7,838	Program within scope for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and will transfer as part of Victoria’s financial and programmatic contribution to the scheme incrementally from 2016-17 to full roll-out in 2019-20.
718361	ECIS Flexible Support Packages	Number of packages	\$6,470	As above
718303	Preschool Field Officer Program	Number of clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro: \$1,010 • Rural: \$1,278 	N/A
718018	Kindergarten Inclusion Support Packages	Number of packages	15 hours/week - \$15,031 per package	Commonwealth/State funded
718392	Kindergarten per capita grants	Per capita grant based on number of funded places	Rates as per the Kindergarten Guide: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/The%20Kindergarten%20Guide%202015.pdf	N/A

Project Activity Code	Activity/Project Name	Funding Basis	2015–16 Funding Level/Unit Cost	Comments/Explanations
718391	Kindergarten fee subsidy	Number of eligible children enrolled in kindergarten	As above	N/A
718023	Small Rural Grants	Number of enrolled children per small rural service	Grants up to \$20,000 per service	N/A
718077	Kindergarten Cluster Management	Total number of funded locations	Rates as per the Kindergarten Guide: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/The%20Kindergarten%20Guide%202015.pdf	N/A
718058	Early Start Kindergarten	Number of eligible 3-year old children enrolled and attending	Standard grant: \$4,591 for 15 hours Rural grant: \$5,356 for 15 hours Small rural grant: \$7,259 for 15 hours	Funding is provided as a one-off payment. It is calculated on a pro-rata basis on enrolled hours up to the maximum 15 hours for each of the service funding rates.
718076	Access to Early Learning	Number of children	\$219,572 per site for 7 sites in 2015/16	Funding covers payment for ECEC place for 15 hours of kindergarten for 16 children; plus 2 hours of additional family support provided per family per week; and a proportion of resources for brokerage to address barriers to participation and professional development activities with ECECs.
711205	National Occasional Care Programme	Number of children	Grants up to \$15,000 per annum Funding per child per hour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015: \$2.50 • 2016: \$2.55 	N/A
612024	Family Learning Support Program	Expression of interest	The unit cost varies between providers	The Department reviews each EOI and calculates the funding available for each participating Learn Local organisation.

Project Activity Code	Activity/Project Name	Funding Basis	2015–16 Funding Level/Unit Cost	Comments/Explanations
718024	Kindergarten sector support	Varies depending on purpose of funding	Funding varies between providers	Funding to external organisations to assist kindergartens to deliver well governed or efficient programs.
718047	Maternal and Child Health Service – Universal	Number of children enrolled in each age group (0–1 year, 1–2 years and 3–4 years)	Unit price - \$95.25 per hour	Program is funded on an agreed number of hours of service for each visit plus additional support through a flexible component and weightings for disadvantage and geographical isolation.
718097	Maternal and Child Health Service – Enhanced	Number of clients/targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EMCH Metropolitan unit price = \$95.25 x 15 hours of service EMCH Rural unit price = \$95.25 x 17 hours of service 	Targets are based on 10 per cent of the 0–1-year-old population.
718371	Parenting Services	Number of clients	Organisation-specific funding	N/A
718322	Strengthening Parent Support Program	Project-specific funding	Organisation-specific funding	N/A
718320	Signposts	Project-specific funding	Organisation-specific funding	N/A
718370	Parentline	Project-specific funding	Internal government funding	Internal Department-delivered service
718324	Supported Playgroups	Number of families and groups	\$88,200 per site per annum, and multiples of this amount for larger sites	New policy and funding guidelines being implemented
718314	Best Start	Number of project sites	Location-based funding - approx. \$100,000 per site per annum x 30 sites	N/A
710318	Early Childhood Workforce Development and Support	Application	Scholarships up to \$12,000 Incentive applicants receive grants up to \$15,000	N/A

<i>Project Activity Code</i>	<i>Activity/Project Name</i>	<i>Funding Basis</i>	<i>2015–16 Funding Level/Unit Cost</i>	<i>Comments/Explanations</i>
718316	Community Development and Assistance	Organisation and project specific	This activity covers a range of different initiatives	N/A

Early Childhood Service Agreements

Relating funding to service expectations

It is crucial that the expectations of organisations receiving government funding for the provision of services are clear and agreed. In the interests of fairness and equality, it is also important that organisations receive like funds for the provision of like services.

Relating funding to service activity also impacts on performance management. Where funding is based on unit priced activity targets, the service agreement stipulates that funding is linked to the attainment of the agreed targets. Where funds are based on unit prices, the benchmark for satisfactory performance is the delivery of at least 95 per cent of the agreed targets. For some activities, other service-specific performance requirements are listed in the service Standards and Guidelines section of the service agreement. Generally, performance below 95 per cent would trigger discussion at the annual review about strategies to improve achievement levels and, if improvement appears unlikely in the following financial year, target and funding reallocation may result. Target and funding reallocation can also occur as a result of changing patterns of need, demand and service delivery.

Service Agreement Information Kit

Organisations are obliged to comply with the specific departmental policies and certain legislative requirements outlined in the terms and conditions of the service agreement. *Service Agreement Information Kit for Funded Organisations 2015–18* (developed for Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Education and Training) provides funded organisations with important information on the relevant processes and reporting and accountability requirements for service agreements. It contains:

- departmental policies and procedures with which the funded organisation is expected to comply
- terms and conditions of funding and service provision
- roles and responsibilities regarding the agreement
- financial accountability reporting requirements.

The kit's terms and conditions may vary from time to time without notice. For further information about the kit, visit <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/facs/bdb/fmu/service-agreement/contents>

PART 2: SERVICE AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND COUNTING RULES

Aboriginal Early Years Services

Note: throughout this document the term Aboriginal is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous is retained when it is part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

In Home Support and Home Based Learning Programs: 718323

Outcomes and Indicators

The In Home Support program aims to:

- improve the health, development, learning and wellbeing of Aboriginal babies and children from birth to three years of age
- strengthen, support and improve parenting capacity for Aboriginal parents and their families
- promote social connections and links with community and community services.

The Home Based Learning program aims to:

- promote parents as primary educators of their children
- assist families to provide enhanced home-learning environments
- increase parental understanding of children's learning
- develop parental strategies that assist learning
- complement children's learning at kindergarten
- increase school readiness of children.

Progress towards the achievement of the outcome will be demonstrated by the number of families whose children are attending Maternal and Child Health Service Key Ages and Stages consultations and are enrolled in kindergarten as reported in the organisation's Annual Action Plan.

Target Group

The services target all Aboriginal families with children aged 0–3 (In Home Support) and aged 3–5 (Home Based Learning) residing within an agreed geographical area or community.

Description

There are two programs within the activity code - In Home Support and Home Based Learning.

The In Home Support Program builds on the service delivery strengths implemented through Koori Maternity Services as children move through infancy up to three years of age. The program provides an opportunity to take an integrated approach to optimising outcomes for all Aboriginal children, mothers and young children, building on a universal platform, but delivering additional supports where they are most needed and most likely to be effective.

Home Based Learning is a home-visiting program that assists families to provide an enhanced home learning environment for Aboriginal children aged 3–5 years. It supports families as the primary educators of their children, seeking to achieve more successful kindergarten and early school experiences. It is an extension of the In Home Support Program. Home Based Learning is only provided by some sites.

The service model for In Home Support and Home Based Learning incorporates three elements: intensive parenting support, enhancing social connections and linking families with communities. The program funds staffing, brokerage, mentoring and supervision and provides up to 100 hours of support for Aboriginal families.

Core components of the In Home Support and Home Based Learning service model are:

- home-visiting
- case management
- liaison and referral
- health observation and promotion
- parent/family and child education, coaching and mentoring
- provision of information and resources.

Program-Specific Requirements

All organisations providing In Home Support and/or Home Based Learning are required to develop an Annual Action Plan at the start of the calendar year.

To support the ongoing implementation of the programs it is strongly recommended that all staff employed under the In Home Support and Home Based Learning programs attend quarterly professional development days and network meetings.

Standards and Guidelines

- Revised In Home Support and Home Based Learning Guidelines will be released at the beginning of 2016.
- Victorian Acts and Statutory Rules are available from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Service Delivery

The In Home Support and Home Based Learning programs are delivered by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of families engaged in a one-year period (25 for In Home Support program and 15 for Home Based Learning program)	Half-yearly	10 January, 10 July	10 January, 10 July
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 85 per cent)	Yearly	10 July	10 July

Counting Rules – Number of Families

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Data Source
This performance measure provides information on the number of families that receive one-on-one support through either a) In Home Support or b) Home Based Learning.	A family is defined as one or more people from the same family group, including, for example, parent, grandparent, or extended family of a child. One-on-one support refers to intensive support provided for a family (most likely in their home).	Count the number of families that receive one-on-one support through either a) In Home Support or b) Home Based Learning.	Agencies record this data half-yearly and send to DET region who will forward it to the DET central office. Where possible data should be recorded in IRIS as well as on the IHS/HBL Data Collection form.

Indigenous Kindergarten Services (Koorie Preschool Assistants Program): 718014

Outcomes and Indicators

The Koorie Preschool Assistants (KPSA) program is designed to increase and enhance the participation of Aboriginal children in kindergarten programs and to support kindergarten programs to develop a strong understanding and practice of Aboriginal culture.

Progress towards the achievement of the outcome will be demonstrated by increasing numbers of Aboriginal children enrolled in kindergarten.

Target Group

The program is targeted at Aboriginal children eligible to attend a government-funded kindergarten.

Description

The KPSA program is auspiced by Aboriginal community-based organisations. The assistants work with Koorie Education Support Officers (KESO's), In Home Support and Home Based Learning workers and kindergarten programs to:

- enhance access and participation of Aboriginal children in kindergarten programs
- provide information and support to Aboriginal families and communities
- support attendance of Aboriginal children in kindergarten programs
- assist in the delivery of Aboriginal inclusive programs in kindergartens
- encourage involvement and participation of Aboriginal parents, families and carers in the development of kindergarten programs
- promote provision of Aboriginal inclusive environments and programs as part of core practice in kindergartens.

Standards and Guidelines

- *Victorian Kindergarten Guide*: This document outlines the funding criteria, policies and procedures with which organisations must comply in order to receive Victorian Government kindergarten funding:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/The%20Kindergarten%20Guide%202015.pdf>
- *Guide to the National Quality Standards* (vols1, 2 and 3) Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) 2011 (acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard)
- Victorian Acts and Statutory Rules are available from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Service Delivery

KPSA services are delivered by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and/or other community service organisations.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Minimum percentage of hours worked in a government-funded kindergarten service per week (target = 50 per cent)	Yearly	15 July	15 July
Number of clients	Yearly	15 July	15 July

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Percentage of hours worked in a government-funded kindergarten service per week				
This performance measure provides information about the actual hours of service and/or support provided to funded kindergartens.	Hours worked by Koorie Preschool Assistants in government-funded kindergartens are defined as the time spent in, and directly devoted to, assisting those kindergartens.	Number of hours worked in a government-funded kindergarten service in one week ÷ 38 (standard hours in one work week).	Number of hours worked in government funded kindergartens = 19, divided by the total number of hours in one work week = 38. Percentage of hours = $19 \div 38 \times 100 = 50$ per cent.	Annual Monitoring Meeting with Region (Access, Participation and Performance) Agency completes the KPSA data collection form and sends to the Regional Performance and Planning Advisor, who forwards it to the Early Childhood and School Education Group.
Number of Clients				
This performance measure provides information about the number of clients.	Clients are defined as aboriginal children attending the kindergarten.	Count all clients attending kindergarten during the reporting period.	N/A	Annual Monitoring Meeting with Region (Access, Participation and Performance) Agency completes the KPSA data collection form and sends to the Regional Performance and Planning Advisor, who forwards it to the Early Childhood and School Education Group.

Children's Facilities Capital Program

Children's Facilities Capital Program: 711301

Outcomes and Indicators

These grants aim to:

- increase infrastructure capacity to deliver kindergarten programs for children in the year before school and other early childhood services
- improve access to local and responsive early childhood services for children from vulnerable and/or disadvantaged families
- streamline and provide better coordinated service delivery through the provision of integrated and co-located early childhood centres, allowing children and families to receive high quality kindergarten education alongside long day care, early childhood intervention services, maternal and child health services and family support services
- increase the number of facilities co-located in early learning centres (ELCs) on school sites to develop stronger connections between the early years and primary school education, including support for a continuum of learning for children and increased opportunities for educators to plan and work collaboratively.

Progress towards the achievement of the outcome will be demonstrated by:

- number of new funded kindergarten places in the year before school available at the completion of the project
- number of new three year old kindergarten places available at the completion of the project
- number of additional early childhood and family services available at the completion of the project
- number of new early childhood education and care facilities co-located on school sites
- number of new early childhood education and care facilities delivered

Target Group

The facilities that are built and upgraded through the program support families and children to access local, high quality early childhood services, particularly those in areas of high demand (e.g. growth areas) and areas of elevated disadvantage.

Description

The Government invests in a range of early childhood facilities by providing contributory grants for new facilities, upgrades, renovations and refurbishments, as well as minor grants for small infrastructure projects and information technology hardware.

The Department assesses expressions of interest and applications for grants against the published assessment criteria to ensure the most suitable projects are prioritised for funding.

Major grants (Integrated Children's Centres, New Early Learning Facilities and Early Learning Facility Upgrades) are allocated through a two stage process, commencing with an Expression of Interest phase to identify high-value projects that address the programs objectives and selection criteria. The second stage requires invited applicants to complete a detailed application that meets all quality and technical requirements as the basis for seeking final funding approval. Minor grants are allocated through an annual, single-stage, competitive process.

Standards and Guidelines

The Children's Facilities Capital Program 2015-16 Guidelines are found at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/capitalprogresources.aspx>

Service Delivery

Local government, schools and other organisations that provide early childhood education and care services

Monitoring and Review

All major grant recipients are required to report against key milestones as the basis for accessing staged payments. An expert contractor is engaged to review and validate progress reports provided by funded organisations and provide project and program level reporting to the Department. This is undertaken bi-monthly and at key milestones that are agreed between the Department and funded organisations.

Performance measures and data collections

There are no predefined performance measures. All performance deliverables and accountabilities are specified in Schedule A, Item 3, Activity Deliverables and Payments table in the Common Funding Agreement.

Conditions of funding

Recipients of grants will be required to conform to certain requirements, such as:

- government guidelines about signage
- site inspection, if required, by departmental officers
- production of receipts and invoices
- evaluation surveys regarding the project as required by departmental officers
- an annual audit of service provision within the facilities.

Acquittal

On completion of the project, applicants are required to complete and return the appropriate Certificate of Expenditure Acquittal form to certify that funds have been expended as specified in the guidelines.

Early Childhood Intervention Services

Early Childhood Intervention Services: 718360

Related Project Codes: ECIS Flexible Support Packages 718361

Outcomes and Indicators

Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) improves the lives of young children with a disability or developmental delay and their families through the provision of specialist support.

Parents and families have the knowledge, skills and support to respond to the needs of their child and to optimise the child's learning, development and ability to participate in family, early childhood education and care settings and broader community life.

Target Group

ECIS is targeted at children from birth to school entry who have either:

- a disability; or
- a developmental delay which is the result of an impairment and causes substantial functional limitations **and** who require a coordinated, long term, multidisciplinary service response.

Description

The primary responsibilities of ECIS are:

- the provision of information, support and resources in a collaborative, timely and effective manner
- the provision of services in everyday family environments where possible to promote naturally occurring learning and development opportunities
- the provision of services in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings where possible to promote sustainable inclusive learning and development opportunities and build the confidence of ECEC staff to meet the needs of children with disabilities or developmental delays
- family-centred practices that recognise and build on family strength, increase confidence and assist families to make informed choices and build family capacity to meet the needs of their children
- responsiveness to the diversity of families, including vulnerable families, families who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background and those who are from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- maximizing the use of universal and other targeted services to support an integrated children's services system that can respond to the needs of families of children with a disability or developmental delay
- key worker approaches supported by a trans-disciplinary team that includes a range of suitably qualified specialists.

A funded ECIS place includes the following activities:

- specialised therapeutic interventions for individuals in family homes or community settings
- counselling and family support to assist families to deal with the impact of caring for a child with a disability
- support to kindergarten and childcare providers to promote the access and meaningful participation of children with a disability in local community settings
- planning and coordination of a range of services and supports to meet the needs of the child and family.

Services are delivered in accordance with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework practice principles recognising the importance of working in partnership with the family and other child and family services.

Program-Specific Requirements

The Department will continue to monitor service provision, and where necessary, may amend service specifications or funding allocations based on community needs or in response to changes to government policy and priorities.

During the 2015-18 service agreement period, the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme will commence in Victoria. The introduction of the scheme will mean changes in the way services are accessed and the funding arrangements for service providers.

Standards and Guidelines

- *Early Childhood Intervention Services vision and key priorities (2003):*
<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/intervention/visionstatement2003.pdf>
- *Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) Program Framework (2005):*
<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/intervention/framework2005.pdf>
- *Specialist Children's Services Program Standards (DHS,1998):*
<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/intervention/programstandards.pdf>
- *Disability Act 2006* www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Service Delivery

ECIS are funded through the Department and delivered by Specialist Children's Services teams (internal) and community service organisations (external).

Monitoring and Review

Internal Services: All internal services are monitored against Performance Measures detailed in Departmental output statements published in Budget Paper No 3. Information regarding the quality, quantity and timeliness of internal services is also monitored by the Department's Executive.

External Services: Government funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this project code in the service agreement. Performance Measures for this project code are outlined below. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements listed here and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Monitoring is conducted by departmental staff and is undertaken on an ongoing basis through the collection of information and data.

Community service organisations are accountable for the appropriate use of funding, and for the delivery of the services specified in the service agreement. To ensure accountability, all providers are required to regularly report on the services through data collections and other reporting. This allows the organisation and Department to periodically review progress and to adjust the service agreement if necessary.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding is based on actual service levels which may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations. External community service organisations are required to enter details of all services in the client information system known as the Integrated Reporting Information System (IRIS). Internal services are required to enter details of all services in the Client Relationship Information System (CRIS).

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of clients receiving a service	Quarterly	15 Oct, 15 Jan, 15 Apr, 15 Jul	Integrated Reports and Information System (IRIS)
Percentage of Family Service and Support Plans completed within four weeks of service commencement (target = 80%)	Quarterly	15 Oct, 15 Jan, 15 Apr, 15 Jul	Manual collection
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 90%)	Yearly	15 July	Manual collection

Counting Rules

When a community service organisation is funded to provide a set number of ECIS places, it is expected that at any time, a minimum of this number of clients are receiving a service. New clients should be accepted from ECIS Intake as soon as the organisation has an ECIS place available. The counting rule for funded ECIS places will be fully implemented from 1 January 2016.

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of clients receiving a service				
This performance measure provides information about the number of clients receiving ECIS.	An ECIS place is defined by the unit price. Clients are defined as children and their families receiving ECIS through a funded community service organisation or Department-employed regional staff.	In each quarter of the financial year: Count the number of clients open at the beginning of the quarter. Subtract the number of clients closed during the quarter. Add the number of clients opened during the quarter.	Organisation is funded for 100 ECIS places. In each quarter count: Number of clients open at the beginning of the quarter=100 Number of clients closed during the quarter=5 Number of clients opened during the quarter = 5 <u>(100-5+5=100)</u>	As per indicators consistent with the Victorian Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (VIC DS NMDS). Community service organisations complete client information in IRIS. Data is submitted to the Department via IRIS export. Specialist Children's Services Teams complete client information in CRIS.
Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Percentage of Family Service Support Plans completed within four weeks of service commencement (target 80%)				
This performance measure provides information on the completion of family support plans (as part of the service) within a specified time frame.	A plan is defined as an agreed and documented service support plan for a client/family entering an ECIS program. It is defined as completed when the family and community service organisation or team staff have discussed, agreed and documented the plan's Outcomes and Indicators to be undertaken.	Number of Family Service Support Plans completed within four weeks of service commencement divided by the total number of commenced Family Service Support Plans.	Number of Family Service Support Plans completed within four weeks of service commencement = 8. Total number of commenced Family Service Support Plans = 10. Percentage of Family Support Plans completed within four weeks of service commencement = $8 \div 10 \times 100 = 80\%$.	As per indicators in IRIS and CRIS. Community service organisations complete client information in IRIS. Data is submitted to the Department via IRIS export. Specialist Children's Services Teams complete client information in CRIS.
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target 90%)				
This performance measure provides information about the quality and effectiveness of Early Childhood Intervention Services	Clients are defined as families whose children receive ECIS	All families should be offered the opportunity to provide feedback on the services provided. Number of families sampled who are satisfied with the service provided ÷ total number of families sampled	Number of sampled clients who are satisfied with the service = 9. Number of clients sampled = 10. Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service = $9 \div 10 \times 100 = 90\%$.	Community service organisations, ECIS intake staff and Specialist Children's Services Teams complete client survey annually and forward results to DET regions, who forward them to DET central office.

ECIS Flexible Support Packages: 718361

Outcomes and Indicators

Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) Flexible Support Packages improves the lives of children from birth to school entry with a disability or developmental delay and their families through the provision of short-term assistance to address the child's current needs.

Parents and families have the capacity to respond to current needs of their child and to optimise the child's learning, development and ability to participate in family and community life.

Target Group

Children approved for state-funded ECIS requiring targeted and time limited supports identified in their current Family Services and Support Plan.

Description

This program builds the capacity of families to respond to the child's current unmet additional needs by:

- supporting the provision of opportunities that address the current learning, development and wellbeing needs of the child
- minimising physical and psycho-social risks to the child, family and others
- assisting with a child's functionality and mobility to promote greater participation in family and community life.

Flexible Support Packages provide funding to enable families to address unmet needs as identified in the Family Service and Support Plan developed as part of their state funded Early Childhood Intervention Service delivery.

ECIS Flexible Support Packages are delivered using a collaborative approach which recognises and builds on family skills, strengths and ability to identify their own needs and work towards bringing positive change into their lives.

Program-Specific Requirements

The Department will continue to monitor service provision, and where necessary, may amend service specifications or funding allocations based on community needs or in response to changes to government policy and priorities.

During the 2015-18 service agreement period, the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme will commence in Victoria. The introduction of the scheme will mean changes in the way services are accessed and the funding arrangements for service providers.

Standards and Guidelines

- *ECIS Flexible Support Packages Guidelines for families and ECIS professionals* (February 2015): <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/needs/Pages/flexiblesupportpackages.aspx>
- *Specialist Children's Services Program Standards* (DHS, 1998): <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/intervention/programstandards.pdf>
- Disability Act 2006 www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Service Delivery

ECIS Flexible Support Packages are delivered by external community service organisations.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the performance measures and targets specified for this project code in the service agreement. Standard performance measures for this project code are outlined below. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements as listed here and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Monitoring of service agreements is conducted by departmental staff and is undertaken on an ongoing basis through the collection of information and data.

Community service organisations are accountable for the appropriate use of funding, and for the delivery of the services specified in the service agreement. To ensure accountability, organisations are required to regularly report on the services through data collections and other reporting. This allows the organisation and Department to periodically review progress and to adjust the service agreement if necessary.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding is based on actual service levels, which may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations. External community service organisations are required to enter details of all services delivered in the ECIS client information system known as the Integrated Reporting Information System (IRIS).

Performance Measure	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of clients	Quarterly	15 October, 15 January, 15 April, 15 July	Integrated Reports and Information System (IRIS)
Percentage of funding applications assessed within 4 weeks of receipt of applications (target = 80 per cent)	Quarterly	15 October, 15 January, 15 April, 15 July	Manual collection
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 85 per cent)	Yearly	15 July	Manual collection

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of clients receiving an ECIS Flexible Support Package				
This performance measure provides information about the number of clients receiving ECIS Flexible Support Packages.	<p>An ECIS Flexible Support Package is defined by the unit price.</p> <p>Clients are defined as children approved for ECIS requiring targeted and time-limited support to address needs identified in their Family Service and Support Plan.</p>	<p>Count clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in the 1st quarter of each financial year open at the start of the period, and those opened during the quarter for the remaining three quarters of the financial year opened during the quarters. 	<p>Clients open at the beginning of the financial year = 4.</p> <p>Clients opened during 1st quarter = 1 2nd quarter = 1 3rd quarter = 2 4th quarter = 1</p> <p>Number of clients receiving a service = 9 (4 + 1 + 1 + 2 + 1).</p>	<p>As per indicators consistent with the Victorian Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (VIC DS NMDS).</p> <p>Community service organisations complete client information in IRIS. Data is submitted to the Department via IRIS export.</p>
Percentage of funding applications assessed within four weeks of receipt of applications (target 80%)				
This performance measure provides information about the number of applications assessed within four weeks of receipt of application.	An application is assessed when it has been considered by the Regional Advisory Panel and a decision about funding determined.	<p>Count number of funding applications at the end of each quarter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assessed within four weeks of receipt total received during the quarter. 	<p>Number of applications assessed within four weeks of receipt = 80.</p> <p>Total number of applications = 100.</p> <p>Percentage of applications assessed within four weeks of receipt = $80 \div 100 \times 100 = 80$ per cent.</p>	<p>As per indicators in IRIS.</p> <p>Community service organisations complete client information in IRIS. Data is submitted to the Department via IRIS export</p>
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target 85%)				
This performance measure provides information about the quality and effectiveness of the service provided by the ECIS Flexible Support Packages program.	Clients are defined as families who have received an ECIS Flexible Support Package to support their child with a disability and complex support needs.	Community service organisations complete client information in IRIS. Data is submitted to the Department via IRIS export.	<p>Number of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service = 9.</p> <p>Number of clients sampled = 10.</p> <p>Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service = $9 \div 10 \times 100 = 90$ per cent.</p>	Community service organisations complete client survey annually and forward results to DET regions, who forward them to DET central office.

Preschool Field Officer Program: 718303

Outcomes and Indicators

The Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program enhances the capacity of state-funded kindergartens to provide for the access and meaningful participation of children with additional needs.

Target Group

The packages are targeted at state-funded kindergartens.

Description

The PSFO Program provides professional services including consultative support, resourcing and advice, to kindergarten teachers to support the access and participation of children with additional needs in inclusive kindergarten programs.

The primary responsibility of the program is to provide a locally responsive approach. It provides kindergarten services with practical advice and support on including children with additional needs in an inclusive kindergarten program.

Services are delivered in the context of the kindergarten and in accordance with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework practice principles, recognising the importance of working in partnership with the family and other child and family services.

Program-Specific Requirements

The Department will continue to monitor service provision, and where necessary, may amend specifications or funding allocations based on community needs or in response to changes to government policy and priorities.

Standards and Guidelines

- *Specialist Children's Services Program Standards*, DHS (1998): <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/intervention/programstandards.pdf>
- *Disability Discrimination Act* (1992) <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2004A04426>
- *Disability Standards for Education* (2005) <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2005L00767>

Service Delivery

The Preschool Field Officer Program is provided by community service organisations and local government.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the performance measures and targets specified for this project code in the service agreement. Standard performance measures are outlined below. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements listed here and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Monitoring of service agreements is conducted by departmental staff and is undertaken on an ongoing basis through the collection of information and data.

Community service organisations are accountable for the appropriate use of funding, and for the delivery of the services specified in the service agreement. To ensure accountability, organisations are required to regularly

report on the services through data collections and other reporting. This allows the organisation and Department to periodically review progress and to adjust the service agreement if necessary.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding is based on actual service levels which may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations. External community service organisations are required to enter details of all services delivered in the client information system known as the Integrated Reporting Information System (IRIS).

Performance Measures	Reporting frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of clients	Quarterly	15 October 15 January 15 April 15 July	Integrated Reports and Information System (IRIS)
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 85 per cent)	Yearly	15 July	Manual collection

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of clients assisted by the program				
This performance measure provides information about the number of children receiving support from the PSFO program.	<p>A PSFO target (metro/rural) is defined by the unit price.</p> <p>Clients are defined as children with additional needs who attend a government-funded kindergarten and receive support through the PSFO program.</p>	<p>Count each child once in a financial year.</p> <p>Count cases in the 1st quarter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at the start of the period opened during the quarter <p>Count new cases opened for the remaining three quarters.</p>	<p>Cases open at the beginning of the financial year (1 July) = 43.</p> <p>New cases opened during:</p> <p>2nd quarter = 12 3rd quarter = 2 4th quarter = 30.</p> <p>Number of clients receiving a service = 87 (43 + 12 + 2 + 30).</p>	<p>As per indicators consistent with the Victorian Disability Services National Minimum Data Set (VIC DS NMDS).</p> <p>Community service organisations complete data in IRIS. Data is submitted to the Department via IRIS export.</p>
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target is 85%)				
This performance measure provides information about the quality and effectiveness of the services provided by the PSFO program.	Clients are defined as parents whose children attend kindergarten programs and receive assistance from the PSFO program.	<p>All families should be offered the opportunity to provide feedback on the services provided.</p> <p>Number of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided divided by the total number of clients sampled.</p>	<p>Number of sampled clients who are satisfied with the service = 9.</p> <p>Number of clients sampled = 10.</p> <p>Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service = $9 \div 10 \times 100 = 90$ per cent.</p>	<p>Community service organisations complete client survey annually and forward results to DET regions, who forward them to DET central office.</p>

Kindergarten Inclusion Support Packages: 718018

Outcomes and Indicators

Children with disabilities and ongoing high-support needs and/or complex medical needs can access and meaningfully participate in state-funded kindergarten programs.

State-funded kindergartens gain the knowledge, skills and support to provide for the access and participation of children with disabilities and ongoing high-support and/or complex medical needs.

Target Group

The packages are targeted at state-funded kindergartens that support the inclusion of children with disabilities and ongoing high-support needs and/or complex medical needs requiring support to access and participate in a kindergarten program.

Description

Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) packages offer supplementary funding to enable the access and participation of children:

- with disabilities and ongoing high-support needs and/or
- complex medical needs.

KIS packages may provide:

- training and specialist consultancy for kindergarten staff to support adjustments, adaptations and modifications of the kindergarten program
- specialist training for kindergarten staff to meet the individual needs of the child with a disability and ongoing high-support needs and/or complex medical needs
- minor building modifications (such as ramps and grip rails) supporting the child's attendance in the kindergarten program and participation in the activities
- staffing support: an additional assistant who works as a member of the team delivering the kindergarten program (that is developed by a kindergarten teacher and is inclusive of all children in the group).

Services are delivered in the context of the kindergarten and in accordance with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework practice principles recognising the importance of working in partnership with the family and other child and family services.

Program-Specific Requirements

The Department will continue to monitor service provision, and where necessary, may amend service specifications or funding allocations based on community needs or in response to changes to government policy and priorities.

Standards and Guidelines

Kindergarten Inclusion Support Packages – Disability

- Guidelines, Information and Application Kit – Disability:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/parents/needs/kisguidedisability.doc>

Kindergarten Inclusion Support Packages – Complex Medical Needs

- Guidelines, Information and Application Kit – Complex Medical Needs:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/parents/needs/kisguidemedical.doc>
- *Program information is available from the Department's website at:*

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/needs/Pages/kinderinclusion.aspx>

- *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2004A04426>
- *Disability Standards for Education (2005)* <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2005L00767>

Service Delivery

External community service organisations are funded to administer the program.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the performance measures and targets specified for this project code in the service agreement. Standard performance measures for this project code are outlined below. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements as listed here and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Service agreements are contracted for a three-year period and reviewed annually through departmental regional offices in accordance with the Monitoring Framework. Monitoring of service agreements is conducted by departmental staff and is undertaken on an ongoing basis through the collection of information and data.

Organisations are accountable for the appropriate use of funding, and for the delivery of the services specified in the service agreement. To ensure accountability, organisations are required to regularly report on the services through data collections and other reporting. This allows the organisation and Department to periodically review progress and to adjust the service agreement if necessary.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding is based on actual service levels which may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations. External community service organisations are required to enter details of all services delivered in the client information system known as the Integrated Reporting Information System (IRIS).

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of clients assisted by the KIS packages	Quarterly	15 October , 15 January, 15 April, 15 July	15 October 15 January 15 April 15 July
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 85 per cent)	Yearly	15 July	Manual collection

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of clients assisted by the KIS Packages				
This performance measure provides information about the number of KIS packages allocated and the number of clients receiving support.	<p>A KIS package is defined by the unit price.</p> <p>Clients are defined as children with disabilities and ongoing high-support needs and/or complex medical needs who attend a state government-funded kindergarten program and receive support through the KIS program.</p>	<p>Count each client once in a financial year.</p> <p>Count clients in the first quarter open at the start of the period, and opened during the period.</p> <p>For the remaining three quarters, count new clients opened during the period.</p>	<p>Clients open at the beginning of the financial year (1 July) = 43.</p> <p>New clients opened during the:</p> <p>1st quarter = 12 2nd quarter = 12 3rd quarter = 2 4th quarter = 30.</p> <p>Number of clients receiving a service = 99 (43 + 12 + 12 + 2 + 30).</p>	Auspice agency completes data in IRIS. Data is submitted to the Department via IRIS export.
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target is 85%)				
This performance measure provides information about the quality and effectiveness of the service provided by the KIS Packages program.	Clients are defined as parents whose children attend a state government-funded kindergarten program and receive support through the KIS package program.	<p>All families should be offered the opportunity to provide feedback on the services provided.</p> <p>Number of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided divided by the total number of clients sampled.</p>	<p>Number of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service = 9.</p> <p>Number of clients sampled = 10.</p> <p>Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service = $9 \div 10 \times 100 = 90\%$</p>	Community service organisations complete client survey annually and forward results to DET regions, who forward them to Early Childhood and School Education Group.

Kindergarten Programs and Services

Kindergarten per capita grants: 718392

Outcomes and Indicators

Funded kindergarten programs promote participation of all children the year before school in high-quality kindergarten programs delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher.

Progress towards this outcome is measured by the percentage of children accessing funded kindergarten programs.

Target Group

Children who turn four years of age on or before 30 April of the year in which they will attend kindergarten and those children assessed as eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten.

Description

A kindergarten program provides a supportive environment in which qualified early childhood teachers and educators work to engage each child in effective learning, thereby promoting communication, learning and thinking, positive relationships, identity and wellbeing.

Since 2009, the Victorian Government has signed up to three National Partnerships on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education. State funding along with Commonwealth funding contribute to the cost of early childhood education for children in the year before school. The Commonwealth has announced that National Partnership funding will be extended to 2016 and 2017.

In Victoria, local government plays a key role in improving the delivery, coordination and strategic planning of early childhood services at the local level. The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the legislated peak body for local government in Victoria. MAV and the Department have a formal partnership that commits both parties to a collaborative and cooperative approach to the planning and delivery of early childhood services.

Kindergarten funding provides a contribution towards the provision of a one-year kindergarten program for all eligible and enrolled children in the year prior to school. A second year of kindergarten is available for children who are assessed as eligible.

In addition to the kindergarten per capita grant, the Department delivers a range of other programs that ensure all children have access to a funded kindergarten program, including:

- kindergarten fee subsidy (718391)
- travel allowance (718025)
- parental leave payments (718020)
- Early Childhood Teacher Supplement (718022)
- small rural grants (718023)
- long service leave and sick leave payments for staff employed in a government-funded kindergarten prior to 1994 (718021)
- grants to organisations providing kindergarten programs as part of an approved cluster management arrangement (718077).

Services are delivered in accordance with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework practice principles recognising the importance of working in partnership with the family and other child and family services.

Standards and Guidelines

The Kindergarten Guide outlines the funding criteria, policies and procedures with which organisations must comply in order to receive government kindergarten funding:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/The%20Kindergarten%20Guide%202015.pdf>

The National Quality Standard (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)) sets the benchmark for the quality of children's education and care services in Australia:

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard>

National Law and National Regulations, Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA):

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/ArticleCategory.aspx?pid=372&gcpid=2>

The Department's *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* supports all early childhood professionals to work together and with families to advance all children's learning and development from birth to eight years: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/pages/veyladf.aspx>

Service Delivery

A range of service providers operate funded kindergarten programs, including:

- local government
- community based incorporated associations
- private and community based child care providers
- non-government and government schools
- kindergarten cluster managers.

Kindergarten programs are provided in a variety of settings reflecting a range of child, family and community needs, including:

- standalone kindergartens
- long day care centres
- children's centres
- community centres
- some schools.

Monitoring and Review

Funded kindergarten services are required to participate in the annual confirmed kindergarten data collection which captures child level data and enrolment numbers to determine ongoing eligibility for funding.

Kindergarten participation rates are determined and monitored through the annual August census and on an ongoing basis through the Kindergarten Information Management (KIM) system.

Service quality is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Quality Assessment and Regulation Division.

Service compliance with legal funding policy is monitored in accordance with Service Agreement Framework.

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of children enrolled and attending in the calendar year	Yearly	August	End of August (August census)
Number of funded places <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed data used for funding purposes. August data used for Budget Paper No.3. 	Yearly	April	Confirmed Kindergarten Data Collection August census (internal)
Statewide participation rate	Yearly	August	August census
Progress towards Performance Indicators in the National Partnership (NP) Agreement on Early Childhood Education <i>Note: The current NP expires Dec 2015. At the time of publishing a further NP agreement for 2016 and 2017 has not been formalised.</i>	As specified in NP	As specified in NP	August census

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of children enrolled and attending in the calendar year				
This measure provides information about the number of children enrolled and attending kindergarten in the calendar year.	The number reported is a snapshot of data collected during the Census Data Collection in August.	Sum of actual number of eligible children enrolled and attending at each service location (1st and 2nd year enrolments) during the nominated census week. A child is considered to be attending a preschool program if the child is present for at least one hour during the nominated census week.	Count number of children enrolled and attending in kindergarten at the service location.	Funded service providers complete the online Census Data Collection in August via the KIM system. Region verifies data where anomalies or inconsistencies in the data arise. Once all data has been collected and verified, the data is extracted in September for reporting.
Number of funded places (Calendar year for funding purposes. Financial year for Budget Paper No.3 reporting and enrolment-based funding)				
This measure provides information about the number of places funded for children to attend kindergarten.	The number reported is a snapshot of data collected during the Confirmed Data Collection in April.	Sum of actual number of eligible children at each service location (1st and 2nd year enrolments).	Count actual number of children enrolled in kindergarten at the service location. The count for a financial year is the average of	Funded service providers complete the online Confirmed Data Collection in April via the KIM system. Regions verify data where anomalies or inconsistencies in the data arise. Once all data

	Services are also funded for any subsequent enrolments throughout the year.		the number of children enrolled and attending for the two relevant calendar years.	has been collected and verified, the data is extracted in June for reporting.
Statewide participation rate				
This measure provides information about the participation of children in kindergarten at a statewide level.	The number reported is a snapshot of data collected during the Census Data Collection in August.	Sum of actual number of eligible children enrolled and attending at each service location (1st year enrolments only) divided by the four year old population estimate (taken from the latest ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP) figures using the number of three year olds in the previous year as the best estimate/proxy of four year olds for the current year).	Actual number of children attending a first year of kindergarten = 64,138. ERP for 3 year olds = 67,433. $[64,138 \div 67,433] \times 100 = 95.1$ per cent.	Funded service providers complete the online Census Data Collection in August via the KIM system. Region verifies data where inconsistencies in the data arise. Once all data has been collected and verified, the data is extracted in September for reporting. N.B. ABS 'back adjusts' ERP following each census and, if ERP changes, previous participation rates may be recalculated.
Progress towards Performance Indicators in the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education				
This measure provides information about progress towards the four Performance Indicators specified in the NP.	The four performance indicators specified in the NP are: teacher qualifications, access to quality program, access to a quality 600 hour program and attendance.	The proportion of early childhood education programs delivered by a degree qualified early childhood teacher who meets NQF requirements. The proportion of children enrolled in the year before school in quality early childhood program(s).	Four and five year old children counted in Commonwealth Child Care Management System (CCMS) data divided by number of children enrolled in kindergarten program in the year before school in the August census (multiplied by 100 to reach percentage).	Funded service providers complete the online Census Data Collection in August via the KIM system. Region verifies data where anomalies or inconsistencies in the data arise.

Kindergarten Cluster Management: 718077

Related project codes: Kindergarten per capita grants 718392

Outcomes and Indicators

Kindergarten Cluster Management (KCM) is designed to:

- increase the sustainability and coordination of community-based kindergarten services
- facilitate the provision of targeted support to vulnerable children and families to improve access and participation in kindergarten programs
- directly support kindergarten educators by providing professional employment arrangements and professional development
- strategically plan for and drive implementation of major policy reforms, such as the National Quality Framework.

A revised KCM Policy Framework will be released in early 2016.

The KCM Policy Framework outlines KCM outcomes, designed for cluster managers to guide service delivery and clarify stakeholder participation. It ensures KCM service delivery is focused on achieving improved outcomes for children, through:

- access and participation
- quality and innovation
- highly skilled professional workforce
- strong partnerships.

Target Group

This activity group targets community-based services that provide government-funded kindergarten programs, especially those provided by incorporated associations overseen by volunteer committees of management.

Description

KCM brings together a group of community-based kindergarten services, under the management of an approved organisation.

Cluster managers operate in line with the KCM Policy Framework *The Kindergarten Guide*, and the National Quality Framework, which includes assuming all responsibilities of an approved provider as specified in the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*.

Cluster managers are responsible for the overall management and delivery of all kindergarten services within their cluster. The primary responsibilities of a KCM organisation are:

- establishing and reviewing effective governance practices that support professional leadership and management systems
- strategically planning for the future to ensure the organisation is viable and positioned to implement policy reforms and innovative practices
- providing access for all children, and proactively seeking the participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- establishing processes that proactively engage parents in making decisions about the policies and educational experiences of children in their services
- engaging with the local community and working collaboratively with local government, schools and other service providers to ensure services are responsive to families and communities
- management and leadership of educators and staff driving improved practices
- establishing effective financial management processes that support the strategic and transparent management of all resources.

The KCM organisation receives an annual grant for each funded children's service they manage that offers a kindergarten program. KCM funding is additional to the per capita grants.

KCM annual grant payments are made as part of base funding, paid on a monthly basis in accordance with the service agreement. Continued funding is subject to the organisation meeting the requirements outlined in the Funding and Service agreement and the KCM Policy Framework. The grant is indexed yearly using the non-government organisation price indexation rate. KCM organisations also receive a one-off start-up grant for any new location added to their cluster, to assist with the cost of integrating a new service into the cluster.

To provide high-quality service delivery cluster managers work closely and collaboratively with key stakeholders:

- Department of Education and Training - undertakes strategic oversight of the sector and performance monitoring for KCM organisations.
- Local Government - coordinates and strategically plans for early years services within municipality.

Families and Parent Advisory Groups (volunteer parent committees) – participate in their children's learning experience and contribute funds through fees and fundraising.

Program-Specific Requirements

KCM funding guidelines are outlined in the Kindergarten Guide, available on the Department's website.

Standards and Guidelines

The *KCM Framework* and application to become a cluster management organisation provide details regarding the approach and expectations of funded providers:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankinder/clusters.htm>

The *Kindergarten Guide* provides detailed information designed to assist services that provide kindergarten programs and currently receive or wish to apply for funding from the Department:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx>

The *National Quality Standard* (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)) sets the benchmark for the quality of children's education and care services in Australia:

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard>

National Law and National Regulations, Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA):

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/ArticleCategory.aspx?pid=372&gcpid=2>

The *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* (Department of Education and Training) supports all early childhood professionals to work together and with families to advance all children's learning and development from birth to eight years:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/pages/veyladf.aspx>

Service Delivery

Funding is available to local government or community-based, not-for-profit organisations. These organisations are approved by the Department as they have the capability and capacity to operate a KCM organisation.

Monitoring and Review

Service agreements with cluster managers are contracted for a three-year-period and are reviewed annually by the Department, through regional offices in accordance with the Service Monitoring Framework. The Service Monitoring Framework uses data collection and financial accountability requirements that are specified in the Service and Funding Agreement.

Annual Service Improvement Plans monitor the work of the KCM organisations against the achievements of the KCM outcomes, outlined in the KCM Policy Framework. This process supports KCM organisations to foster a culture of continuous improvement and to deliver innovative and high-quality services.

Service quality and compliance with regulations is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Quality Assessment and Regulation Division.

If performance issues are identified, the Department will work constructively with the cluster manager to identify improvements and develop a plan or update existing Service Improvement Plans to resolve problems. If the problem is not resolved, the Department will undertake the formal review process outlined in the Service Monitoring Framework.

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding for this activity is based on actual service levels. Funding may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations.

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of locations	Yearly	First week of Term 2	First week of Term 2
Number of children enrolled and attending in the calendar year	Yearly	November	End of August (August census)
Number of funded places (Calendar year for funding purposes. Financial year for Budget Paper No.3 and enrolment based funding)	Yearly	June	End of April (Confirmed Kindergarten Data Collection)
Statewide participation rate	Yearly	October	End of August (August census)
Progress towards Performance Indicators in the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education	As specified in NP	As specified in NP	End of August (August census)
<i>Note: The current NP expires Dec 2015. At the time of publishing a further NP agreement has not been formalised.</i>			

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of government-funded locations in a Kindergarten Cluster Management arrangement				
This performance measure provides information on the total number of service locations operating under a government-funded kindergarten cluster management arrangement.	Government-funded locations are those services offering a funded kindergarten program managed by an approved kindergarten cluster manager and for which approval has been received.	Count the total number of kindergarten locations approved to be part of kindergarten cluster management arrangements provided by an approved provider.	N/A	Organisations complete annual data collection form and return to region, which enters it into the Kindergarten Information Management system.
Number of children enrolled and attending in the calendar year				
This measure provides information about the number of children enrolled and attending kindergarten in the calendar year.	The number reported is a snapshot of data collected during the Census Data Collection in August.	Sum of actual number of eligible children enrolled and attending at each service location (1st and 2nd year enrolments) during the nominated census week. A child is considered to be attending a preschool program if the child is present for at least one hour during the nominated census week.	Count number of children enrolled and attending in kindergarten at the service location.	Funded service providers complete the online Census Data Collection in August via the Kindergarten Information Management (KIM) system. Region verifies data where anomalies or inconsistencies in the data arise. Once all data has been collected and verified, the data is extracted in September for reporting.
Number of funded places (Calendar year for funding purposes. Financial year for Budget Paper No.3 reporting and enrolment based funding)				
This measure provides information about the number of places funded for children to attend kindergarten.	The number reported is a snapshot of data collected during the Confirmed Data Collection in April. Services are also funded for any subsequent enrolments throughout the year.	Sum of actual number of eligible children at each service location (1st and 2nd year enrolments).	Count actual number of children enrolled in kindergarten at the service location. The count for a financial year is the average of the number of children enrolled and attending for the two relevant calendar years.	Funded service providers complete the online Confirmed Data Collection in April via the KIM. Regions verify data where anomalies or inconsistencies in the data arise. Once all data has been collected and verified, the data is extracted in June for reporting.

Statewide Participation Rate

<p>This measure provides information about the participation of children in kindergarten at a statewide level.</p>	<p>The number reported is a snapshot of data collected during the Census Data Collection in August.</p>	<p>Sum of actual number of eligible children enrolled and attending at each service location (1st year enrolments only) divided by the four year old population estimate (taken from the latest ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP) figures using the number of 3 year olds in the previous year as the best estimate/proxy of four year olds for the current year).</p>	<p>Sum of actual number of eligible children enrolled and attending at each service location (1st year enrolments only) divided by the four year old population estimate (taken from the latest ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP) figures using the number of 3 year olds in the previous year as the best estimate/proxy of four year olds for the current year).</p>	<p>Funded service providers complete the online Census Data Collection in August via the KIM system. Region verifies data where anomalies or inconsistencies in the data arise.</p>
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Early Start Kindergarten: 718058

Related project code: Early Start – Aboriginal Children: 718076

Outcomes and Indicators

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) responds to strong evidence pointing to the social and economic benefits of providing quality education for children experiencing disadvantage. This program aims to increase the educational outcomes and wellbeing of children experiencing disadvantage by supporting the inclusion of three year old children in quality kindergarten programs for up to 15 hours per week for free.

Progress towards better participation in early childhood education and care programs by vulnerable children and families will be demonstrated by take up of ESK grants, and transition of children receiving ESK grants to kindergarten in the year before school.

Target Group

ESK is aimed at disadvantaged and vulnerable three year old children known to Child Protection and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Description

ESK is targeted funding for children known to Child Protection and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, to improve access and participation in kindergarten.

ESK funding is provided to an approved Early Childhood Education and Care service provider to deliver 15 hours of kindergarten per week to eligible children.

ESK Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children – 718076: Funding for Aboriginal three year old children to attend a quality early childhood program.

ESK Children Known to Child Protection – 718058: Funding for three year old children known to Child Protection and/or referred by Child FIRST to attend a quality early childhood program.

The key stakeholders include approved Early Childhood and Care service providers, and other relevant referring agencies (e.g. DHHS Child Protection, Family Service providers, Maternal and Child Health Nurses, Aboriginal community controlled organisations). The *Early Childhood Agreement for Children in Out of Home Care* outlines engagement in ESK as a key commitment. Relationships with these stakeholders have been outlined in the Kindergarten Guide.

Standards and Guidelines

- This program is included in the *Kindergarten Guide 2015*:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/The%20Kindergarten%20Guide%202015.pdf>

Service Delivery

ESK funding can be applied for by a range of providers, including local government, community organisations, church organisations, private companies and independent schools. These service providers must meet the eligibility criteria as set out in the Kindergarten Guide.

Monitoring and Review

Services receiving ESK are required to report on the transition of children supported through the grant to kindergarten in the year before school. Data will be gathered through an annual kindergarten data collection process.

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Performance Measures	Reporting frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of funded places	Yearly	Ongoing: collected from applications submitted for ESK Grants	Ongoing
Number of children that transition to a 4 year old program	Yearly	January of the following year	November to January of the following year

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Data Source
Number of government-funded ESK places			
This performance measure provides information about the number of places funded for 3 year old children from targeted groups to attend kindergarten.	Children enrolled in a kindergarten program – operated by an approved provider as defined in Section C of the Kindergarten Guide 2015 – accessing ESK funding.	Total number of children at each service location who received ESK funding.	Service providers complete an Early Start application on the Kindergarten Information management system, and submit it to the Department for approval.
Number of children that transition from an ESK place to a 4 year old program			
This performance measure provides information on the number of children who participate in a 4 year old Kindergarten program having previously received ESK funding.	Children enrolled in kindergarten program and accessed ESK funding the previous year.	Total number of children who enrolled in a 4 year old Kindergarten program who received ESK funding the previous year.	Annual Kindergarten data collection

Access to Early Learning: 718076

Outcomes and Indicators

This program aims to increase the educational outcomes and wellbeing of children experiencing disadvantage, by better engaging vulnerable children and their families in universal Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) programs. Elements include:

- child participation, attendance and transition to Year Before School Kindergarten
- hours and types of support provided to families to address barriers to participation
- activities supporting ECEC services to better engage vulnerable families and children.

Sustained participation in kindergarten by eligible children indicates this program has achieved its outcome.

Target Group

Funding is available to support eligible targeted groups of three year old children experiencing disadvantage.

Description

The Access to Early Learning (AEL) program provides additional support for vulnerable children and families to address complex barriers to participation in early childhood education and care. This support is provided where Early Start Kindergarten funding alone will not adequately engage and sustain participation in early childhood education and care.

AEL is available in selected areas where there is demonstrated community need.

AEL is an early intervention prevention model that is designed to support sustained participation of vulnerable children and their families in quality universal education and care; strengthen home learning environments; and build capacity in the local service system. The model incorporates a number of elements built around children's enrolment in a quality early childhood education setting, including:

- A Key Facilitation Worker focuses on identifying eligible children and linking them to appropriate early childhood education services, introducing families to services and ensuring that the arrangements necessary to support the child's engagement are completed. The Key Facilitation Worker also leads the development of professional and practice development and mentoring of educators.
- Family and In-home Learning Support focuses on linking families to additional services to reduce barriers and build capacity to support their children's learning.
- Professional and practice development funds are provided to support ECEC educators to develop and refine the skills and competencies required to successfully engage vulnerable children and their families.

The Department provides funding to lead agencies to provide the program in line with guidelines. Agencies will employ staff or contract other providers to fulfil the elements of the model, including the provision of early childhood education delivered by a professional educator for 15 hours for each child in the program.

Significant stakeholders in the AEL Program are:

- vulnerable families
- Child Protection (DHHS)
- Local government (as provider of Maternal and Child Health services)
- Kindergarten Cluster Manager(s)
- Child FIRST and other family services organisations e.g. disability support such as Early Childhood Intervention Services, Mental Health or family violence services.

Standards and Guidelines

- This program is included in the *Kindergarten Guide 2015*:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/The%20Kindergarten%20Guide%202015.pdf>

Service Delivery

AEL is delivered by selected external organisations. These include Local Government Areas, Community Health Organisations, Schools, and non-government organisations that provide family services.

Monitoring and Review

AEL sites report quarterly to the Early Learning Participation Unit, detailing enrolments and activities undertaken for each of the service elements. In addition, an annual acquittal is required, outlining how funding has been applied across the service model elements.

External evaluators, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute, are undertaking an evaluation of the AEL program, which will be completed in 2017.

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Performance Measures	Reporting frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of funded places	Yearly	Ongoing: collected from applications submitted for Early Start Kindergarten Grants	Ongoing
Number of children that transition to a four-year-old program	Yearly	January of the following year	November to January of the following year
Number of children receiving support – minimum of 16 children per annum.	Quarterly	Data from the previous term is reported at the beginning of each new term	Ongoing

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Access to Early Learning, number of children receiving support				
This performance measure provides information on the number of children receiving support via the AEL program.	See AEL service model	Number of children receiving additional support and access to a Kindergarten program.	N/A	Quarterly reports to the Early Learning Participation Unit.

National Occasional Care Programme: 711205

Outcomes and indicators

The National Occasional Care (NOC) Programme aims to increase access to flexible, seasonal and sessional child care, particularly for families in rural, regional and remote areas. The programme enables parents to participate in a range of day to day activities while their children socialise and interact with other children in an early childhood education and care setting.

The NOC Programme will increase the number of occasional care places available in Victoria.

Target Group

NOC funded services cater for all Victorian children from birth to five years.

Description

Occasional care is flexible child care delivered by a range of early years' service providers, including funded kindergartens, Neighbourhood Houses/Learning Centres, Local Government and Health Services.

The NOC Programme is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments and administered by the Department.

Program-Specific Requirements

Services approved under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (National Law) and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (National Regulations) operate under the National Quality Framework (NQF).

Service providers operating an existing kindergarten service and providing wrap-around occasional care may operate both services under National Law and National Regulations. Services operating under the NQF must consider the required minimum child to educator ratios and educator qualifications. These services are required to have access to a qualified early childhood teacher working with the service or have an early childhood teacher in attendance at the service. Services not able to meet this requirement may apply for a waiver.

Standards and guidelines

- *National Occasional Care Programme Guidelines 2015-2016*, Department of Education and Training:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/natoccasionalcare.aspx>

Guiding principles for National Occasional Care include:

- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*, Department of Education and Training: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/Pages/veyladf.aspx>
- *Early Years Learning Framework*:
http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf

Service Delivery

NOC funded services must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- the service is located in Victoria
- the service provider must be a not-for-profit community organisation or a local government authority
- the service must be delivered in an early education and care service operating under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations or as a Victorian Children's Service
- the service provider must sign and comply with a service agreement, including acknowledging that any future Programme extension is dependent on Commonwealth funding
- the service must not be a Commonwealth Child Care Benefit approved service

- the service must not be receiving Community Support Programme (CSP) funding for this service from the Commonwealth Government
- registered care cannot be applied to the fee paid by families for the time spent in the NOC Programme.

Monitoring and Review

Services are required to complete a data collection form annually. The Department may adjust the allocation of NOC funding from services that are under-utilising their funded places.

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Performance Measures	Reporting frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Utilisation of the total number of NOC funded hours per annum	Yearly	April (Commonwealth reporting)	March

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
The utilisation of occasional care hours funded by the NOC Programme	The number of NOC funded hours per annum is based on the multiplication of places per session, hours per week and weeks per year funded by the NOC Programme.	Numbers to be reported for all children accessing NOC funded places in a 12 month period	N/A	Each service to complete an online data collection form

Family Learning Support Program: 612024

Outcomes and Indicators

The Family Learning Support Program (FLSP) aims to:

- better support learners across the State and the sector by enabling all Learn Local organisations to opt-in to the Program
- ensure that the cost of child care is not a barrier to learning by providing subsidies to learners for occasional child care
- ensure a fair and equitable funding model by aligning funding directly with the level of training delivered.

The success of the program is measured on the numbers of students receiving subsidised occasional child care to enable them to participate in learning at a Learn Local organisation.

Target Group

Learner accessing a FLSP subsidy must be:

- a parent, carer or guardian of a child or children (aged between 0-6 years and not enrolled at school) for which they are seeking occasional child care
- enrolled in and attending Victorian Government funded education and training at an eligible Learn Local organisation and accessing occasional child care during course hours
- ineligible to receive the Commonwealth Approved Child Care Benefit either because of their circumstances or because the occasional child care service does not have any Commonwealth approved occasional child care places available.

Description

In 2014, the Family Learning Support Program (or FLSP) was introduced to boost the opportunities for adult learners to learn, especially where the cost of child care is a barrier to learning. Each year, Learn Local organisations are offered the opportunity to opt-in to FLSP to provide these opportunities to the greater number of learners across Victoria.

FLSP funds must be used:

- for occasional child care only. This means the child will be in care for a maximum of 5 hours per day or 15 hours per week; and for places provided by a Victorian licensed children's service, or a Commonwealth approved or registered children's service within Victoria
- if the Learn Local organisation does not have eligible child care services onsite, they may direct the subsidy to an external children's service that meets these requirements.

Occasional child care is provided to eligible students to enable them to participate in training. Learn Local organisations or early childhood services provide the occasional care services to families.

Program-Specific Requirements

The Department invites Expressions of Interest to participate in the forthcoming calendar year. Learn Local organisations already funding via the program will be asked to declare if they intend to opt-out. The information is communicated to providers via an Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board memo. The funding is for each calendar year.

Standards and Guidelines

- Program guidelines can be found at:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/training/providers/learnlocal/memo/2014/pbmemo20141020b.pdf>

Service Delivery

For an organisation to receive funding for FLSP, they must be a Victorian Learn Local organisation registered with the ACFE Board.

Monitoring and Review

A key responsibility for participating Learn Local organisations which opt-in for FLSP is data collection and reporting. This reporting forms part of the Learn Local organisation's accountability for expenditure of government funding.

To complete the annual reporting requirements, organisations will need to keep a record of:

- the student number (as per Student Management System/AVETMISS validation software) of learners accessing the subsidy and their reason for accessing the service (e.g. Health Care Card holder)
- the number of hours/days of occasional child care subsidised
- the name and Licence ID or Approved Service number of the approved children's service subsidised
- the amount of FLSP funding spent by the organisation, including funds spent on program administration.

Unused funds are returned by the provider at the end of the funding period.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Performance Measures	Reporting frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Student Participation	Annually	Annually	Annually
Hours of childcare	Annually	Annually	Annually

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
<p>Number of learners accessing services via the FLSP. Number of days for each learner the occasional child care subsidy is used</p> <p>Details of licensed children's services.</p> <p>Amount of FLSP funding spent by the Learn Local</p>	<p>Performance is measured by participation rates according to program eligibility and as stipulated in the service contract with the Learn Local organisation.</p>	<p>Student number is recorded (as per Student Management System) and their reason for accessing the service.</p> <p>Number of hours and days of care subsidised.</p> <p>Name and Licence ID or approved service number of the approved children's service subsidised.</p> <p>Amount of FLSP funding spent by the organisation including administration</p>	N/A	<p>Each service to complete an online data collection form</p>

Kindergarten Sector Support: 718024

Outcomes and Indicators

Kindergarten sector support incorporates a range of services aimed at improving the capacity of community and not for profit services to provide quality kindergarten programs. Specifically, this activity aims to ensure the sector is receiving appropriate and adequate assistance in providing quality kindergarten programs that are well governed, viable and efficiently managed.

Funded early childhood education and care services are meeting the National Quality Standard and complying with their funding and service agreement.

Target Group

The activity targets community based not for profit early childhood education and care services delivering a government-funded kindergarten program.

Description

This activity funds organisations to provide support and assistance at a statewide level to the staff and management of community-based Early Childhood Education and Care services delivering government-funded kindergarten programs.

This activity includes information technology support and internet connectivity, payroll services, local government support and specialised professional advice on governance, financial management and service planning.

Service Delivery

The program is delivered by suitably qualified and experienced for profit and not-for-profit organisations.

Monitoring and Review

The providers of kindergarten sector support are monitored through the Department's contract management and service agreement monitoring framework. This includes regular reviews of progress towards objectives and key performance indicators.

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Maternal and Child Health Services

Maternal and Child Health Service – Universal: 718047

Outcomes and Indicators

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service aims to promote a comprehensive and focused approach for the promotion, prevention, early detection, and intervention of physical, emotional or social factors affecting young children and their families in Victorian communities.

High levels of health and wellbeing in children from birth to 3.5 years of age and beyond indicates that the program outcome is being achieved.

Target Group

The service targets all Victorian families with children aged from birth to school entry.

Description

The Universal MCH service provides 10 Key Ages and Stages (KAS) consultations. The KAS consultations are a schedule of contacts for all children and their families from birth to school entry. They include an initial home visit, and consultations at 2, 4 and 8 weeks, 4, 8, 12 and 18 months, and 2 and 3.5 years of age.

MCH consultations are delivered within the MCH KAS framework, comprising three key components: monitoring; promotion of health and development and intervention. The framework:

- identifies the core activities for the 10 universal consultations that the MCH service should offer to all Victorian children and their families
- is intended to be complemented by flexible and individualized activities on the basis of the MCH nurses' clinical judgment and in response to parental concerns
- provides evidence-based written health information consistent with the health promotion activities listed in the Framework at each Key Age and Stage consultation.

The Universal MCH service also has a flexible component for the planning and delivery of services most relevant to local needs and priorities. These activities may include, but are not limited to, additional one-on-one or group consultations where there is a demonstrated need, community-strengthening activities (such as group activities, health promotion activities and assertive outreach), activities with other service providers and initiatives to engage particular groups or those with particular needs. Parent groups are a required activity within this component.

The Universal MCH service is provided in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria. A Memorandum of Understanding sets out agreed principles to guide the planning, funding and provision of the MCH service. Victorian and local governments jointly fund the service.

Maternal and Child Health services receive funding for 100 per cent of KAS consultations per child. In order to achieve this, the MCH Service Guidelines provide guidance about the increase in participation rates expected over time for the universal service.

The Universal Maternal and Child Health service funding is based on enrolments in the service from the previous year. Weightings for rural isolation and disadvantage are incorporated into the funding formula.

This activity includes the Maternal and Child Health 24-hour telephone line (MCH Line), which is delivered internally.

Standards and Guidelines

- *Maternal and Child Health Service Guidelines 2011*
- *Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards 2009*
- *Maternal and Child Health Service Practice Guidelines 2009*
- Victorian Acts and Statutory Rules are available from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au

- The program standards and guidelines above are available from the Department’s website at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/health/Pages/mchpolicy.aspx>

Service Delivery

The Universal MCH service is managed and delivered by local government in community settings or by other locally based community services. The MCH Line is delivered internally.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the performance measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Standard performance measures for this activity are outlined below. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements as listed below and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Organisations receiving MCH funding are expected to develop and implement an annual Service Improvement Plan (SIP). The MCH SIP tool is sent to local government by the Department each year, with guidelines for development and submission. Some of the action areas for improvement as outlined in the SIP include measures to increase participation in the Universal MCH service, plans to improve identification and engagement of vulnerable children, and plans for increasing participation by Aboriginal children.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures

Funding for this activity is based on actual service levels, although it may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations.

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Number of clients	Yearly	By 15 July	MCH annual June data collection
Percentage of children 0–1 month enrolled at Maternal and Child Health Services from birth notifications (target = 98.5 per cent)	Yearly	By 15 April	MCH annual June data collection
Percentage of children attending the 8 months, 12 months, 18 months, 2 years and 3.5 years key ages and stages development assessment.	Yearly	By 15 July	MCH annual June data collection
MCH Line – 100,000 calls annually	Quarterly	By 15 January, April, July, October	

MCH Line Reporting

The MCH Line provides annual data on the number of responses to calls, number of assisted referrals and trends in call issues.

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Participation rates				
This performance measure provides information about the percentage increase in participation over the previous year of children attending the 8 month, 12 month, 18 months, 2 years and 3.5 years key ages and stages assessment.	Key Ages and Stages consultations are undertaken by an MCH nurse, which may be either centre based or outreach.	<p>Number of 8-month visits as a percentage of total infant record cards of children aged 0–1 years plus 1–2 years divided by 2.</p> <p>Number of 12-month visits as a percentage of total infant record cards of children aged 0–1 years plus 1–2 years divided by 2.</p> <p>Number of 18-month visits as a percentage of total infant record cards of children aged 1–2 years plus 2–3 years divided by 2.</p> <p>Number of 2-year visits as a percentage of total infant record cards of children aged 2–3 years.</p> <p>Number of 3.5-year visits as a percentage of total infant record cards of children 3–4 years, plus 4–5 years divided by 2.</p>	<p>Number of 8-month visits is 1,516.</p> <p>Total number of infant record cards 0–1 year is 1,577.</p> <p>Total number of infant record cards 1–2 years is 1,742.</p> <p>Percentage of children attending the 8-month key age and stage visit = $1,516 \div (1,577 + 1,742) \div 2 \times 100 = 91.4$ per cent</p> <p>The participation rate for the previous year for the 8-month consultation was 87.5 per cent.</p> <p>Thus, the increase for in the 8-month participation rate is $91.4 - 87.5 = 3.9$ per cent.</p>	Maternal and Child Health Annual Data Collection, Municipalities forward annual data report to DET region, which checks it before forwarding it to DET central office.
Percentage of clients enrolled from birth notifications (target is 98.5%)				
This performance measure provides information about the percentage of children 0–1 month enrolled at Maternal and Child Health services from birth notifications.	A new baby is considered enrolled in the MCH service once the MCH nurse has made contact with the family or in the case of older children, once the family has attended the MCH centre.	Number of children 0–1 month enrolled at Maternal and Child Health services ÷ total birth notifications (not including children stillborn, or deceased or moved out of the state within one month of birth).	<p>Number of children 0–1 month enrolled at MCH services = 1,960.</p> <p>Total birth notifications = 2,050.</p> <p>Children stillborn = 10.</p> <p>Children deceased within one month of birth = 5.</p> <p>Children moved out of the state within one month of birth = 35.</p> <p>Percentage of children 0–1 month enrolled from birth notifications = $1,960 \div (2,050 - 10 - 5 - 35) \times 100 = 98$ per cent.</p>	<p>Data is extracted as part of the MCH Annual Data Collection.</p> <p>Municipalities forward annual data report to DET region, which checks it before forwarding it to DET central office.</p> <p>Calculations for participation rates are done centrally.</p>
Percentage of clients attending				
This performance measure	An active record card indicates those	Active record cards divided by total record cards multiplied by 100.	Number of active cards = 1,483. Total number of cards = 1,707.	MCH Annual Data Collection: Municipalities

<p>provides information about improved attendance at the universal MCH service by families.</p>	<p>children who attend a MCH centre at least once within the financial year.</p> <p>Total record cards are records of all children enrolled in the MCH service whether currently attending or not.</p>		<p>Percentage of clients attending = $1,483 \div 1,707 \times 100 = 86.8$ per cent</p>	<p>forward annual data report to DET region, which checks it, before forwarding it to DET central office.</p>
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Maternal and Child Health Service – Enhanced: 718097

Outcomes and Indicators

The Enhanced Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service aims to provide a more intensive level of support for children and families at risk of poor outcomes. It is provided in addition to the suite of services offered through the Universal MCH service.

Description

The Enhanced MCH service responds assertively to the needs of children and families at risk of poor outcomes, in particular where there are multiple risk factors. It prevents emerging difficulties through early identification, intervention and linkage with other support systems, including maternity services, ChildFIRST, family support, child protection, parenting and early intervention services.

The Enhanced MCH service provides a more intensive level of support, including short-term case management in some circumstances. Support may be provided in a variety of settings, such as the family's home, the MCH centre or another location within the community.

The Enhanced MCH service is fully funded by the Department.

Target Group

The primary focus of this service is families with one or more of the following risk factors:

- drug and alcohol issues
- mental health issues
- family violence issues
- families known to Child Protection
- homelessness
- unsupported parent(s) under 24 years of age
- low-income, socially isolated, single-parent families
- significant parent–baby bonding and attachment issues
- parent with an intellectual disability
- children with a physical or intellectual disability
- infants at increased medical risk due to prematurity, low birth weight, drug dependency and failure to thrive.

Standards and Guidelines

- *Enhanced Maternal and Child Health Services Guidelines 2003–04:*
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/professionals/health/mchenhancedguidelines.pdf> *Maternal and Child Health Service Guidelines 2011*
- *Maternal and Child Health Service Program Standards 2009*
- *Maternal and Child Health Service Practice Guidelines 2009*
- Program Standards and Guidelines above are available from the Department's website at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/health/Pages/mchpolicy.aspx>
- Victorian Acts and Statutory Rules are available from the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website at www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Service Delivery

This program is managed and delivered by local government or by other locally based community services.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the performance measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Standard performance measures for this activity are outlined below. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements as listed here and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date
Number of clients receiving a service	Quarterly	15 January 15 April 15 July 15 October
Data collections		
Integrated Reports and Information System (IRIS)	Quarterly	15 January 15 April 15 July 15 October

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
This performance measure provides information about the number of clients receiving an Enhanced MCH service.	Clients are families with one or more of the risk factors identified in the Target Group section.	<p>Only those cases where the family had received a service in the financial year are included. The counting rules are:</p> <p>1. Count in the first quarter of the financial year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing cases at the beginning of the quarter that received a service in the financial year, and - New cases opened during the quarter that received a service in the financial year. <p>2. Count for the remaining three quarters of the financial year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New cases opened during the quarter that received a service in the financial year. 	<p>Of cases that received a service in the financial year:</p> <p>Ongoing cases at the beginning of the financial year = 5</p> <p>New cases opened during the first quarter = 1</p> <p>New cases opened during the second quarter = 2</p> <p>New cases opened during the third quarter = 0</p> <p>New cases opened during the fourth quarter = 1</p> <p>Number of clients receiving a service (5 + 1 + 2 + 0 + 1) = 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Maternal and Child Health services Data Collection (at case opening) • Quarterly Report of Enhanced Maternal and Child Health services • Municipalities forward quarterly to central office, via IRIS software.

Regional Parenting Services

Regional Parenting Services: 718371

Outcomes and Indicators

Regional Parenting Services provide education and support to parents with children 0–18 years to promote the development of parenting knowledge, skills and confidence to enhance children’s social and emotional wellbeing and cognitive development.

Target Group

The target group for Regional Parenting Services is families with children aged 0-18 years including families experiencing complex issues and parenting challenges.

Description

Regional Parenting Services provide universal and targeted services including information, parenting education and support on a group or individual basis according to parents’ needs. Key activities of Regional Parenting Services include:

- parenting education including parenting seminars and the dissemination of information directly to parents and other service providers in contact with parents
- parenting groups
- one-on-one support for families experiencing complex issues
- working with other local services in a both universal and targeted capacity, to strengthen the service networks available to families
- coordinating local services concerned with parent education and parenting programs.

Services are delivered in accordance with the principles of the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

Service Delivery

Regional Parenting Services are provided by community service organisations and/or local governments.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding for this activity is based on actual service levels, although it may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations.

Performance Measures	Reporting frequency	Reporting Due Date
Number of clients	Quarterly	15 January 15 April 15 July 15 October
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 85 per cent)	Yearly	15 July
Data Collections		
Provision of data to regional DET office	Quarterly	15 October, January, April and July

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of clients				
This performance measure provides information about the total number of parents/caregivers and professionals who have received a particular service each year.	<p>Clients are defined as parents or caregivers of children.</p> <p>Service is defined as: Parent education - parenting seminars and local services providing written information for parents. Parenting Groups Individual parenting interventions – individual support for families</p>	<p>Number of parenting seminars delivered</p> <p>Number of local service distributing parenting information</p> <p>Number of parenting groups delivered</p> <p>Families receiving individual support</p>	N/A	Service providers collect data and forward to regional DET office.
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (85%)				
This performance measure provides information about the quality and effectiveness of Parenting Services.	Clients are defined as parents/ caregivers or professionals utilising Parenting Services.	Number of clients sampled via survey who are satisfied with the service provided ÷ total number of clients sampled.	A sample is taken and 9 of the 10 clients sampled are satisfied with the service. This equates to a 90 per cent satisfaction rate.	Program data collection, which is sent manually to DET regions and forwarded to DET central office.

Strengthening Parent Support Program: 718322

Outcomes and Indicators

This program aims to promote the independence and healthy development of families with children aged 0-18 years with a disability or developmental delay by providing opportunities for parents in similar situations to meet on a regular basis for support, advice, referral, networking opportunities and information sharing.

Target Group

The target group for the Strengthening Parent Support Program (SPSP) is parents and carers with children aged 0-18 years with a disability or developmental delay.

Description

The SPSP assists parents and carers who have a child with a disability or developmental delay to connect with other families and the community. A coordinator is employed to support the establishment of peer support groups that provide opportunities for parents in similar situations to meet for mutual support, information sharing and training. Coordinators also deliver education or information sessions and provide individual support to parents.

Performance Targets

Target for 1 funded EFT:

Number of SPSP peer support groups operating during the quarter = 10

Percentage of families satisfied with the service at the end of the year = 85%

Standards and Guidelines

- The Strengthening Parent Support Program Policy and Funding Guidelines are available electronically at: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/support/Pages/Guidelines-for-delivery-of-Parenting-Support-Services-Delivery.aspx

Service Delivery

Community service organisations deliver this program.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this program in the SPSP Policy and Funding Guidelines. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements as listed in the Policy and Funding Guidelines and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding for this activity is based on actual service levels. Funding may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations.

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date
Number of SPSP peer support groups operating during the quarter	Quarterly	15 January 15 April 15 July 15 October
Total number of parents who attended SPSP peer support groups each quarter		
Number of parents new to SPSP in a quarter who attended a SPSP peer support group each quarter		
Number of education/information sessions that were held each quarter		
Number of parents attending education/information sessions that were held each quarter		
Number of one-off contacts with parents each quarter		
Number of parents that received individual support from the Coordinator each quarter		
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 85 per cent)	Yearly	15 July
Data Collections		
Provision of reports to the Department's regions.	Quarterly	15 January 15 April 15 July 15 October

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of SPSP peer support groups operating				
This performance measure provides information about the total number of peer support groups operating each quarter.	Peer support groups may be delivered in person or online. They are facilitated by the Coordinator or a parent.	Number of individual peer support groups that operate each quarter. Not the number of times the peer support group meets each quarter.	A peer support group that meets bimonthly counts as one group for the quarter.	Program data is collected by the service provider and sent to DET regions.
Number of parents who attended SPSP peer support groups				
This performance measure provides information about the total number of parents receiving a service.	Parents are defined as parents and caregivers attending a peer support group.	Number of parents attending a peer support group. If two parents from the same family attend, both parents are counted.	N/A	Program data is collected by the service provider and sent to DET regions.
Number of parents new to SPSP in a quarter who attended SPSP peer support groups				
This performance measure provides information about the total number of parents new to the program receiving a service.	Parents who have not previously attended a peer support group or received individual support from the Coordinator count as new.	New parents are parents who did not have a Family Record (Form E) prior to that quarter.	N/A	Program data is collected by the service provider and sent to DET regions.
Number of education/information sessions that were held				
This performance measure provides information about the total number of education/information sessions held each quarter.	An education or information session is a one off meeting of parents for a specific purpose (whether in person or online).	N/A	A one-off meeting on transition to primary school for parents of children with a disability is an information session.	Program data is collected by the service provider and sent to DET regions.
Number of parents attending education/information sessions that were held				
This performance measure provides information about the number of parents attending education/information sessions each quarter.	Each parent or carer who attends a session is a participant.	If two parents from the same family attend, both parents are counted. Presenters or speakers at the session do not count.	N/A	Program data is collected by the service provider and sent to DET regions.

Number of one-off contacts with parents				
This performance measure provides information about the number of one-off contacts with parents each quarter.	One-off contacts include phone calls and face-to-face conversations with parents that are short in nature and involve only one occurrence. These contacts tend to be limited to the provision of information.	N/A	N/A	Program data is collected by the service provider and sent to DET regions.
Number of parents that have received individual support				
This performance measure provides information about the number of parents that have received individual support from the Coordinator each quarter	Individual support is a one to one meeting(s) between a Coordinator and parents or carers.	N/A	N/A	Program data is collected by the service provider and sent to DET regions.
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided				
This performance measure provides information about the quality and effectiveness of the program.	Clients are defined as parents and carers having direct contact with the program either as an individual or through attendance at a peer support group.	Number of clients sampled via survey who are satisfied with the service provided, divided by the total number of clients sampled.	A sample is taken and 9 of the 10 clients sampled are satisfied with the service. This equates to a 90 per cent satisfaction rate.	Program data is collected by the service provider and sent to DET regions.

Signposts for Building Better Behaviour: 718320

Outcomes and Indicators

Signposts for Building Better Behaviour (Signposts) aims to promote the independence and healthy development of families with children aged 0-18 years with a disability or developmental delay. It provides parenting support, information, advice, and referral to parents. Signposts also aims to support parents to develop strategies to manage difficult behaviours before these behaviours escalate. Signposts can be delivered through group or individual interventions and also through telephone assisted self-directed mode.

Funding is provided to the Parenting Research Centre to deliver training in the delivery of Signposts to professionals working with families in the target group.

Target Group

The target group for training in Signposts is professionals working with the target group in a parenting education or parenting support role.

Description

Signposts training provides professionals with skills to work with parents or carers of children aged 0-18 years with an intellectual disability or developmental delay to develop strategies to manage difficult behaviours. The objective is to address these behaviours before they escalate to the point where intensive behavioural intervention is required. It is based on the premise that workers in generic and disability specific services can be trained as Signposts practitioners to provide support to families using Signposts materials.

Service Delivery

Parenting Research Centre delivers training in Signposts.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Standard Performance Measures for this activity are outlined below. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements as listed here and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding for this activity is based on actual service levels. Funding may be adjusted in accordance with periodic reconciliations.

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date
Number of participants in training.	Quarterly	15 October, January, April and July
Percentage of participants sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 85 per cent)	Yearly	15 July
Data Collections		
Provision of reports to the Department's central office	Quarterly	15 October, January, April and July

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of clients				
This performance measure provides information about the total number of participants in Signposts Training annually.	Clients are defined as participants in training.	Number of people enrolled in training	N/A	Data is sent to DET central office each quarter.
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (85%)				
This performance measure provides information about the quality and effectiveness of the Signposts training	Clients are defined as participants in Signposts training.	Number of clients sampled via survey who are satisfied with the service provided ÷ total number of clients sampled.	A sample is taken and 9 of the 10 clients sampled are satisfied with the service. This equates to a 90 per cent satisfaction rate.	Data is sent to DET central office each quarter.

Parentline: 718370

Outcomes and Indicators

This service aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of Victorian parents by providing a telephone access point for information, advice and referral on parenting issues that is culturally sensitive, anonymous, confidential and non-stigmatising.

Target Group

Parents and carers of children aged 0–18 years.

Description

Parentline is a confidential and anonymous statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for all Victorian families with children aged from birth to 18 years. The focus is prevention and early intervention rather than crisis support. Parentline assists with the development of strategies and skills that promote the confidence, resilience and wellbeing of families and links families with community resources. It also encourages the establishment of positive support networks for families and links with local community services.

Service Delivery

Parentline is delivered internally.

Monitoring and Review

Not applicable as service is internally delivered.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding for this activity is based on actual service levels.

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date
Number of calls received	Quarterly	15 October, January, April and July
Percentage of clients sampled who are satisfied with the service provided (target = 85 per cent)	Yearly	15 July
Data Collections		
Data reports	Monthly	By day 15 of the following month

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
This performance measure provides information about the total number of calls answered by the service annually.	Number of calls answered by the service.	Count the number of calls answered by the service.	N/A	Program data collection through Client Enquiry Recording Enhanced System (CERES). Data is collated by the program and reported in the <i>Parentline Annual Report</i> .

Supported Playgroups: 718324

Outcomes and Indicators

Supported Playgroups are provided for disadvantaged families to assist parents to develop the skills and confidence to improve the early home learning environment and promote their children's learning and development.

Parents also learn about local services and develop social support networks with other parents.

Target Group

The program is delivered to eligible parents as specified in the program guidelines to improve parenting skills and confidence to promote children's learning. Refer to the Supported Playgroup Policy and Funding Guidelines for eligibility criteria.

Improvement in children's learning outcomes through improvements in the quality of the early home learning environment and parent child interaction. Parents also learn about local services and develop social support networks with other parents.

Description

Parents participate in Supported Playgroups led by qualified facilitators. *smalltalk*, an evidence-based parenting intervention, is delivered in the Supported Playgroup.

Some parents may also be eligible for In-Home Support (see Target Group in the Supported Playgroups, Policy and Funding Guidelines) which provides more intensive one-on-one support to eligible parents.

Performance Targets

Cumulative targets for 1 funded EFT:

Number of supported playgroups per year = 20

Number of families in supported playgroups per year = 160

Number of families engaged in-home support per year = 24

Point in time target for 1 funded EFT:

At any point in time, 5 supported playgroups with 40 families and 6 families engaged In-Home Support.

Standards and Guidelines

- The Supported Playgroup Policy and Funding Guidelines are available electronically at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/supportedplaygroups>

Service Delivery

Local government and some community service organisations are funded to deliver the program.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Funding is subject to the delivery of specified targets. Where annual performance is less than 95 per cent of target performance, the funded organisation will be required to provide the Department with a justification for retaining full funding.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Funding for this activity is based on an annual allocation to service providers which is indexed annually.

Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date
Number of families enrolled in supported playgroups	Quarterly	Within two weeks of the end of each school term
Number of supported playgroups	Quarterly	Within two weeks of the end of each school term
Number of families receiving in-home support (each term and at the end of the calendar year)	Quarterly	Within two weeks of the end of each school term

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Number of families enrolled in Supported Playgroups This performance measure provides information on the number of families enrolled in Supported Playgroups	A family is defined as a parent (or other adult e.g. grandparent) and child(ren)	Number of parents enrolled each term	N/A	Data collected by service providers and provided to DET
Number of Supported Playgroups	Template provided to service providers			Data collected by service providers and provided to DET
Number of families receiving in home support	A family is defined as a parent or other adult e.g. grandparent, and child(ren)	Number of parents receiving In-Home Support each term.		Data collected by service providers and provided to DET

Partnerships

Best Start: 718314

Outcomes and Indicators

Best Start is a place-based initiative that aims to increase the participation of vulnerable children in universal services through establishing agreed local priorities and actions, improving service coordination and collaboration, removing barriers and improving referral pathways. Best Start is delivered in 30 locations across metropolitan and rural Victoria. Increased participation of vulnerable children in kindergarten and increased attendance of vulnerable children at Maternal and Child Health (MCH) will demonstrate progress towards achieving these outcomes.

Target Group

Families and children (0-8 years) in 30 locations across Victoria

Description

1. Local partnerships, comprising key service agencies that work towards service system development through a range of strategies based on an analysis of community need and consultation to increase the participation of vulnerable children in kindergarten and increase the attendance of vulnerable children in the MCH Service
2. Engagement of a Best Start Facilitator to support the Partnership

Best Start involves the implementation of strategies proven to be effective in increasing sustained engagement of vulnerable children and families in universal services. Responsibilities include ensuring regular contact and liaison with vulnerable children and families, including Child Protection and services for Aboriginal children and families and implementation of the Strategic Activities in the Best Start Action Plan.

Best Start activities are delivered by improving the quality and linkages between services, the Partnership, and the employment of a Facilitator who coordinates and supports the Partnership.

Standards and Guidelines

The guidelines for Best Start are currently being redeveloped.

Service Delivery

Best Start projects are led by local partnerships, comprising local government, parents, health and education services, Elders and community organisations.

Monitoring and Review

Government-funded organisations are monitored against the Performance Measures and targets specified for this activity in the service agreement. Monitoring is undertaken through data collection requirements and financial accountability requirements as specified in the service agreement.

Sector Support

Early Childhood Workforce Development and Support: 710318

Outcomes and Indicators

Early Childhood Workforce Development and Support initiatives are designed to lift qualification levels and build the professionalism of the early childhood education and care workforce. National Quality Standards and Victorian sector supports have driven significant improvements in qualification levels across the Victorian Early Childhood Education and Care workforce since 2010.

Indicators of achievement continue to be improved qualification levels, improved professional practice across the workforce and service level improvements against National Quality Standard assessments.

Target Group

These programs target early childhood professionals including assistants, educators and teachers from licensed early childhood services.

Description

The Department offers a number of support initiatives to support the early childhood workforce.

- Four early childhood professional development programs through the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership to support leadership development across the areas of partnership development, people development and program development. The Department also provides reimbursement of backfill costs for services to release staff to participate in professional learning programs.
- Scholarships through the Early Childhood Qualifications Fund and the Early Childhood Scholarships for Aboriginal People schemes are awarded to support professionals to upgrade or attain an early childhood qualification.
- Employment Incentives for Early Childhood Teachers (up to \$15,000) scheme, through which incentives are available to attract and retain qualified early childhood teachers to hard-to-staff positions, such as outer regional and remote communities, and Aboriginal services.
- Mentoring programs to prepare experienced teachers to support beginning teachers to achieve full Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration.

Program Specific Requirements

Entry requirements for programs are detailed in policies and procedures on the respective websites.

Standards and Guidelines

Standards and Guidelines are listed on the following websites and in the funding agreements with service providers:

- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/profdev/Pages/leadership.aspx>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/profdev/Pages/mentoring.aspx>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/roadmap/Pages/eduscholarships.aspx>
- <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx>

Service Delivery

Sector support services are provided by the Department and early childhood peak organisations. The Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership (Bastow) currently delivers the four professional learning programs. Administration of Early Childhood scholarships schemes is undertaken by Early Childhood Australia, Victoria (ECA Vic) on behalf of the Department.

The Department directly administers provision of incentives for early childhood services experiencing difficulty in attracting or retaining qualified early childhood teachers. The Department has commissioned delivery of Early Childhood Mentoring Programs since 2008.

Monitoring and Review

Bastow evaluation reports are provided on completion of professional development programs. An extensive evaluation of programs 2010 – 2014 will be completed in July 2015 and provide recommendations for future programs.

Scholarship and incentive schemes have been evaluated as part of lapsing program evaluations in 2010 and 2012. An evaluation of scholarship schemes will be completed in November 2015 and provide recommendations for future programs.

Annual reports on early childhood mentoring programs have informed program development since 2008, and summary feedback from participants is compiled after each program.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

Program	Performance Measures	Reporting Frequency	Reporting Due Date	Data Collection
Scholarships and incentives	Number of applications; number of offers/acceptances; number of course completions	As required	As required	As required
Professional development and mentoring	Number of applications; number of enrolments; number of course completions; perceptions of course quality/course meeting its Outcomes and Indicators	Mid-course and post course	Mid-course and post course	Mid-course and post course

Counting Rules

Purpose	Definition of Terms	Counting Rules	Example	Data Source
Perceptions of course quality/course meeting its objectives (professional development)				
The perceived quality of the delivered program Whether the program has met participants expectations/ program objectives	As above	Survey to participants pre, mid and post course Quantitative and qualitative data	Surveys	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system
Participation and completion rates (scholarships, incentives and PD)				
Number of individuals who have participated and completed the program	Successfully completed the course/ program	Whole population Quantitative data	Analysis of participation data Analysis of program evaluations	CRM system and registers of scholarship recipients

Community Development and Assistance: 718316

Outcomes and Indicators

The Community Development and Assistance activity aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of early years services.

Target Group

The activity targets community service organisations providing early years services.

Description

This activity funds organisations (including peak bodies) to undertake statewide or regional projects that support and assist the staff and management of community service organisations providing early years services.

Organisations may also provide advice on government policy and programs, and represent sector views to the Department. The activity also funds a number of community development projects.

Service Delivery

Community Development and Assistance services are provided by community service organisations.

Performance Measures and Data Collections

There are no predefined Performance Measures, and all performance deliverables and accountabilities are specified in the Service Plan Level Information (Other Requirements) section of the service agreement.