
Early parenting centres support families

Summary

- Early parenting centres work in partnership with families to provide specialised and targeted support to care for babies and toddler until they are 4 years old.
- The service is free for all eligible Victorian families
- Early parenting centres offer tiered support alongside the universal, enhanced and MCH Line programs.
- Early parenting centres offers day stay, residential, in home and group services when extra support is needed.

Early parenting centres (EPCs) provide specialist support for Victorian families with children 0–4 years old.

They deliver flexible, targeted services that aim to enhance parent-child relationships and support parents with strategies for achieving their parenting goals. These goals are often in areas such as sleep and settling, child behaviour, child learning and development, and parent and child health and wellbeing.

EPC services are part of a broader service system supporting families which includes maternal and child health services, supported playgroups and community-based parenting programs.

Help for parents

Early parenting centres offer a range of specialised support, counselling and advice for families with children 0 to 4 years. Services are provided at no cost to families who are assessed as needing some extra support to reach their parenting goals. Ask your maternal and child health nurse or call the **maternal and child health line** (Tel: **13 22 29**) to discuss support services available in your area.

What programs do early parenting centres provide?

- Residential: a centre-based intensive parenting program in which families stay at the centre over a number of days
- Day stay: centre-based day programs provided at EPCs or at outreach locations
- Group services: group-based programs attended by families, which are designed to improve parent-child relationships and interaction
- In-home support – an intensive program providing early parenting support in the family home

How can they help my family?

Support is available for all Victorian families with children from pregnancy to 4 years who need additional, specialised or targeted support. Early parenting centres help families to:

- Strengthen parenting capacity and skills
- Enhance parent-child relationships
- Increase parental confidence in responding to their infant/toddlers needs
- Build on a family's link with their community

How can you access your local early parenting centre?

Centres are staffed by highly qualified maternal and child health nurses and specialist early parenting, health and wellbeing practitioners.

Early Parenting Centre services are provided by:

- **O'Connell Family Centre** located in Canterbury Tel. **(03) 8416 7600**
- **Queen Elizabeth Centre** located in Noble Park Tel. **(03) 9549 2777**
- **Tweddle Child and Family Health Service** located in Footscray. Tel. **(03) 9689 1577**

These centres operate several satellite services across the state. Please contact the centres for more information

Referrals to early parenting centres are usually from Maternal and Child Health services, maternity services, general practitioners or other services. Alternatively, you may choose to refer yourself to a centre by phoning your local centre.

Where to get help

- Your **maternal and child health nurse**
- **The maternal and child health line** Tel. **13 22 29** (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- **Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS)** Tel. **(03) 9419 3000**
- Download **fact sheets on sleep and settling in 0 – 6 year olds**
- Your **GP (doctor)**
- **Parentline** Tel. **13 22 89**
- **Family Relationship Advice Line** Tel. **1800 050 321** Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm, Saturday, 10am to 4pm
- Contact the centres directly.

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by:

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