

South Australian Kids Hub

YourSay Consultation Summary

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Statement of appreciation

The Department for Health and Wellbeing's Mental Health Strategy and Planning Branch would like to thank you for your participation in this consultation. Your time, commitment and openness will ensure that the Kids Hub can provide a safe and welcoming environment for children and their families and carers in South Australia.

How your feedback has contributed to the Draft SA Kids Hub Service Model

Each respondent's feedback was recorded and cross-referenced against the Draft SA Kids Hub Service Model and changes were made to ensure the service model aligns with the key themes from the YourSAy consultation.

Key themes

The feedback collected from families and carers, service providers, people with a lived experience, and other community members suggested there are five key areas that need to be considered to ensure the Kids Hub meets the needs of the community:

- **Accessibility and cost**

Families emphasised the need for free appointments, shorter wait times, and options to self-refer. Additionally, telehealth services, transport support, and the option for outreach services to be provided in community settings were also described as ways of ensuring services are more accessible for children and families.

- **Flexible opening hours and locations**

Extended opening hours, including outside of school and business hours, and weekends, would offer better flexibility for families. Accessible locations near public transport, schools, early childhood services, shopping centres, other health and community services are key to improving accessibility and promoting engagement.

- **Culturally safe and inclusive care**

There was strong feedback on the need for services to be culturally safe, including through having First Nations people and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) people represented in the workforce, and offering access to interpreters, and language support. Feedback reinforced the need for the workforce to be trained in cultural safety, trauma-informed care, and strategies for supporting people with diverse communication, sensory and engagement preferences.

- **Child-friendly, sensory-focused environments**

Families want welcoming spaces with quiet waiting areas, access to sensory rooms, "loud spaces" for children to be able to express themselves, and play-

based options. Implementing the principles of universal design by using clear child-friendly signage and creative strategies for engaging and sharing information will help to provide a more accessible environment for children with varying sensory, access, mobility, and communication needs.

- **Effective collaboration and communication**

A collaborative approach, including co-location with schools, community centres, and other services where possible, will enable care to be provided in a more connected way and make it easier for children and families to navigate.

Feedback emphasised the importance of continuity of care (staying connected) and for support plans to be centred on and responsive to the individual needs of the children and families, and delivered in an open, transparent and non-judgemental way.

Next Steps

The Kids Hub Service Model is still evolving, with key stakeholders continuing to provide feedback. Once finalised, it will be made available on the YourSAy website.

An upcoming focus is the physical design of the Kids Hub, ensuring the space offers a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for children and families with diverse needs. This process will involve collaboration between:

- children and families
- service providers
- UniSA occupational therapy students

It is acknowledged that resource limitations may influence the design and implementation of the Kids Hub. However, the insights gathered through this process are invaluable and will ensure the Kids Hub is reflective of the priorities and needs of the South Australian community.

Question 1: If you needed to support a child or family's mental health and wellbeing, what would make it easier to access services?

Key findings

- The Kids Hub must provide a free or low-cost service with flexible appointment options, including extended hours, weekends, and telehealth options, as well as home visits and outreach to other community-based locations.
- Self-referrals with low restrictions on eligibility criteria to improve accessibility and ensure the service is equitable for all families.
- An online triaging system should be implemented to streamline and manage referrals efficiently.

- Service locations should be easily accessible, near public transport, schools, early childhood, family support services, and GP clinics, while also expanding to regional areas in future.
- A trauma-informed, non-judgmental approach is essential, ensuring clear intake processes, follow-up care, and support that respects people's choice and privacy.

How this fits into the SA Kids Hub Service Model:

- The Kids Hub services will be free for children aged 0-12 and will prioritise timely access to care with strategies to manage service capacity and a clear and equitable way of managing referrals.
- The Kids Hub service model highlights flexibility in service delivery, including offering telehealth, outreach, and adaptative models where possible to improve accessibility for families in different locations and with different access needs.
- Self-referral is supported, reducing the need for GP referral and allowing families to seek support directly. Eligibility is not restricted to diagnosable mental illnesses, with a focus on social and emotional wellbeing, functional, and developmental needs.
- If there is a waiting period for particular Kids Hub services, children and families will have access to alternative options while they wait, such as practical strategies, information, and group-based programs. Services will focus on early intervention and mental health literacy to help caregivers identify early signs of distress and strategies to support children's mental health and wellbeing in their day-to-day life.
- Collaboration with local services is emphasised to ensure care is delivered in partnership and responds to the child and family's needs in a holistic and coordinated way.

Question 2: What locations and opening hours would make it easier to access the Kids Hub?

Key findings

- Open outside of school hours, including evenings and weekends, to accommodate working parents.
- The Kids Hub should be located near major shopping centres (e.g., Marion, Colonnades, Seaford, Edwardstown, Tea Tree Plaza, Elizabeth) and other places that children and families visit.
- Accessible by public transport (bus/train routes) for families without private transport options.

- The Kids Hub should have the option for co-location with other services for children and families where possible, particularly in the Northern suburbs (e.g., Munno Para, Elizabeth, Salisbury).
- Availability in regional and rural areas (e.g., Murray Bridge, Adelaide Hills) with flexible service delivery.
- Online/telehealth options, including weekend availability, to reduce emergency department visits.

How this fits into the SA Kids Hub Service Model:

- The Kids Hub service model focuses on support equity of access, enabling families to access support regardless of their location or circumstances where possible.
- Services will be adaptable, with opening hours extending beyond standard business hours, including after school and weekends, to accommodate family schedules.
- Co-location with local services where possible to improve accessibility for children and families and to support collaboration between services.
- The Kids Hubs are designed to be inclusive and child and family-focused, ensuring children and families are at the centre of communication and decision making about their care and support.
- The Kids Hub service model highlights flexibility in service delivery, including telehealth and outreach services, to improve accessibility for families with different access needs.

Question 3: What would make the Kids Hub more accessible and supportive for children and families?

Key findings

- All staff, including welcome/reception staff, should complete cultural safety training to provide respectful and inclusive support to families. Additionally, it's important that the team understands and uses augmentative and alternative communication strategies.
- Physical accessibility features are essential, including ramps, lifts, automatic doors, access to disability parking, and wheelchair-friendly spaces.
- Engaging and sensory-informed waiting areas with toys, books, interactive activities, comfortable furniture and play spaces can help to provide a sense of comfort and reduce stress for children.

- Clear signage, access to interpreters, and alternative communication methods can improve accessibility for children with diverse communication and language needs.
- Families require transport support, such as subsidised parking, public transport links, or outreach options.
- A sensory room and quiet spaces should be included for children who feel overwhelmed, with calming visuals, non-triggering colours, and sensory tools. Likewise, some children will need space to be loud or express themselves freely without impacting on others.

How this fits into the SA Kids Hub Service Model:

- The Kids Hub service model includes a diverse workforce, including social and emotional wellbeing workers and cultural liaison workers to meet the needs of children and families from diverse backgrounds. Cultural and language translation services will be available to support communication and engagement.
- Physical accessibility is prioritised through the principles of universal design, ensuring the physical environment is responsive and accessible for people with diverse mobility, vision, hearing, functional and sensory needs.
- The Kids Hub service model promotes child and family-focused services, incorporating human-centred design to create welcoming, non-clinical spaces that support engagement and comfort.
- A diverse and culturally safe workforce is prioritised, with cultural awareness training and the inclusion of social and emotional wellbeing workers and cultural liaison workers to support access and engagement with First Nations people and CALD communities.
- The service model focuses on continuity of care (staying connected), making sure there are seamless connections between services, with a focus on care planning and coordination that is responsive to the child and family's needs.
- The Kids Hub service model prioritises early engagement strategies, addressing developmental, emotional, relational, functional, and behavioural needs as early as possible, in partnership with other services where possible.

Question 4: What would help to make the Kids Hub feel more culturally safe, respectful, and supportive?

Key findings

- Cultural diversity represented in the workforce, displaying First Nations artwork and other culturally appropriate designs and furnishings in the physical space to create a culturally safe and welcoming environment.

- Welcome signage, communication boards, and information should be provided in multiple languages that are reflective of the community.
- Separate areas for older children should be provided to ensure they feel respected and not placed in spaces designed for younger kids (or vice versa).
- Cultural practice spaces, such as prayer rooms, should be available to support where possible to meet the needs of families from diverse backgrounds.
- A non-clinical, home-like environment with comfortable seating and natural elements should be prioritised to help children and families feel at ease.
- Consultation and co-design with different cultural groups should be an ongoing process to ensure services remain relevant and inclusive.
- Access to social supports, including resources and information for parenting, food accessibility, emergency relief support options, and community networks, should be made available.
- Group-based support and play therapy options should be included to foster peer connections and help children and parents feel less targeted and isolated in their experience.

How this fits into the SA Kids Hub Service Model:

- The Kids Hub service model focuses on creating inclusive, child and family-friendly environments, ensuring spaces are welcoming, accessible, and designed to meet diverse needs.
- Co-design with local communities will ensure ongoing consultation and adaptations to reflect the evolving needs of children and families.
- Support will be delivered by multidisciplinary teams to ensure children and families have access to a variety of supports and approaches, including perinatal mental health support, art and play-based therapies, peer supports, and social and emotional wellbeing supports to cater to a variety of developmental and relational needs.
- Culturally safe practices will be embedded through services provided at the Kids Hub in addition to partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.
- The principles of universal design will guide the development of physical spaces that are sensory-friendly, trauma-informed, calming, and adaptable to the needs of children with diverse needs.
- Clear communication strategies will ensure accessibility, including signage and information available in a range of languages.

- Access to other community-based social supports is reinforced, connecting families with other services and supports beyond the mental health system to support their broader wellbeing needs.

Question 5: What are some things that could be included in the physical space that would make the Kids Hub feel culturally safe, welcoming, and supportive?

Key findings

- The Kids Hub should have warm, home-like spaces with couches, rugs, beanbags, soft lighting, and natural elements to create a welcoming environment.
- Low-stimulation areas, along with spaces where children can be active and express themselves, should be available to support children with different sensory needs.
- Multicultural artwork, murals, posters, and play spaces should be available to reflect diverse backgrounds, including First Nations people.
- Age-appropriate play areas should include things like lego, craft materials, cubby houses, and outdoor spaces where possible to encourage engagement.
- Interactive and sensory items, such as fidget toys, tactile materials, and developmentally appropriate resources should be provided to help children to feel calm and comfortable throughout their visit.
- Braille signage, multilingual brochures, and accessible communication materials should be available to ensure inclusivity.
- A small café or refreshment area could help create a relaxed environment and normalise the experience for families.
- Individual and group rooms should feel comfortable and non-clinical, with furniture arranged to be inviting and child centred.
- Prayer spaces and culturally appropriate resources should be included to support families from diverse backgrounds.
- Clear communication about wait times, along with access to water and snacks should be provided to ensure a welcoming and comfortable experience.

How this fits into the SA Kids Hub Service Model:

- The Kids Hub service model emphasises engaging with local communities and service providers, ensuring spaces are co-designed with input from children and families, and service providers to create safe and inclusive environment.
- Culturally safe practices are embedded through the inclusion of social and emotional wellbeing workers, cultural liaison workers, First Nations and multicultural artwork and prayer spaces where possible to foster a sense of belonging for all families.

- Flexibilities in service delivery allow for the use of different spaces based on the child's needs, such as access to outdoor play areas where possible, quiet spaces, and indoor play areas.
- Clear verbal and visual communication will be available to suit the varied needs of children across the age cohort and their families.
- The physical space will focus on inclusivity through the creative use of signage, imagery, artwork, play-based resources, and a range of different seating and waiting areas to ensure families feel comfortable and supported from the moment they arrive.

Question 6: What are the most helpful ways (and places) that we can share information about the Kids Hub with the community?

Key findings

- The Kids Hub should use a mix of communication methods to reach diverse audiences, including social media, posters, TV ads, and online promotion.
- GPs, hospitals, and healthcare providers should be key referral points, with information displayed in waiting rooms and clinics.
- Schools, childcare centres, and preschools should be engaged, ensuring teachers and staff can easily refer families to the service.
- Pop-up events in shopping centres, community hubs, and bus interchanges would help to raise awareness in high-traffic areas.
- Word-of-mouth through community leaders, non-government organisations, sporting clubs and local community organisations should be used to promote the service.
- Hosting information sessions at playgroups, schools, and community centres with interpreters and bilingual staff would ensure accessibility for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Collaboration with NDIS providers, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, and other mental health services should be prioritised to ensure the Kids Hub is offered as an alternative or complementary service.

How this fits into the SA Kids Hub Service Model:

- The Kids Hub service model prioritises engaging with local communities and service providers, ensuring strong partnerships with schools, early childhood services, GPs, hospitals, and community centres to increase awareness and accessibility.

- Accessible and inclusive information is a key focus, through brochures, posters, social media, and other digital tools help families understand how to they can access the Kids Hub.
- The involvement of cultural community liaison workers will aim to enhance engagement with culturally diverse groups, ensuring services are inclusive and responsive to the community's needs.

Question 7: What types of information or support would be helpful for parents and caregivers in supporting a child's mental health and wellbeing?

Key Findings

- The Kids Hub should provide both individual and group sessions for parents, offering tailored support to help parents and caregivers to support their child's mental health needs.
- Peer Workers should be available to support parents, share strategies, and foster support networks.
- Culturally inclusive parenting programs should be offered, addressing the unique experiences of CALD families while promoting resilience and cultural identity.
- Workshops and education sessions should cover practical parenting strategies, mental health literacy, self-care, and navigating support systems such as NDIS and Carers SA.
- A crèche service should be available during parent sessions to ensure accessibility for those with young children.
- Financial and social supports, including guidance on accessing rebates, advocacy skills, and community resources, should be integrated into sessions.
- Clear referral pathways and contact details for relevant services should be provided to ensure parents can access ongoing, practical support beyond group sessions.

How this fits into the SA Kids Hub Service Model:

- The Kids Hub service model emphasises parenting education and support to equip families with the skills and confidence needed to support their children's mental health and wellbeing.
- A strength-based and capacity-building approach ensures that families receive holistic, personalised support to navigate challenges effectively.
- Multidisciplinary care teams, including allied health, medical, nursing, social and emotional wellbeing workers and lived experience workers will provide both individual and group-based sessions to enhance parent and caregiver support.

- Clear and accessible resources, such as handouts and take-home strategies and activities will be available to extend the support outside of the Kids Hub environment and to maintain engagement.
- Flexible service delivery, including telehealth and online options, will be made available where possible to increase engagement for families with access barriers.
- Collaboration will occur with external organisations, such as NDIS and Carers SA, to strengthen pathways to other support and advocacy services in partnership with the parents and caregivers.
- Equity of access will be prioritised, ensuring services are culturally inclusive and responsive to the needs of caregivers and families with diverse cultural and language needs.
- Strategies for supporting caregivers and family's mental health literacy will be in place to help families recognise early signs of distress in children while reducing stigma and barriers to seeking support.
- Peer support and community networks will be integrated to foster connection and shared learning among families navigating similar experiences.

Question 8: What types of technology could be used at the Kids Hub to make it easier and more engaging for children and families to connect with the service?

Key findings

- The Kids Hub should provide interactive technology options, such as tablets, apps, and touch screens, while ensuring a balance with traditional play materials like books, board games, and sensory resources.
- Technology should be purposeful and therapeutic, including apps that support emotional regulation, social skills, and non-verbal communication tools like chat boards or Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices.
- A cautious approach to gaming should be taken, ensuring only carefully selected, evidence-based apps are used to support engagement.
- Online booking and check-in systems should be available to streamline access and reduce waiting times.
- Non-digital options should always be available, such as art therapy, fidget tools, mindfulness activities, and play therapy to support self-expression without reliance on screens.
- Noise-cancelling headphones and sensory-friendly technology should be offered to accommodate children with sensory needs.

- Digital resources for families, including apps and websites with strategies, exercises, and follow-up support, should be developed to reinforce learning at home and in the community.

How this fits into the SA Kids Hub Service Model:

- Innovative technology will be used where possible to enhance engagement and support for children and families in a way that meets a diverse range of needs.
- Digital tools such as chat boards, talking posters, apps, and devices will be used where possible to facilitate communication between children, families and staff.
- Technology options will be explored and implemented where possible to provide a range of different ways for children and caregivers to check-in, book appointments, engage in therapy and support, receive follow up communication and to provide feedback on their experience.

For more information

✉ health.headtohealthkidssa@sa.gov.au

🌐 yoursay.sa.gov.au/KidsHub