

MAPPING AND BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS



In this tool, you will find:

- » Suggestions for identifying and building relationships with other local services
- » A template to map and plan your engagement with other service providers

Related tool:

- » [Creating Collaborative and Sustainable Partnerships and Networks](#)

KEY GUIDANCE

Background

Building relationships with other service providers in your region will strengthen the CaFIS service you provide to families and children and also increase your ability to reach and engage with potential clients who need support. It is acknowledged that CaFIS providers may already have strong and established relationships with other service providers in the region/community.

This tool encourages CaFIS providers to map all service providers that work with children, young people and families in the region/community and consider ways to build relationships, or to strengthen existing relationships. This mapping should be reviewed at regular intervals, so that you can include new providers or programs, and/or changes to existing programs.

Mapping and building relationships with other service providers

The following are the key steps in mapping and planning your engagement with other service providers:

- 1 **Identify service providers:** Identify all service providers operating in the community/region that play a role in supporting children and families directly or indirectly. This may involve consulting with other services and community members to ensure you have a comprehensive list.
- 2 **Define service provision:** Identify the service offerings of each service provider in the community/region, the area they service, their operating hours and the cohorts of families and children they work with.

- 3 **Define strengths and any challenges:** Map out each service's strengths and any challenges that impact their service provision. This may help to clarify opportunities to work together and potential benefits for each organisation in working together.
- 4 **Set expectations of benefits:** Define the expected benefits from engagement with each identified service provider (eg increased number of referrals, resource sharing, knowledge sharing, sharing training costs, joint community events).
- 5 **Invest in relationship building:** Define how your CaFIS service will engage with each of the service providers to build or strengthen a relationship.
- 6 **Identify key people:** Building ongoing, sustainable relationships with other service providers requires time and resources. Identify key people from both organisations responsible for building and/or strengthening relationships. This might include ensuring relationship building is recognised as part of their role description so that it is prioritised.
- 7 **Identify the best engagement approach:** Think about the best way to work together to support children, young people and families. When relationships are identified as being especially important to CaFIS service delivery or resource sharing is involved, a formal agreement or Memorandum of Understanding between the organisations could be useful to document how the organisations will work together (see CaFIS tool *Creating Collaborative and Sustainable Partnerships and Networks*).
- 8 **Give it time:** Building long-term relationships takes time and requires ongoing commitment.

APPLICATION TO CaFIS PROVIDERS

The following template can be used to map and plan your engagement with other service providers. It could be used to map service providers you already work with as well as others you have less well-formed relationships with. There is an example in the first row of the template, and rows can be added in order to map all service providers in your community/region.

CaFIS SERVICE PROVIDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Service provider	Service area	Operating hours	Cohorts of children and families	Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities for collaboration	Engagement Approach	Engagement Lead
Example: Early childhood education and care service provider.	Example: Provides childcare in community and an outreach playgroup to outstations.	Example: Childcare is open from 8am-1pm, Monday to Friday Outreach playgroup operates 8am-11am, Mondays and Tuesdays.	Example: Works with children between 6 months-5 years old. Parents/carers are involved in playgroup sessions.	Example: Reaches children and families in outstations through playgroup.	Example: Childcare only caters for maximum of 12 children per day and there are only two places currently available.	Example: Work with provider to encourage families in CaFIS program to access early education and care, including through the Additional Child Care Subsidy if appropriate.	Example: Set up monthly meetings to discuss ways to work more closely together to support children and families.	Example: CaFIS Team Leader.

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