



New Children and Family Support (CaFS) Program

A single national program for stronger families and better outcomes for children

The **Children and Family Support (CaFS) Program** is a new national program commencing on **1 July 2027**.

The new program is expected to support up to **270,000 children and families annually**, 26,000 more than currently supported under the 5 programs CaFS will replace.

The Government will invest **\$371 million per year ongoing from 2027–28** to establish the program.

This includes \$332.8 million in existing investment, and an additional \$38.2 million per year from 2027–28 for additional frontline early intervention and prevention services.

This represents a **12% funding boost** to support more families doing it tough and less red tape for frontline organisations.

What is changing?

From 1 July 2027, the CaFS program will **replace 5 existing programs** under the Families and Children (FaC) Activity:

- ▶ Children and Parenting Support (CaPS)
- ▶ Family Mental Health Support Services (FMHSS)
- ▶ Communities for Children Facilitating Partners (CfC FP)
- ▶ Family and Relationship Services (FaRS)
- ▶ Specialised Family Violence Services (SFVS)

These programs will no longer operate as separate funding streams. Instead, they will be delivered under a **single national program** with shared outcomes, consistent priorities and simplified grant arrangements.

Where feasible, a new relational contracting approach will be adopted, to assist service providers deliver better outcomes for families and children.

In most cases we will generally recommission existing providers to deliver on the priorities of the new program and make it easier for them to apply.

Over the course of the new arrangements, we will use clear, data driven performance measures to understand progress and any obstacles.



Who is affected?



Children, young people, parents and caregivers who access family and child support services.



Service providers currently funded through one or more of the 5 existing programs.



Communities, including First Nations communities, particularly those experiencing higher levels of disadvantage.

How the extra funding will be used

- ▶ **\$166 million over 5 years** from 2026–27 (and \$41.1 million per year ongoing) to implement and expand CaFS, including to provide **additional funding for frontline services** that support children, parents, carers and families.

This includes:

- ▶ **\$39.2 million over 3 years** from 2027–28 to address service gaps and support organisations transition to the new program.

Why this change matters

Bringing services together under one program will:

- ▶ support **prevention and early intervention**, helping families earlier to reduce the need for more intensive support later
- ▶ strengthen **frontline services** that support children’s development and wellbeing
- ▶ help **parents, carers and families** build skills, confidence and connection
- ▶ build capability across the **families and communities sector**
- ▶ **simplify grant administration** so services can focus more on families and less on paperwork
- ▶ transition to deliver more **targeted and culturally appropriate support**, in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ACCOs).





What this means for service providers

- ▶ The program will build on existing service strengths, including established community relationships and local knowledge.
- ▶ To ensure continuity for families and minimise disruption, applications for the new programs will generally be current providers funded under the 5 programs.
- ▶ Providers will be invited to submit applications demonstrating how their current and any proposed activities align with the investment priorities within current funding levels.
- ▶ Providers may also outline opportunities to increase impact with additional funding, where evidence shows significant disadvantage or service gaps.
- ▶ Data to support identification of community need will be published when the grant round opens.



Eligible service providers will be contacted directly with details on application processes and timelines, and provided more information ahead of the grant round.

Applications for the CaFS program will open in mid-2026.

Visit dss.gov.au/children-and-family-support-program for more information.

For more information

Visit the [Department of Social Services](https://dss.gov.au) website (dss.gov.au) to find out more about this measure and other Department of Social Services' Budget measures.

Visit the [Australian Government Budget](https://budget.gov.au) website (budget.gov.au) to find out more about the 2026–27 Budget.