

Parents and Carers Reference Group Meeting 5

Tuesday 28 April 2026

Communique

The Parents and Carers Reference Group (PCRG) held its fifth meeting on Tuesday 28 April 2026 (virtual meeting).

The meeting was opened by Ms Corri McKenzie, Acting Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities, Department of Social Services (DSS), alongside Mr Jamie Crosby, Chief Executive Officer, Families Australia, who co-chaired the meeting. The meeting was attended by 12 PCRG members including 8 parents and caregivers and 4 representatives from peak body organisations.

At this meeting, the PCRG discussed a range of initiatives to support children's digital health, resilience and wellbeing:

1. The **eSafety Commission** provided an overview of the practical tools and resources available to help families stay safe online. Members noted that online safety is not just an individual parenting responsibility, and that a range of measures are needed to help families feel confident navigating the online world and ensure children are safe when learning and playing online.
2. A representative from **Emerging Minds** facilitated a discussion on evidence-based approaches to infant and child mental health in the digital age. Members noted that children's mental health is shaped primarily by their relationships, and that this is the strongest protective factor for mental health in digital environments.

Members also discussed:

1. Representatives from **KPMG** (on behalf of the Department of Education) sought feedback from members to inform a national evaluation of CCTV use in early childhood education and care settings. Members agreed that child safety is best supported through people, relationships, supervision and strong systems, and that cameras should not be relied on.
2. The **Department of Education** provided an overview of the Preschool Outcomes Measure (POM) which aims to support everyday teacher and educator practice and enable evidence-based decisions about a child's learning pathway. Members discussed the value of the POM as a play-based assessment and the importance of clear communication with parents and carers on how it was administered and the results applied.

3. Representatives from **ARACY** shared findings from two Young and Wise roundtable series held with young people in 2025 and 2026. Members noted the findings that young people are managing complex pressures in systems that do not feel designed for them and that young people want to be treated as partners in shaping solutions, Members agreed the findings reflected their own sector and community experiences and expressed hope that they would inform future policy and practice.
4. The **Raising Children Network** provided an overview of the information available through their online platforms for parents, caregivers and professionals working with and supporting parents and care givers. Members agreed that RCN had been a valuable resource and trusted source of advice in their parenting journeys and provided suggestions to maximise its reach and impact.
5. The **Parenting Research Centre** provided members with an overview of the Parenting Today National Survey undertaken in 2025. Members noted the survey findings would be released later in 2026.

Members noted the next formal meeting will be held in August 2026 and agreed to convene an interim meeting in June 2026 for a reflective discussion on the current experiences and challenges faced by children and their families across the country.

Members noted Mr Crosby had announced his resignation from Families Australia, effective Friday 29 May, and this would be his final meeting. Members thanked Mr Crosby for his leadership and contributions as the inaugural co-chair.

Meeting attendees

Department of Social Services

- Corri McKenzie, (Co-chair) A/g Deputy Secretary, families and Communities

Peak body representatives

- Jamie Crosby (co-Chair), Families Australia
- Melodie Potts Rosevear, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY)
- Maryjean Whyte, proxy for The Parenthood
- Michael Currie, SNAICC – National Voice for our Children

Parent and carer representatives

- Sara Barker, NT
- Tomasi (Tom) Rananumanu, SA
- Eve Buckley, Victoria
- Sarah Cummings, NSW
- Nicole El-Hage, Victoria
- Kristy Jones, Tasmania
- Ravi Krishnamurthy, ACT
- Malinda Savage, QLD

Officials / advisers

- PCRG Secretariat

Guests

- Department of Education
- KPMG
- eSafety Commission
- Parenting Research Centre
- Raising Children's Network
- Emerging Minds