Parents and Carers Reference Group Meeting 6

Thursday 24 September 2026

Communique

The Parents and Carers Reference Group held its sixth meeting on Thursday 24 September 2026 (virtual meeting).

The meeting was opened by Ms Corri McKenzie, Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities, Department of Social Services, alongside Ms Suzanne Greenwood, Chief Executive Officer, Families Australia, who co-chaired the meeting. The meeting was attended by 10 PCRG members including 5 parents and carers and 5 representatives from peak body organisations.

At this meeting, the PCRG discussed culturally responsive and accessible supports:

1. Representatives from the Department of Education provided an update on the development of the Preschool Outcomes Measure, a national reform designed to support educator practice and improve outcomes for children in the year before full-time school. Members discussed the importance of ensuring the measures support children's learning and development while remaining practical for educators and families.
2. The Department of Education also shared findings from the Early Childhood Education and Care Parent Survey. Members discussed families' experiences engaging with early education and care services and the implications of the findings for policy and service delivery.
3. Representatives from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing provided an update on the Thriving Kids initiative. Members discussed the implementation of the initiative, highlighting the importance of early intervention, timely access to supports and ensuring reforms meet the diverse needs of children and families.

Members also discussed:

4. The Department of Social Services sought feedback from members as part of targeted engagement for the Safe and Supported Action Plans. Members discussed the importance of early support, coordinated service systems, culturally safe and community-led services, and ensuring children's voices are heard in decisions affecting them.
5. The Department of Social Services also provided an update on the Child and Family Support Program and work underway to strengthen outcomes measurement and evidence-based service delivery.
6. Peak body representatives provided updates on emerging issues affecting children, young people and families. Members discussed current sector priorities and opportunities for continued collaboration.

Members noted the next formal meeting will be held on 13 November 2026 and agreed to continue exploring culturally responsive and accessible supports at future meetings.

Meeting attendees

Department of Social Services

- Corri McKenzie, (co-Chair) Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities
- Tim Crosier, Branch Manager, Design and Development Branch
- James Steen, Branch Manager, Child and Family Branch

Peak body representatives

- Suzanne Greenwood (co-Chair), Families Australia
- Melodie Potts Rosevear, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY)
- Michael Currie, SNAICC – National Voice for our Children
- Tegan Gilchrist, The Parenthood
- Janet Williams-Smith, Early Childhood Australia

Parent and carer representatives

- Sara Barker, NT
- Tomasi (Tom) Rananumanu, SA
- Eve Buckley, VIC
- Ravi Krishnamurthy, ACT
- Malinda Savage, QLD

Officials / advisers

- PCRG Secretariat
- Felicity Corbin, Strategy and Stewardship

Guests

- Jennifer Palmer, Department of Education
- Kylie Ellis, Department of Education
- Lilli Stevens, Department of Education
- Dilreene Wojciechowski, Department of Education
- Sharon West, Department of Education
- Daniel Franklin, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- Kate Konrad, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- Ella Moffitt, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing