

Building Blocks: Best practice programs
that improve the wellbeing of children
and young people – Edition One



Commissioner for Children and Young People
Western Australia

February 2012

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LETTER TO PARLIAMENT

Hon. Barry House MLC
President, Legislative Council

Hon. Grant Woodhams MLA
Speaker, Legislative Assembly

Building Blocks: Best practice programs that improve the wellbeing of children and young people – Edition One

In accordance with section 49 of the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006*, I hereby submit to Parliament for information the report *Building Blocks: Best practice programs that improve the wellbeing of children and young people – Edition One*.



MICHELLE SCOTT
Commissioner for Children and Young People WA

29 February 2012

FOREWORD

As Commissioner for Children and Young People, I have had the opportunity to visit communities across the metropolitan area and throughout regional and remote Western Australia to listen to the views of children and young people, their families and those that work to support them.

In doing so, I have seen first hand the many outstanding local programs that, often through the hard work and inspiration of committed locals, are improving the lives of children and young people and their families and contributing positively to their community.

From the Warmun Early Learning Centre in the Kimberley which works closely with the community to enhance children's social and cognitive development and preparedness for school, to the Regional Youth Justice Services working to divert vulnerable young people away from the criminal justice system, there is much being done to improve the wellbeing of children and young people.

My statutory responsibilities include promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and I have advocated and promoted programs that are evidence-based and proven to be making a positive difference to the lives of children and young people.

Evidence-based policy and practice is critical to improving the wellbeing of young Australians, so it is vital that agencies have easy access to information about programs that are working.

Building Blocks – Best practice programs that improve the wellbeing of children and young people does just that – it provides a selection of programs with information and data that will assist government, non-government agencies and the private sector to make informed decisions about evidence-based programs and thereby achieve maximum benefits with limited resources.

This first *Building Blocks* report was developed as part of my Wellbeing Monitoring Framework initiative which includes two other reports – *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* and *The Profile of Children and Young People in Western Australia*.

In particular, this report should be read in conjunction with *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People*. If we want to improve outcomes for children and young people – by improving our performance in specific measures – then we need to be investing in the best practice programs contained in this report.

Using the data and evidence-based research in these three reports will enable agencies to better meet the wellbeing needs of all our children and young people, and make improvements for our vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people.

This report, and its associated interactive website, enables government, non-government agencies and the private sector to boost their effectiveness and level of service delivery to children and young people through improved decision making, producing benefits to the wellbeing of the more than 540,000 Western Australian citizens under the age of 18 years.



MICHELLE SCOTT

Commissioner for Children and Young People WA

Foreword	4
Acknowledgements	6
About Building Blocks	7
Background	8
Who produced Building Blocks?	9
How were programs selected?	9
How is Building Blocks structured?	10
How to use Building Blocks	11
Feedback	12
Further information	12
Programs	13
Domains	14
Health and Safety	15
Education	23
Material Wellbeing	37
Family and Peer Relationships	43
Participation	62
Subjective Wellbeing	69
Behaviours and Risks	81
Environment	94
Appendices	99
Appendix 1 – What are the components of best practice in program and service provision for children and young people (as developed by the Australian Institute for Family Studies for this research project)?	99
Appendix 2 – Methodology of the current report	103
Appendix 3 – Evaluation tool	109
Appendix 4 – Considerations in program evaluation	113
Appendix 5 – Further program evaluation resources	115
Appendix 6 – What works in program and service delivery for children and young people? Evaluating the research	117

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The project was assisted by the contributions of the members of the Best Practice Advisory Group:

- Dr Fiona Arney Head of Child Protection Research Program, Menzies School of Health Research
- Ms Jill Cameron Principal Consultant, Jill Cameron and Associates
- Dr Helen Cheney Policy Research and Advocacy Adviser, Save the Children
- Mr Chris Gostelow Manager School Psychology Service, Department of Education
- Mr Frank Hytten Chief Executive Officer, Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care
- Ms Donna Legge Manager, Program Development, Department for Communities
- Ms Sue Leivers Manager Obesity and Nutrition Policy, Chronic Disease Prevention Directorate, Department of Health
- Ms Jacquie Thomson General Manager Grants and Community Development, Lotterywest
- Prof Steve Zubrick Winthrop Professor, Centre for Child Health Research, University of Western Australia; Head, Division of Population Science, Telethon Institute For Child Health Research

The guidance and knowledge of this group was crucial in assisting the development of the evaluation tool and identifying and selecting the programs that demonstrate best practice or promising outcomes.



About Building Blocks

ABOUT BUILDING BLOCKS

Background

The aim of the report *Building Blocks: Best practice programs that improve the wellbeing of children and young people*, is to showcase a selection of evidence-based programs from Western Australia and across Australia that demonstrate best or promising practice in strengthening the wellbeing of children and young people.

Building Blocks is one of three reports which comprise the Wellbeing Monitoring Framework project, an initiative of the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA.

The other reports of the Framework are:

- *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* – provides data on 33 measures of children and young people's wellbeing, categorised under eight domains
- *The Profile of Children and Young People in Western Australia* – provides socio-demographic data from a variety of sources.

The Framework relates to several of the Commissioner's functions as set out in the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006*:

- to promote and monitor the wellbeing of children and young people generally (s19(c))
- to advocate for children and young people (s19(a))
- to conduct, coordinate, sponsor, participate in and promote research into matters relating to the wellbeing of children and young people (s19(i))
- to promote public awareness and understanding of matters relating to the wellbeing of children and young people (s19(h))
- give priority to, and have special regard to, the interests and needs of
 - (i) Aboriginal children and young people and Torres Strait Islander children and young people; and
 - (ii) children and young people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged for any reason (s20(1)(a))
- work in cooperation with, and consult with, other government agencies and non-government agencies (s20(1)(f)).

Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Commissioner acknowledges the unique contribution of Aboriginal people's culture and heritage to Western Australian society. For the purposes of this report, the term 'Aboriginal' encompasses Western Australia's diverse cultural and language groups and also recognises those of Torres Strait Islander descent.

ABOUT BUILDING BLOCKS

Who produced Building Blocks?

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) was contracted by the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA to undertake research to identify best practice and promising programs positively influencing children and young people's wellbeing.

AIFS's work was guided by the Best Practice Advisory Group comprising experts in various fields of children's wellbeing and program evaluation. The content and data developed by AIFS formed the basis of this *Building Blocks* report, produced by the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA.

How were programs selected?

The list of programs in *Building Blocks* is not comprehensive, but rather provides a selection of programs that the AIFS were able to identify in the timeframe and scope of this project. The programs demonstrate different components of best practice in program and service provision for children and young people (see Appendix 1 for a description of the components of best practice).

Organisations or agencies established specifically to provide broad support in a particular area of wellbeing – such as headspace, the Inspire Foundation or beyondblue (youth) – were not included, although in some cases individual programs from such organisations were.

The programs identified vary in many aspects, including their size, scope, target group and location. They range from being narrowly focused, time-limited programs, through to wide-ranging initiatives or processes.

Building Blocks also identifies 'promising programs'. These programs show 'promise' in terms of their benefits for young people's wellbeing but their evaluations (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Thorough program evaluations can be costly and are difficult for many program and service providers to achieve. The 'promising programs' sections of this report are an acknowledgement of this fact, and also of the fact that there are currently many excellent unevaluated programs for children and young people operating in Australia.

For more information on how programs were selected, refer to Appendix 2.

How is Building Blocks structured?

The *Building Blocks* report identifies 82 programs categorised under the eight domains established by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth to report on the health and wellbeing of young Australians:

- Health and Safety – The health and safety of children is a strong indicator of the value a society places on children. Being healthy and safe has a direct relationship with a child's wellbeing.
- Education – From early childhood through to late adolescence, education and pathways to employment have a strong influence on the future outcomes of children and young people.¹
- Material Wellbeing – The material circumstances of the family unit can have a significant impact on children and young people's wellbeing. Adequate access to basic material needs is linked to improved outcomes in other domains such as Health and Safety, Education and Behaviours and Risks.² Family income, employment situation and suitable housing are examples of material wellbeing that can help to deliver a stronger foundation to a child's life.
- Family and Peer Relationships – Key to children and young people's wellbeing is their relationship with their families and peers. For most children and young people their family is the primary source of security, support and development.³ As children grow, peer relationships also become important sources of support and socialisation.
- Participation – Participation in community activities provides opportunities for children and young people to learn new skills, build community networks and express their opinions.⁴
- Subjective Wellbeing – Subjective wellbeing considers how children and young people feel about themselves and the world they live in. This includes feelings about their own physical and mental health, as well as concerns about broader issues, such as family conflict and problems at school.⁵
- Behaviours and Risks – Healthy behaviours, such as eating well and exercising, contribute to young people's wellbeing. In contrast, risky behaviours, such as misuse of alcohol or other drugs, may have a negative effect on their health and wellbeing.⁶ The impact is not only on children and young people themselves, but also on their families and communities who are exposed to these behaviours.
- Environment – The state of the environment is considered to affect children and young people's wellbeing through long-term socio-economic and health impacts.⁷ The built environment in which children live, play and interact affects wellbeing as children and young people need safe spaces to relax, have fun, explore and be active.⁸

As programs commonly address several areas of wellbeing (eg a parenting program may focus primarily on strengthening family relationships, but may also work to increase material wellbeing or decrease risky behaviours), a list of 'other relevant domains' is provided in each best practice program description.

1 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians, Report Card*, ARACY, Canberra, p.6.

2 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians, Report Card*, ARACY, Canberra, p.2.

3 Price-Robertson R, et al 2010, 'Family is for life: Connections between childhood family experiences and wellbeing in early adulthood', *Family Matters*, No. 85, pp. 7–17.

4 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians: Technical Report*, ARACY, Canberra, p.117

5 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians, Report Card*, ARACY, Canberra, p.14.

6 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians: Report Card*, ARACY, Canberra, p.12.

7 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians: Report Card*, ARACY, Canberra, p.18

8 These themes come through most of the literature on children's interaction with the built environment. See for example Commissioner for Children and Young People 2011, *Building spaces and places for children and young people*, Perth, Western Australia, <http://www.cyp.wa.gov.au/files/Building%20spaces%20and%20places%20for%20children%20and%20young%20people.pdf>

ABOUT BUILDING BLOCKS

The details provided for each best practice program includes:

- the name of the coordinating organisation
- the location/s in which it operates
- a brief description of its purpose and structure
- its target group
- the type/s of evaluation undertaken
- the degree to which it has or could be replicated
- other relevant domains
- any relevant contacts, references and further readings.

The information provided for 'promising programs' is similar, excluding the evaluation and related fields.

How to use Building Blocks

Building Blocks is a companion report to the other Wellbeing Monitoring Framework reports and, while these three reports all work together, it is recommended *Building Blocks* be read in conjunction with *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* in particular.

The report is intended to be a practical document which increases access to evidence-based data and information concerning programs improving the wellbeing of children and young people.

Building Blocks is not intended to be a 'shopping catalogue' whereby a program can be directly copied and expected to be relevant and effective in any situation or context.

Providing an effective and sustainable program for children and young people must involve working closely with the local community to respond to specific needs and cultural diversity.

ABOUT BUILDING BLOCKS

Feedback

This first *Building Blocks* report is a selection of programs from Western Australia and nationally. It is not a comprehensive database.

People with knowledge of programs that are making a positive difference to the wellbeing of children and young people are welcome to inform the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA in one of the following ways:

Email info@ccyp.wa.gov.au

Post: Commissioner for Children and Young People WA
Ground floor
1 Alvan St
Subiaco WA 6008

Further information

A focus of this report is to inform readers about different aspects of program delivery. Thus, a number of detailed appendices are included:

- **Appendix 1** describes the components of best practice in program and service provision for children and young people.
- **Appendix 2** outlines the methodology of identifying and describing best practice programs.
- **Appendix 3** contains the evaluation tool that was used to identify which programs exemplified the components of best practice in program delivery for children and young people. Readers planning to use the current report as a guide in the development or selection of their own program may use this tool as an indicator as to how they can evaluate the wider literature on programs not included in this report.
- **Appendix 4** provides information and links on conducting program evaluations. Readers interested in developing their own program or in evaluating their already existing program will find this appendix useful.
- **Appendix 5** provides references and links to resources – many of which have a similar scope and purpose to that of the current report – that can be used to identify programs other than the examples profiled in this report.
- **Appendix 6** outlines the different forms of evidence that go into making an ‘evidence base’ upon which programs can be developed. This may be useful for readers interested in developing their own program or in explicating the research evidence that supports their current practices.



Programs

PROGRAMS

This section identifies 82 current and previously operating programs for children and young people.

Please note that in this report the term 'pre-school' refers to children of a pre-compulsory school age and includes children who participate in a range of early childhood education and care programs.

Any use in this report of the term Aboriginal respectfully includes Torres Strait Islander people.

Domains

The following 82 programs identified in this report are categorised under eight domains (see page 10 for more information):

- Health and Safety
- Education
- Material Wellbeing
- Family and Peer Relationships
- Participation
- Subjective Wellbeing
- Behaviours and Risks
- Environment

About this domain

The health and safety of children is a strong indicator of the value a society places on children. Being healthy and safe has a direct relationship with a child's wellbeing.

In this report, the Health and Safety domain includes aspects such as immunisation, injury, accidents, physical illness, chronic illness, poor diet, physical inactivity and obesity. The domain also includes child maltreatment (physical, sexual, emotional maltreatment; witnessing family violence; and neglect).

As this domain is so broad in scope, there were many evidence-based programs found to be well evaluated and effective. This report includes a range of programs targeting different aspects of health and safety, such as home visitation and antenatal care, pedestrian injury prevention, healthy eating and exercise and therapeutic initiatives for children suffering from maltreatment. Many of the programs highlighted originated, or have since been implemented, in Western Australia.

The companion report *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* contains information about measures of wellbeing relevant to the Health and Safety domain.

Programs

The following best practice programs are listed in this domain:

- Best Beginnings 16
- Family Home Visiting Service 17
- Maternal and Child Health Program 18
- Queensland School Breakfast Project 19
- Take Two 20
- Western Australia Healthy Schools Project 21

The following promising program is listed in this domain:

- Protective Behaviours 22

PROGRAMS - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Best practice programs

These programs have been evaluated as being effective in improving the wellbeing of children and young people.

Program	Best Beginnings
Organisation	Western Australian Department for Child Protection; Western Australian Department of Health
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>Best Beginnings is a home visiting service that targets vulnerable families with new infants aged 0 to two years.</p> <p>The program involves regular home visits by trained staff – including nurses, teachers, social workers, and psychologists – that provide support, advice, information, community connections and practical help to parents.</p> <p>The program aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve child health and wellbeing • foster attachment and bonding between mothers and infants • improve parent and family functioning • develop social support networks.
Target group	Families of new infants exposed to behavioural, psychosocial and environmental risk
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using strong qualitative research found that the program significantly improved participants' wellbeing, child health outcomes, and family functioning.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/SUPPORTINGINDIVIDUALSANDFAMILIES/Pages/BestBeginnings.aspx
References	<p>Clark K 2008, <i>A Follow-Up Study of Best Beginnings Clients</i>, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, p.63</p> <p>Clark K 2006, <i>Report on the Analysis of Best Beginnings Client Data</i>, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, p.24</p> <p>McGoldrick J 2006, <i>Analysis of Data Collected By Best Beginnings Home Visiting Service 2001–2005</i>, Department for Community Development, Government of Western Australia, p.22</p> <p>Robson A & Clark K 2004, <i>Best Beginnings Evaluation Report</i>, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, p.104</p>

PROGRAMS - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Program	Family Home Visiting Service
Organisation	Government of South Australia; Children, Youth and Women's Health Service
Location	South Australia
Description	<p>The Family Home Visiting Service aims to provide children with the best possible start in life and to assist families to provide the best possible support for their children.</p> <p>All families across South Australia are eligible to receive one home visit within the first few weeks of their child's life. Qualified child health nurses, supported by a multidisciplinary team of psychologists, social workers, Aboriginal health workers and family brokers, provide home visits to new parents.</p> <p>Those families identified with additional needs for support may be offered ongoing family home visiting up to the child's second birthday. The extended program involves 34 visits focusing on child health and development and maternal-child attachment.</p> <p>The visits take place weekly for the first six weeks, then fortnightly for the next six months. Families receive monthly visits for the final 12 months of the program and are supported in forming links with their local community.</p>
Target group	All families with new infants
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using strong qualitative research found that the program significantly improved parenting skills and fostered a strong sense of community.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.cyh.com/subcontent.aspx?p=134
References	<p>Sivak, L, Arney F, et al 2008, <i>A pilot exploration of a family home visiting program for families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children</i>, Magill, South Australia, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia: p.83</p> <p>Service outline available online at: http://www.cyh.com/library/CYWHS_FHV_Service_Outline.pdf</p>

PROGRAMS - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Program	Maternal and Child Health Program
Organisation	Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS)
Location	Queensland
Description	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants are more than twice as likely to be born premature or underweight as non-Aboriginal infants, placing them at higher risk of developing chronic illnesses such as heart disease, kidney disease and diabetes later in life. The Maternal and Child Health Program aims to address this disparity.</p> <p>The program is administered by the Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS), and was established in 2000 in response to barriers experienced by Aboriginal women attempting to access mainstream child and maternal health care.</p> <p>Since its inception, and with additional funding, the Maternal and Child Health Program has achieved significant improvements in infant health, with a dramatic reduction in the infant death rate during the last trimester of pregnancy and first eight weeks after birth.</p> <p>The program includes antenatal health checks, postnatal infant health checks and an immunisation strategy.</p>
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation utilising mixed methodology found that the program significantly improved pre-term birth rates and doubled the number of participants' antenatal and postnatal visits.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.taihs.net.au/programs/medical_and_dental/maternal_and_child_health_prog.php
References	<p>Atkinson R 2001, <i>Antenatal Care and Perinatal Health: How to Do It Better in an Urban Indigenous Community</i>, paper presented to the 6th National Rural Health Conference, Canberra.</p> <p>Panaretto KS, Lee HM, Mitchell MR, Larkins SL, Manassis V, Buettner PG & Watson, D 2005, 'Impact of a collaborative shared antenatal care program for urban Indigenous women: A prospective cohort study', <i>Medical Journal of Australia</i>, Vol. 182 No. 10, pp. 514–519.</p> <p>Panaretto KS, Mitchell MR et al. 2007, 'Sustainable antenatal care services in an urban Indigenous community: The Townsville experience', <i>Medical Journal of Australia</i>, Vol. 187 No. 1, pp. 18–22.</p>

PROGRAMS - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Program	Queensland School Breakfast Project
Organisation	Queensland Health
Location	Queensland
Description	<p>This project was a breakfast promotion intervention based on Health Promoting Schools processes.</p> <p>The project aimed to teach children the constituents and benefits of eating a healthy breakfast and thereby curtail unhealthy food choices that can result in poor health outcomes, including obesity.</p> <p>Participating schools formed working groups, discussed their specific breakfast issues and developed, implemented and evaluated their action plans.</p>
Target group	General public
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using a randomised controlled trial found that the program was effective in fostering healthy eating outcomes in participants.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks
Resources and contact information	<p>This program is no longer in operation and there are no relevant contacts available, however the program was administered by Queensland Health.</p> <p>http://www.health.qld.gov.au/</p>
References	Radcliffe B, Ogden C. et al. 2005, 'The Queensland School Breakfast project: A health promoting schools approach', <i>Nutrition and Dietetics</i> , Vol. 62 No. 1, pp. 33–40.

PROGRAMS - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Program	Take Two
Organisation	Berry Street Victoria; La Trobe University Department of Social Work and Social Policy; Mindful; Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>Take Two is an intensive therapeutic service that provides counselling and therapy for children and young people who have suffered from exposure to family violence; physical, sexual or emotional abuse; or neglect.</p> <p>The program also ensures that families, carers and teachers are provided with guidance and training. Take Two has approximately 100 staff, including clinical, research and training teams. The clinical teams include an Aboriginal team that provides direct service as well as training and consultation to other Take Two clinicians to ensure that all staff are able to work sensitively and effectively with Aboriginal children, families and carers.</p>
Target group	<p>Disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	A large-scale evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program resulted in strong positive outcomes for participants.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.berrystreet.org.au/TakeTwoStatewide
References	<p>Frederico M, Jackson A & Black C 2005, <i>Reflections on Complexity: Take Two First Evaluation Report</i>, La Trobe University.</p> <p>Frederico M, Jackson A & Black C 2006. 'Give Sorrow Words': <i>A Language for Healing. Take Two Second Evaluation Report 2004–2005</i>, La Trobe University.</p> <p>Frederico M, Jackson A & Black C 2010, <i>More Than Words: The Language of Relationships</i>, La Trobe University.</p> <p>Frederico M, Jackson A & Black, C 2008, 'Understanding the impact of abuse and neglect on children and young people referred to a therapeutic program', <i>Journal of Family Studies</i>, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 342–361.</p> <p>Jackson AL, Frederico M, Tanti C & Black CM 2009, 'Exploring outcomes in a therapeutic service response to the emotional and mental health needs of children who have experienced abuse and neglect in Victoria, Australia', <i>Child and Family Social Work</i>, No. 14, pp. 198–212.</p> <p>Holzer P 2007, 'Program profile: Take Two', <i>Child Abuse Prevention Newsletter</i>, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 3–8.</p>

PROGRAMS - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Program	Western Australia Healthy Schools Project
Organisation	Western Australian Department of Health
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>The Western Australia Healthy Schools Project aims to increase participation rates in physical activity and increase the consumption of healthy food and drinks by school children.</p> <p>The program involves Healthy School Coordinators working with targeted schools to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop best practice healthy eating and physical initiatives • incorporate healthy eating and physical activity into school policies and plans • facilitate the implementation of healthy community and school – based initiatives • support the development of healthy and active school environments • assist in building the broader school community’s capacity to implement strategies to encourage and support healthy eating and physical activity.
Target group	Students at primary schools with populations most at risk of poor health outcomes – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and low socio-economic families.
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program successfully increased physical activity and healthy eating behaviours in participating schools.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks
Resources and contact information	http://www.healthnetworks.health.wa.gov.au/abhi/project/school_community_based.cfm
References	Evaluation of the project available online at: http://www.healthnetworks.health.wa.gov.au/abhi/project/school_community_based.cfm

PROGRAMS - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Promising programs

This program shows 'promise' in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, however its evaluation (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Program	Protective Behaviours
Organisation	Protective Behaviours (WA)
Location	Western Australia
Description	Protective Behaviours is a personal safety program that promotes resilience in children, young people and adults by utilising empowerment strategies, clear communication and an awareness of 'safe' behaviours. The program aims to prevent child abuse by increasing understanding and providing participants with strong life skills.
Resources and contact information	http://www.protectivebehaviourswa.org.au/

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

About this domain

From early childhood through to late adolescence, education and pathways to employment have a strong influence on the future outcomes of children and young people.⁹

Within the context of this report, the Education domain covers pre-school, primary and secondary education and includes programs aimed at improving outcomes in academic achievement, literacy, numeracy, school readiness or the transition from school to employment.

A diverse selection of well-evaluated and effective education programs was found. Those selected highlight a broad range of best practice programs targeting different ages and disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, such as Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children (which is in accordance with the Commissioner for Children and Young People's obligations as set out in the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006*).

The companion report *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* contains information about measures of wellbeing relevant to the Education domain.

Programs

The following best practice programs are listed in this domain:

- Best Start 24
- Better Beginnings 25
- Challis Early Childhood Education Centre 26
- Clontarf Academy 27
- Home Instruction Program for Pre-school Youngsters (HIPPY) 28
- Incredible Years: Teacher and Child Training Program,
Incredible Years: Parent Program 29
- Linking Education and Families Program (LEAF) 30
- Nyungar Sports Education Program at Balga Senior High School 31
- Scaffolding Literacy Programme with Indigenous Children in School 32
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) 33
- Warmun Early Learning Centre 34
- Wyndham Early Learning Activity Centre (WELA) 35

The following promising program is listed in this domain:

- Moorditj Coolangars ('Solid Kids') Community Hub 36

9 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians, Report Card*, ARACY, Canberra, p.6.

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Best practice programs

These programs have been evaluated as being effective in improving the wellbeing of children and young people.

Program	Best Start
Organisation	Western Australian Department for Communities
Location	Western Australia
Description	Best Start is a flexible, family friendly program that can include playgroups, nutrition and health education, early language and numeracy skills, and integration into pre-primary programs at school targeted at Aboriginal families with children up to five years.
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found the program achieved significant outcomes related to health, social and education development, parent skill development and coordinated service delivery.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/childrenandfamilies/aboriginalbeststart/Pages/default.aspx
References	Gillam C 2000, <i>Final Evaluation of the Best Start Pilot: Report to the Interdepartmental Steering Committee</i> , Family and Children's Services.

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Better Beginnings
Organisation	State Library of Western Australia
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>This program aims to provide positive language and literacy influences for young children by supporting parents as their children's first teacher.</p> <p>It provides reading packs for parents of young babies and children commencing kindergarten and pre-primary school, specific resources such as 'virtual libraries' on DVDs for children in remote Aboriginal communities, story and rhyme time sessions and workshops, outreach story time boxes and discovery backpacks for use in libraries and available for loan to community agencies, staff training modules and a support website.</p>
Target group	General public
Evaluation and effectiveness	An independent longitudinal study has provided strong evidence that the program has had a positive impact on parental early literacy practices, attitudes and beliefs.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://better-beginnings.com.au/
References	Barratt-Pugh C, Kilgallon P & Statkus S 2009, <i>Making a Difference: The Report on the Evaluation of the Better Beginnings Family Literacy Program 2007–2009</i> , School of Education, Edith Cowan University, p.75.

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Challis Early Childhood Education Centre
Organisation	Challis Early Childhood Education Centre; Western Australian Department of Education
Location	Armadale, Western Australia
Description	<p>Challis Early Childhood Education Centre is an integrated and comprehensive multi-agency school and community resource focused on early learning and family support located on the school premises.</p> <p>It provides programs for children 0 to three years of age and support programs and services for their parents /guardians. It is a model of interagency collaboration and is being developed as a hub of service delivery.</p> <p>The vision for Challis Early Childhood Education Centre is that children residing in the Challis school boundary will enter school with the health and developmental readiness to become proficient in literacy and social competency, leading to a positive pathway of optimal social and emotional wellbeing, physical health and success at school.</p>
Target group	Families in the Challis school area
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation published in 2010 found that the program had successfully improved parenting skills, parental self-efficacy and connectedness with the local school community. Interviews provided qualitative evidence on improvements in children's speech and language skills, attention and behaviour.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships; Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.challisecec.wa.edu.au/
References	Vaz SMA & O'Meara Smith J 2010, <i>The pilot phase of the Challis Parenting and Early Learning Centre: Report</i> , Challis Early Childhood Education Centre (ECEC), Challis Primary School and Therapy Focus Inc.

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Clontarf Academy
Organisation	Clontarf Foundation
Location	Nationwide, including Bentley and multiple regional academies in WA
Description	The Clontarf Foundation exists to improve the education, discipline, self-esteem, life skills and employment prospects of young Aboriginal men. By doing so, it aims to equip them to participate more meaningfully in society.
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Evaluation and effectiveness	Qualitative and quantitative research found that the program had a significant impact on school retention rates and participants' ability to secure employment after high school.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Participation; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.clontarf.org.au/content.php?req=9
References	http://clontarf.org.au/userfiles/files/Foundation/2011/2010_CF_Annual%20Report.pdf

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Home Instruction Program for Pre-school Youngsters (HIPPY)
Organisation	Brotherhood of St Laurence
Location	50 sites around Australia including Rockingham and Girrawheen in WA; International
Description	<p>HIPPY is a combined home- and centre-based early childhood enrichment program that supports parents in their role as their child's first teacher.</p> <p>Home tutors, who have been recruited from the local community, work with parents as peers over two years during the critical period of the child's transition to full-time school. HIPPY aims to ensure that children at risk of developmental delay start school on an equal footing with their peers, as well as to strengthen communities and the social inclusion of parents and children.</p>
Target group	Disadvantaged groups
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program improved literacy development and orientation towards learning in participating children.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.hippyaustralia.org.au
References	<p>Gilley T 2003, <i>Early Days, Much Promise: An Evaluation of the Home Instruction Program for Pre-school Youngsters (HIPPY) in Australia</i>, Brotherhood of St Laurence, p.22.</p> <p>Liddell M, Barnett T, Diallo Roost F & McEachran J 2011, <i>Investing in our future: An evaluation of the national rollout of the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)</i>, Final report to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government.</p>

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Incredible Years: Teacher and Child Training Program, Incredible Years: Parent Program
Organisation	Incredible Years
Location	Nationwide; International
Description	<p>The Incredible Years: Teacher and Child Training Program is designed to promote social competence and prevent, reduce and treat aggression and related behavioural problems in children aged four to eight years.</p> <p>The Incredible Years Parent Program focuses on strengthening parenting competencies (monitoring, positive discipline, confidence) and fostering parents' involvement in children's school experiences in order to promote children's academic, social and emotional competencies and reduce conduct problems.</p> <p>The programs are supported by manuals and video materials for both practitioners and parents, and professionals who administer the program are required to undertake an accredited system of training. The Incredible Years program contains a range of interventions aimed at endowing practitioners, parents and children with the skills to further the development of positive behavioural outcomes in children.</p>
Target group	<p>Disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p> <p>General public</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	A large-scale randomised controlled trial found that the program had a significant impact on the behaviour, social competence and emotional self-regulation of participating children.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.incredibleyears.com
References	<p>Webster-Stratton C, Reid MJ et al. 2008, 'Preventing conduct problems and improving school readiness: Evaluation of the Incredible Years Teacher and Child Training Programs in high-risk schools', <i>Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry</i>, Vol. 49 No. 5, pp. 471–488.</p> <p>See also: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1469-7610</p>

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Linking Education and Families Program (LEAF)
Organisation	Investing in Our Youth Inc.
Location	Bunbury, Western Australia
Description	<p>The LEAF program is a school-based initiative that aims to assist children aged 0 to four years and their families with the transition to school, as well as raising parental awareness of the importance of early childhood development.</p> <p>The program invites young children and their families to participate in a once-a-week 'Play Café' at a local school or kindergarten. This structured play enables the children to improve their social skills and become accustomed to the school environment, while simultaneously fostering the development of friendships and a relationship with a future teacher.</p> <p>The program also provides parents with a support network of other families adjusting to the transition to primary school. Other components of the program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the opportunity for new students to receive a family visit from their teacher • welcome packs for parents with information on preparing children for kindergarten and school, as well as useful parent information and local service contacts • a pre-school health screening check conducted by a local community health nurse. <p>These components work together to ensure that children are ready for their best learning experience and enable an anxiety-free start to school.</p>
Target group	General public
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program is successful in supporting children and their families during the transition to primary school.
Replicability	The program is an initiative that was designed to be implemented in various locations and tailored to suit the needs of individual schools/communities.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships; Participation
Resources and contact information	http://www.investinginouryouth.com.au/Archive/Linking%20Education%20and%20Families
References	<p>Gregg C 2009, <i>The Linking Education and Families Program Evaluation Report 2008</i>, Investing In Our Youth Inc., Bunbury, WA.</p> <p>Thomas K 2007, <i>'Extending the Hand of Welcome': Final Impact Evaluation of the Linking Education and Families Program</i>, Investing In Our Youth Inc., Bunbury, WA.</p>

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Nyungar Sports Education Program at Balga Senior High School
Organisation	Balga Senior High School; Western Australian Department of Education; Smith Family
Location	Western Australia
Description	The Swan Nyungar Sports Education Program at Balga Senior High School is an intervention program designed to encourage Aboriginal adolescents in the Swan Region (covering the northern suburbs of Perth) to attend school regularly.
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Evaluation and effectiveness	Qualitative research found that the program has had a significant impact on retention rates of participating students.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Participation
Resources and contact information	http://www.balgashs.det.wa.edu.au/school_programs/swan_nyungar_sports_education_program.htm
References	Higgins DJ (Ed) 2005, <i>Early Learnings: Indigenous Community Development Projects, Vol. 2</i> , Telstra Foundation. Elderfield J & Loudon W 2005, <i>Evaluation of the Swan Nyungar Sports Education Program (SNSEP): Final Report</i> , Edith Cowan University.

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Scaffolding Literacy Programme with Indigenous Children in School
Organisation	University of Canberra
Location	Western Australia; South Australia; Northern Territory; Queensland
Description	<p>The Scaffolding Literacy Programme with Indigenous Children in School aimed to improve Aboriginal literacy levels.</p> <p>The program provided a supportive curriculum framework to engage students at a level approximately equivalent to the full expected potential for their year level.</p>
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found that the program was successful in improving the literacy of participating Aboriginal students.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks
Resources and contact information	<p>The program is no longer in operation and there are no relevant contacts available, however, the former Department of Education, Science and Training site is a useful resource.</p> <p>http://www.dest.gov.au/literacynumeracy/innovativeprojects/Oakley_Scaffolding_Literacy/appendix.htm</p>
References	Cresswell J, Underwood C, Withers G, Adams I 2002, <i>Evaluation of the University of Canberra Programme for Advanced Literary Development Scaffolding Literacy Programme with Indigenous Children in School</i> , Australian Council for Educational Research.

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)
Organisation	Queensland Department of Education and Training
Location	Nationwide
Description	School Wide Positive Behaviour Support is an organisational framework that aims to improve student social and academic outcomes by ensuring that all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioural practices and interventions possible, delivered at three levels of service provision – universal, secondary and tertiary.
Target group	General public
Evaluation and effectiveness	Randomised, controlled trials show positive outcomes for staff, students and the wider school community of schools using the SWPBS program.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviour and Risks; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.learningplace.com.au/sc/studentservices/swpbs
References	http://www.det.nt.gov.au/parents-community/students-learning/safety-wellbeing/behaviour/swpbs

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Warmun Early Learning Centre
Organisation	Warmun Early Learning Centre
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>The Warmun Early Learning Centre offered a four-day, 8am to 2pm structured environment for Aboriginal children aged two to five years.</p> <p>The centre aimed to improve child cognitive development and competence, enhance child social and emotional development and prepare both children and parents for the transition to primary school. The Warmun Early Learning Centre also employs members of the local community.</p> <p>The program was awarded the Outstanding Education Program 2008 as part of the East Kimberley Aboriginal Achievement awards, as well as the Department for Communities Annual Award for Outstanding Children and Family Project.</p> <p>Sadly, flooding in early 2011 destroyed the newly built Warmun Early Learning Centre. The local community, however, has rallied together in an inspirational show of resilience and is currently in the process of rebuilding the centre.</p>
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Evaluation and effectiveness	Qualitative research indicates positive outcomes for all of the aims of the program.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	Information available from the Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley website http://www.swek.wa.gov.au/
References	<p>Saggers S & Frances K 2009, <i>Local Evaluation of East Kimberley Communities for Children Initiative for Children and their Families: Final Report</i>, Social Justice Research Centre.</p> <p>Hutchins T 2007, <i>Local Evaluation of East Kimberley Initiatives for Children and Families: Phase 3 Formative Evaluation, February – December 2007</i>, Centre for Social Research.</p>

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Program	Wyndham Early Learning Activity Centre (WELA)
Organisation	Wyndham Early Learning Activity Centre (WELA)
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>The Wyndham Early Learning Activity Centre aims to provide early learning activities that encourage the promotion of children's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development as well as providing a source of support for their parents and carers.</p> <p>The program endeavours to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop the self confidence of children and parents • foster an interest in imaginary and exploratory play • develop children's fine and motor skills • enhance early literacy and numeracy skills • develop organisational and self-help skills that will enable children to make a smooth transition into the primary school environment • instil good food habits and a taste for a well-balanced and nutritious diet • develop pride in their home language • encourage competence and confidence in using Standard English.
Target group	<p>General public</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	Qualitative research indicates positive outcomes for all of the aims of the program.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety; Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	Information available from the Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley website http://www.swek.wa.gov.au/ and from the WELA Centre website http://welacentre.wordpress.com/
References	Saggers S & Frances K 2009, <i>Local Evaluation of East Kimberley Communities for Children Initiative for Children and Their Families: Final Report</i> , Social Justice Research Centre.

PROGRAMS - EDUCATION

Promising programs

This program shows 'promise' in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, however its evaluation (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Program	Moorditj Coolangars ('Solid Kids') Community Hub
Organisation	Lower Great Southern Communities for Children
Location	Albany, Western Australia
Description	<p>This Aboriginal community hub aims to close the literacy and numeracy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children.</p> <p>Based at a local school, the program involves the delivery of information sessions with Aboriginal families around a range of health and social issues. Specific input is provided by health and community development practitioners, including community nurses, speech therapists, dieticians, Auslan teachers, health officers, social workers and school administrators.</p>
Resources and contact information	<p>Information on this program is limited. The program and a regional funding contact is provided at http://www.amityhealth.com.au/programs/communitiesforchildren.aspx</p> <p>The program is also listed in the Promising Practice Profiles - Final Report, available at http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/ppp.html</p>

PROGRAMS - MATERIAL WELLBEING

About this domain

The material circumstances of the family unit can have a significant impact on children and young people's wellbeing. Adequate access to basic material needs is linked to improved outcomes in other domains such as Health and Safety, Education and Behaviours and Risks.¹⁰ Family income, employment situation and suitable housing are examples of material wellbeing that can help to deliver a stronger foundation to a child's life.

A small number of programs were identified for this domain, all of which targeted homelessness or those at risk of homelessness. Two of the programs targeted families, while others targeted young people. The issues that lead families and young people into homelessness are complex and, as such, the initiatives required to address these issues must reflect that complexity. The programs identified as being effective tended to be multi-faceted and involved a range of services.

The companion report *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* contains information about measures of wellbeing relevant to the Material Wellbeing domain.

Programs

The following best practice programs are listed in this domain:

- Family Homelessness Prevention Pilots (FHPP) continued by the Household Organisational Management Expenses (HOME) Advice Program 38
- Homeless and Parenting Program Initiative (HAPPI) 39
- Innovative Health Services for Homeless Youth (IHSY) 40
- Reconnect 41

The following promising program is listed in this domain:

- Justice Housing Support Program (JHSP) 42

¹⁰ Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians: Report Card*, ARACY, Canberra, p.2.

PROGRAMS - MATERIAL WELLBEING

Program	Family Homelessness Prevention Pilots (FHPP) continued by the Household Organisational Management Expenses (HOME) Advice Program
Organisation	Federal Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA); Department of Human Services: Centrelink
Location	Nationwide, including Mandurah in WA
Description	<p>The Household Organisational Management Expenses (HOME) Advice Program assists families who face difficulty in maintaining tenancies or home ownership due to personal or financial circumstances.</p> <p>The program's early intervention approach prevents families from using crisis accommodation services. FaHCSIA delivers the HOME Advice Program through a partnership with Centrelink and community agencies in eight locations throughout Australia – one in each state and territory. Each site delivers the service to families within the relevant Centrelink Customer Service Centre area boundary.</p>
Target group	Those at risk of homelessness
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation utilising mixed methodology found that the program significantly reduced homelessness and risk of homelessness for participants.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/progserv/homelessness/Pages/fhpp_HOME_prog.aspx
References	<p>Cvjeticanin M 2007, 'Centrelink social worker's role in early intervention and prevention of family homelessness', <i>Parity</i>, Vol. 20 No. 5, pp. 12–14.</p> <p>Mackenzie D, Desmond K & Steen A 2007, <i>HOME Advice Program Evaluation Report</i>, available online at: http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/pubs/housing/Pages/home_advice_eval_2007.aspx</p> <p><i>HOME Advice Operational Guidelines (2011–12)</i>: http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/pubs/housing/Pages/home_advice_op_guidelines.aspx</p> <p><i>Final Evaluation Report 2005</i>: http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/pubs/homelessfamilies/fhpp/Documents/FHPP_Final_Report.pdf</p>

PROGRAMS - MATERIAL WELLBEING

Program	Homeless and Parenting Program Initiative (HAPPI)
Organisation	Centacare
Location	South Australia
Description	<p>This program offered a mobile service that worked with families dealing with homelessness or the risk of homelessness within the Adelaide metropolitan area.</p> <p>HAPPI was established as an early intervention program that focused primarily on children in order to provide resources and support, and thereby break the vicious cycle of intergenerational homelessness.</p>
Target group	Homeless or those at risk of homelessness (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people)
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program reduced the risk of homelessness.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.centacare.org.au/
References	Porter M & Witham P 2003, <i>HAPPI Evaluation Report: An Evaluation of the Centacare Homeless and Parenting Program Initiative, South Australia</i> , Department of Family and Community Services, p.68.

PROGRAMS - MATERIAL WELLBEING

Program	Innovative Health Services for Homeless Youth (IHSY)
Organisation	Australian, state and territory governments
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>The Innovative Health Services for Homeless Youth (IHSY) program is a joint state and federal-funded initiative that promotes health care for homeless and vulnerable young people.</p> <p>The program aims to address the complex health needs of young people who are at risk and enhance their access to mainstream health services.</p>
Target group	Vulnerable young people (aged 12 to 24 years) at risk of homelessness
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program successfully addressed some of the multifaceted needs of homeless and vulnerable young participants.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pch/cyf/ihshy.htm
References	<p>The 2007 review of this program is, available online:</p> <p>http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-ihshy-program-review-07</p>

PROGRAMS - MATERIAL WELLBEING

Program	Reconnect
Organisation	Federal Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Location	Nationwide, including East Perth, Midland, Mirrabooka, Wembley, Albany, Bunbury, Broome and Mandurah
Description	<p>Reconnect is a community-based early intervention program for young people aged 12 to 18 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and their families.</p> <p>Reconnect uses early intervention strategies to help the young person stabilise their living situation, achieve family reconciliation and improve their level of engagement with work, education, training and the community.</p>
Target group	<p>Disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Homeless or at risk of homelessness</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program was successful in assisting significantly disadvantaged young people and families with complex problems.
Replicability	The program is a national initiative that was designed to be implemented in various locations and tailored to suit the needs of individual schools/communities.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Family and Peer Relationships; Education
Resources and contact information	http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/progserv/homelessness/reconnect/Pages/default.aspx
References	<p>Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services 2003, <i>I'm Looking at the Future: Evaluation Report of Reconnect</i>. http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/pubs/homelessyouth/Evaluation_Final_report_2003/Pages/default.aspx</p> <p>RTR Consulting, <i>Report of the Reconnect Longitudinal Study: Building Community Capacity for Early Intervention</i> http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/pubs/homelessyouth/reconnect_longitudinal_survey2003_report/Pages/default.aspx</p>

PROGRAMS - MATERIAL WELLBEING

Promising programs

This program shows 'promise' in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, however its evaluation (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Program	Justice Housing Support Program (JHSP)
Organisation	Homeground Services
Location	Victoria
Description	JHSP works with young people referred for targeted transitional housing properties by the CREDIT/Bail Support and Court Integrated Services Programs at Magistrates Courts around metropolitan Melbourne.
Resources and contact information	This program does not have a dedicated website, however the outline on the HomeGround Services website is a valuable resource: http://www.homeground.org.au/what-we-do/individual-services/justice-housing-support/

About this domain

Key to children and young people's wellbeing is their relationship with their families and peers.^{11, 12} For most children and young people their family is the primary source of security, support and development.¹³ As children grow, peer relationships also become important sources of support and socialisation.

In this report, the Family and Peer Relationships domain includes programs aimed at fostering or improving the parent-child relationship (family relations, father-child relationship, mother-child relationship) as well as peer group relations and friendships.

There were a large number of well-evaluated, evidence-based programs targeting family and peer relationships, so programs included in this report are those that showcase diversity and a range of different types of initiative. The report includes programs that are aimed at the individual child, parent, family or school, many of which focus on specific groups, such as Aboriginal children, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children, children with disabilities and children living in rural and remote areas. Most programs are based on improving parenting knowledge and skills and on fostering the parent-child relationship.

No programs specifically targeting peer relationships were included in this domain, although programs in the Behaviours and Risks and Participation domains do focus on improving peer relationships (such as bullying interventions).

The companion report *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* contains information about measures of wellbeing relevant to the Family and Peer Relationships domain.

11 Price-Robertson R et al 2010, 'Family is for life: Connections between childhood family experiences and wellbeing in early adulthood', *Family Matters*, No. 85, pp.7–17.

12 Hartup WW & Stevens N 1997, 'Friendships and adaptation in the life course', *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 121 No. 3, pp.355–370.

13 Price-Robertson R et al 2010, 'Family is for life: Connections between childhood family experiences and wellbeing in early adulthood', *Family Matters*, No. 85, pp.7–17.

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Programs

The following best practice programs are listed in this domain:

- 1–2–3 Magic and Emotion Coaching 45
- Bending Like a River: The Parenting Between Cultures Program 46
- CHAMPS (Children and Mentally Ill Parents) 47
- Core of Life: National Project 48
- Early Intervention Parenting Project (EIPP) 49
- Families and Schools Together (FAST) 50
- Hey Dad! for Indigenous Dads, Uncles and Pops 51
- Parents and Adolescents Communicating Together (PACT) 52
- Partnerships in Early Childhood (PIEC) 53
- Resilient Families 54
- Sing and Grow 56
- Through the Looking Glass (TtLG): A Community Partnership in Parenting 57
- Triple P: Positive Parenting Program 58
- What Were We Thinking! Psycho-Educational Program for Parents (WWWT) 60

The following promising programs are listed in this domain:

- Aboriginal Dads Program 61
- Circle of Security 61
- Family Journeys: Parent Resource Program 61

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Best practice programs

These programs have been evaluated as being effective in improving the wellbeing of children and young people.

Program	1–2–3 Magic and Emotion Coaching
Organisation	Parentshop Pty Ltd
Location	Nationwide (incl. rural trial); International
Description	<p>The 1–2–3 Magic and Emotion Coaching program aims to teach parents how to deal with their children’s difficult behaviour by using a simple signalling system.</p> <p>The system encourages parents and carers to be less verbal and emotive when met with problem behaviours in order to encourage the development of children’s ability to manage their emotional reactions to parental boundaries. The program has been trialled with parents and carers of maltreated children in Australia.</p>
Target group	Parents of pre-school and primary school-aged children
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using randomised controlled trials found that the program decreased participants’ anxiety, depression, stress and dysfunctional parenting style.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.parentshop.com.au
References	<p>Bradley S J et al 2003, ‘Brief psychoeducational parenting program: An evaluation and 1-year follow-up’, <i>Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry</i>, Vol. 42 No. 10, pp. 1171–1177.</p> <p>Flaherty R & Cooper R 2010, ‘Piloting a parenting skills program in an Australian rural child protection setting’, <i>Children Australia</i>, Vol. 35 No. 3, pp. 18–24.</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	Bending Like a River: The Parenting Between Cultures Program
Organisation	Marymead Child and Family Centre
Location	Australian Capital Territory; Western Australia
Description	<p>Bending Like a River was a parenting program that was developed and trialled to cater specifically to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.</p> <p>The program aimed to strengthen the ability of CALD parents to parent confidently and capably in the Australian context by focusing attention on key parenting issues found to be particularly relevant to CALD communities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intergenerational conflict arising from different acculturation rates • the benefits of bicultural parenting identity • knowledge of the school system • discipline strategies • knowledge of child abuse laws and support services.
Target group	CALD families
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found that the program was effective in fostering an understanding of the impact of culture on parenting, participants' knowledge of the school system, the application of non-physical disciplinary measures and the understanding of child abuse laws.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Education; Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.marymead.org.au/
References	<p>Kayrooz C & Blunt C 2000, 'Bending like a river: The parenting between cultures program', <i>Children Australia</i>, Vol. 25 No. 3, pp. 17–22.</p> <p><i>Parenting Between Cultures: The Primary School Years, A Program for Parents from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities</i> (manual), available online at: http://www.marymead.org.au/_literature_48589/Parenting_between_cultures_manual</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	CHAMPS (Children and Mentally Ill Parents)
Organisation	Eastern Health, Melbourne
Location	Melbourne, Victoria
Description	<p>CHAMPS programs are aimed at helping children and young people deal with the realities of having a parent who suffers from a mental illness.</p> <p>The CHAMPS After School Program gives children and young people age-appropriate information about mental illness, provides an opportunity for them to meet other children who are in similar situations and enables them to develop healthy coping strategies.</p> <p>These programs complement the support workers who assist the families and involve workers meeting with parents, children and other family members. The suite of CHAMPS programs also includes camps, holiday programs and specialist programs.</p>
Target group	Children and young people with parents experiencing a mental illness or mental health issues
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant impact on participants' ability to cope with the stressors of having a parent with a mental illness.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety; Participation; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.easternhealth.org.au/fapmi.aspx
References	<p>Cuff R & Purdey K 2003, 'Responding to children in SAAP services who also have a parent affected by mental illness', <i>Parity</i>, Vol. 16 No. 6, pp. 18–19.</p> <p>Goodyear M, Cuff R, Maybery D & Reupert A 2009, 'CHAMPS: A peer support program for children of parents with a mental illness', <i>Australian e-Journal for the Advancement of Mental Health</i>, Vol. 8 No. 3.</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	Core of Life: National Project
Organisation	Menzies Inc.; Peninsula Health, Victoria
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>The Core of Life National Project was designed to empower both male and female Aboriginal young people by providing comprehensive education on pregnancy, birth and parenting a newborn.</p> <p>The program responds to local communities' needs for promoting awareness of the potential short- and long-term consequences of pregnancy and parenting, and focuses special attention on young people aged from 14 to 17 years – many of whom are at risk of early pregnancy. The program also provides an opportunity for young people to acquire skills and knowledge in parenting, child development, community resources and life skills in order to increase their self-esteem and positive decision making.</p>
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, especially in remote and rural communities
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation utilising mixed methodology found that the program significantly increased participants' knowledge and awareness of pregnancy, birth and parenting, as well as participant likelihood of accessing community resources.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.coreoflife.org.au/
References	CAFCA Promising Practice Profile, available online at: http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/itg_core_of_life.html

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	Early Intervention Parenting Project (EIPP)
Organisation	Parenting Australia
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>The program focused on the universal needs of families with young children, as well as the specific needs of CALD families, Aboriginal families and parents with a disability.</p> <p>The project emphasised the importance of improving parent-child relationships and gaining a better understanding of child development and building positive attitudes in the family. The project also focused on increasing confidence in parenting through teaching better communication practices and approaches.</p>
Target group	<p>General public</p> <p>CALD groups</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p> <p>Parents with a disability</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found that the program had a significant impact on participating families' likelihood of accessing community services and improving family wellbeing.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	<p>The program is no longer in operation, however the evaluation prepared by the Royal Children's Hospital (Melbourne) is a valuable resource.</p> <p>http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/EI_ParentingProject_final.pdf</p>
References	<p>Jenkin C & Jewell P 2005, '<i>Early Intervention Parenting Project</i>', paper presented at the 9th Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference, Melbourne, 9–11 February.</p> <p>Centre for Community Child Health Royal Children's Hospital 2003, <i>Early Intervention Parenting Project: Improving access to playgroups for all families project: Final Report</i>, Centre for Community Child Health.</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	Families and Schools Together (FAST)
Organisation	FAST Australia
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>FAST is an eight to 10 week early intervention and prevention program designed to strengthen family functioning and build protective factors in children. It addresses four overarching problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alcohol and drug abuse • violence and delinquency • school dropout • child abuse and neglect. <p>The program is usually conducted in a local school context or community organisation and involves family meetings in which positive interactions are structured and facilitated by a collaborative leadership team.</p> <p>The program aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase school attendance rates for participating children • involve parents in school participation • empower parents with strategies to help their child(ren) succeed • strengthen the parent-child relationship and foster self-esteem • improve links between families and community services • develop and maintain a parent support network. <p>A FAST program specifically tailored to respond to Aboriginal communities' needs has been widely implemented in the Northern Territory.</p>
Target group	<p>General public</p> <p>Disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p> <p>Rural groups</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program significantly improved participants' sense of social connectedness, behaviour, parent involvement in school and family relationships.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Education; Health and Safety; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.familiesandschools.com.au/
References	<p>Coote S 2001, <i>Families and Schools Together (FAST): Building Family Resilience and Social Capital</i>, paper presented at the 8th Australasian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Melbourne.</p> <p>CAFCA Promising Practice Profile, available online at: http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/cfc_fast.html</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	Hey Dad! for Indigenous Dads, Uncles and Pops
Organisation	Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Location	New South Wales
Description	<p>Hey Dad! for Indigenous Dads, Uncles and Pops has been designed specifically to help Aboriginal men engage with and understand their children.</p> <p>Importantly, the program aims to build individual and community skills and provide Aboriginal men with the confidence to be strong role models for the young people in their communities. The program covers a range of topics, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being a dad today • understanding grief and loss • talking with and understanding young people • keeping young people safe • being a mentor for young people. <p>The program also includes sessions on child development, communication, discipline, participants' experiences of parenting and being parented and conflict resolution. It is based around a professional, comprehensive manual/workbook, which is also available on CD.</p> <p>The program can be delivered in various formats including as a two-day workshop, a series of shorter workshops or as an extended, weekly program. It was designed to be delivered by Aboriginal men in their own communities and functions as a conduit to other family relationship services for Aboriginal fathers, including counselling and other programs and services.</p>
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found that the program had a significant impact on participants' relationships with their children and wider community.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	<p>This program does not have a dedicated website, however the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse's assessment of the program is a valuable resource.</p> <p>http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/resources/qa.cfm?item_id=4962&ic_assessment_id=1241&group_type=BB&group_id=1&q=&coll=QA&perPage=all&detailList=SUMMARISE&start=46</p>
References	<p>Evaluation available online at: http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/docs/heydadeval.pdf</p> <p>Program Spotlight available online at: http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/pubs/newsletter/newsletter12.html#hey</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	Parents and Adolescents Communicating Together (PACT)
Organisation	Exploring Together
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>The Parents and Adolescents Communicating Together (PACT) Program is a group program for adolescents and their parents to teach skills for resolving conflict peacefully.</p> <p>The program is facilitated by two professionals who attend a one-day training workshop and was designed to be implemented in secondary schools or community settings with all age groups. The program comprises two sessions for adolescents, a parent evening and a combined parent-adolescent evening.</p>
Target group	General public
Evaluation and effectiveness	Evaluation documentation offers support of the program's effectiveness.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks
Resources and contact information	http://www.exploringtogether.com.au/
References	Soltys M & Littlefield L 2008, 'Evaluation of Parents and Adolescents Communicating Together (PACT): A conflict resolution program', <i>Australian e-Journal for the Advancement of Mental Health</i> , Vol. 7 No. 1.

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	Partnerships in Early Childhood (PIEC)
Organisation	The Benevolent Society
Location	New South Wales
Description	<p>The Partnerships in Early Childhood (PIEC) program promotes strong and healthy relationships between families, communities and childcare centre staff.</p> <p>The program transforms childcare centres into dynamic community centres by placing a child and family worker within a childcare centre who works with the children, families and staff. In this way, PIEC provides a direct pathway to accessing the information, resources and opportunities that empower all families, though especially those at risk, by enabling them to acquire additional parenting support and address their individual needs as they arise.</p> <p>PIEC activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing hands-on training and supporting staff at the centres to increase their understanding of children's behaviours and relationship needs • focusing on important transition moments for children, parents and staff • providing individual support and counselling for parents • holding parenting sessions that focus on the needs and strengths of parents • providing referrals and links to local service providers and connecting families to services and other community supports • establishing supported playgroups in the local community.
Target group	<p>General public</p> <p>Disadvantaged groups</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found that the program had a positive impact on participants' family relationships, sense of community connectedness and awareness of community resources.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.bensoc.org.au/
References	<p>Thomson C, Valentine K et al 2008, <i>Partnerships in Early Childhood Program: Final Evaluation Report</i>, Benevolent Society, p.56</p> <p>CAFCA Promising Profile, available online at: http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/itg_piec.html</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	Resilient Families
Organisation	Developed by Prof John Toumbourou, Deakin University
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>Resilient Families was a school-based prevention program designed to help students and parents develop knowledge, skills and support networks that promote health, wellbeing and education during the early years of secondary school.</p> <p>The program was designed to increase family connectedness as well as improve social support between different families and between families and schools. The program is designed to promote social, emotional and academic competence and to prevent health and social problems in young people.</p>
Target group	General public
Evaluation and effectiveness	<p>Two evaluations suggest the program can positively affect the whole school community. A quasi-experimental evaluation showed the initial version of the program reduced substance use and adolescent-parent conflict for the students in the intervention schools.</p> <p>An evaluation using a randomised controlled school trial found that the program had a significant impact on improving family and school attachment and school attendance among the intervention school students.</p>
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Health and Safety; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	<p>Email – resilientfamilies@deakin.edu.au</p> <p>Resources include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School planning assistance and staff training. 2. Student Social Relationship Curriculum and teacher training. 3. Parenting Adolescents Quiz Night materials and presenter training. 4. Parenting Adolescents: A Creative Experience materials and presenter training.

References

Cahill H, Murphy B et al 2005, *A Toolkit of Interventions to Assist Young People to Negotiate Transitional Pathways*, Department of Health and Ageing, p.86.

Shortt A, Toumbourou J, Chapman R & Power E 2006, 'The Resilient Families program: Promoting health and wellbeing in adolescents and their parents during the transition to secondary school', *Youth Studies Australia*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp.33–40.

Shortt A & Toumbourou J 2006, 'The Resilient Families Program: Helping to prepare adolescents for success in school and life', *Youth Studies Australia*, Vol. 25 No. 1, pp.57–58.

Shortt AL, Hutchinson DM, Chapman R, Toumbourou JW 2007, 'Family, school, peer and individual influences on early adolescent alcohol use: First year impact of the Resilient Families program', *Drug and Alcohol Review*, Vol. 26 No. 6, pp.625–634.

Toumbourou JW & Gregg ME 2002, 'Impact of an empowerment-based parent education program on the reduction of youth suicide risk factors', *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp.279–287.

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program/service	Sing and Grow
Organisation	Playgroup Association of Queensland
Location	Queensland
Description	<p>Sing and Grow is a 10-week early intervention music therapy program for families with children aged 0 to three years and is delivered by Registered Music Therapists in local community settings.</p> <p>The families who participate in the program have experienced one or more of the following child, parent or community characteristics that has been shown in previous research to be associated with poorer behavioural, educational and health outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child or parent with a disability • Aboriginal background • young parent • involvement in the child protection system • mental illness • incarcerated mother • alcohol or drug dependence • refugee status • domestic violence environment • single parenthood • social isolation • low socio-economic status. <p>Sing and Grow provides a learning and therapeutic opportunity for families through structured music-based activities which aim to support positive family relationships and build effective parenting skills.</p> <p>The use of music therapy provides a unique, non-threatening and accessible means to engage all families regardless of their familial, financial, cultural or linguistic circumstances.</p>
Target group	<p>Disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p> <p>CALD groups</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using qualitative research found that the program had a positive impact on participants' family relationships, sense of social connectedness and parenting skills.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Education; Health and Safety; Participation
Resources and contact information	http://www.playgroupaustralia.com.au/qld/index.php/early-intervention-programs/sing-and-grow-supported-playgroups
References	<p>Nicholson JM, Berthelsen D, Abad V, Williams K & Bradley J 2008, 'Impact of music therapy to promote positive parenting and child development', <i>Journal of Health Psychology</i>, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 226–238.</p> <p>CAFCA Promising Practice Profile, available online: http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/itg_sing_grow.html</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program/service	Through the Looking Glass (TtLG): A Community Partnership in Parenting
Organisation	South Australian Children, Youth and Women's Health Service; Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Adelaide
Location	South Australia
Description	<p>The Through the Looking Glass (TtLG) project is a collaborative model of early intervention and prevention that aims to provide intensive psychosocial support, therapeutic assistance and childcare for high-risk families in order to improve secure attachment outcomes for young children.</p> <p>It targets families from a variety of backgrounds that exhibit multiple risk factors including anxiety, depression and social isolation. The program targets mothers as the primary caregivers and works from a partnership approach, supporting strong collaborative relationships between the parent and clinician, parent and childcare primary caregiver, childcare primary care giver and clinician, and childcare primary caregiver and child.</p> <p>The program supports the development of secure attachment relationships between mother and child by striving to address the specific attachment problems that are impeding the mother's ability to be emotionally available to her child and develop a secure attachment.</p> <p>The program also aims to increase social connectedness by linking families to the childcare community and other local resources.</p>
Target group	Vulnerable mothers of children aged 0 to five years
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant impact on participating mothers' depression and anxiety, enabling the development of secure attachment outcomes for young children.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety; Participation; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.gowrie-adelaide.com.au/
References	<p>Final evaluation report available online at: http://www.gowrie-adelaide.com.au/cms/?q=system/files/TtLG+final+report1-8.pdf</p> <p>CAFCA Promising Practice Profile available online at: http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/itg_through_looking_glass.html</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program/service	Triple P: Positive Parenting Program
Organisation	Triple P International
Location	Nationwide; International
Description	<p>The Triple P Positive Parenting Program is a parenting and family support suite of training developed by the University of Queensland that endeavours to prevent behavioural, emotional and developmental difficulties in children and young people.</p> <p>Only professional practitioners who receive specialised training in Triple P methods can administer the program. Practitioners represent a variety of professionals in the health, education, justice and social welfare sectors.</p> <p>Triple P aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the development, growth, health and social competencies of children and young people • promote the development of non-violent, protective and nurturing environments for children • promote the independence and health of families by enhancing parents' knowledge, skills and confidence • enhance the competence, resourcefulness and self-sufficiency of parents in raising their children • reduce the incidence of child abuse, mental illness, behavioural problems, delinquency and homelessness. <p>The program targets the developmental periods of infancy, toddlerhood, pre-school, primary school and adolescence. Within each developmental area the intensity of the intervention can be quite broad (eg targeting an entire group) or very narrow (eg targeting only high-risk children).</p> <p>There are a range of Triple P programs available, such as Group Triple P, Indigenous Group Triple P and Stepping Stones Triple P for parents of a child with a disability.</p> <p><i>... continued on following page</i></p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

<p>Description (continued)</p>	<p>Triple P incorporates five levels of intervention of increasing strength:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1. This communications strategy provides parents with access to information about parenting and aims to increase community awareness of parenting resources, de-stigmatise and normalise parenting support, encourage parents to take part in programs and create a sense of optimism by portraying solutions to common behavioural and developmental difficulties. • Level 2. This intervention involves brief, individual or seminar-based consultation with parents and caregivers and provides topic-specific guidance to parents of children with mild behavioural problems. • Level 3. This intervention targets children with specific mild-to-moderate behaviour difficulties through four brief consultations or a one-off discussion group and includes active skills training for parents. • Level 4. Interventions are more intensive at this level and take between eight to 10 sessions. They are designed for parents of children with more severe behaviour difficulties and can be delivered individually or in a group context. • Level 5. This intervention is designed for parents and caregivers who are experiencing high levels of stress, including relationship conflict or parental mental illness. Level 5 is usually delivered to parents after they have undertaken a Level 4 intervention.
<p>Target group</p>	<p>Parents with children aged 0 to 16 years</p>
<p>Evaluation and effectiveness</p>	<p>Numerous randomised controlled trials, four meta-analyses and two population trials have demonstrated that Triple P has had a significant positive impact on the behavioural, emotional and developmental difficulties of participating children and young people, as well as benefiting their families and school communities.</p>
<p>Replicability</p>	<p>The program has been successfully replicated.</p>
<p>Other relevant domains</p>	<p>Behaviours and Risks; Health and Safety; Material Wellbeing; Subjective Wellbeing</p>
<p>Resources and contact information</p>	<p>http://www.triplep.net/</p>
<p>References</p>	<p>Holzer PJ, Higgins JR, Bromfield LM & Higgins DJ 2006, <i>The Effectiveness of Parent Education and Home Visiting Child Maltreatment Prevention Programs</i>, National Child Protection Clearinghouse Child Abuse Prevention Issues No. 24, Australian Institute of Family Studies.</p> <p>Sanders MR, Turner KMT & Markie-Dadds C 2002, 'The development and dissemination of the Triple P-Positive Parenting Program: A multi-level, evidence-based system of parenting and family support', <i>Prevention Science</i>, Vol. 31, pp. 173–198.</p> <p>Also see: http://www.pfsc.uq.edu.au/research/evidence/</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Program	What Were We Thinking! Psycho-Educational Program for Parents (WWWT)
Organisation	Key Centre for Women's Health in Society, Melbourne School of Population Health, University of Melbourne
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>WWWT is an early intervention program for mothers, fathers and their first babies that aims to empower first-time parents by extending their knowledge and skills in managing their infant's needs and their relationship.</p> <p>By focusing on areas where difficulties often arise, the program endeavours to prevent potential mental health problems such as post-natal depression and anxiety. WWWT is offered as two half-day seminars and is conducted by maternal and child health nurses.</p> <p>Specifically, the program aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contribute to community improvements in family functioning and child development • prevent postnatal psychological disturbance in first time parents of newborns • increase knowledge, skills and confidence of parents of a first newborn • provide practical techniques to manage infant temperament • improve the quality of partner relationships by addressing adjustment to changes in the intimate relationship between partners after the birth of a baby • provide constructive ways of renegotiating the unpaid workload of household tasks and infant care • provide social support to parents of newborns • foster strong parent-child relationships • optimise infant health and development • contribute to capacity building of primary health care professionals in the fields of maternal, infant and family health.
Target group	First-time parents of newborns
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant positive impact on participants' ability to cope with the stressors involved in caring for a newborn baby.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.whatwerewethinking.org.au/
References	<p>Program Evaluation available online at: http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/10/432</p> <p>CAFCA Promising Practice Profile available online at: http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/itg_pepp.html</p>

PROGRAMS - FAMILY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Promising programs

These programs show 'promise' in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, however their evaluations (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Program	Aboriginal Dads Program
Organisation	Males in Black Inc.; UnitingCare
Locations	South Australia
Description	This program supports young Aboriginal fathers in positive parenting and community involvement through mentoring.
Resources and contact information	This program does not have a dedicated website, however the CAFCA Promising Practice Profile is a valuable resource. http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/cfc_aboriginal_dads.html

Program/service	Circle of Security
Organisation	Attachment Training Australia
Locations	Western Australia
Description	This program focuses on assisting parents to provide their children with the emotional support needed to develop secure attachment.
Resources and contact information	http://www.circleofsecurity.net/ http://www.attachmenttraining.com.au/Site/Welcome.html

Program/service	Family Journeys: Parent Resource Program
Organisation	St Joseph's Family Services
Locations	New South Wales
Description	This program offers coordinated parent/carer support in order to strengthen and build parenting and relationship skills, support networks, and reduce isolation.
Resources and contact information	This program does not have a dedicated website, however the CAFCA Promising Practice Profile is a valuable resource. http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/la_family_journeys.html

PROGRAMS - PARTICIPATION

About this domain

Participation in community activities provides opportunities for children and young people to learn new skills, build community networks and express their opinions.¹⁴

Limited numbers of well-evaluated, evidence-based programs were found, with no specific programs for Aboriginal children and young people identified. The programs that have been identified in this domain highlight a range of different ways that children and young people can be encouraged to participate in their communities and discouraged from becoming socially isolated.

The programs included in this domain are diverse in nature. For example, programs include one targeting newly arrived migrants and humanitarian entry families and their children aged 0 to five years and another offering youth camps for young people aged 12 to 18 years from rural and regional backgrounds.

The companion report *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* contains information about measures of wellbeing relevant to the Participation domain.

Programs

The following best practice programs are listed in this domain:

- Advance 63
- Cadets WA Program 64
- It Takes A Village: Multicultural Early Learning Program (ITaV) 65
- Operation Newstart 66
- Youth Insearch Youth Programs (Weekend Specific) 67

The following promising programs are listed in this domain:

- School Community Regional Arts Youth Program (SCRAYP): Youth Arts with An Edge 68
- Sports Mentoring Project 68

¹⁴ Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians: Technical Report*, ARACY, Canberra, p.117.

PROGRAMS - PARTICIPATION

Best practice programs

These programs have been evaluated as being effective in improving the wellbeing of children and young people.

Program	Advance
Organisation	Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>Advance is a school-based program that provides young people with the opportunity to volunteer or implement a project of benefit within their communities.</p> <p>The program is a partnership between the Office for Youth, Victorian Government secondary schools and a range of community organisations. Many of the young Advance participants face a range of disparate barriers to success in education and do not possess the social capital to foster supportive personal networks.</p> <p>Through Advance, young people, schools and community organisations are able to develop networks of relationships and achieve shared goals. The program also encourages communities to foster and appreciate young people's participation and positive role in society, thereby empowering the participants and strengthening their communities by forging links that are pivotal to young people's sense of connectedness and belonging.</p>
Target group	<p>General public</p> <p>Disadvantaged groups</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found that the program had a positive impact on participants' sense of community connectedness and belonging.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Education; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/programs/youth-specific/advance-schools-program
References	Broadbent R & Papadopoulos T 2010, 'Government, schools, young people and communities in partnership', <i>Youth Studies Australia</i> , Vol. 29 No. 3, pp. 52–60.

PROGRAMS - PARTICIPATION

Program	Cadets WA Program
Organisation	Western Australian Department for Communities
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>The Cadets WA Program is based on the Australian Defence Force Cadets (ADFC) model and relies on a variety of host organisations based in the community.</p> <p>The program's stated purpose is to provide an opportunity for secondary school-aged young people to participate in fun, structured, intellectually and physically challenging training that offers the provision of practical life skills, the development of leadership skills, the promotion of teamwork and the development of initiative.</p> <p>The program is committed to fostering qualities of community responsibility and service in its participants, and in providing a supportive, inclusive and exciting environment for all.</p>
Target group	General public (ages 12 to 17 years)
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant impact on participants' sense of community belonging, social skills and wellbeing.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.cadetswa.wa.gov.au/
References	AOT Consulting 2008, <i>Review and Evaluation of the Office for Youth's Cadets WA Program</i> , AOT Consulting Pty Ltd.

PROGRAMS - PARTICIPATION

Program	It Takes A Village: Multicultural Early Learning Program (ITaV)
Organisation	Save The Children Australia (WA)
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>This program utilises an intensive, supported playgroup model to engage with mothers and their young children (0 to five years) in order to address recognised social challenges experienced by migrants and migrant entrants in Australia.</p> <p>The program involves mothers bringing their children to engage in a variety of early-learning play activities that aim to effectively prepare families for a smooth transition into the Australian school system. The mothers involved in the program are assisted by trained bicultural family support and play support workers and they are encouraged to participate in life skills workshops that include sewing, cooking and conversational English classes.</p> <p>Furthermore, the mothers are offered help accessing mainstream services for issues including health, housing, financial advice, employment and educational opportunities, child protection and domestic violence.</p> <p>The program aims to address endemic social isolation by facilitating and nurturing strong social networks between the mothers and their families and, in this way, support and empower migrant and refugee families during their initial years of integration into the Australian community.</p>
Target group	Migrant and refugee families
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found that the program had a significant positive impact on participants' social connectedness, awareness of community services, skills and ability to integrate less stressfully into the Australian community.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships; Health and Safety; Education; Material Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	www.savethechildren.org.au/where-we-work/australia/early-childhood-care-and-development.html
References	<p>Evaluation available online at:</p> <p>http://www.savethechildren.org.au/images/content/where-we-work/Australia/It_takes_a_Village_FINAL_REPORT_PDF.pdf</p>

PROGRAMS - PARTICIPATION

Program	Operation Newstart
Organisation	Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD); Victoria Police; Save The Children; Royal Children's Hospital Integrated Mental Health Service
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>Operation Newstart is an intensive, eight-week early intervention program that endeavours to assist disengaged 14 to 17 year-olds make positive changes in their lives.</p> <p>The program is offered at nine locations in Victoria, including a rural program in Shepparton. The program engages secondary school students in an array of stimulating adventure-based activities, vocational education, community service and other personal development activities. Operation Newstart aims to improve leadership skills, encourage teamwork and build self-esteem among its participants.</p> <p>Operation Newstart is characterised by a partnership approach between the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), Victoria Police and Save the Children. These three organisations work in tandem, each adding a different element to the overall experience of the program, encouraging respect and nurturing positive self-expression in the young participants.</p>
Target group	Disadvantaged groups
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a positive impact on participants' self esteem and anti-social behaviours.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviour and Risks; Education; Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://onv.org.au/
References	Evaluation by The Nous Group (2010): http://www.savethechildren.org.au/images/content/where-we-work/Australia/STC_-_Operation_Newstart_Evaluation.pdf

PROGRAMS - PARTICIPATION

Program	Youth Insearch Youth Programs (Weekend Specific)
Organisation	Youth Insearch Foundation (YIF)
Location	New South Wales; Queensland; Victoria
Description	<p>The Youth Insearch Weekend Youth Programs comprise an early intervention 'peer-to-peer' assistance program for troubled young people aged between 12 and 18 years.</p> <p>The participants are from rural and regional communities and experience a range of difficulties, including poor school attendance, drug and alcohol abuse, social isolation, homelessness and self-harm.</p> <p>The intensive weekend programs rely heavily on the cultivation of peer support and peer leadership, and provide participants with access to positive young role models. The programs involve a series of workshops and open discussions on a range of issues – covering good communication, self-esteem, trust, assault, parent-adolescent issues, substance abuse and grief – in a safe and supportive environment.</p> <p>There is also a more informal component to the camps, including free time, an entertainment night, bedtime tuck-ins and training in relaxation techniques. Approximately 30 per cent of participants are Aboriginal and receive support from Aboriginal volunteers who appreciate cultural sensitivity.</p>
Target group	<p>Disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	Evaluations using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant impact on participants' self esteem, social skills, community connectedness and general wellbeing.
Replicability	The program is an initiative that was designed to be implemented in various locations and tailored to suit the needs of individual schools/communities.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Education; Family and Peer relationships; Health and Safety; Material Wellbeing; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.youthinsearch.org.au/
References	<p>AIFS Promising Practice Youth Insearch Program Profile: http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/la_youth_insearch_program.html</p> <p>Urbis Young Keys 2003, <i>Youth Insearch Evaluation Final Report</i>, Urbis Young Keys.</p>

PROGRAMS - PARTICIPATION

Promising programs

These programs show 'promise' in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, however their evaluations (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Program	School Community Regional Arts Youth Program (SCRAYP): Youth Arts with An Edge
Organisation	Our Community
Location	Victoria
Description	Uses involvement in arts activities to develop supportive social networks and increased feelings of wellbeing in vulnerable young people. In particular, drama is used to engage young people and make connections with peers, school and their community, which enhances self-esteem and resilience.
Resources and contact information	http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/directories/listing?id=21103

Program/service	Sports Mentoring Project
Organisation	Stride Foundation
Location	New South Wales
Description	The project aims to re-integrate disadvantaged and disengaged students into the school environment, improve their employment prospects, build skills and help them set goals for the future, thereby increasing young people's connection to their community, school and peers. It also provides them with the opportunity to engage in activities that have valued outcomes for themselves and their community. The program has an Aboriginal focus.
Resources and contact information	http://www.stride.org.au/Sport-Mentoring.aspx

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

About this domain

Subjective wellbeing considers how children and young people feel about themselves and the world they live in. This includes feelings about their own physical and mental health, as well as concerns about broader issues, such as family conflict and problems at school.¹⁵

The programs selected in the Subjective Wellbeing domain of this report are those that focus on improving mental health outcomes of children and young people.

Programs included in this report focus on families, adults working or interacting with young people, whole school communities and different age groups of children and young people (such as pre-schoolers or adolescents). Most of the programs included also target specific mental health problems such as anxiety, depression or grief and loss.

The companion report *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* contains information about measures of wellbeing relevant to the Subjective Wellbeing domain.

Programs

The following best practice programs are listed in this domain:

- ACE: Adolescents Coping with Emotions 70
- Aussie Optimism 71
- Exploring Together Pre-school Program 72
- FRIENDS 74
- KidsMatter Primary; KidsMatter Early Childhood; KidsMatter Transition to School: Parent Initiative 75
- MindMatters 76
- Resourceful Adolescent Programs (RAP) (RAP-A, RAP-P, & RAP-T) 77
- Seasons for Growth 78
- Youth Mental Health First Aid 79

The following promising programs are listed in this domain:

- Cool Teens CD-ROM 80
- Rainbows 80
- You Can Do It! (YCDI) 80

15 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians: Report Card*, ARACY Canberra, p.14.

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Best practice programs

These programs have been evaluated as being effective in improving the wellbeing of children and young people.

Program	ACE: Adolescents Coping with Emotions
Organisation	Macquarie Hospital, Sydney
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>ACE is a school-based early intervention program targeting 13 to 15 year-olds that aims to build resilience and increase positive coping in young people using cognitive behavioural and interpersonal skills.</p> <p>ACE is offered to students most at risk of depression and the program content has been developed in consultation with school counsellors and young people.</p> <p>Components of the ACE program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • challenging unrealistic thinking • social skills • assertiveness and negotiating skills • problem solving • increasing pleasurable activities • encouraging appropriate help-seeking behaviour. <p>Program sessions involve interactive education, discussion, structured group activities and opportunities to practice new skills by way of role-play and exercise.</p> <p>A further aim of the program is to enhance collaboration between education and health staff in addressing mental health issues in young people.</p>
Target group	13 to 15 year-olds at risk of depression
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant impact on participants' resilience and wellbeing.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	<p>This program does not have a dedicated website, however the outline on the Australian Guidance and Counselling Association's website is a useful resource.</p> <p>http://mhws.agca.com.au/mmppi_detail.php?id=1</p>
References	<p>Kowalenko N, Rapee J et al 2000, The 'ACE' Program (Adolescents Coping with Emotions), paper presented at the 10th Mental Health Services Conference, Adelaide.</p> <p>Further material available online at:</p> <p>http://www.nscchealth.nsw.gov.au/services/cahms/ACE_info_sheet.pdf</p>

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Program	Aussie Optimism
Organisation	Curtin University
Location	Western Australia; Queensland
Description	<p>Aussie Optimism is a comprehensive mental health promotion program for middle primary, upper primary and lower secondary school students developed by researchers at Curtin University.</p> <p>The program comprises three classroom-based modules – Positive Thinking Skills, Social Life Skills and Optimistic Thinking Skills – and a program for parents and families.</p> <p>The classroom programs are implemented over a period of 10 weeks and come with teacher, student and parent resources. Teachers who wish to commence the program are required to attend a one-day training session for each program.</p> <p>The broad aim of Aussie Optimism is to promote resilience and prevent depression and anxiety in children, and to thereby assist them in meeting the challenges and stresses of life as they transition into adolescence.</p>
Target group	General public (though developmentally appropriate for children in Years 4 to 9)
Evaluation and effectiveness	Multiple evaluations including randomised controlled trials found that the program reduces anxiety and depression among at-risk rural students, lowers internalising symptoms in children from low socio-economic status schools and reduces mental health symptoms and disorders in a large community trial.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks
Resources and contact information	http://psych.curtin.edu.au/research/aussieoptimism/contact.cfm
Resources	<p>Bishop B & Roberts C 2005, 'The process of embedding and sustaining mental health promotion program in social contexts', <i>Community Psychologist</i>, No. 38, pp. 14–16.</p> <p>Quayle D, Dziurawiec S, Roberts C, Kane R & Ebsworthy G 2001, 'The effects of an optimism and lifeskills program on depression in preadolescents', <i>Behaviour Change</i>, No. 18, pp. 194–203.</p> <p>Roberts C 2006, 'Embedding mental health promotion programs in school contexts: The Aussie Optimism Program', <i>International Society for the Study of Behaviour Newsletter</i>.</p> <p>Roberts C, Kane R, Bishop B, Matthews H & Thomson H 2004, 'The prevention of depressive symptoms in rural school children: A follow-up study', <i>International Journal of Mental Health Promotion</i>, Vol. 6, pp. 4–16.</p> <p>Roberts C, Kane R, Thomson H, Bishop B & Hart B 2003, 'The prevention of depressive symptoms in rural school children: A randomised controlled trial', <i>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology</i>, Vol. 71, pp. 622–628.</p> <p>Rooney R, Roberts CM, Kane R, Pike L, Winsor A, White J et al 2006, 'The prevention of depression in 8- to 9-year-old children: A pilot study', <i>Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling</i>, Vol. 16, pp. 76–90.</p>

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Program	Exploring Together Pre-school Program
Organisation	KidsMatter; Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Location	Nationwide; Northern Territory (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus)
Description	<p>The Exploring Together Pre-school Program is a 10-week, community-based group treatment program for children in their pre-school or early primary school years who have behaviour problems and are at risk of developing ongoing mental health problems. It includes components for children's parents and pre-school teachers.</p> <p>The pre-school program is based on the Exploring Together Primary School Program, which is a well-researched and empirically validated program for families with children aged five to 14 years whose long-term mental health is at risk.</p> <p>The Exploring Together Pre-school Program aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance self-esteem and reduce problematic behaviour in young children • boost their interpersonal and social skills • provide training in problem-solving and behaviour management • improve communication and understanding between family members • empower families to use their own resources more effectively so that relationships between family members can improve. <p>Recently, the Let's Start project was initiated to trial the Exploring Together Pre-school Program in the Northern Territory, for managing behaviour problems in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children.</p> <p>The program remained essentially the same in all contexts but, importantly, was shown to provide a framework responsive to Aboriginal contexts and cultures.</p>
Target group	Children aged three to seven years
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology offers strong support for the program's effectiveness in enhancing participants' self-esteem and social skills, reducing problematic behaviour and fostering stronger family relationships.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.exploringtogether.com.au

References

Hemphill SA & Littlefield L 2001, Evaluation of a short-term group therapy program for children with behaviour problems and their parents, *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, Vol. 39, pp. 823–84.

Reid K et al 2008, Early intervention for pre-schoolers with behaviour problems: Preliminary findings for the Exploring Together Pre-school Program, *Australian e-Journal for the Advancement of Mental Health*, Vol. 7 No. 1.

Evaluation available online at:

<http://www.kidsmatterprimary.edu.au/uploads/2009/10/kidsmatter-full-report-web.pdf>

http://www.lowitja.org.au/files/crcmh_docs/lets-start-evaluation-report-2010.pdf

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Program	FRIENDS
Organisation	FRIENDS (Australia)
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>The FRIENDS program applies firm cognitive behavioural principles in order to prevent childhood anxiety and depression by building emotional resilience.</p> <p>It aims to reduce the incidence of serious psychological disorders, emotional distress and impairment in social functioning by teaching children and young people how to cope with and manage anxiety, both now and in later life.</p> <p>The program has been designed to be effective as both a treatment and a school-based prevention course promoting self-development. When used in schools, it is targeted across a single selected grade of children. It can be applied in both primary and secondary school contexts.</p>
Target group	Young people aged seven to 16 years
Evaluation and effectiveness	Multiple Australian and international evaluations using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant positive impact on participants' resilience and wellbeing.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.friendsinfo.net/
References	<p>Turner C & May S 2002, 'The FRIENDS program: Prevention and early intervention for child and youth anxiety', <i>Auseinetter</i>, No. 16, pp.22–23.</p> <p>A summary of research-based evaluations of the program is available online at: http://www.friendsinfo.net/downloads/FRIENDSAbstractsBooklet.pdf</p>

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Program	KidsMatter Primary; KidsMatter Early Childhood; KidsMatter Transition to School
Organisation	Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing; beyondblue; Australian Psychological Society; Early Childhood Australia; Principals Australia
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>KidsMatter is a mental health initiative that aims to assist schools, early childhood education and care services, and parents and carers to recognise, understand and respond to children's mental health needs.</p> <p>It aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children, reduce mental health problems among children and achieve greater support for children experiencing mental health difficulties and their families.</p> <p>KidsMatter features three initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KidsMatter Early Childhood: a 'plan, do and review' process that enables early childhood education and care services to implement evidence-based mental health and wellbeing strategies, with custom resources and training for staff, parents and carers. • KidsMatter Transition to School: a set of evidence-based resources and information sessions for parents, carers and teachers to support the successful transition of children to primary school. • KidsMatter Primary: a step-by-step planning process for primary schools to implement evidence-based mental health and wellbeing strategies, with custom resources and training for staff, parents and carers.
Target group	School and child care communities Children of pre and primary school age
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a strong positive impact on the mental health outcomes of participants.
Replicability	The program is a national initiative that was designed to be implemented in various locations and tailored to suit the needs of individual schools/communities.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks
Resources and contact information	http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/
References	Evaluation available online at: http://www.kidsmatterprimary.edu.au/uploads/2009/10/kidsmatter-full-report-web.pdf

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Program	MindMatters
Organisation	Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>MindMatters is a national mental health initiative for secondary schools, which utilises a whole-school approach to mental health promotion based on the principles of the World Health Organization’s Global School Health Initiative and the Australian National Health Promoting Schools Framework.</p> <p>The MindMatters initiative aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foster the promotion, prevention and early intervention for mental health and wellbeing in secondary schools • nurture the development of school environments in which young people feel safe, valued, engaged and purposeful • assist young people in developing the social and emotional skills required to meet life’s challenges • help school communities create a climate of positive mental health and wellbeing • develop strategies that enable a continuum of support for students with additional needs in relation to mental health and wellbeing.
Target group	Secondary school students and their communities
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found that the program had a significant impact on participants’ awareness of mental health issues and the importance of a sense of community belonging.
Replicability	The program is a national initiative that was designed to be implemented in various locations and tailored to suit the needs of individual schools/communities.
Other relevant domains	Education; Participation
Resources and contact information	http://www.mindmatters.edu.au
References	Several evaluations are available online at: http://www.mindmatters.edu.au/about/evaluation/evaluation_-_landing.html

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Program	Resourceful Adolescent Programs (RAP) (RAP-A, RAP-P, & RAP-T)
Organisation	Queensland University of Technology
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>The Resourceful Adolescent Program (RAP) was developed to build resilience and promote positive mental health in teenagers.</p> <p>The program specifically aims to prevent teenage depression and related difficulties. RAP attempts to integrate both cognitive behavioural and interpersonal approaches to improve coping skills and build resilience to promote positive development.</p> <p>It consists of three components that promote the individual, family and school protective factors respectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP-A for adolescents – school-based program for 12 to 15 year-olds that aims to improve the coping skills of teenagers. • RAP-P for parents – targets family protective factors such as increasing harmony and preventing conflict. • RAP-T for teachers – aims at assisting teachers to promote school connectedness, a protective factor that has recently been shown to be very important in teenage mental health. • RAP-A and RAP-P – also have adaptations that meet the specific needs of Aboriginal communities. <p>The three components of the Resourceful Adolescent Programs are primarily run as universal prevention programs and are designed to be of use to all teenagers. The three components of the program can be run independently or together.</p>
Target group	Adolescents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Evaluation and effectiveness	Multiple evaluations using mixed methodology found that the program had a positive impact on participants' wellbeing and resilience.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated nationally and internationally.
Other relevant domains	Education; Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.rap.qut.edu.au/
References	<p>Shochet IM, Dadds MR et al 2001, 'The efficacy of a universal school-based program to prevent adolescent depression', <i>Journal of Clinical Child Psychology</i>, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 303–315.</p> <p>Other evaluations are available online at: http://www.rap.qut.edu.au/research/research-publications.jsp</p>

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Program	Seasons for Growth
Organisation	Good Grief
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>Seasons for Growth is a national grief education program operating out of schools, welfare agencies and community-based organisations for young people aged six to 18 years.</p> <p>The aim of the program is to promote mental health, psychological competence and early intervention for young people from the significant 'at risk' group of those who have experienced major change due to death or family breakdown.</p> <p>Using a wide range of creative learning activities, the program explores important issues such as change, loss, feelings, coping and memories, and provides a basis for enhancing resilience and a sense of community interconnectedness.</p>
Target group	Young people (six to 18 years old) who have experienced grief or a loss – usually due to a death or family unit breakdown
Evaluation and effectiveness	Multiple Australian and international evaluations using qualitative research have found that the program has a positive impact on participants' ability to cope with grief and loss.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks; Family and Peer Relationships; Participation
Resources and contact information	http://www.goodgrief.org.au/
References	<p>Muller D et al 2001, 'Evaluation of Seasons for Growth', <i>Youth Suicide Prevention Bulletin</i>, No. 5, pp. 12–13.</p> <p>Newell S & Moss A 2011, <i>Supporting Children and Young People Through Change, Loss and Grief: An Evaluation of the Seasons for Grief Program</i>, Good Grief.</p>

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Program	Youth Mental Health First Aid
Organisation	Mental Health First Aid
Location	Nationwide, including instructors across metropolitan and regional WA
Description	<p>The Youth Mental Health First Aid Program aims to teach adults who work with adolescents the skills required to recognise the early signs of mental illness, identify potential mental health-related crises and help young people receive the mental health care they need as quickly as possible.</p> <p>The program comprises a 14-hour course. It is based on research that demonstrates that adolescence is the peak age of onset for mental illness and that early onset of mental illness is a significant predictor for future episodes.</p>
Target group	Adults working with young people
Evaluation and effectiveness	Evaluations using mixed methodology found that the program improved participants' knowledge, attitudes and helping behaviours in relation to mental health.
Replicability	This program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Behaviours and Risks
Resources and contact information	http://www.mhfa.com.au/
References	Kelly CM, Mithen JM, Fischer JA, Kitchener BA, Jorm AF, Lowe AJ & Scanlan C 2011, 'Youth Mental Health First Aid: A description of the program and an initial evaluation', <i>International Journal of Mental Health Systems</i> , Vol. 5 No. 1, p. 4.

PROGRAMS - SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

Promising programs

These programs show 'promise' in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, however their evaluations (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Program	Cool Teens CD-ROM
Organisation	Macquarie University's Anxiety Research Unit
Location	Nationwide
Description	This program is a self-help treatment option for young people with anxiety. It is a home-based cognitive behavioural therapy program that helps users to develop skills to better cope with the negative feelings associated with anxiety, such as fear, worry, nervousness or shyness.
Resources and contact information	This resource does not have a dedicated website, however this article from The Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies is a valuable resource. http://www.acys.utas.edu.au/journal/public/v25/n1_2006/PDFS/article6-pp50-56.pdf

Program/service	Rainbows
Organisation	Rainbows Inc.
Location	Nationwide, including the WA office in East Perth
Description	Rainbows is an international not-for-profit organisation that provides training for volunteers and age-directed curricula to assist children and young people aged four to 18 years overcome grief and loss. The program aims to provide a healthy path towards emotional healing for those grieving a significant loss or life-altering crisis, such as the divorce of parents, homelessness, natural disasters, the death of a loved one or abandonment/separation.
Resources and contact information	http://www.rainbows.org.au/

Program/service	You Can Do It! (YCDI)
Organisation	Australian Scholarships Group
Location	Nationwide
Description	Focuses on the emotional resilience of primary school students who have learning, behavioural, social and/or emotional difficulties.
Resources and contact information	http://www.youcandoit.com.au/

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

About this domain

Healthy behaviours, such as eating well and exercising, contribute to young people's wellbeing. In contrast, risky behaviours, such as misuse of alcohol or other drugs, may have a negative effect on their health and wellbeing.¹⁶ The impact is not only on children and young people themselves, but also on their families and communities who are exposed to these behaviours.

This study identified many well-evaluated, evidence-based programs that targeted different behaviours and risks. The programs selected for the Behaviours and Risks domain targeted younger children, adolescents and teachers. Interventions were included to showcase the diversity of available programs and include those that focus on aggression, bullying, smoking, substance abuse and sexual education and health.

The companion report *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* contains information about measures of wellbeing relevant to the Behaviours and Risks domain.

Programs

The following best practice programs are listed in this domain:

- Aggression Replacement Training (ART) 82
- Deadly Sista Girlz 83
- The Gatehouse Project 84
- Friendly Schools and Families 85
- Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships Curriculum Support Materials 86
- Pathways to Prevention 87
- Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) 88
- Smarter than Smoking 90
- Talking Realities... Young Parenting Peer-Education Program 91

The following promising programs are listed in this domain:

- CAST: CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and Schools Together 92
- Get the Facts: Information and support on sexual health and relationships for young people in WA 92
- Parent Support 92
- Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC) 93
- Regional Youth Justice Services 93
- Solving the Jigsaw 93

¹⁶ Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of young Australians: Report Card*, Canberra, ARACY

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Best practice programs

These programs have been evaluated as being effective in improving the wellbeing of children and young people.

Program	Aggression Replacement Training (ART)
Organisation	Innovative Minds Australia
Location	Victoria; Queensland
Description	<p>ART is an evidence-based, cognitive-behavioural group intervention for aggressive youth.</p> <p>The program consists of three inter-related components delivered in three sessions per week over a 10-week period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Skills Training. • Anger Control. • Moral Reasoning. <p>An initial pilot study in an Australian youth justice custody centre showed overall support for the effectiveness of ART with Australian youth. A follow-up, longitudinal investigation found both statistically and clinically significant reductions in youth self-reported aggressive behaviours and thoughts, criminogenic cognitive distortions, impulsivity and improved social problem solving abilities after treatment.</p>
Target group	Young, moderate-to-high-risk, violent offenders
Evaluation and effectiveness	Multiple international evaluations have found that the program has had a significant impact on participants' behaviour and social skills.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://innovativeminds.com.au
References	<p>Amendola M & Oliver R 2010, 'Aggression replacement training stands the test of time', <i>Reclaiming Children & Youth</i>, Vol. 19 No. 2, pp. 47–50.</p> <p>Currie MR, Wood CE, Williams B & Bates GW (in press), 'Aggression replacement training in Australia: A longitudinal evaluation', <i>Psychiatry, Psychology & Law</i>.</p> <p>Currie MR, Wood CE, Williams B, Bates GW 2009, 'Aggression replacement training in Australia: Youth Justice Pilot Study', <i>Psychiatry, Psychology & Law</i>, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 413–426.</p> <p>Goldstein AP & Glick B 1994, 'Aggression replacement training: Curriculum and evaluation', <i>Simulation & Gaming</i>, Vol. 25 No. 1, pp. 9–26.</p> <p>Gundersen K & Svartdal F 2006, 'Aggression replacement training in Norway: Outcome evaluation of 11 Norwegian student projects', <i>Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research</i>, Vol. 50 No. 1, pp. 63–81.</p> <p>National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention 2010, <i>Aggression Replacement Training (ART): Evidence-Based Fact Sheet</i>. Retrieved at: http://www.promoteprevent.org/publications/ebi-factsheets/aggression-replacement-training®-art®</p>

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program	Deadly Sista Girlz
Organisation	David Wirrpanda Foundation
Location	Western Australia; New South Wales; Australian Capital Territory; Victoria
Description	<p>The David Wirrpanda Foundation exists to improve the life outcomes of Aboriginal children by promoting strong role models and healthy life choices.</p> <p>The Deadly Sista Girlz program was developed as the Dare to Dream Girls Group in 2007 and aims to empower Aboriginal girls by offering a safe, stable and trusting environment in which they can discuss current and personal issues and receive guidance from positive Aboriginal female role models.</p> <p>Each girl has the opportunity to be personally mentored throughout the program, which addresses issues of self esteem, healthy relationships, sexual and women's health, drug and alcohol abuse, healthy lifestyles and future directions and opportunities.</p>
Target group	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant positive impact on participants' self esteem, personal relationships and awareness of healthy lifestyle choices.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships; Health and Safety; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.dwf.org.au/activities-dare.asp
References	David Wirrpanda Foundation 2010, Sustainability Achieved: <i>Outcomes Delivered by Ongoing Programs Benefiting Aboriginal Youth: Evaluation Report.</i>

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program	The Gatehouse Project
Organisation	Centre for Adolescent Health, Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>The Gatehouse Project was established in 1995 by the Centre for Adolescent Health in Victoria and aims to develop whole-of-school approaches to promoting adolescent mental health by increasing school connectedness and reducing young people’s experiences of bullying and victimisation.</p> <p>Participating schools had assessments of the school social environment, created action teams and were assisted by a consultancy over a two-year period to implement evidence-informed responses to the particular priorities of each school around the social development of students.</p> <p>It used a whole-of-school approach to enhance students’ sense of belonging in the school community and promoted emotional skills for observing and responding to the problems of everyday life.</p> <p>Evaluations of the project have indicated that enhancing the quality of school relational environments leads to improvements in health outcomes for young people, most notably in relation to a reduction in the use of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs.</p>
Target group	General public
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using randomised controlled trials found that the program had a positive impact on participants’ use of alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs and antisocial behaviour.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated but has informed developments in the UK and Canada where similar work has been undertaken. The evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.rch.org.au/gatehouseproject/index.cfm
References	<p>Bond L, Thomas L et al 2004, ‘Long-term impact of the Gatehouse Project on cannabis use of 16-year-olds in Australia’, <i>Journal of School Health</i>, Vol. 74 No. 1, pp. 23–29.</p> <p>Cahill H, Murphy B et al 2005, <i>A Toolkit of Interventions to Assist Young People to Negotiate Transitional Pathways</i>, Department of Health and Ageing, p.86.</p>

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program	Friendly Schools and Families
Organisation	Edith Cowan University
Location	Nationwide, including multiple metropolitan and regional schools in WA
Description	<p>Friendly Schools and Families is a whole-school program to reduce and prevent bullying and increase social skills among primary school students.</p> <p>The program is designed to help all members of primary and secondary school communities, including teachers, school administrators, students and parents. The program assists with the design, development, implementation, dissemination and evaluation of a social skill building and comprehensive anti-bullying program.</p> <p>It offers practical guidance and various strategies for each component of a whole-school program, including ethos, policy and practice, physical environment, social environment, engaging families, learning environments and behaviour management.</p> <p>The program also provides tools to assist with strategy implementation, as well as case studies to demonstrate how other schools have tailored and used these strategies.</p> <p>Friendly Schools and Families challenges and encourages schools to examine how their organisation, ethos, learning environments and responses to bullying prevent this behaviour and improve social skills.</p>
Target group	All members of primary school communities
Evaluation and effectiveness	Two randomised controlled trials found that the program had a significant impact on bullying behaviour in participating schools.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.friendlyschools.com.au/
References	<p>Cross D et al 2004, 'Australia: The Friendly Schools project', in <i>Bullying in Schools: How Successful Can Interventions Be?</i>, K Rigby, PK Smith & D Pepler (eds), Cambridge University Press, pp. 187–210.</p> <p>Cross D 2009, 'School-based intervention research to reduce bullying in Australia 1999–2007: What works, what doesn't, and what's promising', in <i>Understanding and Addressing Bullying: An International Perspective</i>, D Pepler & WM Craig (eds), Bloomington.</p> <p>Cross D et al 2011, 'Three-year results of the Friendly Schools whole-of-school intervention on children's bullying behaviour', <i>British Educational Research Journal</i>, Vol. 37 No. 1, pp. 105–129.</p> <p>Cross D et al 2004, 'Validated guidelines for school-based bullying prevention and management', <i>International Journal of Mental Health Promotion</i>, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 34–42.</p> <p>Cross D, 'The Friendly Schools Friendly Families program: Three-year bullying behaviour outcomes in primary school children', in submission, <i>International Journal of Educational Research</i>.</p>

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program	Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships Curriculum Support Materials
Organisation	Western Australian Departments of Health and Education
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>The aim of the Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships Curriculum Support Materials is to assist Western Australian school communities to provide sexuality education.</p> <p>The program reflects a philosophy where abstinence from sexual activity for school-aged students is the key focus and emphasises a positive, preventative approach to sexual health. The program highlights safer-sex strategies that endeavour to de-normalise sexual activity for school-aged students, while striving to reflect current research about patterns of behaviour and attitudes toward the sexuality of young people.</p> <p>Above all, the program aims to help young people to accept that they are sexual and that their sexual feelings and desires are natural.</p>
Target group	WA-based teachers and schools providing sexual health education in Western Australia
Evaluation and effectiveness	Qualitative research offers support of the program's effectiveness in enabling teachers and health care professionals to provide sexual health education to young people.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://gdhr.wa.gov.au/
References	<p>Impact evaluation study available online at: http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/cproot/2430/2/11396%20impact%20evaluation%2024048%20Web.pdf</p> <p>Audit of the uptake of the program: http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/cproot/814/2/GDHR%20Audit%20Report.pdf</p>

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program	Pathways to Prevention
Organisation	Mission Australia; Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Griffith University, Queensland
Location	Queensland
Description	<p>The Pathways to Prevention is a multi-systemic early prevention model that combines school, home and community-based activities.</p> <p>It involves families, schools and communities in a broad set of interventions to promote positive development and prevent anti-social behaviour in young children.</p> <p>The program targets three to 12 year-old children and their families and has focused on enhancing children's skills for learning and social and emotional wellbeing, as well as empowering families, schools and ethnic communities in order to provide supportive environments for positive development.</p>
Target group	<p>Disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Culturally and linguistically diverse groups</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a strong impact on the problem behaviour of participating children.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Family and Peer Relationships
Resources and contact information	http://www.griffith.edu.au/pathways-to-prevention
References	<p>Elias E, Hay I, Homel R, & Freiberg, K 2006, 'Enhancing parent-child book reading in a disadvantaged community', <i>The Australian Journal of Early Childhood Studies</i>, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 20–25.</p> <p>Freiberg K, Homel R, Batchelor S, Carr A, Hay I, Elias G, Teague R & Lamb C 2005, 'Creating pathways to participation: A community-based developmental prevention project in Australia', <i>Children & Society</i>, No. 19, pp. 144–157.</p> <p>Freiberg K, Homel R & Branch S 2010, 'Circles of Care: The struggle to strengthen child development systems through the Pathways to Prevention Project', <i>Family Matters</i>, No. 84, pp. 28–34.</p> <p>Homel R, Lamb C & Freiberg K 2006, 'Working with the Indigenous Community in the Pathways to Prevention Project', <i>Family Matters</i>, No. 75, pp 18–23.</p> <p>Homel R, Freiberg K, Lamb C, Leech M, Batchelor S, Carr A, Hay I, Teague R, & Elias G 2006, 'The Pathways to Prevention project: Doing developmental prevention in a disadvantaged community', <i>Trends and Issues</i>, No. 323, pp. 1–6, available online at: http://www.aic.gov.au/documents/8/1/0/%7B810F4BC4-F62C-479B-8315-883A6FEC3183%7Dtandi323.pdf</p> <p>Manning M, Homel R et al 2006, 'Economic evaluation of a community based early intervention program implemented in a disadvantaged urban area of Queensland', <i>Economic Analysis and Policy</i>, Vol. 36 No. 1–2, pp. 99–119.</p>

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program	Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)
Organisation	Channing Bete Company
Location	Nationwide; International
Description	<p>The PATHS program is a universal, classroom-based social and emotional learning program aimed at primary school students.</p> <p>The program aims to assist primary school-aged children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change problem behaviours and attitudes that contribute to violence and bullying • express and control their emotions • develop effective conflict-resolution strategies. <p>PATHS covers five conceptual domains – self-control, emotional understanding, positive self-esteem, relationships, and interpersonal problem-solving skills – and helps participating students with the social and emotional skills they need to successfully manage their feelings, relationships and schoolwork.</p>
Target group	<p>General public</p> <p>Young people with a disability</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	Evaluations using randomised controlled trials found that the program had a significant positive impact on participants' social skills, anti-social behaviour, ability to tolerate frustration and ability to better understand and recognise emotions.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Education; Family and Peer Relationships; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.channing-bete.com/paths

References

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PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program	Smarter than Smoking
Organisation	Heart Foundation
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>Smarter than Smoking aims to prevent the uptake of smoking among 10 to 15 year-olds in Western Australia.</p> <p>The project is funded by Healthway and implemented by the Heart Foundation in collaboration with key health agencies in WA. The program takes a comprehensive and sustained approach and does not rely on one single strategy to prevent smoking among young people. This approach is supported by reviews of literature that concur that effective youth smoking prevention requires a well-researched, comprehensive, multifaceted approach.</p> <p>Key strategies adopted by the program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mass media campaigns • school-based education programs and resources • promotion of the Smarter than Smoking message through sport, arts and racing sponsorships • youth oriented resources, website and merchandise • advocacy to reduce tobacco promotion, availability and affordability for young people.
Target group	Young people aged 10 to 15 years
Evaluation and effectiveness	Quantitative research found that the program had a significant impact on participants' awareness of the dangers of smoking and intention to remain a non-smoker.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.smarterthansmoking.org.au
References	Clarkson P, Donovan J, Jamrozik K, Sydney-Smith K & Frizzell S 1999, <i>'Smarter Than Smoking': Evaluation of a Campaign to Reduce Teenage Smoking in Western Australia</i> , Health Promotion Evaluation Unit, Department of Public Health and Graduate School of Management, University of Western Australia, available online at: http://www.aes.asn.au/conferences/1999/Clarkson%20_2_%20LS.pdf

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program	Talking Realities... Young Parenting Peer-Education Program
Organisation	Delivered in WA by UnitingCare West
Location	Western Australia; South Australia; Victoria
Description	<p>Talking Realities is a health promotion strategy for young parents and youth at risk of early pregnancy, which utilises a peer-education model to expand the scope of existing school-based, sexual health programs.</p> <p>The program provides participants with skills, experiences and opportunities to build meaningful social connections with other young parents and develops greater self-confidence and self-esteem. It also provides economic and social benefits.</p> <p>Talking Realities provides an opportunity to deliver substantial, additional benefits for young parents and their children, whom research has identified as vulnerable, socially isolated, often at risk of homelessness and economically disadvantaged.</p>
Target group	<p>Young parents</p> <p>Youth at risk of pregnancy</p>
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a significant impact on participants' self-confidence, self-esteem, parenting skills and social connectedness.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Health and Safety; Family and Peer Relationships; Material Wellbeing; Subjective Wellbeing
Resources and contact information	http://www.unitingcarewest.org.au/services/young-parents/talking-realities/
References	<p>CAFCA Promising Practice Profile: http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/profiles/la_talking_realities.html</p> <p>Jolley G & Masters S 2001, <i>Talking Realities... Young Parenting: A Peer Education Project Evaluation Report</i>, South Australian Community Health Research Unit.</p> <p>Montague M 2008, <i>Talking Realities... Young Parenting: A Peer Education Program, An Evaluation of Three Years Of Implementation in Victoria, 2005–2008</i>, available online at: http://www.kingstonbaysidepcp.org.au/Documents/Evaluation_Report_Final_Dec-22_2008.pdf</p>

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Promising programs

These programs show 'promise' in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, however their evaluations (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Program	CAST: CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and Schools Together
Organisation	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (Victorian Department of Health); Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development; Victorian Catholic Education Office
Location	Victoria
Description	This initiative treats children with emerging disruptive behaviours in the early primary school years.
Resources and contact information	http://www.connectingcare.com/Home/Service?region=vicpcp&regionid=8&site-id=8528&service_id=26244

Program/service	Get the Facts: Information and support on sexual health and relationships for young people in WA
Organisation	Western Australian Department of Health
Location	Western Australia
Description	This dynamic website provides young people in WA advice and correct information on relationships and safe sex, including a service which enables young people to confidentially ask a health professional questions about sex and their bodies.
Resources and contact information	http://www.getthefacts.health.wa.gov.au/

Program/service	Parent Support
Organisation	Western Australian Department for Child Protection
Location	Western Australia
Description	A free, specialist, home-based service that aims to support parents to be more effective in managing their children's problem behaviour and thereby avoid the need for a child protection response.
Resources and contact information	http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/SupportingIndividualsAndFamilies/Pages/ParentSupport.aspx

PROGRAMS - BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

Program/service	Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC)
Organisation	Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres
Location	Western Australia
Description	PCYC provide all young people with a safe space to express themselves and develop leadership skills, with an emphasis on young offenders and their families, which aims to break the pattern of re-occurring crime.
Resources and contact information	http://www.wapcyc.com.au/

Program	Regional Youth Justice Services
Organisation	Western Australian Department of Corrective Services
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>The Regional Youth Justice Strategy (RYJS) is a community-oriented service that includes a range of programs to support young people at risk of entering the justice system, as well as those already in the system.</p> <p>The RYJS operates in the Mid-West, Gascoyne, Goldfields, East Kimberley, West Kimberley and Pilbara.</p> <p>It provides a range of prevention, intervention, diversion and statutory services for children and young people at risk of entering, or already in, the youth justice system.</p>
Resources and contact information	http://www.correctiveservices.wa.gov.au/youth-justice/regional-youth-justice.aspx

Program	Solving the Jigsaw
Organisation	Emergency Accommodation and Support Enterprise (EASE)
Location	Victoria
Description	The program aims to help young people and schools change cultures of bullying and violence at school, home and in the community.
Resources and contact information	http://www.solvingthejigsaw.org.au/

About this domain

The state of the environment is considered to affect children and young people's wellbeing through long-term socio-economic and health impacts.¹⁷ The built environment in which children live, play and interact affects wellbeing as children and young people need safe spaces to relax, have fun, explore and be active.¹⁸

Few evaluated environmental programs for children and young people were found. The three that have been included in the Environment domain involve children engaging with, preserving or improving their natural environment. One targets teachers and students and is aimed at providing practical learning experiences of local waterways, wetlands and their catchments. Another encourages children to cultivate their own healthy food in order to influence food awareness and choice. The final program is a school education program aimed at reducing waste.

The companion report *The State of Western Australia's Children and Young People* contains information about wellbeing relevant to the Environment domain.

Programs

The following best practice programs are listed in this domain:

- Ribbons of Blue 95
- Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program 96
- Waste Wise Schools Program 97

The following promising programs are listed in this domain:

- Bunyaville Easter Bilby Adventure 98
- Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden 98
- South Australia Urban Forest Biodiversity Program: BioWhat? and Zoom Lens Project 98

17 Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth 2008, *The Wellbeing of Young Australians: Technical Report*, ARACY, Canberra, p.123

18 These themes come through most of the literature on children's interaction with the built environment. See for example Commissioner for Children and Young People 2011, *Building spaces and places for children and young people*, Perth, Western Australia, <http://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/files/Building%20spaces%20and%20places%20for%20children%20and%20young%20people.pdf>

PROGRAMS - ENVIRONMENT

Best practice programs

These programs have been evaluated as being effective in improving the wellbeing of children and young people.

Program	Ribbons of Blue
Organisation	Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation; Swan River Trust
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>Ribbons of Blue is an environmental education program aimed at primary and secondary school students that endeavours to provide young people with practical, hands-on learning experiences that focus on sustainable local waterways, wetlands and their catchments.</p> <p>The program aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop students' values related to environmental responsibility • increase students' knowledge of local catchments and waterways • further students' understanding of the human impact on the health of waterways • encourage students to adopt behaviour that will improve the health of waterways and inspire a sense of civic responsibility.
Target group	General public
Evaluation and effectiveness	An evaluation using mixed methodology found that the program had a strong impact on participants' knowledge of sustainability, civic responsibility and local waterways.
Replicability	The program has not been replicated. However, the evaluation documentation suggests that with further development the program could be replicated.
Other relevant domains	Education
Resources and contact information	http://www.ribbonsofblue.wa.gov.au
References	Government of Western Australia 2010, <i>Ribbons of Blue: Performance Story Report 2008–2009</i> , Department of Environment and Conservation, Department of Water, Department of Education.

PROGRAMS - ENVIRONMENT

Program	Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program
Organisation	Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation
Location	Nationwide
Description	<p>This program aims to provide pleasurable food education for young children, which involves learning how to grow, harvest, prepare and share fresh, seasonal food.</p> <p>The underlying belief is that by introducing a holistic approach to the cultivation and consumption of food, teachers have a chance to beneficially influence children's food choices and help to encourage healthy eating habits.</p> <p>The evaluation of the program has demonstrated that the children who participate have positively changed attitudes, a greater willingness to try new food, and increased knowledge, skills and confidence in relation to cooking and gardening.</p>
Target group	General public (aged eight to 12 years)
Evaluation and effectiveness	A sizeable mixed-methods, longitudinal, matched-comparison trial was used to determine that the program was effective in achieving most of its outcomes.
Replicability	The program is an initiative that was designed to be implemented in various locations and tailored to suit the needs of individual schools/communities.
Other relevant domains	Education; Health and Safety
Resources and contact information	http://www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au/
References	Block K & Johnson P 2009, <i>Evaluation of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program</i> , Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation.

PROGRAMS - ENVIRONMENT

Program	Waste Wise Schools Program
Organisation	Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation
Location	Western Australia
Description	<p>The Waste Wise Schools Program operates throughout Western Australia and aims to reduce waste by implementing the 3Rs – ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’ – while developing positive environmental values in students and the broader school community.</p> <p>The participating schools demonstrate responsible environmental behaviours through practical learning experiences that are linked to the WA Curriculum Framework. The program offers resources, infrastructure and support for schools to plan, implement and maintain waste-minimising projects, such as recycling, composting and worm farming, in the hope of changing community attitudes and behaviour in regard to sustainable waste management.</p>
Target group	Primary and secondary school students
Evaluation and effectiveness	Strong qualitative research found the program had a significant impact on participants’ knowledge of positive environmental behaviours and sustainable waste management.
Replicability	The program has been successfully replicated.
Other relevant domains	Education
Resources and contact information	www.wastewise.wa.gov.au
References	<p>Armstrong P, Sharpley B & Malcolm S 2004, ‘The Waste Wise Schools Program: Evidence of educational, environmental, social and economic outcomes at the school and community level’, <i>Australian Journal of Environmental Education</i>, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 1–11.</p> <p>Cutter-Mackenzie A 2010, ‘Australian waste wise schools program: Its past, present, and future’, <i>Journal of Environmental Education</i>, Vol. 41 No. 3, pp. 165–178.</p>

PROGRAMS - ENVIRONMENT

Promising programs

These programs show 'promise' in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, however their evaluations (although positive) did not meet the AIFS criteria as described in Appendix 3.

Program	Bunyaville Easter Bilby Adventure
Organisation	Bunyaville Environmental Education Centre
Location	Queensland
Description	<p>An early childhood program designed for four and five year-old children aimed at changing children's knowledge, attitudes and actions/advocacy towards the endangered bilby.</p> <p>The program includes pre-visit orientation activities undertaken at school, a structured half-day field experience and follow-up learning activities.</p>
Resources and contact information	http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/environment/outdoor/bunyaville.html

Program	Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden
Organisation	Ian Potter Foundation; Royal Botanical Gardens
Location	Victoria
Description	<p>The Melbourne Royal Botanic Gardens run a range of school programs, including a mentor program, gardening program and school feedback program for children with mild intellectual disabilities.</p> <p>The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden is an interactive educational environment in which children of all ages, backgrounds, physical abilities and cultures can play, explore and discover the natural world.</p>
Resources and contact information	http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/rbg-melbourne/childrens-garden

Program	South Australia Urban Forest Biodiversity Program: BioWhat? and Zoom Lens Project
Organisation	South Australian Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Location	South Australia
Description	<p>BioWhat? is a teaching resource that has been designed to encourage an awareness of biodiversity in primary schools.</p> <p>The program involves students, teachers, parents and local community members setting goals, researching and taking action to make real changes to protect biodiversity where they work and live. The Zoom Lens Project caters for upper primary students and provides a framework that leads teachers and students towards greater understanding of their relationship with their environment.</p>
Resources and contact information	http://www.backyards4wildlife.com.au/index.php?page=resources

Appendix 1 – What are the components of best practice in program and service provision for children and young people



Appendix 1: What are the components of best practice in program and service provision for children and young people (as developed by the Australian Institute for Family Studies for this research project)?

For programs and services to be effective and enduring, a number of components need to be in place. The most effective programs for children and young people, no matter how different they may look on the surface, share a number of key components.

Evaluation

People participating in a program have the right to expect high-quality, evidence-based and effective services delivered by appropriately qualified professionals. Program evaluation is one of the best ways to ensure that this is achieved. Evaluation can assist in:

- providing evidence of the effectiveness of a program to aid in securing funding and gaining community support
- identifying what is and is not working in a program, so that the program can be further developed
- demonstrating what a program does and how it benefits participants
- improving staff performance and management
- adding to the evidence base about what does and does not work in a particular type of program with particular types of participants.¹⁹

Appendix 4 provides further information on the importance and practice of program evaluation.

Effectiveness

Overall, the main aim of most program evaluations is to demonstrate whether or not participants benefited from attending the program.²⁰ In other words, it is to demonstrate the program's effectiveness in meeting its objectives and desired outcomes. Although evaluation and effectiveness are closely related (demonstrating effectiveness is dependent upon an evaluation being conducted), it is useful to consider these two components of best practice separately. This is because the quality of an evaluation is distinct from the question of effectiveness.

A very high-quality evaluation may find that a program, or at least certain elements of a program, are ineffective. Best practice requires both that a program is evaluated and that the evaluations find it to be effective in achieving its aims.

¹⁹ Parker R 2010, *Evaluation in Family Support Services*, Issues Paper 6, Australian Family Relationships Clearinghouse.

²⁰ Soriano G, Clark H & Wise S 2008, *Promising Practice Profiles: Final Report*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, available online at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/evaluation/pubs/pppfinalreport.pdf>

Supporting evidence/theory

Increasingly, governments and other funding bodies, practitioners, service providers and researchers are recognising and advocating for the importance of evidence-based practice in child and family welfare program and service provision.^{21, 22} When initiatives are based on research evidence, the chances of effecting positive change are enhanced and the chances of inadvertently harming those involved in the program are greatly reduced. It is recognised that an emphasis on evidence-based practice prioritises research evidence over other forms of knowledge in program and service provision, such as expert opinion and 'practice wisdom', and that there is a significant body of literature on what constitutes 'evidence'. This component of best practice requires that program providers stay updated on the research evidence affecting their field and be willing to adjust their program if the evidence strongly suggests that doing so would be of benefit or would avoid unintended harm to the children and young people with whom they work.

Unfortunately, there is a dearth of research evidence in certain areas of child and family support.²³ In cases where there is a lack of evidence supporting an initiative, and yet an initiative is clearly necessary, actions may need to be based on limited evidence, expert opinion and 'practice wisdom', or the best available theory. There are many theoretical and conceptual frameworks that inform thinking about the structure of the service system and the delivery of services to children and young people. Prominent approaches include the developmental-ecological framework, attachment theory, trauma theory, child development, gender theory, victimology, developmental psychopathology, community development, health promotion and behaviour change models, the public health model and models of therapeutic engagement.

Appendix 4 provides information on how readers can judge whether a particular program or practice is indeed 'evidence-based'.

Replicability

An important factor in evidence-based research and evaluation is replicability. Metz, Bowie and Blase have suggested that replication 'establishes the effectiveness of a program model by demonstrating that it can be successfully implemented, as well as achieve consistent outcomes, in new locations'.²⁴ A program is replicable if there is enough clear and precise information on the core characteristics or components of the program (eg program philosophy and values, service delivery model and activities, and treatment or service components) and enough detailed information on the core implementation components (eg program costs, staff recruitment, training and coaching, and administrative processes) to allow it to be flexibly adapted to new contexts.²⁵ This information is crucial in allowing others to judge the program's suitability for their needs and, if necessary, in enabling them to implement it.

21 Bromfield L & Arney F 2008, *Developing a Road Map for Research: Identifying the Priorities for a National Child Protection Research Agenda*, Child Abuse Prevention Issues No. 28, Australian Institute of Family Studies, available online at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/issues/issues28/issues28.html>

22 Lewig K, Arney F & Scott D 2006, 'Closing the research-policy and research-practice gaps: Ideas for child and family services', *Family Matters*, No. 74, pp. 12–19.

23 Cashmore JA, Higgins DJ, Bromfield LM & Scott DA 2006, 'Recent Australian child protection and out-of-home care research: What's been done – and what needs to be done?', *Children Australia*, Vol. 31 No. 2, pp. 4–11.

24 Metz AJR, Bowie L & Blase K 2007, *Seven Activities for Enhancing the Replicability of Evidence-Based Practices*, Research-to-Results Brief, Child Trends, p. 1.

25 Ibid.

Innovation

Many of the problems that children and young people face are complex, with some proving to be consistently difficult to remedy or address. Additionally, new challenges arise for children and young people; for instance, the recent emergence of cyber-bullying and 'sexting'. Persistent or new problems are often only effectively combated with new ways of thinking and practising. Thus, an important component of best practice is innovation. Often, innovation and evidence-based practice need to be balanced to ensure that there is continual progress and improvement.

Innovation in program delivery for children and young people can take three forms:

- **Innovation in content:** applying a new approach, theory or model, or adding new topics in response to a social, demographic or other trends
- **Innovation in delivery method:** employing new or adapted modes of delivery through partnerships with stakeholders, creating ownership among clients, staff or stakeholders, or through the use of learning approaches that make use of new information and computer technologies (such as Internet, blogs, webinars and other electronic communication platforms)
- **Innovation in forging new partnerships or networks:** sharing and increasing expertise, knowledge and experience; fostering communication; and exchanging ideas.²⁶

It should be acknowledged that while this component of best practice is important, innovation for the sake of innovation is not the goal – the **effectiveness** of programs for children and young people is paramount.

Cultural reach

The strength and resilience of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities is compromised by multiple complex problems, including historical and ongoing dispossession, marginalisation and racism, as well as the legacy of past policies of forced removal and cultural assimilation.²⁷ Additionally, members of many culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities face barriers to achieving positive life outcomes.²⁸

These issues negatively affect the children and young people of these communities, who may demonstrate poor health, educational and social outcomes when compared to non-Aboriginal or non-CALD children and young people.²⁹ Both Aboriginal and CALD children and young people tend to be over-represented in many areas of child and family welfare program and service delivery.³⁰

Aboriginal Australians and many CALD communities have cultures that are distinct from those of other Australians. These cultural differences have implications for program and service delivery. If programs do not adapt to the contemporary cultural context of the groups with which they are engaged, they have little chance of improving outcomes in the long term.

To be culturally competent, service organisations need to ensure that cultural knowledge shapes (a) the structure of the service; (b) the specific practices and strategies employed; and (c) the selection, training and actions of individual staff members.

26 Parker R 2010, *Evaluation in Family Support Services*, AFRC Issues paper 6, AIFS.

27 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997, *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, available online at: http://www.hreoc.gov.au/pdf/social_justice/bringing_them_home_report.pdf

28 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2009, *A Picture of Australia's Children 2009*, Cat. No. PHE 112, AIHW.

29 Ibid.

30 Australian Human Rights Commission 2009, *Social Justice Report 2008: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner*, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

Appendix 2 – Methodology of the current report

APPENDIX 2

Appendix 2: Methodology of the current report

The aim of this project was to develop a showcase of evidence-based programs from across Australia that were considered to demonstrate best or most promising practice in addressing wellbeing issues for children and young people (ie infants to 18 year-olds). Achieving this aim involved a number of steps:

- conducting an extensive literature search for publicly available program evaluations, leading to the development of an initial 'long list' of programs
- developing an evaluation tool that could assess the scope and quality of the evaluations and programs identified in the 'long list'
- applying the evaluation tool, leading to a final 'short list' of programs to be included in the current report
- obtaining input from a range of expert advisors through the Best Practice Advisory Group.

Each of these steps is described in greater detail below.

The Best Practice Advisory Group

An advisory group was established to provide expert guidance and advice on a number of components of the current project. Specifically, the Best Practice Advisory Group's terms of reference were to:

- identify evidence-based programs that address wellbeing issues for children and young people
- assist in identifying and adapting an evaluation tool that could be used to assess the quality of the identified programs
- review and comment on a draft report prior to publication.

The advisory group comprised eight members based in a number of Australian states. The members represented independent and university-based research organisations, government departments and organisations, advocacy and service-based organisations, and non-government organisations.

The advisory group met for two face-to-face meetings and provided feedback via phone and email throughout the course of the project.

Conducting the literature search

A literature search was undertaken by an Australian Institute of Family Services (AIFS) specialist librarian to identify published evaluations (including 'grey' literature) of programs for children and/or young people in the eight Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) domains identified in the introduction of this report.

The purpose of the search was to compile an initial 'long list' of evaluations and programs that could potentially be included in the final report.

As the eight domains are broad in scope, a list of search terms was developed for each domain (see table over page). In order to ensure the information was up-to-date, the search was limited to program and practice initiatives published during or after 2000.

APPENDIX 2

Table 1: Search terms

Domain	Search terms
Health and Safety	<p>immunisation or injuries or accidents or mental health or mental illness or physical illness or chronic illness or health or obesity</p> <p>(Note: As the AIFS Library does not have substantial holdings in the area of childhood accidents/injuries in relation to prevention programs, additional searching was undertaken using AEI (Australian Education Index) using the terms: injuries or natural disasters or accidents or safety education or accident prevention)</p> <p>child abuse or child neglect or child sexual abuse or child emotional abuse or child physical abuse</p>
Education	<p>academic achievement or literacy or numeracy or pre-school education or primary students or primary education or secondary education or secondary students or school readiness or school work transition</p>
Material Wellbeing	<p>living standards or poverty or low income or socio-economic status or financial stress or employment or housing or homeless</p>
Family and Peer Relationships	<p>parent child relationship or father child relationship or mother child relationship or social inclusion or peer relations or peer groups or family relations or friendship or exclusion</p>
Participation	<p>community participation or voluntary workers or voluntary work or social inclusion or sport or culture</p>
Subjective Wellbeing	<p>health or wellbeing</p>
Behaviours and Risks	<p>smoking or drug use or drug abuse or alcohol use or alcohol abuse or substance use or substance abuse or adolescent mothers or adolescent fathers or traffic accidents or risk taking or anti-social behaviour or young offenders or juvenile delinquency or suicide</p>
Environment	<p>environment or environmental impact or pollution or conservation or recreation or facilities</p> <p>(As a very limited number of programs were found, additional search terms were added to include the built environment: neighbourhoods or playgrounds or town planning or transport or infrastructure or urban environment or public space)</p>
Terms used in all searches	<p>(infants or children or adolescents) and (evaluation or programs or services or intervention or prevention) and (followed by domain-specific search terms)</p>

APPENDIX 2

A series of databases and search engines were accessed:

1. An initial search was conducted of the Australian Family & Society Abstracts (AFSA) database. AFSA is produced by the library team at Australian Institute of Family Studies and hosted on the Informit website.
2. A web search using the Google search engine was also undertaken to identify programs not captured via the initial AFSA database search. Any additional programs identified, along with available information, were added to the 'long list'.
3. Several pre-existing Australian practice profile databases relating to children, young people and families were also investigated to identify if they contained any programs or practices that were of interest to this project. They included:
 - the Promising Practice Profiles database of the Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia³¹
 - the Family Relationship practice/program profiles collection of the Australian Family Relationships Clearinghouse³²
 - the Promising Practices Programs and Responses for Sexual Assault database at the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault³³
 - the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse Assessed Collection.³⁴

These databases were valuable because of their focus on projects and programs that may not have been published or presented via traditional methods (eg via academic journals or conferences).

As the above searches did not identify many programs under the domains of 'Participation' or 'Environment', a further search utilising the same search terms was completed of the Australian Education Index and international Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) databases.

Finally, the Best Practice Advisory Group was approached for advice on the inclusion of any programs that may have been missed in the above searches.

Application of the above search methodology sourced approximately 580 documents. Many of these documents were deemed to be irrelevant to the current project for a variety of reasons, such as:

- they were simply descriptions of programs rather than program evaluations
- they were articles on the theory of program evaluation
- multiple evaluations had been published on one program.

Thus, this process led to an initial 'long list' of approximately 170 programs.

31 <<http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/topics/index.html>>

32 <<http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/practice/practiceprofiles.html>>

33 <<http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/ppdb/promisingpractice.html>>

34 <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/assessed/index.cfm>>

Developing the evaluation tool

The literature search described above identified more evaluated programs for children and young people than could be usefully included in the current report. Therefore, in order to identify which programs would exemplify the components of best practice in program delivery for children and young people, an evaluation tool was developed. The evaluation tool and criteria are included as Appendix 3.

As an initial step in the development of the evaluation tool, a brief literature search was conducted in order to identify the methodologies of other projects that had sought to identify best or promising programs. The reports of Williams et al³⁵ and Soriano, Clark and Wise³⁶ in particular proved to be useful examples for the development of the current evaluation tool.

The evaluation tool was designed to assess the published evaluations and 'grey' literature for programs on the 'long list', using each of the six components of best practice discussed in the introduction to this report.

The evaluation tool was used to arrange the six components of best practice into three domains (see Appendix 1):

- **Domain One** related to the published evidence supporting the program – both the level of evaluation that had been conducted and whether or not the program showed effectiveness in achieving positive outcomes for children and young people. For further information on the criteria used to classify published evaluations and effectiveness, see Appendix 3.
- **Domain Two** related to the explicitly discussed evidential or theoretical base supporting the program, as well as its degree of replicability.
- **Domain Three** included two components: innovation and cultural reach. Innovation was deemed to be present if the program improved upon or changed existing service provision in terms of content and delivery method, or in forging new partnerships or networks. Cultural reach was rated affirmatively if the program was designed to cater to the unique cultural practices, contexts and understandings of Aboriginal or culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children and young people, or if it had been shown to be strongly effective with these groups.

Overall, the evaluation tool had a reasonable degree of flexibility built into it and is perhaps best thought of as a detailed guide that assisted the decision making of the researchers and advisory group members involved in this project. This flexibility was important – given the wide range of programs catering to children and young people, selection criteria that were too rigid would have made the tool unnecessarily difficult to use and might have seen programs ultimately selected on their capacity to meet administrative criteria, rather than their service to children and young people. This flexibility also assisted in avoiding a bias towards the selection of popular, heavily evaluated programs rather than the broad selection displayed in the current report.

35 Williams K, Fildes D, Marosszeky N, Harwood N & Eagar K 2007, *Technical Report: Development of the Best Start Catalogue of Early Intervention Strategies for Children's Health and Wellbeing*, Victorian Department of Human Services.

36 Soriano G, Clark H & Wise S 2008, *Promising Practice Profiles: Final Report*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, available online at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/evaluation/pubs/pppfinalreport.pdf>

Finalising the list of program profiles

The final step in producing the showcase of evidence-based programs involved refining the 'long list' so that the 'short list' comprised an appropriate number of exemplary programs. The published evidence and literature for each program in the 'long list' was evaluated using the evaluation tool. As a number of programs did not meet the criteria for inclusion in the 'short list', this process resulted in roughly 80 programs remaining in the 'short list'. A range of criteria were applied in order to further refine the draft 'short list' and to provide the best representation of programs in each domain:

- If available, programs targeting different aspects of each domain (eg for the Health and Safety domain, programs targeting children's pedestrian safety knowledge, antenatal care, and healthy eating and exercise) were included.
- Programs targeting different ecological levels – such as individual children or young people, parents and families, teachers, schools and the broader community – were included.
- If possible, programs targeting different age groups within the 0 to 18 year range were included.
- If available, at least one program targeting Aboriginal and/or CALD children and young people was included in each domain.
- It was considered desirable to include programs that were based in Western Australia, however, Western Australian programs were not included at the expense of more appropriate programs from other states.
- If possible, programs targeted at children and young people in different geographic environments (ie urban, rural and remote) were included, as the needs of these populations can differ greatly.

The application of these criteria led to a diverse list of program profiles that highlighted the breadth and depth of effective programs available to enhance the wellbeing of children and young people. This is the list that has been included in the current report.

Appendix 3 – Evaluation tool

APPENDIX 3

Appendix 3: Evaluation tool

Name:	ARACY domain:	Target group:
WA: Y/N	Commercial: Y/N/Unknown	Cost effectiveness:

Domain	Criterion	Score	Details
1	Evaluation	Well supported	3
		Supported	2
		Limited	1
	Effectiveness	Strong	3
		Moderate	2
		Low	1
If score \geq 4, proceed to domain 2 & 3			
2	Supporting evidence/theory	Yes	1
		No	0
	Replicability	Yes	1
		No	0
If score = 2, program fit for inclusion			
3	Innovation	Yes	1
		No	0
	Cultural Reach	Yes	1
		No	0
If score = 2, program fit for inclusion			
Service or program included in short list: Y/N/Provisional			

APPENDIX 3

Criterion 1: Level of evaluation

Well supported:

- Randomised controlled trials (quasi-experimental research design) (N > 20 participants in both the test and control groups).
- Very strong qualitative research (ie interviews conducted with appropriate percentage of program participants; sampling strategy appropriate to reflect diversity of views; findings provide a rich description of 'lived experiences' of participants).
- Mixed methods approach involving (at minimum) research in which outcome indicators are evaluated (N > 20) and strong qualitative research.

Supported:

- Randomised controlled trials (N < 20 participants in both the test and control groups).
- Research in which outcome indicators are evaluated, but no control group (N > 20).
- Strong qualitative research (ie same criteria as above, but perhaps with a smaller, less diverse sample, or research that provides a more limited description of the 'lived experiences' of program participants).

Limited:

- Purely descriptive or subjective indicators of program evaluated (eg evaluation of participant opinions or perceptions of service providers).
- N < 20 participants for quantitative research.
- Limited qualitative research.

Criterion 2: Effectiveness

Strong: Program directly and positively impacts on desired outcomes (multiple outcomes, if applicable). At least one outcome is changed by 20% or 0.25 standard deviations (or more).

Moderate: Program directly impacts on at least one desired outcome. At least one outcome is changed by 10% or more. Qualitative analysis offers strong support.

Low: Change in at least one outcome is more than 5%. Qualitative analysis offers moderate support.

APPENDIX 3

Criterion 3: Supporting evidence/theory

Does the program or service clearly describe the existing evidence that was used to justify any intervention? And/or, does the program explicitly and convincingly draw on an appropriate theoretical base (eg attachment theory, trauma theory)?

Criterion 4: Replicability

Has the program or service been successfully replicated in more than one area or context? Is there evidence of thorough documentation or systems, which suggest that the program could be replicated?

Criterion 5: Innovation

Does the program or service improve upon or change existing service provision in one or more of the three following areas:

- **Innovation in content:** Applying a new approach, theory or model, or adding new topics in response to a social, demographic or other trend.
- **Innovation in delivery method:** Employing new or adapted modes of delivery through partnerships with stakeholders, creating ownership among clients, staff or stakeholders, or through the use of learning approaches that make use of new information and computer technologies (such as Internet, blogs, webinars and other electronic communication platforms).
- **Innovation in forging new partnerships or networks:** Sharing and increasing expertise, knowledge and experience, fostering communication and exchange of ideas.

Criterion 6: Cultural reach

Has the program or service been designed to cater to the unique cultural practices, contexts and understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or CALD children and young people? Or has it been shown to be strongly effective with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people?



Appendix 4 – Considerations in
program evaluation

APPENDIX 4

Appendix 4: Considerations in program evaluation

The information provided below has been taken from *Evaluation in Family Support Services*, by Robyn Parker – <http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/pubs/issues/issues6/index.html>

Although written specifically for Family Support Service providers, these papers provide an excellent overview of program evaluation, including how to construct and perform them.

What is program evaluation?

Program evaluation is the systematic process of investigating if a program achieves its aims. There are several broad types of program evaluation but two that are commonly used are impact and process evaluations.

Impact evaluations are designed to investigate if the program was effective at meeting its objectives, whereas process evaluations look at how programs work. Although it is vitally important to know if a program is effective it is just as important to understand how the program is implemented. For example, it can be difficult to understand why participants did or did not gain benefit from participating in the program if there is no information available about how it was implemented.

What does program evaluation involve?

There are various methods for carrying out program evaluation and the choice of these is largely influenced by the availability of resources such as time, staff and money. The methods differ in their degree of scientific rigour, which in turn has an impact on organisations' ability to attribute outcomes to the program. An evaluation can involve many elements and may include pre- and post-testing or the inclusion of comparison or control groups. There are also a range of data collection methods such as surveys or questionnaires, interviews and focus groups.

Service providers can perform an evaluation themselves where they have staff with the necessary skills and expertise to develop and run it. Time and resource constraints, however, may limit their capacity to do so. Alternatively, evaluations can be run in conjunction with, or entirely by, external evaluators. Utilising an external evaluator ensures independence in the evaluation as well as allowing staff to focus on running the program, but may be cost prohibitive. A collaborative approach may help with costs and also means that ownership of the process remains largely with the organisation and its staff. Another way of minimising costs and time constraints is to utilise university postgraduate research students to perform the evaluation.

Want to know more?

Evaluation in Family Support Services,³⁷ offers a series of five papers discussing different aspects of program evaluation in further detail:

- Part A: 'Evaluation and innovation'
- Part B: 'Broader issues: Evidence-based practice, service-based evaluation, and ethics in evaluation'
- Part C: 'Basic principles in preparing for evaluation'
- Part D: 'Getting started in evaluation: The devil is in the detail'
- Part E: 'Evaluation: Dissemination and beyond'

Further resources can be found at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/links/evaluation.html>

³⁷ Parker R 2010, *Evaluation in Family Support Services*, AFRC Issues Paper 6, AIFS



Appendix 5 – Further program
evaluation resources

APPENDIX 5

Appendix 5: Further program evaluation resources

The following links provide details of further evaluated Australian and International programs:

- Communities and Families Clearinghouse Promising Practice Profiles
<http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/index.html>
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Victoria)
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/chilyouth/catalogue/updates.htm>
- California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse
<http://www.cebc4cw.org/>
- Promising Practices Network
<http://www.promisingpractices.net/programs.asp>

Appendix 6 – What works in program
and service delivery for
children and young people?

Appendix 6: What works in program and service delivery for children and young people? Evaluating the research

The information provided below has been taken from the National Child Protection Clearinghouse website What Works in Service Delivery (<http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/resources/whatworks.html>).

What works in the child and family welfare sector? Which policies, programs, and practices are the most effective? In order to confidently answer these questions it is necessary to access the research evidence. Such research comes in different forms, some of which are more reliable than others when making decisions:

- **Research papers or reports** generally focus on a specific topic or question and report the results of an original or primary research study. The results of such a study constitute a building block for an evidence base. However, it is not good practice to base a policy or program on the results of a single study.
- **Literature reviews** are articles that aim to review the current knowledge of a particular topic. They are secondary research sources, in that they do not report on the results of original experimental work. Literature reviews can sometimes present a one-sided view of a topic or be used to support an argument. As such, it is not good practice to base a policy or program on the results of a single literature review.
- **Systematic reviews** are similar to literature reviews in that they are secondary sources that review the current knowledge of a particular topic. However, a systematic review aims to provide an exploratory and objective account of the current research, rather than use research to support an argument. Individual research papers or reports are rigorously searched for and then graded for quality using a scoring system. Any studies that do not reach a quality threshold are excluded from the review. The methods used to perform the systematic review are explicitly stated so that other researchers can replicate the process.
- **'Systematic plus' reviews** are similar to systematic reviews in that they objectively explore the current knowledge of a particular topic. However, a 'systematic plus' review also includes a section for research or data that may be useful or insightful, but that does not meet the quality threshold of standard systematic reviews (eg certain types of qualitative research, opinion pieces of experts in the field).
- **Meta-analyses:** incorporate many of the elements of a systematic review, but go further by using specialised statistical techniques to synthesise the results of numerous studies. Thus, a meta-analysis is an original piece of research that uses previously published research as its data. A meta-analysis can indicate whether specific policies or practices work, as well as how much of an effect they have.

Systematic reviews, 'systematic plus' reviews and meta-analyses are the most effective ways to identify what works in the child and family welfare sector. The following is a list of organisations that specialise in the production and/or distribution of these forms of research.

It should be noted that not all subject areas receive the research attention that they deserve, and so may be lacking systematic reviews or meta-analyses. The absence of evidence supporting specific policies or programs is not evidence of their ineffectiveness. Rather, it more likely points to a lack of research in the specific area.

- The **Campbell Collaboration** prepares, maintains and disseminates systematic reviews in education, crime and justice, and social welfare.
- The **Cochrane Collaboration** is an international not-for-profit organisation preparing, maintaining and promoting the accessibility of systematic **reviews** of the effects of health care.
- **Every Child Matters** is a government initiative in the United Kingdom, with high-quality research.
- The **Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre** (EPPI-Centre) focuses on conducting systematic reviews and developing review methods in social science and public policy.
- **Making Research Count** is an English initiative that facilitates the dissemination of research findings between academics, practitioners, carers and users in the social care field.
- **National Implementation Research Network** (NIRN) conducts, develops and updates syntheses on the implementation of evidence-based programs.
- **Safeguarding Children Research Initiative** has high-quality research, and includes research on the impact of child welfare interventions.
- **Social Care Institute for Excellence** is a source of good practice guidance, research and learning materials for social care and social work.

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