

CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN THE CITY OF PORT PHILLIP

A BETTER FUTURE FOR CHILDREN

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATIONS

*(BASED ON A SYNTHESIS OF THE FEEDBACK FROM PHASE 1
ENGAGEMENT)*

Produced by 27 participants
Tuesday, 17 July 2018, St Kilda Town Hall.

What do we want for children, for their families in order to support their children, and from the infrastructure in order to support families and children?

Infrastructure: is the services, community groups, buildings and can include things such as how they function and work together.

VISION STATEMENT

By 2024, we would like to see

The City of Port Phillip as a community are committed to providing all children and their families to a variety of "services"; that are unique to meeting the diverse needs of its individuals. The emphasis/focus will ensure all children have the opportunity to grow and learn through play holistically, paving the way to lifelong learning.

**Outcomes (relating to developmental domains) came up in discussions with others at the policy workshop.

POLICY OBJECTIVES (themes could focus on infrastructure, children and families etc)

CoPP to provide low cost, quality Early Years services eg (Toy libraries, kindergartens, Occasional Care, Long Day Care, Playgroups, Outdoor & Indoor Play Spaces, MCHN) for **ALL** children and families to access.

Provide the community with current information of Early Year Services at the most pertinent time for their children's stage/age/needs

Access to flexible (24 hour) services especially childcare and flexible hours for (immunisations, playgroups MCHN) to cater for the diversity of families needs.

Sustainable practices to be incorporated at ALL Early Years Services for ALL families and for the community to participate.

Provide an integrated service model for families with children from 0-5 (linking or sharing information and learnings between all the services provided by CoPP)

Childcare - Improvement focus (themes could focus on infrastructure, children and families)

Buildings and Infrastructure

Sustainable

Improve access for all families e.g. ramps/doorways.
Current buildings update and refresh
Wet weather/indoor play areas at all centres.
Bush natural outdoor areas.

Administration and staffing

Consistent PD across all children's services
Set standards of PD and continuous staff improvement.
Qualified and consistent staffing at centres.

Service provision

Option of nature/bush/farm kinder
More childcare
More sessional kinder/short term childcare options.
Support the smaller community run day/kinders care
Update the older buildings- meet OHS and comfort and DDA access requirements
Ensure all childcare centres provide education about school readiness to families

Waitlist enrolments

Coordinated waitlist for all COPP centres (private and public)
Offered timely childcare
Set numbers of vulnerable family allocated places
W/List timely feedback to families
Priority to local families.

Affordability and access

Equitable spread of childcare centres across COPP.
Affordable to all families esp vulnerable families
Equitable funding to council and community run centres.
Continue with childcare subsidy for low income families

Operations

Use apps for updates to families- less paper.

Support for alternatives to full daycare.

See above - all shapes, times and sizes to be offered.

Kindergarten - Improvement focus (themes could focus on infrastructure, children and families)

- Information needs to be available to families regarding options of early years education and care. Families are confused; there needs to be greater clarity around options - long day care, sessional kindergarten, extended hours kindergarten, costs, accessibility, wait list information.
- Compassionate consideration for families experiencing vulnerability/hardship.
- Kindergarten hours need to meet the needs of the families in the community and kindergartens need to annually consult with families.
- Infrastructure needs to meet the needs of children, families. Forward planning needs to occur with regard to available and current data. Services that provide for connectedness to nature and the outdoors. Natural environments in which children can explore, manipulate their environments and build cubbies!!!
- Consideration of how CoPP will respond if funded 3 year old kindergarten is introduced.
- Educators in CoPP should part of a connected network with opportunities for shared professional development to improve practice
- Consideration of a range of service model types e.g. beach kinder, bush kinder, opportunity to connect with nature
- Making use of YorK St kindergarten as an early years service.
- Kindergartens that need support have access to mentoring opportunities to improve National Quality Standards and raise the quality across CoPP.

Toy Libraries - Improvement focus (themes could focus on infrastructure, children and families etc)

To provide an **accessible** service where the diverse array of families with children from the CoPP are welcome and have access to a variety of toys that are sustainable, non-gender specific with a wide cultural representation.

Understanding the diversity of families with children in CoPP, this service needs to provide flexibility of hours and increased space (in particular given the limited storage and spaces in small dwellings),

Future proofing the service by offering online access to bookings and picking up toys

Co-location with other services for ease of access for families

Flexibility of membership fees so vulnerable families can be accommodated.

Playgroups - Improvement focus (themes could focus on infrastructure, children and families etc)

Playgroup should be flexible in regards to the times, days and venues offered. There should be a focus on playgroups that offer a wide variety of alternatives to include under 25s, vulnerable families, Dads, grandparents and playgroups for culturally diverse backgrounds.

There should be more council provided space for playgroups, there are so many rooms that are left empty that could be utilised. Playgroup should offer families the flexibility to change or merge groups as their situation evolves. There should be more assistance from council when setting up playgroups, sending out reminders to families and look at offering parenting information sessions within playgroups.

Council to provide fee funding assistance to vulnerable and low income and provide more resources such as toys.

Council to listen to the users of the service when planning or delivering playgroups and actively seek feedback.