



Child Development Service Information for Referrers

WA Country Health Service Child Development Service (CDS) provides a free service for children who have difficulties in areas such as eating, hearing, talking, understanding, movement, hand skills, and social/play skills.

Child Development Services will work closely with families to meet the individual needs of their child. Our service will support families to promote the development of their child in day to day activities, and work with other people who can help achieve the goals identified for the child (i.e. school, childcare).

Who is the service suitable for?

Our services are suitable for children under the age of 18 who have or are at risk of developmental delay. Families who have a concern with their child's eating, hearing, talking understanding, movement, hand skills, or social/play skills are encouraged to access the service for information and strategies to support the development of their child. Services for children over the age of 8 years may be limited, so please call us to discuss if referral is appropriate and the types of services we could offer.

Who can assist families to connect with the service?

Parents and legal guardians can contact the service directly. Other services supporting the family such as teachers, early childhood educators or GP's can assist the family to access the service by completing a referral form. Parental consent is required to make a referral to the service.

If you are considering referring a family to our service, consider if it is the right time to make a referral. We understand that sometimes life is busy and families may not have the time or capacity to participate in services at a particular point in time. Family participation is key in achieving good outcomes for children.

How to support a family to connect with our service?

- Discuss concerns with the family, including the child's performance and skills at home, school and in other environments.
- Discuss our service with the child's parent or guardian, including how our service can support and promote the child's development and skills. The family can contact us directly or they may prefer for you to complete a referral form.
- Provide the WACHS CDS Brochure to the family. This has details of the service and contact details.
- If the family would like you to refer their child to our service please complete the WACHS CDS Referral Form* attached.
- **Consent from the family for referral must be provided and indicated on the form.**
- You will need to indicate on the form that you have gained consent from the family to refer.
- Please ensure the family's contact details are current. We are happy to make contact with the family by different methods including phone, letter, SMS, or email. If the family have a preference please let us know.



- Provide as much information as possible on the referral form and attach any other relevant history, reports and information.
- Describe the parent's main concern and how it impacts on the child and family in their everyday life.
- Let us know if there are any reasons that may impact on a family's ability to respond to us when we contact them or to attend appointments. We can be flexible with how we offer a service.
- Return the completed referral form by post, fax or email using details on the bottom of the referral form.

**To open and complete the attached CDS Referral Form electronically, you will need Adobe Reader (the latest version is recommended). If you do not have Adobe Reader installed on your computer, you may download the latest version free of charge from <http://get.adobe.com/reader/otherversions>.*

What services will families receive?

We will make contact with the family to find out more about their concerns for their child to help us plan the next step. We have a team who work in different areas of child development: including Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Allied Health Assistant, Dietitian, Social Worker, Audiologist and Child/School Health Nurse. Depending on the child's needs, they may see one or more of our team members. Services will focus on supporting families to learn strategies that support the development and skills of their child during their daily lives

Support may be provided over the phone, in person, or using video conferencing. The family may be offered group programs or individual appointments to attend with their child. Our services can be provided in a variety of settings including a health centre, school, child care, Child and Parent Centre, or Aboriginal Medical Service. We will discuss with each family the options on how they can receive services. We may link the family with other community programmes or support them to access another service.

Can families choose private services?

Some families choose private services instead of, or sometimes as well as, using our services. It is important families know all their options so they can make a decision of what is best for their family. We can support the family to understand their options.

When will services end?

Families may leave our service for a range of reasons, such as; the family identify they have the strategies required to support their child's development, the capacity of families to attend services is limited at a particular time or the family are no longer concerned. After families leave our service they can always contact us again if they have further concerns for their child. Families can reconnect with our services without a new referral.

For more information on WA Country Health Service Child Development Services please refer to www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/childdevelopment

