



Thriving Kids Advisory Group Final Report

04 February 2026

On 3 February 2026, the Hon. Mark Butler MP released the Thriving Kids Advisory Group's final report. This report's release follows Minister Butler's announcement of the *Thriving Kids* initiative at the National Press Club in August 2025.

The Thriving Kids Advisory Group was co-chaired by the Minister Butler, and Professor Frank Oberklaid from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

National Cabinet has endorsed the model proposed by the Advisory Group. The State and Territory Governments have agreed to invest a combined total of \$4 billion, with the Commonwealth providing \$2 billion. \$1.4 billion of the Commonwealth's contribution will go directly to support states and territories in delivery of the model.

Proposed Thriving Kids Model

The model seeks to ensure that children with developmental delay and neurodevelopmental differences are identified as early as possible. Once these differences are identified, the model seeks to connect children and families with supports in a timely manner, matched to their level of need.

Key principles of the proposed national model include:

- Early identification of developmental delay
- Connecting children and families with programs and facilities that best support their child
- Offering supports for both children and their families that are focused on positive outcomes
- Supports are delivered in everyday settings
- Supports are empowering, connected to pre-existing service systems that are easy to navigate
- Acknowledging that children's needs are not linear and can change

The report provides further detail about each component of the model and how it is expected to operate. Proposed components of the model are:

- Identification and connection to supports
- Best-practice Universal Parenting Supports
- Best-practice Targeted Supports
- Enablers
- Interface with other systems

Identification and Connection to Supports

The Advisory Group's model recommends that *Thriving Kids* should provide information, and resources whilst also raising awareness about child development in a way that is inclusive and provides easy access to accurate advice. The Advisory Group also recognised that it can be hard for families to get a formal diagnosis.

Members recommended that *Thriving Kids* should give families early access to supports without needing a formal diagnosis. This will help families by improving access to practical advice and have multiple entry points into the support system.

Best-Practice Universal Parenting Supports

The Advisory Group acknowledged that families and carers are the first teachers in a child's life. To support this, *Thriving Kids* delivers universal parenting supports that help families build their child's knowledge and skills, and seek peer support. Early access to these supports can help develop the strengths and wellbeing of families and limit the need for extra supports later in life. These supports should be tailored, easy to access and evidence based to support families and their needs.

Best-Practice Targeted Supports

The Advisory Group recommended that targeted supports should be delivered for children and families who need more than universal parenting supports. These supports include allied health and more individualised capacity building. Targeted supports include supports delivered by trained workers and includes access to low-cost assistive technology and sensory aids. This also includes access to professionals at key milestones in a child's life, such as starting school. These measures must be accessible depending on the child's needs.

Enablers

The Advisory Group noted that it is important for *Thriving Kids* to focus on priority community groups, such as First Nations Peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and children living in out-of-home care. The Advisory Group also made suggestions about areas the government could improve on to ensure that *Thriving Kids* works well for children and families, including addressing workforce shortages, investing in digital tools, and training.

Interface with Other Systems

The Advisory Group noted that connections between *Thriving Kids* and the NDIS should be smooth so that children and families can move between the systems as needed. The Group also recognised that early childhood education and schools are important places for children and families. As a result, the group recommended that *Thriving Kids* supports should connect with education systems while ensuring primary focus remains on learning.

See the full Thriving Kids Advisory Group report [here](#).

See the Minister's [Media Release](#) and [Press Conference](#).

Further Information

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