

Call For Expressions of Interest: Voice of Parents: A model for inclusion - Reference Group

About

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (the Centre) is inviting Expressions of Interest from senior organisational representatives from the child and family welfare sector and adjacent sectors who would like to join the Reference Group to support the Voice of Parents project. This critical project aims to develop a model for parent voices to be heard and provide a framework and tool to enable government and the child and family services sector to engage with parents in the development, design and delivery of services to support them and their children.

The Voice of Parents Project

For a child to fully reach their potential and thrive in a stable, safe and nurturing environment a responsive parent is critical. Unfortunately, this is not available to all Victorian children and in some cases statutory child protection responses (including out-of-home care services) will be required. To achieve best outcomes for children, it is critical to recognise parents as the experts in their child's life and to include and enhance parent voice in the development and delivery of service responses.

The **Voice of Parents** project will develop a framework for parent voices to be heard through a Charter of Parental Participation, an agreed principles that can be applied across organisations and programs in the child and family services sector, and a Parent Participation Model (with a practical tool kit of resources). These resources will be used by government and the child and family services sector across Victoria for the inclusion of parents' voice in their work.

The Reference Group

It is proposed that the Reference Group will be comprised of senior organisational representatives from community service organisations and peak bodies in the child and family services sector and other relevant sectors that work with parents.

Key objectives for the Reference Group will include:

- co-designing, developing, reviewing and advising on products including frameworks, charter principles, and the development of the Parent Participation Model;
- providing recommendations to support the embedding of the toolkit and charter in practice;
- capturing the views and interests of the sector, children, and families are represented, and
- engaging stakeholders and identifying opportunities to support the goals of the Voice of Parents project.

Draft Terms of Reference (TOR) will be provided ahead of the launch meeting for discussion and finalisation at the first meeting.

Benefits

The Voice of Parents Reference Group provides an exciting opportunity to work with representatives from various organisations and be part of a co-design and advisory group to support consistent, effective, and ethical parental participation with parents and thereby improve the outcomes for their children. .

Anticipated benefits include:

- Opportunity to hear and embed parental voices in critical system touch points.
- Model and resources will provide clear, supportive framework for establishing and embedding parental participation.
- Sector collaboration will support sustainable implementation.
- Evidence base of national and international participatory programs will address current knowledge limitations.

The Voice of Parents Project continues the Centre's commitment to promoting client voice and learning from those with lived experience to achieve better outcomes for children and support parents in their critical role in their child's life.

Expressions of interest (EOI) process

Expressions of interest are sought from **senior organisational representatives** who are:

- interested in participating in the reference group and its activities;
- are able to attend bi-monthly meetings;
- committed to the meaningful inclusion parents in its group membership and when planning and undertaking activities;
- keen to work collaboratively and collectively to identify and implement activities to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families in relation to enhancing participation across multiple service streams;
- ready to be an ambassador for the Voice of Parents project in your organisation.

Interested parties can complete an EOI application to be considered for membership of the Reference Group. Responses to this EOI are due by **5.00pm 11 September 2020** and can be provided here.

Applicants will be advised of the outcome via email by **25 September 2020**.

Should you have any questions please contact Danielle Walt on danielle.walt@cfecfw.asn.au

Thank you for your interest.