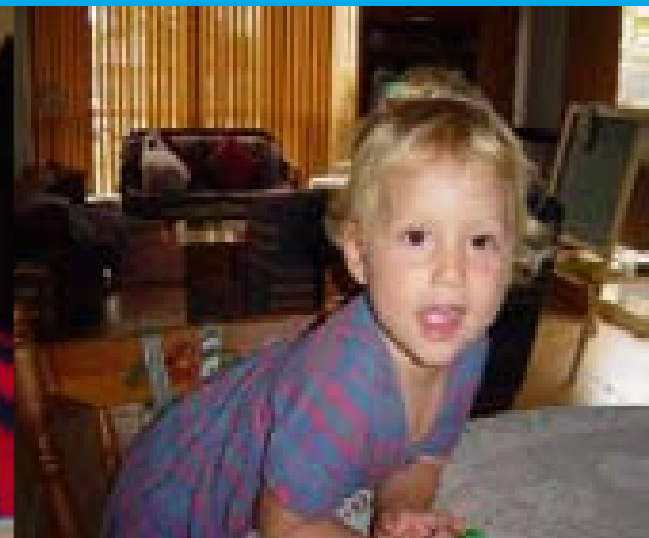




Healthy Start

A national strategy for children of parents with learning difficulties



An Early Childhood – Invest to Grow initiative
funded by the Australian Government

Healthy Start

Initially funded under the *Early Childhood – Invest to Grow initiative*, Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2005-2008,
Then 2008-2009,

And now, 2009-2011

Australian Supported Parenting Consortium



The University of Sydney
www.afdsrc.org



Parenting Research Centre
www.parentingrc.org.au

Learning Difficulties



- Intellectual disability
 - Mild cognitive limitations
 - History of special education
 - ‘Slow at learning’
-

Healthy Start Goal



To build capacity in the human services sector across the nation
with the aim of supporting parents with learning difficulties and promoting a healthy start to life for their young children

Healthy Start Objectives



- To develop active interagency & multi-disciplinary networks
- To promote research-informed practice by disseminating knowledge and resources

Evaluation Questions 2005-2008



- Has *Healthy Start* built capacity in the human services sector?
- Has *Healthy Start* changed practice?
- Has *Healthy Start* produced better outcomes for parents and their children?

Capacity Building



Healthy Start

Strategies

- Local leadership & agency collaboration
- Web based resources
- Training in evidence-based programs
- Graduate level education
- Trial of new resources

Capacity Building



Strategies

- Local leadership & agency collaboration
- Web based resources
- Training for practice change
- Graduate level education
- Trial of new resources

Outcomes

- 67 local networks & champions across Australia
- Website, E-network, listserv
- >400 practitioners trained
- *Parenting with developmental disability* on-line unit of study
- 1. *Me & My Community*
2. *Healthy Start for Me & My Baby*

Practice Change



Healthy Start

Strategies

- Access to evidence based resources
- Graduate level education

Practice Change



Strategies

- Access & use of evidence based resources
- Education

Outcomes

- Website use, E-Network & listserv membership, trained practitioners
- 91 completed on-line graduate unit of study – *Parenting with Developmental Disability*

Trial of new resources

**Australian Supported
Learning Program**

**Healthy Start for Me
and My Baby**



Family Capacity



Healthy Start

Strategies

- Training in evidence based parent education programs

*Healthy Start and
Parenting Young Children*

- Practitioners implementing programs

Family Capacity



Strategies

- Training in evidence based parent education programs
- Practitioners implementing programs

Outcomes

- >400 trained
- >120 families received program

Challenges 1

- Practitioners with many responsibilities
- Agency priorities which change over time
- Lack of agency support for enthusiastic practitioners interested to work with parents with intellectual disabilities

Challenges 2

- Perception of risk with these families
- Disability strong practitioners with no parenting or family expertise
- Parenting and family strong practitioners with no disability expertise

2008-2011 New – sector capacity building



- Develop module for **pre-service courses** in health and welfare sector
- Analysis of national and state policy and education of policy bureaucrats
- Analysis of media and education of individual journalists and press associations
- Develop strategy for better linkage with child protection sector

2008-2011 Resource research and development



- *Australian Supported Learning Program* – Father's version
- *Healthy and Safe* in group version
- *Healthy and Safe* 6 -9 years version
- *Parenting Young Children* 6-9 years version
- Community based resource for children of parents with intellectual disability
- Group program for mothers whose children have been removed

2008-2011 Local capacity building



- Develop our communities of practice at four levels
- Bolt on –backpack knowledge
- Integrated with existing knowledge
- Application of principles to practice
- True champion who shares knowledge and informs and teaches others



Healthy Start



A national strategy
for children of
parents with learning
difficulties

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Healthy Start is an Australia-wide strategy to support parents with learning difficulties and promote a healthy start to life for their young children.

Healthy Start will do this by:

1. Building active interagency and multidisciplinary **networks** at local, state and national levels.
2. **Promoting research-informed practice** through an information-rich website, online professional development, workshops in every state and territory, and the dissemination of proven parent educational resources designed for parents with learning difficulties.
3. Leading the field forward through **new research and development** addressing critical issues for policy makers, practitioners and families.

Healthy Start helps all families with a parent with a learning difficulty, including parents with a diagnosed intellectual impairment. For more information, read or print the [full project description](#).

News

May 2009

Congratulations to the Learning Hubs that have been awarded Healthy Start Development Grants. Ten Learning Hubs across the country were recently successful in their applications to secure Healthy Start Development Grants to support activities in their local community. [Find out more](#)

April 2009

Understanding and Planning Support (UPS) resource to be trialed through Healthy Start. This is the final call for practitioners interested in using the Understanding and Planning Support (UPS) resource. The UPS is an engaging resource for understanding and planning support for parents with a learning difficulty. [Find out more](#)

March 2009

Opportunity to participate in Healthy Start DVD study. The Healthy Start team are looking for

Resources

For information about various healthy Start resources click on the links below:

Step by Step DVD

The Step-by-Step Baby Care DVD is a resource to support the specific needs of new parents who have learning difficulties. The DVD can be used as an interactive teaching aid and left with parents to use at home. [Find out more](#)

Strengthening Every Family

A DVD, Strengthening Every Family, is available to order from the Parenting Research Centre. The DVD presents interviews with parents with learning difficulties who have asked to remain anonymous, as their faces are obscured. [Find out more](#)

Find a Learning Hub

This section of the website contains information on existing Learning Hubs

Join the
Healthy Start network

[Bookmark this site](#)

Search this site:

Australian Supported Farming Consortium

The University of Sydney
Parenting Research Centre

Stronger Families and
Communities Strategy

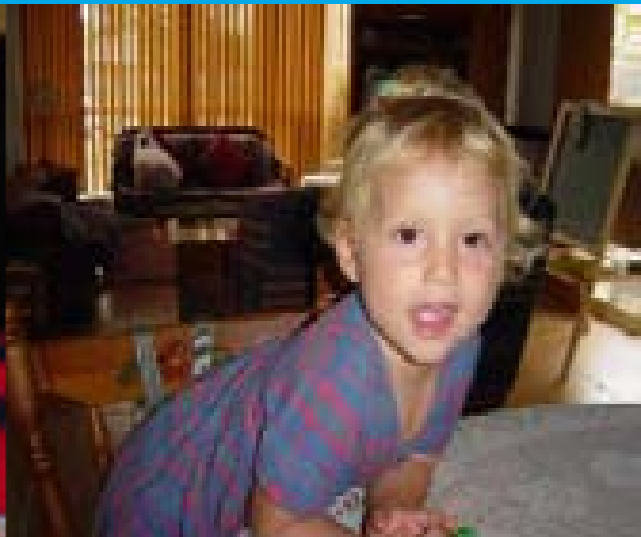
An Australian Government Initiative

This website provides information about Healthy Start which is funded by the Australian Government's Early Childhood - Dream to Drive Initiative. However, the Australian Government is not responsible for the overall content of the website.



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difficulties



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