Part 1: Getting started

Establish KidsMatter Early Childhood Leadership Team

Implementing KidsMatter Early Childhood requires a planned and coordinated approach. To achieve this, your service will need to establish a KidsMatter Leadership Team who will plan and lead the implementation of the initiative at your service. Initially, the KidsMatter Leadership Team will include:

- your service’s director or coordinator
- a representative from the management committee, or a parent or carer
- a staff member.

Your KidsMatter Leadership Team will attend a ‘Getting Started with KidsMatter Early Childhood’ session that will be run in your local area, to help you become familiar with the initiative and show you how to use our tools and resources. You can expand the core KidsMatter Leadership Team to include any other staff members, parents and carers or interested parties who are important to your service. It will be important to schedule regular times to meet, which will help you plan and keep track of timelines, goals and achievements.

Membership of the team can be revisited at any time—at the beginning of a new year, a new Component, or when new staff or families express interest in becoming part of KidsMatter Early Childhood.
Provide all staff with KidsMatter Early Childhood introductory information

KidsMatter Early Childhood emphasises a whole-service approach in promoting mental health and addressing mental health concerns. It is important to engage all staff in the initiative, including administrative and support staff and any new staff.Introductory information about KidsMatter Early Childhood can be provided in written form, shared at a staff meeting or special presentation given by the KidsMatter Leadership Team, or a combination of all of these. It will provide your staff and anyone who needs more information with the rationale for the initiative and summary information about the four KidsMatter Early Childhood Components.

Giving new staff the material in written form, whether they attend a verbal presentation or not, is a good idea as staff can refer back to the material. It will also help them to begin thinking about the initiative and how they can play a role in promoting mental health for all children.

Provide all families with KidsMatter Early Childhood introductory information

Involving families is an important part of KidsMatter Early Childhood. Providing all families with introductory information about the initiative will help to foster communication and a shared understanding about what is happening in your service. This may be done in a variety of different ways, such as including information in your regular newsletter, providing a link on your website, or leaving written information for families to take home. A handy summary of the initiative is available at www.kidsmatter.edu.au.