

# KidsMatter Early Childhood Component 4: Helping children who are experiencing mental health difficulties

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## Staff Survey

### What is KidsMatter Early Childhood?

KidsMatter Early Childhood is an Australian mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative for early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. It involves the people who make a difference to children's lives—parents, carers, families, and early childhood staff, along with a range of community and health professionals—working together to support children's mental health. KidsMatter Early Childhood has four Components through which ECEC services can strengthen the protective factors for children's mental health and minimise the risk factors. There are a series of KidsMatter resources available to you that provide information on how ECEC services and families can work together to foster children's mental health and wellbeing. These resources and further information and updates on the initiative can be found on the KidsMatter Early Childhood website: [www.kidsmatter.edu.au](http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au).

### Component 4: Helping children who are experiencing mental health difficulties

'Helping children who are experiencing mental health difficulties', the fourth KidsMatter Early Childhood Component, is fundamental to children's mental health and wellbeing. Getting support early for children who are showing signs of mental health difficulty can reduce the impact that this has on their day-to-day experiences. This means that the child gets the support they need to improve their mental health and wellbeing. It also helps staff and families to feel more confident in supporting a child who may be experiencing mental health difficulties. This not only improves the mental health and wellbeing of the child, but also that of staff, parents, carers and other children who attend the ECEC service.

### Why are you being asked to complete this survey?

KidsMatter Early Childhood challenges ECEC services to reflect on current practice, identify areas for development and work towards improving the

ECEC services they offer to families for the benefit of children's mental health and wellbeing. Your views are an important part of the KidsMatter Early Childhood planning process. Completing the survey is optional. However, we hope that you will feel happy to contribute to help your ECEC service work on assisting children with mental health difficulties. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you may have about completing this survey with your KidsMatter Leadership Team.

### Who will see and use the information you provide by completing this survey?

Surveys will be collated at the ECEC service for their use only. All information you provide in this survey will be treated in confidence and not identified individually. Surveys are anonymous and the ECEC service will summarise group responses to guide planning. Responses to this survey will help your ECEC service to identify its strengths and areas for improvement with respect to helping children who are experiencing mental health difficulties. You can discuss any concerns that may arise from completing the survey with your ECEC service KidsMatter Leadership Team should you wish to do so.

### Staff Survey instructions

Your views are an important part of the KidsMatter Early Childhood planning process. Responses to this survey will help identify strengths and areas for improvement at your service in terms of helping children who are experiencing mental health difficulties. It should take around 10 minutes to complete.

**For questions 1–11**, please circle one response that first comes to mind and best fits how you feel about each statement.

**For question 12**, please feel free to tell us what you think on the lines provided.



**General question**

1. Our ECEC service takes steps towards supporting children who are experiencing mental health difficulties, and their families.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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**Understanding children's mental health and wellbeing**

2. I have an understanding of mental health difficulties in early childhood, including common signs and symptoms.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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3. I understand how mental health difficulties impact on children and families, and the factors that protect children from developing mental health difficulties and those that put them at risk.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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4. I understand that getting help and support early is important for children (and families) experiencing difficulties.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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5. Our ECEC service provides an inclusive and accepting environment for staff, families and children who may be experiencing difficulties with their mental health.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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**Responding to children who may be experiencing mental health difficulties**

6. Our ECEC service has policies and practices that support children and families to seek help for mental health difficulties.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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7. The ECEC service has protocols and processes for recognising and responding to children who may be experiencing mental health difficulties.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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8. I am able to recognise behaviours, emotions and thoughts that may indicate a child is experiencing mental health difficulties.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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9. I know how to access support and make referrals (where appropriate) for a child who is experiencing mental health difficulties and their family.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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10. Our ECEC service has good working relationships and clear referral pathways with support services, and supports families to access these services.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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11. Our ECEC service works together with families and other professionals who are involved in caring for children's mental health.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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12. Is there anything that you would like to see the ECEC service doing more of, or differently, with respect to enabling staff to help children who are experiencing mental health difficulties, and their families?

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