

The Role of the Community Development Coordinator

CDCs aim to improve the lives of those living in the community, with a focus on the wellbeing, access and safety of the CFSS priority populations. CDCs take a holistic approach to building the capacity of local communities, and a significant aspect of their role is supporting individuals, families and groups to identify key assets, issues, and needs. CDCs work collaboratively with local networks and from a strengths-based perspective, to enable community-led responses unique to the community in which they are based.

CDCs are based within Children's Centres as a key partner in an integrated model, using a place-based approach, providing outreach and building relationships, beyond the Children's Centre. While CDCs are place-based in their local community, they also strategically address community needs and strengths across a region. Together with local families and groups they work to identify and strengthen protective factors within a community, enabling co-designed and co-owned programs, and mobilising local resources. They partner with universal programs to provide targeted support services.

Through a collaborative approach, CDCs consult deeply and broadly within community and service systems, and draw on available evidence and research. In addition to enabling ground-up responses to local needs, CDCs assist with the planning of local service provision. They encourage local services (including Department for Education sites) to work collaboratively and remain responsive to current and emerging trends. Their role is to mobilise systems, communities and individuals in order to support the strengthening of adult-child relationships, children's overall safety, learning, health, active participation and wellbeing. This work is critical to ensuring an agile and responsive service-system driven by local needs and aspirations and focusing on identified priorities.

CDCs work closely with all Education sites and contribute to their four key outcomes of:

- Children having optimal health, learning and development
- Parents providing a strong foundation for children's healthy development and wellbeing
- Communities that are child and family friendly
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as safe, healthy, culturally safe and confident

Priority Populations

In response to evidence and the co-design process, CFSS will focus on four priority populations, therefore CDCs will seek to better understand and support children and families within their local area who fall into one or more of these four groups. CDCs will prioritise initiatives which support the needs, access and safety of these identified populations:

- Families of infants deemed to be at high risk in their first 1000 days
- Aboriginal families with multiple service needs
- Young parents (where mothers are under 23 years and fathers under 25 years)
- Young people experiencing vulnerability and at risk of having children who may go on to enter the child protection system

Program Elements and Functions

The Program is founded on families and community taking the lead in their own lives. Entry and exit points to the program are varied and flexible to ensure responsiveness to the community. The program is underpinned by the delivery of four core elements (see Diagram 1):

- *Community*
- *Coordination*
- *Evidence Based*
- *Project Management*