



Children's Services

"Giving Voice to Children's Experiences"

Children are one of the most vulnerable groups in our society.

Their needs are complex and dependent on their own unique experience and stage of development.

Just like adults, children have psychological, emotional, cognitive, health, social, educational and financial needs. The difference between adults and children is that children almost always rely completely on adults to meet their needs.

Because of the chaos and upheaval resulting from homelessness and/or family violence, a child's "voice" may go unheard and as a result they can be left vulnerable to poor health, education, social and emotional outcomes.

The aim of the Children's Services at Central Hume Support Services is to improve outcomes for children affected by homelessness and family violence through offering the following programs to children in the Hume Region.

Children's Resource Program – Hume Region



"No longer is it acceptable for services to work with adults who are parents without paying attention to the needs of their children."

David Murray – President, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

"Children need specific care and attention to ensure their social, emotional, and physical needs are identified and addressed."

The Homelessness Assistance Service Standards (HASS)

The Regional Children's Resource Program is designed to raise awareness of the issues faced by accompanying children in the homelessness & family violence sectors. In doing this, they aim to build on existing skills of workers in the sector and encourage organisational orientation to child inclusive practice.

What this means is that the role of the Children's Resource Coordinator is to:

- assist agencies and workers to include the needs of children in their practice
- assist in creating a more child-friendly environment in your office
- making sure workers have access to resources (posters, pamphlets, handouts) which inform parents of child specific responses and needs



- assist and support workers with child specific case management, case planning and safety planning
- assisting workers to include children accurately in all data recording
- assist workers in understanding the principles of Best Interest of the Child
- assist workers in understanding the effects of trauma and cumulative harm on children's development and incorporate this knowledge in to practice
- assist workers in effectively assessing children and providing tools to do so
- have and provide knowledge of children specific services in your area that may be relevant to your clients needs
- provide training in areas workers feel they need it
- providing Children's Brokerage where needed while available

To access children's brokerage please read the brokerage guidelines and complete the following application form.

- Brokerage Guidelines
- Brokerage Application Forms

To contact the Hume Region's Children's Resource Coordinator please call:

0260 437 404

Homeless Children's Specialist Support Service

Accompanying children are the least powerful group in homelessness services....

The Homeless Children's Specialist Support Service aims to enhance the response to children experiencing homelessness and further support the homelessness service sector to improve their knowledge, skills and confidence in providing support to children and families. The service provides support to children who accompany families receiving case management support from homelessness assistance agencies including youth specific services, generalist family service, family violence services and cross target services. Central Hume Support Services' Homeless Children's Specialist Support Service model adopts a framework of an early intervention approach to case management using a family orientated and child-focussed approach. The service model involves collaborative work with other agencies and referring workers with Co-Case Management and shared co-facilitation of groups. This approach promotes a strong emphasis on prevention and early intervention strategies for accompanying children.

The Homeless Children's Specialist Support Service incorporates a suite of four support responses to children and families (where the child is the primary client), including: assessment and case planning support (stream one); enhanced case management support (stream two); therapeutic group work (stream three); and individual counselling (stream four).

For more information about the program or to make a referral please contact the Children's team located across the Hume Region.

Wodonga/Wangaratta and surrounds: 0260 437 422
Shepparton/Seymour and surrounds: 0358 331 080

Children's Domestic Violence Counselling

A free and confidential service for children who are in need of counselling and additional support due to their experience of family violence and/or homelessness.

This may include:

- One-on-one counselling for children (0-18)
- Sibling groups
- Education on impact of trauma on children's behaviour and feelings
- Developmental needs
- Referrals for appropriate services
- Information, printed materials
- Advocacy

Why might a child need counselling?

Kids experience events in their lives in their own unique ways. It is sometimes hard for kids to talk about things that have hurt them or frightened or confused them or made them feel sad. While many children can overcome their difficulties with some support from their parent, many children require specific intervention to address their unique needs. A counsellor is someone outside the family that a child can feel safe to talk to about what's worrying them.

To make a referral to the children's counselling service please call:

0260 437 425



Connecting Kids Group Work Program

Connecting Kids is a therapeutic group program designed for children who may have experienced homelessness and/or family violence. The program is child focused and will focus on the children's strengths and skills and aim to build on them.

Connecting Kids intends to connect the children to each other and reduce feelings of isolation. Also, it aims to build resilience, emotional awareness, self-respect and social skills. The children will be encouraged to express themselves and how they feel about a range of different issues in a therapeutic, safe and confidential environment.

Connecting Kids will be held at Central Hume Support Services.

There is no cost to participate in the program and afternoon/morning tea will be provided for the children in each session.

Transport to and from the sessions can be negotiated.

**For more information about the program or dates when group work programs are on
please contact the children's team located.**

Wodonga/Wangaratta and surrounds: 0260 437 422