

The Emerging Minds: National Workforce Centre for Child Mental Health's six practice positions help practitioners to apply a child-focused lens to their work. According to people with lived experience of service delivery, children's visibility is the most important aspect of child-focused practice. These positions can help to keep children visible through every aspect of service delivery, by promoting authentic conversations between practitioners and parents/caregivers about parenting and their children's wellbeing, and supporting practitioners to feel confident engaging with infants, children and families.

Our practice positions



1. Child-aware and parent-sensitive

practice in adult services recognises the need to ask parents about their relationship with their child. A child-aware approach acknowledges and considers the experiences of children so that they are visible within service delivery. A child-inclusive approach prioritises the involvement and consideration of children's social and emotional wellbeing in all aspects of decision making that affects their lives.



2. Curiosity

means more than asking questions to diagnose a problem: it allows for genuine understanding of children's and parents' daily lives. Being genuinely interested in the relationship of parents and children allows practitioners to consider the child's wellbeing as a prime motivator for change in the lives of parents. It also allows for conversations which focus on both strengths and vulnerabilities impacting on the parent-child relationship.



3. Collaboration

occurs where professionals work alongside children, parents and families to reach a shared understanding of their circumstances and concerns. Through this process, practitioners recognise that parents know their children's strengths and vulnerabilities and can collaborate on creating plans that support children's social and emotional wellbeing. Collaborative practice with children occurs where practitioners view them as genuine participants in the decisions that affect their lives.

Delivery partners:



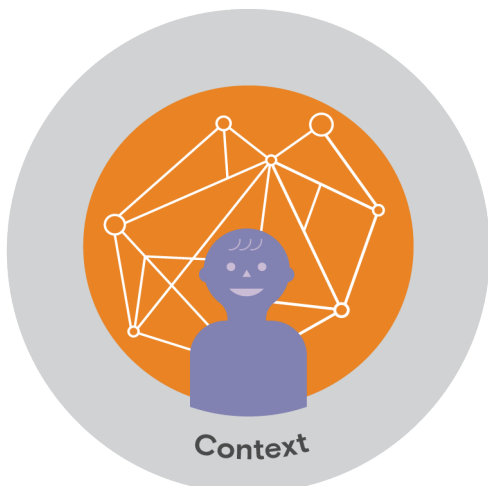
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4. Hopeful

conversations focus on the capacity of both children and parents to identify their strengths, skills, knowhow and capabilities in overcoming adversities. This recognises times when adults have been able to parent in their preferred ways and the history of their care for their children. A focus on hopeful conversations recognises the interdependence of parents' hope for themselves and for the social and emotional wellbeing of their children. Through an application of this practice, stories of strength and hope, as well as challenges and vulnerabilities are more likely to emerge.



5. Contextual understandings

involve exploring circumstances that have contributed to the child's and parent's lives. A detailed history of the parent-child relationship, shaped by many different experiences and an understanding of the family's cultural, social and relational contexts will emerge through this exploration. Contextual understandings are key to providing culturally competent service delivery that caters to children and families from diverse cultures.



6. Respect

is built from the belief that children and parents can describe their preferences for the kinds of relationships and lives they would like. Respectful practice does not mean the compromising of a practitioner's stance around children's safety, but it does avoid the assumption that children or parents are unable to make decisions that positively affect their lives.

Delivery partners:

