



New voluntary service for parents

Consultation Guide for parents

Together, we'll design a new, voluntary service that supports parents who care for young children.

The new service will be for parents who receive a Parenting Payment. The new voluntary service will aim to:

- plan for their future education and employment goals
- build their capabilities and skills
- work toward the type of paid work they want, when they're ready.

Parent's and children's needs are the key focus of the new service. What you tell us will help build a supportive service that helps parents.

Who we're consulting

We are consulting with parents on Parenting Payment with young children who may use the new voluntary service. This includes parents who used the ParentsNext program, and potential users of the new voluntary service.

Consultation timing

We're talking to interested parents between **July 2023 and September 2023**. We'll consult in 4 phases:

1. **Pre-design:** We have sought people's input to what our consultation should look like, and how our stakeholders prefer to participate (May to June).
2. **Design:** Consult and collaborate to understand parents' needs and goals, and the kind of supports we could provide (July to August).
3. **Check-in:** Check-in with people about what we've learned, present our thoughts on what design could look like and get their feedback and advice (August).

4. **Design options:** We'll come back to people to talk about options, and seek their feedback and advice to inform our decisions (August to September).

What we want to hear from you about

We will talk to you about the new **voluntary service** to support parents. The topics we will talk to you about are below.

We'll ask you about your:

1. **Needs and supports:** Help us understand your experiences with services and the type of supports you need to reach your employment goals.
2. **Ideas:** Tell us the things you want or need in a new voluntary service for parents to meet your goals.
3. **Opinions:** Tell us what you think of the service options we come up with for a new voluntary service and what would make you want to use the new voluntary service.

We welcome conversations around the difficulties and complex circumstances some parents may face.

Topics for discussion

We'll discuss a range of topics when we speak with you.

- **Parents' needs:** What support parents get now, and what challenges they have that we can help with.
- **Eligibility:** Who can access the voluntary service, and which groups to prioritise.
- **Timing:** When parents can access the service, and for how long.
- **Features:** What features, information and support options to prioritise to best meet parents' needs.
- **Delivery:** How the voluntary service should run, and its service deliverers should operate.
- **Engagement strategies:** What engagement strategies and incentives would encourage participation.
- **Funding:** How to structure and prioritise the funding for the service.

Contact for more information

Contact the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Email - ParentsConsultation@dewr.gov.au