



Frequently Asked Questions

Thriving Kids Connect WA

What is Thriving Kids?

Thriving Kids is an initiative announced by the Commonwealth Government that includes investment in new supports for children aged 0-8 years with developmental delay and or autism with low to moderate support needs.

In Western Australia, our approach is focused on building family strengths, increasing community connections, and supporting child development and participation in everyday life.

The program will offer support that's easier to reach, community-based and built around the family. Importantly, families won't need a diagnosis to get help.

Like all other States, Western Australia is implementing Thriving Kids in a phased approach. Services will be progressively introduced between 1 October 2026 and 1 January 2028.

Thriving Kids will be primarily delivered by the WA Government commissioned through the Department of Communities.

When fully mobilised, Thriving Kids will be informed by early intervention, family centred approaches such as:

- information, advice and navigation so that families and caregivers have assistance with navigating across service systems.
- family and parenting support programs, such as playgroups, peer supports and community groups to build capacity, skills, and connect with others.
- targeted and time limited specialist therapeutic supports for children with more moderate needs.

There will also be dedicated supports provided by Aboriginal led organisations for Aboriginal families and children.

These services will be delivered by a range of providers through grants and service agreements.

What is Thriving Kids Connect WA?

Thriving Kids Connect WA is a free statewide phone and online information, advice and navigation service. It operates a 'no wrong door' entry point for families, carers and kin seeking support.

When a family contacts Thriving Kids Connect WA, an experienced Navigator will listen to what is happening for the child and family. They will provide information and advice, explain available options and help the family make informed decisions and connect with the appropriate supports that can best meet their child and family's needs.

If they can't help directly, they'll do their best to connect you with a service that can. This may include support through future Thriving Kids WA-funded providers or other existing services in the health, mental health, education or community sectors.

Thriving Kids Connect WA will also refer children to the National Disability Insurance Scheme when children have higher support needs.

Children can still access early intervention supports through the NDIS during the transition period and participants will remain "grandfathered" in the scheme until they turn 9, subject to normal reassessment.

What is the overall goal of Thriving Kids Connect WA?

The goal of Thriving Kids Connect WA is to make it easier for families to find the right information, understand options and connect with appropriate supports at the right time.

The service provides practical advice and guidance tailored to a child's age, stage and circumstances. Where appropriate, this may include connecting families directly with services or making referrals to support their needs.

By providing access to experienced professionals with knowledge of child development and WA services, Thriving Kids Connect WA aims to provide clear, practical information and advice, and support to work out the next step.

Who is the service for?

Thriving Kids Connect WA is available to families, carers and kin of children aged 0 to 8 years across WA who:

- have developmental delay and/or autism with low to moderate support needs.
 - have developmental concerns and are seeking information, advice or support to understand possible next steps.
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What does "low to moderate support needs" mean?

The term "low to moderate support needs" is not a label for your child and does not describe the severity of a disability or developmental differences. Rather, it helps identify the level and type of support that may be helpful for a child and family.

What does “no wrong door” mean?

“No wrong door” means families do not need to know exactly which service to contact before seeking help.

When families contact Thriving Kids Connect WA, an experienced team member will listen to them, provide relevant information and help identify the most appropriate next step.

If another service is better placed to assist, the team will explain this and help to connect you wherever possible.

What can families contact the service about?

Families can contact Thriving Kids Connect WA if they:

- are worried their child may not be developing in the same way as other children their age
 - have questions about autism or developmental delay
 - want ideas and strategies to support their child at home
 - need help finding services in their area
 - are not sure what support their child may need
 - want to better understand assessments or diagnoses
 - are waiting for an assessment and would like support in the meantime
 - want to know more about the NDIS and other support options
 - need help preparing for appointments or conversations with services
 - feel unsure about what to do next.
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Does a child need a diagnosis to use the service?

No. A diagnosis is not required to access Thriving Kids Connect WA. Families can contact the service if they have concerns about their child’s development or are seeking information about developmental delay or autism.

Support and information are available at any stage of a family’s journey. This may include families who are noticing developmental differences or concerns, seeking an assessment, waiting for an assessment, recently receiving a diagnosis, exploring support options, or already connected with services but uncertain about the next steps.

Does a child need to be a NDIS participant?

No. Thriving Kids Connect WA is not an NDIS service.

The service helps families understand the range of supports available across health, education, community and disability services, and explore the options that may be most appropriate for their circumstances.

This is particularly important for families who may not be eligible for NDIS-funded supports, or whose needs may be met through other services and community-based supports.

Can the service help families who are not eligible for the NDIS?

Yes. Supporting families who are not eligible for the NDIS is an important part of the service. Many children and families benefit from supports available through health, mental health, education, community and local services.

Thriving Kids Connect WA can help families understand these options, identify relevant services and programs, and connect with supports that best meet their needs.

Can Thriving Kids Connect WA help families understand the NDIS?

Yes. Thriving Kids Connect WA can provide information and support to help families understand the NDIS and how it may relate to their child's circumstances.

This may include information about what the NDIS is, who it is designed to support, how NDIS supports differ from other services, possible pathways into the NDIS, how NDIS supports may work alongside other services, and other options where the NDIS may not be the most appropriate pathway.

Thriving Kids Connect WA does not make decisions about NDIS eligibility and cannot determine what supports a child or family will receive through the NDIS.

Is Thriving Kids Connect WA a therapy service?

No. Thriving Kids Connect WA does not provide therapy, diagnosis or clinical treatment.

Instead, we are focused on helping families access reliable information, and support to understand their options and connect with services that may be right for them.

Does the service provide diagnosis?

No. Thriving Kids Connect WA does not provide assessments or diagnose autism, developmental delay or other developmental conditions.

However, the team can provide information about assessment pathways, explain possible next steps, and help families understand where they may be able to access further assessment or professional advice.

The broader Thriving Kids program will be rolled out progressively across WA from 1 October 2026 to 1 January 2028, with additional Thriving Kids-funded supports, including targeted and time limited specialist therapeutic supports for children with more moderate needs, commencing over the next 14 months.

Can the team recommend specific local services?

Yes. Thriving Kids Connect WA is a statewide service with knowledge of supports available across Western Australia.

The team can help families identify existing services, programs and supports that are relevant to their circumstances, location and needs. This local knowledge helps families move from general information to practical next steps.

How can I contact Thriving Kids Connect WA?

Families can access Thriving Kids Connect WA via phone, email, online enquiry or face-to-face in some locations. Families can also make contact themselves or be connected through someone they already know and trust, such as a GP, community health professional, disability service, educator or another Thriving Kids WA service.

The telephone service is the simplest and most accessible way for families to speak directly with an experienced team member.

Families do not need to know exactly which service they require before making contact. Through a conversation, team members can understand the family's circumstances, answer questions, clarify information and provide tailored advice and support.

Can families speak with someone in-person?

The service is primarily delivered by telephone, allowing families across Western Australia, including in regional and remote communities, to access support without travelling or waiting for a face-to-face appointment.

Where appropriate and available, families may also be able to access face-to-face support through Uplyft offices or community-based locations. The most suitable option will depend on a family's circumstances, location and needs.

Who will families speak to?

Families will speak with an experienced Thriving Kids Connect WA Navigator who has knowledge of child development, autism, disability and family support services.

Navigators understand the challenges that families may face and can provide practical information, guidance and support.

Most importantly, they'll take the time to listen and work with you to identify the next steps that are right for your child and family.

What happens when a family calls?

Every family's situation is different, but when you call we will:

- listen to your questions and concerns
- learn about your child and family
- provide information and practical advice
- talk through support options that may suit your needs
- help you find relevant local services
- explain possible next steps
- support you to connect with other services if needed.

You do not need to have all the answers before you call.

Will families have to tell their story more than once?

Thriving Kids Connect WA aims to make accessing support simpler. The team will take the time to understand your situation and provide relevant information and guidance.

If you are referred to another services, we will explain what information may be useful to share and what to expect from the next step.

With your permission, we may be able to share some of your information with another service that we refer you to.

Can a family contact the service more than once?

Yes. Children's needs and family circumstances can change over time.

Families are welcome to contact Thriving Kids Connect WA whenever they need further information, advice or support.

Does the service replace existing services?

No. Thriving Kids Connect WA is designed to complement and work alongside existing services, not replace them.

It can be particularly helpful for families who are unsure where to start or which service may be most appropriate.

Does the service only support families in metropolitan Perth?

No. Thriving Kids Connect WA is available to families across Western Australia, including regional, rural and remote communities, as well as metropolitan Perth.

The service maintains knowledge of supports available throughout the State so families can receive information and advice that is relevant to their local area.

What if there are no suitable services nearby?

Where local options are limited, the team can help you explore alternative supports and pathways.

This may include services available remotely, supports in neighbouring communities, mainstream services, community programs or other relevant options that may help your child and family.

Can professionals and services contact Thriving Kids Connect WA?

Yes. Professionals, community organisations and services that work with children and families can contact Thriving Kids Connect WA for information and advice.

The service can assist when a family may benefit from additional support, information about available services, or guidance about potential pathways and options.

Is the service free?

Yes. Thriving Kids Connect WA is a free service for families living in Western Australia.

There is no cost to access information, advice, guidance or support to help identify appropriate services and next steps.

Is the information provided confidential?

Information shared with Thriving Kids Connect WA will be handled respectfully and in accordance with relevant privacy and confidentiality requirements.

All information you share regarding your child's development, health, and family circumstances is kept strictly confidential and stored on a secure system. You or your child's details information will not be shared with other professionals without your permission.

If a family is experiencing an immediate crisis or emergency

Thriving Kids Connect WA provides information, advice and navigation support and is not an emergency or crisis response service.

If a child or family requires urgent medical, emergency or crisis assistance, contact should be made with the appropriate emergency or crisis service immediately.

Available services and support include:

000 – Ambulance, Fire, Police for life-threatening emergencies or serious injuries, child safety emergencies, or situations where someone is in immediate danger.

Mental Health Emergency Response Line

Perth Metro: 1300 555 788

Country WA: 1800 552 002

1800 551 800 – Kids Helpline for support for children needing to talk to someone about their life.

13 11 14 – Lifeline, crisis counselling for children, young people, and parents

1800 007 339 – Women's Domestic Violence Helpline Western Australia

1800RESPECT (1800 737 732) – National telephone and online counselling and referral for anyone experiencing family and domestic violence.

1800 199 008 – Crisis Care provides an after-hours response to reported concerns for a child's safety and wellbeing, and information and referrals for people experiencing crisis.

