

# Children in Australia

English



**Children coming to Australia have a lot to get used to – a new home, school, language, culture and people. Parents can help children adapt to the changes and settle into their new life.**

## What parents can do

Parents play an important role in guiding and supporting children. They can help them:

- > feel loved and safe
- > go to school, learn and make friends
- > discover places and activities they enjoy
- > be involved in the community
- > talk about any worries or problems
- > get help if they need it.

Some children have experienced hardship or violence, or lost people or places they love. They can feel grief and loss just as adults do, even if they can't tell you about it.

**The good news is that children of all ages usually adapt, learn and do well in Australia.**



Feeling loved and safe helps children adapt to their new life.

## Feeling safe

When children feel safe it is easier for them to cope with change.

Some things that might help are to:

- > keep children's lives as calm as you can
- > continue with things they know and enjoy, such as food, stories, songs
- > have daily routines such as the same mealtimes, bedtimes
- > stay in touch with loved ones overseas, if you can
- > explore the local community with your children so they get to know it
- > protect young children from knowing too much about adult problems.

Making friends and being involved in the community can help children feel accepted and that they belong.



## Going to school

Going to school is a big part of getting used to Australian life.

Children can:

- > go to playgroups, child care and preschools from a young age
- > learn English
- > start or continue their education
- > make friends
- > be involved in sports or other activities they enjoy such as music, art, dance. They may like to join a group
- > get help if they have a disability or other concern.

**Schools are great places for parents to meet other families and share ideas. Parents are welcome to talk with teachers, even if there is no problem.**

If children seem upset, worried or angry, ask if they are OK.

## Problems with feelings

If children are upset or 'misbehaving' try to understand what's causing it.

You could:

- > listen patiently
- > show you really understand
- > help children name their feelings - are they sad, worried, angry?
- > ask children what would help them. This builds their confidence and skills
- > get any help they need.

## Stress and trauma

Children of all ages can be affected by events that made them feel unsafe, scared, worried, angry or helpless. It may be war, violence, hardship, losing loved ones or having many big changes in their life.

Signs of stress in children can be:

- > wetting the bed
- > often feeling upset, worried or sick, having headaches or stomach aches
- > becoming very quiet – not wanting to see family or friends
- > becoming angry or fighting a lot
- > taking more risks. Older children might use alcohol or drugs.

There may be other reasons for these, so try to find out why they are happening.

**Children need to experience over and over again:**

- > **feeling loved and safe**
- > **being comforted and soothed**
- > **knowing others understand how they feel.**

## Getting help

If you are worried about your child, you could talk with doctors, teachers or other services. Multicultural services can often help you find what you need.

It can help children to have other trusted adults to talk to.





# Services

## Emergency

000 Police, Fire, Ambulance  
13 14 44 Police attendance if there is a problem but no immediate danger

## Interpreters

### Interpreting and Translating Centre

1800 280 203, 8.30am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
Phone or face to face interpreters [www.translate.sa.gov.au](http://www.translate.sa.gov.au)

### Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)

13 14 50 any time day or night for phone interpreters  
[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

## Multicultural services

### AMES Australia

7224 8550, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
Ground floor, 212 Pirie Street, Adelaide  
7224 8500, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
2/59 Commercial Road, Salisbury  
Settlement services for refugees and newly arrived migrants  
[www.ames.net.au/locations/find-sites](http://www.ames.net.au/locations/find-sites)

### Australian Migrant Resource Centre

8217 9500, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
23 Coglein Street, Adelaide  
Settlement, family relationships and family violence services for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers  
See [www.amrc.org.au](http://www.amrc.org.au) for metro and country locations

### Australian Refugee Association

8354 2951, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
304 Henley Beach Road, Underdale  
8281 2052, 9.30am-4.30pm, Mon to Fri  
1 Brown Terrace, Salisbury  
Assistance and support for refugees [www.australianrefugee.org](http://www.australianrefugee.org)

## Health and wellbeing

### Kids Helpline

1800 551 800 any time day or night  
Phone and online support for anyone aged 5-25 years  
[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

### Refugee Health Service

8237 3900 or 1800 635 566 (country callers) 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
21 Market Street, Adelaide  
Health service for newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers

### Healthdirect

1800 022 222 any time day or night if someone is sick or injured  
[www.healthdirect.gov.au](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au)

### National Home Doctor Service

13 74 25 to book an after hours doctor home visit  
<https://homedoctor.com.au>

### Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS)

1300 733 606, 9am-4.30pm, Mon to Fri for an appointment  
Free service for babies and young children aged 0-5 years. Nurses can help with children's health, eating, sleeping and development  
See [www.cyh.com](http://www.cyh.com) for child health and parenting information

### Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

8161 7198 or 1800 819 089 (country callers) 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
Free counselling service for children aged 0-15 years  
[www.wch.sa.gov.au/camhs](http://www.wch.sa.gov.au/camhs)

### Relationships Australia (Multicultural Services)

1300 364 277 or 1800 182 325 (country callers) 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
Support for family relationships, children and teens, gambling, violence, HIV, hepatitis [www.rasa.org.au](http://www.rasa.org.au)

### Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service (STTARS)

8206 8900, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
81 Angas St, Adelaide; 11 Wehl Street, Mt Gambier  
For anyone affected by events such as war, violence, loss of loved ones before coming to Australia [www.sttars.org.au](http://www.sttars.org.au)

## Education

### Department for Education

Find your local government child care, children's centre, preschool or school [www.education.sa.gov.au](http://www.education.sa.gov.au)

### Playgroup SA

Find your local playgroup [www.playgroupsa.com.au](http://www.playgroupsa.com.au)

### Australian Government

Information on child care and preschools  
Find your local centre [www.mychild.gov.au](http://www.mychild.gov.au)

## Family violence

### Domestic Violence Crisis Line

1800 800 098 any time day or night  
Help with violence, emergency accommodation and referrals  
<http://womenssafetyservices.com.au>

### Migrant Women's Support Program

8152 9260, 8.30am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
Free, confidential assistance for migrant women and children in family violence <http://womenssafetyservices.com.au>

### 1800 RESPECT

1800 737 732 any time day or night  
Talk to someone by phone or online about family violence or sexual assault [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

## Parenting

### Parent Helpline

1300 364 100 for advice on child health and parenting

### Islamicare – Parenting Helpline

1800 960 009, 7 days a week  
Confidential support for parents of teenagers <http://Islamicare.org.au>

### Raising Children Network

Parenting information and videos in many languages  
<http://raisingchildren.net.au>

### Parenting SA

Other multicultural Parent Easy Guides and general Guides on a wide range of topics, including 'Children's mental health', 'Coping skills', 'Self-esteem' [www.parenting.sa.gov.au](http://www.parenting.sa.gov.au)

This Parent Easy Guide is one of 9 developed by Parenting SA for families from new and emerging multicultural communities in South Australia. We would like to thank the many services and families that generously contributed their knowledge and expertise to the Guides, especially families and staff members whose photographs appear in them.

Parenting SA is a partnership of the Department for Education and the Women's and Children's Health Network.

Phone (08) 8303 1660

[www.parenting.sa.gov.au](http://www.parenting.sa.gov.au)

Parent Easy Guides are free in South Australia

Important: This information is not intended to replace advice from a qualified practitioner.

© Government of South Australia First produced 01/2019.



Government  
of South Australia