



Healthy Start

# A national strategy for children of parents with learning difficulties

## Healthy Start is a national strategy for young children of parents with learning difficulties

Healthy Start is a 3.5 year Australia-wide strategy to support parents with learning difficulties and promote a healthy start to life for their young children.

Healthy Start addresses the need identified by practitioners for access to evidence about what works in the area, for formal training, and for the opportunity to learn from others in the field. It does this by:

- Building active **networks** across agencies and disciplines at local, state and national levels.
- **Promoting research-informed practice** through
  - [www.healthystart.net.au](http://www.healthystart.net.au);
  - online professional development;
  - workshops in every state and territory;
  - proven parent educational resources designed for parents with learning difficulties.
- Advancing the field through **new research and development** addressing critical issues for policy makers, practitioners and families.

**Each Australian state and territory is taking part and adapting Healthy Start to suit existing programs and meet local needs. Networks throughout Australia and within each state and territory are made up of a growing system of Learning Hubs.**

## What are Learning Hubs?

Healthy Start Learning Hubs are networks of individuals and agencies. These could be based on geography, region, local services, roles, projects, interests or pre-existing links or networks.

Hubs will be connected and supported online via a listserv, newsletters and the Healthy Start website, and will enable sharing of knowledge between practitioners, agencies and service workers.

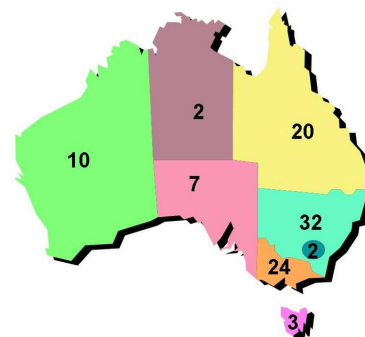
## Creating Learning Hubs

Each appointed state and territory Healthy Start Leader is recruiting agencies and supporting practitioners to convene local Learning Hubs.

Learning Hub Convenors will:

- Invite practitioners to join their Learning Hub.
- Identify and implement a local action plan with other Hub members, which will guide the actions of the Hub.
- Identify practitioners in the Hub who will participate in face-to-face training of evidence-based parenting education resources.
- Be eligible for a scholarship to enrol in a six month online unit of study on parenting with learning difficulties through the University of Sydney.

## Proposed Number of Learning Hubs



The University of Sydney



Stronger Families and  
Communities Strategy

An Australian Government Initiative

Healthy Start is an *Early Childhood – Invest to Grow* initiative, funded by the Australian Government under the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy. The Australian Supported Parenting Consortium is a partnership between the University of Sydney (Australian Family & Disability Studies Research Collaboration, School of Occupation & Leisure Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences) and the Victorian Parenting Centre.



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## Learning Hub Members

By joining a Learning Hub, members can tap into the learning of others across health, disability, family support and children's services. Members also participate in implementing local solutions. Hub members will be able to access training in four parenting education resources that are based on evidence and specifically designed for parents with learning difficulties:

- **Parenting Young Children** develops positive parent-child interactions and parents' skills in child care tasks.
- **Health Care Tool Kit** promotes the health and wellbeing of pregnant women during the antenatal period and birth.
- **Healthy & Safe: An Australian Parent Education Kit** is designed to equip parents with the knowledge and skills necessary for managing home dangers, accidents and illnesses.
- **Supported Learning Program** aims to assist mothers to identify their own learning needs and aspirations, to help them create learning opportunities and connect with local community resources.

## Join Healthy Start:

Practitioners can become involved with Healthy Start in a number of ways:

- To receive twice-yearly news updates, log on to the Healthy Start website [www.healthystart.net.au](http://www.healthystart.net.au) and follow the link to Join the Network.
- To enquire about becoming a **Healthy Start Learning Hub Convenor**: Contact your state or territory Healthy Start Leader (except TAS & ACT, which have positions filled).
- To join a **Healthy Start Learning Hub**: Visit [www.healthystart.net.au](http://www.healthystart.net.au) and find a Hub near you or contact your state or territory Healthy Start Leader.

## Healthy Start State & Territory Leaders

Healthy Start Leaders in each Australian state and territory will recruit and support local Learning Hub Convenors. Healthy Start Leaders will also host two forums in their area per year.

### NSW

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### WA

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## National Key Contacts

To contact the Healthy Start project team at the University of Sydney (Gabrielle Hindmarsh) or the Victorian Parenting Centre (Robyn Mildon):

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