

CPS Child and Family Centre




## CPS

*Our Vision:*  
That all children thrive in safe families and communities


*Our Mission:*  
To break the cycle of abuse and neglect in families and to improve the life chances and choices for all children

*Our Aim in this project:*  
To intervene early in the life of a child to perforate intergenerational cycles of social exclusion, disadvantage, abuse and neglect.

To demonstrate a model of care that has capacity to change the life chances of some of our most vulnerable children

## We have the opportunity...

- To broaden the capacity of universal early years services to include and sustain children at risk of abuse and neglect.
- To ensure that children at risk of abuse and neglect have access to high quality early education and enriched care services to ensure they reach their maximum developmental potential prior to starting school
- To effect long lasting change for the most vulnerable young children in our society.



## Barriers to Inclusion

**Circumstantial**

- Lack of trust in services
- Traumatic family history
- Chaotic parental lifestyles, often associated with mental health problems and/or substance abuse, homelessness, family violence, leading to difficulties in maintaining participation
- Anti-social behaviour of parents leading to social exclusion

**Structural**

- Patchy capability and readiness of universal services
- Current funded models are often not intensive enough, comprehensive enough, to sustain inclusion
- Isolation
- Transport, fractured service delivery and lack of availability of places for children at risk

**Systemic**

- Cost
- Access to services and benefits
- Access to poor quality care
- Low level of parental education and connection to community

## Integrated Care and Education Pilot...


**The Model**  
Informed by the Carolina Abecedarian Research – CPS in partnership with the federal government has set up an Early Education and Care Program that provides children at risk of abuse and neglect the opportunity to access high quality pre-school services

**Five key strategies of the model:**


- High staff ratios (1:3 under 3, 1:6 over 3)
- All staff qualified-(Diploma minimum)
- Frequency of care (5hr/day, 5 days/wk, 50 weeks/yr)
- Close links with family support services
- Attachment focused care giving model

## Key elements of the program

Purposeful Greetings



Primary Educator



## Key elements of the program

12 weekly reviews



Partnerships with family services



## "Every interaction is meaningful"



- Extended Orientation
- Parent participation encouraged
- Time and space to reflect
- Emotions are identified and acknowledged
- Sensory experiences
- Transitions are thoughtfully planned and prepared for

## What else?..

- Indoor/Outdoor program
- Emphasis on natural materials
- Caring for animals
- Nutritious food
- Traditions
- Home visits
- Transport

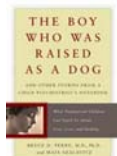


## And...

- Swimming lessons
- Sports for kinder sessions
- Music Therapist
- Infant Massage
- Links with community eg-Playgroup, mobile library, Banyule Community Health Centre (Maternal Health Nurse, Dietician, Speech Therapist, GP, local schools)

## What influences our work

- EYLF
- Calmer Classrooms
- From Isolation to Connection
- Bruce Perry
- Joseph Sparling-Abecedarian approach
- "Every interaction is meaningful"
- "Purpose and intention"



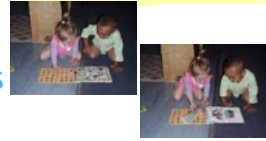
## Research - Where are we now?

The Centre	Research	Consortium Found	Impact	Prove	Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Government Pilot Funding</li> <li>• Evaluation from CCHH</li> <li>• Centre open</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek funding for a further 30 places into the research trial.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research consortium with the University of Melbourne sourced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure the long term social and economic impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Demonstrate</li> <li>• Document</li> <li>• Disseminate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government Policy</li> <li>• Universal Access</li> <li>• Long term life chances for vulnerable children</li> </ul>

## How do we define success?

- When **our most vulnerable** children **have sustainable access to recurrent existing federal government funding that provides them with opportunity to participate in early years and pre-school services like all other children**
- When children at risk **have a pathway** into and receive an **entitlement** to high quality, integrated early education and child care with family support
- When CPS and other **welfare organisations no longer needing to provide tertiary services as the primary prevention investment will have broken those cycles.**

## Expected Outcomes



### Children

- Sustained participation of the most vulnerable children in early years services.
- Better outcomes in the domains of social-emotional, cognitive and language development.
- More secure attachment relationships with their primary care givers.
- Better physical health and development
- More successful transition into the “universal system” (including school)
- Social Inclusion of vulnerable children
- Improved stability and safety outcomes

## Expected Outcomes



### Families

- More sensitive and attuned caregiving
- Higher engagement and participation in early childhood services
- Better partnerships with early years services and school in care and education of children
- Reduction in notifications to child protection
- Prevention of progression into child protection system and out of home care
- Social Inclusion, community connection, parents become confident consumers of early years services, perforating cycles of abuse and neglect.

## Expected Outcomes



### System & Community

- Broaden the capacity of early years services to accommodate and include these children and families.
- Providing knowledge to the universal sector on what works, how and how much. Sustainable, transferable model that will ensure sustained participation of all children. Providing knowledge about what combination of services works for these families and children
- Inclusion support services, early intervention services adapt to provide attachment and trauma theory informed support to child care services to support sustained participation of children at risk
- Opportunity for access to benefits for all children at risk in Victoria and Australia

## Summary



- The CPS project has the potential to perferate intergenerational cycles of disadvantage, abuse and neglect, as well as social exclusion through connecting families and communities
- Investment in the early years has the optimal potential to improve outcomes and socially include our most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society
- Up to 30,000 children in Australia are at risk of abuse and neglect and cumulatively this is a significant social and economic concern

### The Skeleton

As an part of the hospital learning experience the children had an opportunity to look at some 'bones'. We also read the story of "Dry Bones". Braden was very intrigued with the spine and he wanted to count the vertebrae each time he read the story. After lunch it was suggested that he might like to try and draw the skeleton. Braden did the red drawing first. The following day he did the bottom green drawing and then 2 days later he did the green drawing. With each drawing Braden is adding more parts to his skeleton and with the final drawing he was able to draw the spinal cord in the correct proportion.

### OUTCOME 4

Children transfer and adapt what they have learnt from one context to another.

Braden is demonstrating that he is very interested in the bones and the spine. He is transferring his understanding of how a skeleton looks to paper, and with each drawing he is perfecting his work understanding of the body.

What next for Braden?  
Provide Braden with opportunities to practice his ideas through drawing and allowing him time to practice.  
May 2012



## What have we learnt so far...

- One size does not fit all
- Engagement takes time ; building relationships is the key
- A sense of belonging is essential for children and families
- Children thrive when given the opportunity and space to do so



## What is the impact of our work

- Linking families in with other services
- School readiness
- Emotional regulation
- Social skills, children and parents
- A safe space to work through 'big feelings'
- Parents welcomed and encouraged to participate, share skills and talents
- A shift in the way parents view their children

*Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood. -Fred Rogers*



*"The skillful teacher of young children is one who makes play possible and helps children keep getting better and better at it."*  
- Jones E Reynolds, 1992