



**Inquiry into ACT Budget 2021–22**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Elizabeth Kikkert: To ask the Minister for Early Childhood Development

Ref: Early Childhood Development, Budget Statement G, p. 8, output class CSD 2.1 Child and Family Centres

In relation to: Child and Family Centres

1. How does the ACT Government measure whether families who need the services provided by Child and Family Centres a) know about them and b) are accessing them?
2. How do new residents, including migrants and refugees, learn about services available at Child and Family Centres?
3. What methods does the ACT Government rely upon to increase awareness of Child and Family Centres and their services?
4. According to internal data, what percentage of ACT families with children access services at a Child and Family Centre – broken down, if possible, by service?

YVETTE BERRY MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The ACT Government can't measure this directly. The needs of families, including the need for this service, are often identified when they are engaged and referred through another service.

The centres provide services that all families with young children may need such as the Maternal and Child Health nurses, who run their clinics from the centre. This allows for families accessing those services to also access other more targeted and specialised CFC programs they may need, such as a parenting program. For example: A family may come in for the immunisation of a baby and the MACH nurse may suggest the mother to have a conversation with the CFC intake worker about their domestic violence issue.

Families can also self-identify for CFCs services and find out about the CFCs through:

- CFC website:  
<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/children/childandfamilycentres>.
- The CFCs also produce a booklet of services provided and these booklets are distributed to other services and schools:  
[https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/1854122/CFC-Brochure.pdf](https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1854122/CFC-Brochure.pdf)
- Referrals are also received by services within government such as Child and Youth Protection Services, Child Development Service and also from community partners.

2. The CFCs operate locally in the community. New residents are made aware of CFC services and supports through local schools and community agencies. CFCs continuously update local schools and other local services about the services and supports offered at each CFC.

In each CFC, there are multicultural groups facilitated from the centres. For example, at Gungahlin CFC there is an Atfaal group (for Muslim families), at Tuggeranong CFC there is a Multicultural Supported Playgroup which includes strong enrolment from the local Indian community, and at West Belconnen CFC there is a South Sudanese group. These groups were started as a way of responding to identified local area needs and are aimed at promoting play and connection to community and community services for these families.

All families who access these groups are from a migrant background and some are from a refugee background. Most families are made aware of CFC services through their community. Having families accessing the groups, provides an opportunity for staff to talk to the families about the range of supports offered in the CFCs and other ACT services.

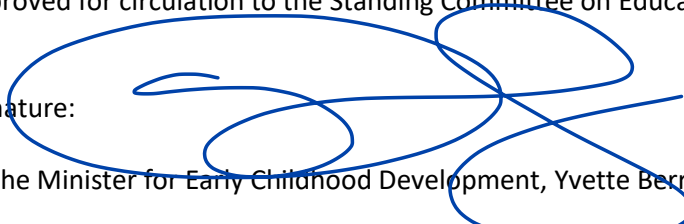
3. The CFCs work closely with government and non-government agencies to ensure they are up-to-date with the supports and services offered in the CFCs. Co-location with other agencies allows families to be referred into intake services without having to ring or make an appointment to see a child and family worker for support or information.

There are new parent groups facilitated in the CFCs by Canberra Health Services. During these group sessions CFC staff provide information in relation to services offered by each centre. Keeping contact with local schools and visiting the Koori preschools is another way of promoting our services and connecting families. A brochure which lists all the CFC services and supports is distributed to agencies and families as a way of increasing awareness of our services. Forums have also occurred with Education Directorate staff which have provided an opportunity to increase awareness of CFC services about options for supporting families in need.

4. Information is not collected in a format to be able to provide a response to this question. The CFCs provided 10,948 occasions of service in 2020-21 (Output 2.1, Strategic Indicator 2).

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:



Date:

08/11/21

By the Minister for Early Childhood Development, Yvette Berry MLA