



# Disability Services

## Information Sheet

### Intensive Family Intervention Program

The Specialist Service for Children and Youth (SSCY) is an area of Disability Services offering a range of specialist programs to children, young people, and their families. SSCY works closely with the Disability Services regional Child and Youth teams.

The SSCY Intensive Family Intervention Program (IFIP) provides a community and home-based service to children and young people with disability and their families, where parents have serious concerns about their capacity to continue in their caring role. Usually this is due to the significant stress associated with caring for a child who exhibits very difficult behaviour, along with other concerns related to health, relationships, or lack of support.

The IFIP is able to work regularly and intensively with families in the metropolitan area. For families who live in country areas, the IFIP can offer a consultation service in conjunction with the local Disability Services team.

#### Our aims

We aim to work in partnership with families and carers to:

- ▶ support parents to increase their knowledge, skills and resources so that they are better able to continue to care for their son or daughter; and
- ▶ improve the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person so that they can develop skills and enjoy participating in their community.

In these ways we aim to prevent family breakdown or placement of a child or young person with disability out of the home.

#### Our team

The IFIP consists of staff with a variety of experience in working with children with disability. They have backgrounds in psychology, social work, speech pathology, occupational therapy and disability studies.

The IFIP staff also work closely with the Child and Youth team members, and any other service providers who have a role in the child's life.

#### What we provide

We begin by gaining an understanding of the family's experience and concerns, and the strengths and developmental progress of the child or young person.

Based on the key issues identified by the family and the team, the IFIP may assist by providing:

- ▶ information about the child's disability
- ▶ support with parenting skills
- ▶ detailed assessment of the child's development and behaviour
- ▶ interventions focused on offering parents different ways of approaching and managing their child's challenging behaviour
- ▶ strategies to address the child's communication, sensory processing, and developmental needs
- ▶ practical tools such as visual stories
- ▶ support in teaching the child new skills, such as relaxation and social skills
- ▶ counselling to address family and individual concerns
- ▶ consultation to schools or other agencies.

## How we work

We believe it is important to work in partnership with families.

This means:

- ▶ Working together to address the issues that are contributing to the current difficulties
- ▶ Gaining a clear understanding of the perspective of all family members
- ▶ Making sure we agree on the goals for our involvement
- ▶ Working in the home, or community settings at times that are most convenient to the people involved
- ▶ Working collaboratively with the child's school or other involved agencies
- ▶ Communicating honestly and openly and regularly reviewing the intervention
- ▶ Supporting parents so that they are able to continue positive strategies once the IFIP is no longer involved.

## How to refer

The IFIP accepts referrals from Disability Services Child and Youth teams. Please speak to your regional Child and Youth team member if you would like to consider a referral to this program.

