



## early matters: Promoting and strengthening healthy family relationships

We know there are times when relationships in families can get stuck at particular transitions in life. This often happens at significant life stages such as:

- having a baby
- children starting kindergarten, primary or high school
- separation or divorce
- becoming a stepfamily
- the death of a family member.

Families are also facing additional challenges right now due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For all these adjustments, we believe it's important to talk things through early.

Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV) is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services to provide the *early matters* program in specific areas of Ballarat and Sunshine.

This program is designed to promote and support healthy, safe, family relationships through educative programs for parents and children, and a Home Visiting / Outreach Service.

### Contact

For more information or to discuss how the *early matters* program can support you or your clients, please contact your nearest location.

Ballarat: (03) 5337 9222

Sunshine: (03) 9313 0444

Email: [earlymatters@rav.org.au](mailto:earlymatters@rav.org.au)

Visit: [www.rav.org.au/earlymatters](http://www.rav.org.au/earlymatters)

## Group programs

RAV delivers group programs in universal services such as kindergartens, primary schools, hospitals, maternal and child health services and play groups.

### Tuning in to Kids™

A parenting program of Melbourne University's Mindful Centre, focusing on emotional intelligence and the emotional connection between parents and children. This program is suitable for parents of children aged between three and 12 years.

### ATTUNE

A program for expectant and / or new parents focussing on the changes and challenges placed on relationships after the birth of a baby. ATTUNE promotes healthy, safe relationships between parents and their baby and normalises the challenges of parenthood.

### Circle of Security Parenting™

An early intervention parenting program that teaches parents how to read their infant/ children's emotional needs and support their children to manage emotions and enhance their self-esteem.

### Ready Set Kids

A program which utilises a whole-of-school early intervention program for kindergarten and primary school aged children. This program increases emotional awareness and regulation, enhances interpersonal and social skills, and promotes confidence and resilience.

### I like, like you <sup>UP</sup>

A healthy relationships program for primary schools, using a whole-of-school approach to promote the connection between healthy relationships and emotional health and wellbeing.

## Home Visiting / Outreach Service

Our Home Visiting / Outreach Service provides families with between one and four sessions of short-term intervention to support them with their greatest concern or most significant challenge.

Our service:

- promotes the healthy development of children across a range of health and wellbeing domains.
- promotes parenting practices that enhance healthy and safe family relationships.
- works to support families to reduce the likelihood that they will require tertiary service interventions, such as the involvement of child protection.
- utilises a strengths-based, family-centred approach to support families with what they feel is important for them.

## Referral Criteria

- Families must have one or more children under 12 years of age.
- Families must not be actively involved with child protection. Where child protection is involved, *early matters* can provide secondary consultations and referral pathways.
- Family members with current mental health or substance use issues, or a history of family violence will be assessed for appropriateness for *early matters* services. Where *early matters* services are not appropriate, we can support families through referrals to other services.
- Clients must be voluntarily seeking services and not be court-mandated.

## Service delivery areas

RAV is funded to provide *early matters* specifically in Sunshine (Delahey and Kings Park) and Ballarat (Wendouree, Miners Rest and Ballarat South).

Clients located outside these areas may still be able to use *early matters* if they are willing to attend an appointment or group program at a community health centre or other suitable location within our service delivery areas.