

Children and Families Plan to guide service delivery

The delivery of children and family services in South Gippsland will be guided by Council's early years plan following the report's adoption at the last Council meeting.

The early years plan titled 'Children and Families - A Plan for the Future in South Gippsland 2016-2021' outlines Council's direction to work in partnership with community, local agencies, State and Federal Government and children and families to improve education and wellbeing outcomes for children aged 0 - 8 years in South Gippsland.

The Plan brings together the aspirations and needs of the community and strategic actions to achieve positive outcomes for children that will have long term benefits for South Gippsland over the next five years.

The Plan was developed following surveys and interviews conducted with local children and families. A broad reference group including service providers, representatives from the Department of Education and Training, Department of Health and Human Services, Council staff and Cr Mohya Davies was convened. Workshops were held to analyse data and identify priorities for the Plan and the draft document was returned to the reference group for review and relevance for local action and service provision.

Manager Community Services, Bart Ruyter, said the aim of the Plan was to guide best practice within Children and Family Services at South Gippsland for both Council and key stakeholders.

"The plan is supported by a shared vision between agencies working with children and families in South Gippsland and the strategic direction of this plan will be incorporated into detailed implementation plans and service plans across a range of service providers and planners resulting in a collective impact approach," he explained.

Five key principles were developed in consultation with the community and experts in early childhood, and by researching strategic plans and legislation along with local, State and National data which will guide service delivery locally. These include:

- Child friendly spaces and places
- Children and families connected with the community for whole of life
- Children and families are healthy, well and safe
- Equal access and inclusion to services for children and families
- Collaborative partnerships that support children and families

An implementation plan contains a range of actions aimed at achieving the objectives of the Plan. The actions have been prioritised and will be implemented over the life of the Plan.

PR1860 8/6/16