

WHAT ARE SUPPORTED PLAYGROUPS?

Supported playgroups are playgroups run by a paid, qualified facilitator for families who need extra support, focusing on the wellbeing and development of both children and parents together.

Children are usually from birth to school age.

Many supported playgroups help families move into regular community playgroups when ready.

WHO CAN JOIN?

Families who may benefit include:

- ✓ CALD and refugee families
- ✓ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- ✓ Young parents and kinship carers
- ✓ Families facing isolation, disadvantage or mental health challenges
- ✓ Families where a parent or child has a disability or developmental concern

WHAT HAPPENS AT PLAYGROUP?

Groups usually meet once a week during school terms for about two hours.

Activities may include:

- ✓ Free play, songs and stories
- ✓ Simple craft and outdoor play
- ✓ Shared routines like “hello time” and “pack up”
- ✓ Visits from community workers (e.g. child health nurses, speech pathologists)
- ✓ Light snacks and healthy eating routines

WHAT DO FACILITATORS DO?

Facilitators are trained professionals who:

- ✓ Plan play-based activities
- ✓ Model warm, positive ways to interact with children
- ✓ Offer parenting tips in everyday language
- ✓ Check in with families about what they need
- ✓ Link families with local health, housing, education or support services

HOW DOES IT HELP?

PARENTS/CARERS

- ✓ Build friendships and feel less alone.
- ✓ Learn ways to support play, language and routines at home.
- ✓ Grow confidence in managing behaviour kindly.
- ✓ Discover local services and how to use them.

CHILDREN

- ✓ Practice sharing, turn-taking and playing with others
- ✓ Explore toys, books and activities that spark curiosity.
- ✓ Hear more songs and language to support speech and learning.
- ✓ Grow confidence to try new things.

A SAFE AND WELCOMING SPACE

- ✓ Child-safe venue with secure gates and checked toys
- ✓ Clear routines and guidelines about photos, allergies and safety.
- ✓ Quiet area for breastfeeding, naps or calm time.
- ✓ Welcoming to extended family and dads.
- ✓ Interpreters and bilingual workers help families feel included.
- ✓ Books, songs and toys reflect many cultures.

HOW TO JOIN?

There are a few ways to find out more about Supported playgroups including:

- Speak with your Maternal and Child Health nurse.
- Reach out to Bendigo Community Health Services which runs the state-government funded smalltalk Supported Playgroup.
- Contact your local council.

Scan the QR code
to watch a video on
supported playgroups

