



Kids Talk: Hearing from you

Information for children

Your parents or carers have been talking about how they can work together to take care of you and will have a meeting called mediation. Your opinion is important. They'd like to know what you think so they have agreed for you to meet to a professional. This professional is called a child specialist. We call these meetings 'Kids Talk'.

How Kids Talk works

In a Kids Talk meeting you will meet with the child specialist. They will ask you:

- what life is like for you
- what is going well
- what is not going well.

If you feel confused, worried or sad, you can let the child specialist know. You might draw, play fun games, or just chat about family, friends and school.

You might have something specific you would like your parents to know.

The child specialist will talk to your parents or carers about all of this and only share information you want to share. Your parents and carers use this information when they make decisions about your care.

How Kids Talk can help

Sometimes it can be hard to talk to your parents or carers about your family. Talking to a child specialist is a way for you to have a say. It can help to talk to someone about your feelings. It can also help your parents make decisions.

How we try to make Kids Talk easier for you

You don't have to speak to the child specialist if you don't want to. The child specialist works with lots of families and will do their best to make it easier for you. You might feel worried about what to say or not be sure what you think. This is okay.

You will be asked some questions at the end of the meeting about your feelings and about Kids Talk. You don't have to answer. Any information you give us can help us improve what we do.

Who else can help

The child specialist can also help by:

- telling someone in authority if they are worried about your safety
- connecting you with someone else to talk to.

More information

Kids Talk is part of Victoria Legal Aid's mediation service, called Family Dispute Resolution Service.

At a mediation, a trained mediator helps your parents or carers talk about family arrangements. If you go to Kids Talk, your parents or carers and the mediator can talk about what's important for you. This can help them make decisions.

Mediation is available to all types of families. We welcome all families, including rainbow families and caregivers of different generations and relationships. We try to make sure our service meets the needs of all families, including First Nations families.

If you would like more information, or to tell us how Kids Talk went for you, ask your parents how to get in touch with us.

Contact

Managing Child Specialist, Kids Talk

phone: (03) 9269 0500

email: fdrs@vla.vic.gov.au

web: www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/kids-talk

Contact the **Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800** or visit www.kidshelpline.com.au (for free 24/7 telephone and online counselling for young people)

