families working together
with fun and free activities

HIPPY
Operations guide

HIPPY
Australia
Families Learning Together
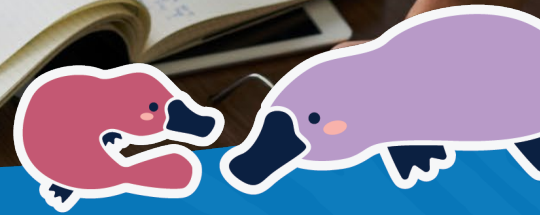
Acknowledgment of Country

The Brotherhood of St. Laurence acknowledges the
Traditional Custodians of the land and waterways on which
our organisation operates.

We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Elders past, and present.

Here is the land
(touch the ground)

Here is the sky
(raise hands to the sky)

Here is my family,
hand in hand
(join hands)

To acknowledge the traditional
custodians of this land

Contents

Section 1
Introduction to HIPPY

Welcome to HIPPY

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a two-year, home-based early learning and parenting program. HIPPY is voluntary and free for families, and includes activity packs, storybooks, and other learning resources. It is designed to be integrated into daily life, with families spending around 10-15 minutes a day doing play-based educational activities together.

HIPPY was first developed in 1969 by a team of researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Led by Professor Avima Lombard, the program was then designed for mothers and their pre-school children from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Today, HIPPY operates in several countries including Australia, Argentina, Canada, Finland, New Zealand, and the United States.

The general 'HIPPY approach' is informed by evidence that children's earliest and most powerful learning comes from their family. Encouraging literacy, language, and numeracy in early childhood equips children for a positive transition to school and success in lifelong learning and also promotes a positive learning environment at home.

Through HIPPY, parents and carers are supported to foster their child's love of learning using play-based activities. Parents are also supported to become advocates in their child's education by expanding their understanding of their child's development and learning, as well as the expectations of formal education, such as preschool and school.

In addition to improved learning outcomes for children, the program also offers some parents and carers a paid and supported pathway to employment as Tutors. Tutors help other parents become comfortable teaching the curriculum through a peer-to-peer model. As part of the two-year role, Tutors are offered training pathways tailored to their personal employment and training goals.

Children start HIPPY in the two years prior to starting full-time formal schooling. Our Sublicence and Funding Agreement explains how this relates to state and territory government school age requirements. The journey of each HIPPY participant is recorded for the duration of the program. The information we gather helps measure the success of the program and analyse how it creates positive change for children, families, and communities.

About HIPPY Australia

The Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL) first delivered HIPPY in 1998, at a hall in Fitzroy, Melbourne. BSL holds the exclusive licence from HIPPY International to operate HIPPY in Australia.

HIPPY in Australia has been funded by the Australian Government since 2009, currently through the Department of Social Services (DSS). DSS is also responsible for the selection of HIPPY sites, program administration and managing the grant agreement with BSL, which sets out several milestones to be met by HIPPY Australia.

HIPPY Australia, based in Melbourne, is responsible for program sublicensing. HIPPY Australia grants sublicences to established not-for-profit organisations (subsequently referred to as 'Providers') to implement the program. HIPPY Australia provides program materials, curriculum, training, and organisational support to sites.

The benefits of this model include:

HIPPY Australia works with families that reflect the diversity of our broader society, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, families born overseas, and families that speak a language other than English at home.

Between 2009 and 2011, the number of HIPPY sites progressively increased from 9 to 50, with 50 sites fully operational in 2011. From 2014, DSS provided funding for 50 more HIPPY sites with a focus on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. Since 2016, HIPPY has been delivered in these 50 First Nations communities across Australia.

As of 2024, the HIPPY Australia network encompasses 100 sites, partnering with local Providers to reach over 4,500 families annually in urban, regional, rural and remote communities.

About this guide

This Operations Guide supports HIPPY Australia's Coordinators, Line Managers and other HIPPY Provider staff to deliver the program in your local community. The Operations Guide is one of several foundational documents that form the HIPPY Australia Manual, which together summarise the core components and practices of our program. The information contained here also references more detailed HIPPY guides, procedures and policies stored on our learning management system.

To get the most out of the Operations Guide, we recommend staff use the digital copy stored on the learning management system. This ensures that sites are accessing the most up to date information and can make the most of interactive links embedded throughout the guide.

Refer to this document at any stage on your HIPPY journey.

The HIPPY Australia manual

The 'HIPPY Manual' refers to the series of documents outlining how to run the HIPPY program, as well as our program requirements. It includes (but is not limited to) the:

- HIPPY Operations Guide (this guide)

- Sublicence and Funding Agreement

The Sublicence and Funding Agreement is the legally binding document that lays out the operational requirements of each site. It also includes information on their target number of families to enrol and retain, catchment area, funding amounts and schedules, as well as the main roles of the Coordinator and Tutor. Each site will have its own Sublicence and Funding Agreement with HIPPY Australia, signed by an authorised person (most often a CEO or senior manager within the organisation).

- Gatherings Handbook

This handbook provides guidance for Coordinators and Tutors on how to plan and deliver HIPPY Gatherings.

- ETO Manual

The ETO Manual supports HIPPY Providers to use ETO, including what data is required, how to submit it and access reports, and the guidelines for data collection.

- Provider Guide to HIPPY Network Quality Assurance (currently being updated)

This guide explains how quality assurance is undertaken in HIPPY, including the quality cycle, outcomes, standards, as well as indicators and information on all elements of the framework.

- HIPPY Australia Critical Incident Guidelines

These guidelines support HIPPY Providers to understand what they must do when a critical incident occurs as part of the HIPPY program (in addition to their organisation's own critical incident policy).

- HIPPY Style Guide and Guidelines

HIPPY's Style Guide and Guidelines describes the HIPPY Australia brand, values, visual elements, and how to use them. This guide provides an overview of the brand's philosophy and a toolkit of assets that are to be used when developing materials.

The guide is to be used by HIPPY Australia when creating resources, communications, advertising, or promotional material, and sets out the rules of co-branding and use of the brand at both a national and a local site level.

- HIPPY Australia Media Policy (currently being updated)

The media policy is currently being updated. It aims to ensure that all interactions with the media align with the organisation's mission, values and strategic goals, while promoting accurate, timely, and transparent communication about the HIPPY programs and initiatives.

> - HIPPY Australia will notify sites when documents flagged as 'being updated' are finalised and published.
>
> - The HIPPY Manual is updated to ensure that changes related to the program as well as policies and procedures reflect the most current information.
> To ensure that you are using the most up to date documents, you should always access them via HIPPY's learning management system (details covered in 'the HIPPY Australia resources' below).

The HIPPY Australia resources

HIPPY Australia provides access to digital resources to support program delivery. These are the learning management system, the online library, and the 'Efforts to Outcomes' database.

If you have trouble accessing any of these, please contact the ETO Helpdesk.

The learning management system (LMS)

The LMS, as it is commonly known, is an online platform used to deliver training to HIPPY staff across Australia, particularly those in site roles such as Coordinators and Tutors. For example, there are mandatory program delivery modules for all new Coordinators to complete before in-person preservice Coordinator training, as well as cultural competency modules with an Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and CALD focus. All Line Managers, Coordinators, and Tutors receive an LMS login upon starting with HIPPY.

For more information about the specific functions and responsibilities of HIPPY site staff, refer to **Section 2** > Staffing, training and development

You can access the LMS at https://bsl.instructure.com/login/canvas

Ensure you use Chrome as your internet browser when accessing the LMS, as other browsers may not support its videos or interactive features.

The HIPPY online library

Accessed through the LMS, the online library is the first port of call for HIPPY staff to access up-to-date information. The library contains key documents, from curriculum activity packs to manuals and guides. We recommend that, rather than saving documents on your desktop, you use the online library to source the most current information and versions of our forms.

Note: Coordinators and Line Managers are provided access to the LMS on commencing with HIPPY and automatically enrolled in the online library.

After staff login to the LMS, the HIPPY online library tile is visible on their dashboards.

Efforts to Outcomes database (ETO)

ETO is HIPPY Australia's performance management system, which measures the program's impact on families and communities and provides evidence for future service delivery improvements and funding submissions. ETO is designed to reflect the importance of measuring outcomes with data that demonstrates the efforts of HIPPY staff and the impact on families and Tutors against the Outcome Areas indicated below.

Throughout the HIPPY year, Coordinators are regularly required to enter program data into ETO, while Line Managers are required to submit biannual reports. It is the responsibility of Line Managers to provide support and supervision to Coordinators to ensure the input of quality data and that all required data is submitted. On joining HIPPY, Coordinators and Line Managers will be provided with a personal ETO login.

The collection of timely and accurate data in ETO assists sites to improve the delivery of HIPPY. Reports can help monitor the progress of families, organise Gatherings and home visits, plan recruitment and retention strategies, support Tutor development, and more.

You can access the ETO login page at https://secure.etosoftwareau.com/NewLogin.aspx

Foundations of HIPPY in Australia

The delivery of the HIPPY Australia program is informed and shaped by our values, principles, and core features, which guide our strategic vision now and into the future.

The Outcome Areas, Guiding Principles, and Five Essential Features are the foundations of HIPPY.

Outcome Areas

The Outcome Areas drive our purpose. There are four Outcome Areas, each of which aims to bring about change and provide measurable benefits to our HIPPY participants. Each site collects and records data in ETO which is used to measure program achievements. The four Outcome Areas are listed below.

Table: Four Outcome Areas

Outcome Area	Aim	Benefits
Children	Develop their love for learning early	• Strengthens the relationship between a child and their parent or carer • Encourages a love of learning • Increases the likelihood that children enjoy and do well at school • Promotes language, listening, and concentration skills • Builds children's self-esteem and confidence in learning
Families	Engage in their child's learning by building their confidence, skills, and knowledge	• Spend quality time as a family • Create a positive learning environment at home • Improve understanding of how their child develops and learns • Be actively involved in their child's education • Build the confidence to apply these skills to other children
Training & employment	Employ parents and carers as Tutors and build their capacity through training, goal setting, and professional development opportunities	• Two-year part-time employment with HIPPY • Receive regular on-the-job training and support from a Coordinator • Understand early child development and education • Build knowledge of local community services • Assess opportunities and funding for training and professional development • Increase confidence in working with families
Communities	Engage families in their local communities	• Build social connections, including time spent with other HIPPY families • Increase connection with community • Establish knowledge of local services

The Guiding Principles

Our Guiding Principles inform how HIPPY is delivered across Australia, and ensures that each site stays true to the program's values and aims.

HIPPY's Nine Guiding Principles

1. Children can learn and be supported to reach their full potential

We believe that with consistent support, encouragement, and by building on existing strengths, all children will be supported to achieve their full potential.

2. Children thrive when we respect their voice and agency

We recognise children as active participants in their own learning and, to that end, provide opportunities for them to have a say in their learning. This empowers and engages children to develop a love for and drive their own learning.

3. All parents and carers want the best for their children

We believe that parents and carers seek success for their children in learning and in life. Parents and carers are encouraged to seek support to enable them to feel confident in their ability to prepare and parent their children.

4. Parents and carers are the first and continuous educators of their child

Parents and carers are actively involved in the education of their children as their first teachers and can be strong advocates for their children's learning.

5. Providing parents and carers with tools, information, techniques and resources can help to guide their children's learning

HIPPY provides supports that enable parents and carers to be actively involved in their children's lives, educational experiences and communities.

6. Parents and carers can support and learn from each other

HIPPY connects families with each other to provide valuable support, assist parents and carers to build community and facilitate greater social inclusion.

7. Family learning is enriched when First Nations culture is recognised and celebrated

HIPPY believes that all children deserve to learn about our ancient country and the rich culture of First Nations people. By embedding First Nations culture into a family's learning, HIPPY supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's sense of identity, as well as promote a culture of understanding and respect towards First Nations people.

8. Families can thrive when their culture is acknowledged, included and respected

HIPPY believes that culture is a fundamental part of identity and is important for children and families to understand, accept and celebrate the cultural background they descend from. Celebrating and sharing culture allows children to build respectful relationships and aids in forming their self-identity from their own culture being celebrated.

9. Connecting to their community can build the capabilities of families when caring for and educating their children

HIPPY believes that when parents and carers are offered pathways into community participation, connections with local services, and informal support networks, children's lifelong outcomes are improved.

The Five Essential Features

The Five Essential Features are the core components of the program that are found in every HIPPY program across the globe. They are designed to encourage participation of families from all walks of life.

In Australia, there are Five Essential Features, these are:

1.   HIPPY is a two-year program

HIPPY is a free, two-year program that runs in step with local school schedules (30 weeks a year), incorporating breaks during end-of-term holidays. Children start HIPPY in the two years prior to starting full-time formal schooling - usually around the time they turn three.

Two years give families time to discover their child's strengths, areas where they need support, and how they learn. Children gain skills and confidence in learning at their own pace and in their own home and local community.

2.   Parents and carers are employed as Tutors

Parents and carers who are currently doing HIPPY with their child or have recently completed the program can be employed as Tutors. They are paid and trained to demonstrate the activities and support parents in working through the curriculum with their children.

3.   Role play is the primary method of delivery to families

Role play is a powerful learning tool that allows participants to practise teaching in a supported environment and encourages experiencing activities from different perspectives. Tutors and parents role play each activity before HIPPY parents and carers work through them with their child. One person takes on the role of the parent, and the other plays the child.

Role play is used during Tutor training, home visits, and at Gatherings.

## 4.   Home visits and Gatherings are integral

Tutors provide peer support to families in their home or another familiar environment where families feel comfortable. The safety and security of home fosters a great learning environment for children. Home visits allow parents to discuss their HIPPY journey one-on-one with their Tutor.

Gatherings, usually held at a community venue, are an opportunity for parents and carers to get together, share their experiences of HIPPY, build relationships with each other, enjoy enrichment activities, and do HIPPY in small groups.

5.   Everywhere Learning

Skills that children learn and develop through HIPPY activities can be applied to everyday situations, other places and with other family members. When this happens, it is called 'Everywhere Learning'.

Coordinators and Tutors support families at home visits and Gatherings by brainstorming different strategies and settings to introduce and integrate learning opportunities into daily life.
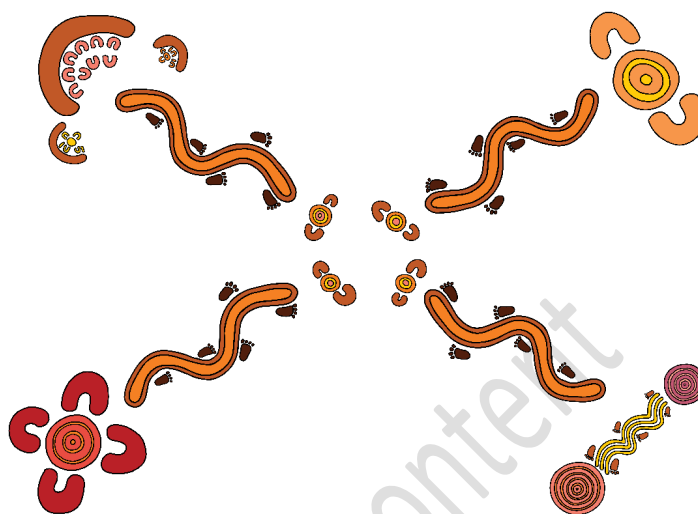
Section 2
How HIPPY Works
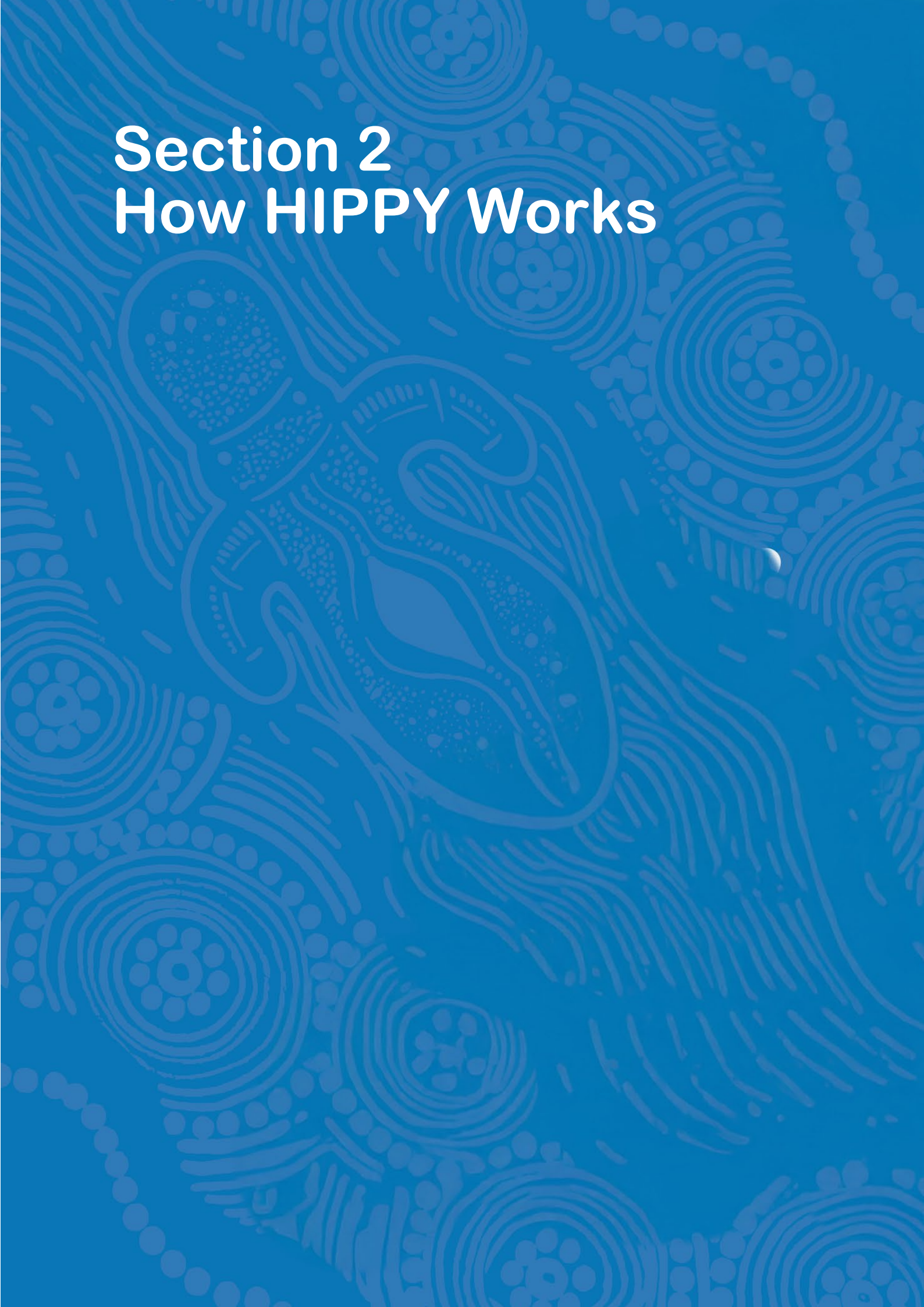
HIPPY in Australia

In Australia, the HIPPY program is licensed to BSL. 'Providers' are not-for-profit organisations experienced in working with children and families that deliver HIPPY in their local area/s. These providers have been selected due to their commitment to and understanding of their local communities, and their alignment to HIPPY Australia's values.

BSL then contracts the responsibility for running HIPPY to Providers through a sublicence that operates as a funding and service agreement. Under the agreement, Providers must recruit staff and families. The agreement also specifies how the program works in an operational sense, from staffing to setting up your site and recruiting and retaining families. It also covers critical aspects of delivery, such as the delivery cycle, home visits, and Gatherings, our curriculum, and approach to learning.

The following figure illustrates the relationship between HIPPY, our Providers, and Site staff.

Figure 1 - HIPPY Australia model
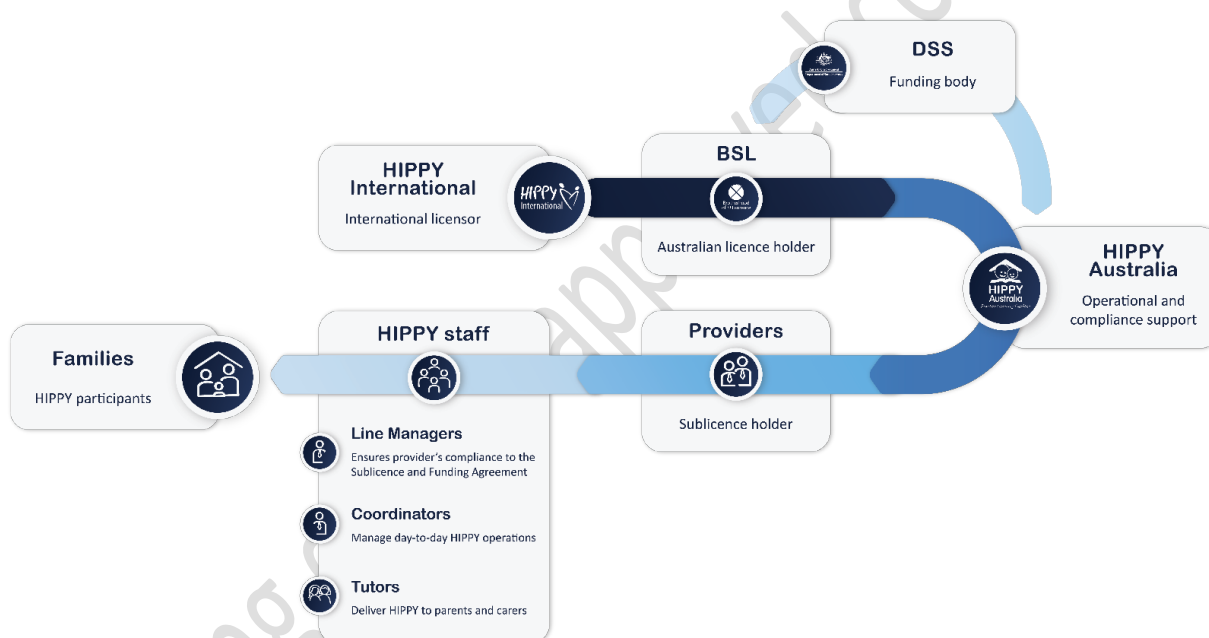
Staffing, training, and development

Three main roles make up HIPPY Australia's site staff. Each of our sites are run by HIPPY Australia Providers, who appoint a Line Manager and employ a Coordinator and several Tutors to deliver the program.

Line Managers

Line Managers are appointed by HIPPY Australia Providers to oversee the implementation of the Sublicence and Funding Agreement at their site. A Line Manager is usually an existing employee of the Provider who is selected to take on the role of supervising the HIPPY Coordinator.

Key responsibilities and duties

Ensure that the Sublicence and Funding Agreement and the HIPPY provider's obligations under this agreement are implemented and adhered to in full, including child safety, staff compliance checks, and critical incidents

- Facilitate networking, such as developing links and opportunities for Coordinators to build relationships with local community and other services
- Support and develop Coordinators in their role to manage the day-to-day delivery of HIPPY
- Quality assurance and reporting through ETO as required by HIPPY Australia
- Set up, engage, and chair the advisory group.

Coordinator supervision

Line Managers must schedule regular monthly supervision with Coordinators. This includes:

- discussing ETO reports and collaborating with Coordinators to monitor and plan for engaging and retaining families
- discussing and organising professional development opportunities for Coordinators
- discussing and approving professional development opportunities for Tutors, such as traineeships, certificates, or short courses
- monitoring program delivery data on ETO and completing Coordinator reports for HIPPY Australia
- discussing budgets, including allocation of any variable funds available.

Coordinators

Coordinators manage the day-to-day operations of each local HIPPY program. They recruit families and engage them in HIPPY, train and supervise the Tutors, and link HIPPY to the community, early childhood education services, schools, and other agencies. The role has a broad remit, combining people management and training, technical reporting, early childhood education, family support, community engagement, administration, and governance.

Key responsibilities and duties

- Employ, train, and supervise Tutors, including **child safety and critical incidents**
- Recruit and retain families
- Provide additional support to families, such as referrals to other services as needed
- Plan and conduct Gatherings and associated enrichment activities
- Deliver according to the Outcome Areas, Guiding Principles, and Five Essential Features
- Collect and input program data in ETO
- Attend advisory group meetings

Preservice Coordinator training

We provide group preservice Coordinator training at regular intervals throughout the year, which includes face-to-face and online modules. Training costs are met by the site's provider in accordance with their Sublicence and Funding Agreement.

Preservice Coordinator training covers all aspects of managing and delivering the HIPPY program, including:

• the HIPPY foundations

• the role of Coordinators

• recruiting, enrolling, and engaging families

• working with Tutors – managing, supervising, and training

• role play as an instructional tool

• program delivery through home visits and Gatherings

• quality improvement, record keeping, and program monitoring.

Tutors

Tutors are employed by HIPPY for two years to deliver the program to families. They are either parents or carers currently doing the program with their child or have taken part in the program within the past 12 months. The role is designed to help parents and carers build their skills and capacity to move on to other employment and/or further study.

Key responsibilities and duties

• Adhere to **child safety and critical incident policies and procedures**

• Visit families at home to work through and role-play the activities

• Establish and maintain strong working relationships with families, acting as the point of contact between families and their HIPPY Coordinator

• Regularly collect and document feedback from families

• Collect samples of children's work (using photos and videos)

• Assist with planning and coordinating Gatherings

• Participate in supervision, P2P, and development and training opportunities

Line Managers, Coordinators, and Tutors should refer to their respective training courses on the LMS for a more detailed description of their roles.

Site facilities and operational resources

The following provides an overview of what is required to resource the program. It is necessary to factor in adequate workspace and provisions for staff when setting up your site.

To ensure the success of HIPPY in your community, facilities (office/s, training spaces, and so on) should be in your local catchment area. At a minimum, Gatherings are to be held in the catchment area as defined in your Sublicence and Funding Agreement.

Each site requires:

- fortnightly access to a large room to run HIPPY Gatherings

- access to suitable spaces for training and supervision

- desks for HIPPY staff (with privacy and adequate space)

- a work mobile phone

- a computer

- access to a stable internet connection

- a printer

- a scanner

- a filing and record-keeping system

- storage space for HIPPY materials.

Working with families

Recruitment

Engaging families is the first step towards enrolling them in the HIPPY program.

When it comes to identifying families that would benefit most from participating, HIPPY Australia developed the 'Priority of Access Criteria'. These criteria are also outlined in each site's Sublicence and Funding Agreement stipulates that **65% of families** recruited must meet the following conditions:

    i)   They **have not** completed HIPPY before.

    ii)   They meet **one or more** of the Priority of Access Criteria:

- The household holds a Health Care Card

- The HIPPY child is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

- The HIPPY child resides in out-of-home care

- The household has no income, or are receiving a form of government support payment as their primary source of income

- The HIPPY family is a single-parent family

- The HIPPY child resides with a carer (that is, not a parent)

- The main language spoken at home by the HIPPY child is not English

- The HIPPY child has a developmental delay or disability and can engage positively in HIPPY

- The parent or carer lives with a disability or long-term health condition.

The remaining 35% of families are only required to meet the essential eligibility criteria of living in a site's catchment and commencing HIPPY two years before full-time formal schooling.

Coordinators should use a wide range of promotional and recruitment strategies and document, monitor, and evaluate the success of each through their site's recruitment plan. Additionally, they should always be on the lookout for families who may benefit from the HIPPY program.

Coordinators should also use all their networks, opportunities, and other services and agencies to recruit families. Recruitment is most successful when families are actively engaged in learning about HIPPY through their networks and contacts. Families may need to hear about the program several times and in several contexts before they decide to enrol.

For more information on the promotional materials available to support the recruitment of families, visit the **LMS >** media and promotion > promotional materials: brochures, flyers, posters, postcards.

Keys to recruitment

Coordinators should:

- determine their site's catchment area (found in the Sublicence and Funding Agreement)

- be aware of and recruit to the Priority of Access Criteria

- be aware of enrolment cut-off date as per their site's Sublicence and Funding Agreement

- ensure all children can participate in HIPPY for two years before commencing full-time formal schooling and are developmentally ready for the HIPPY curriculum (refer to the table below)

- recruit a new Age 3 cohort each year per the target numbers outlined in your Sublicence and Funding Agreement

- ensure children participating in Age 4 have completed Age 3

- start the recruitment process early. Collect expressions of interest throughout the calendar year and commence active recruitment in the last quarter of the previous year

- involve Tutors in the recruitment process. Tutors have HIPPY experience and can promote the program to interested families. Where applicable, consider the use of enhancement funding to extend Tutor working hours so they can attend local community events and services to promote HIPPY

- be intentional when involving the Tutors. It is critical to use consistent messaging to promote the program. One way to ensure this is by planning an enrichment topic for Tutor training focused on recruitment and program promotion. Brainstorm key messages and create a document for everyone to use when speaking with families.

The table below is a ready reference for age eligibility criteria across various states and union territories in Australia.

Table: HIPPY Australia eligibility by age

STATE AND TERRITORY	AGE
Tasmania	Aged three **on or before** 1 January
Australian Capital Territory	Aged three **before** 30 April
Victoria	Aged three **before** 30 April
South Australia	Aged three **before** 1 May
Northern Territory	Aged three **on or before** 30 June
Western Australia	Aged three **on or before** 30 June
Queensland	Aged three **on or before** 30 June
New South Wales	Aged three **on or before** 31 July

Strategies for recruitment

Parent- and carer-focused strategies

- Word of mouth is one of the most powerful tools for attracting new families, so encourage current and past families to spread the word within their local networks

- Tutors are best placed to recruit new families as both parents in the program and local residents

- Hold an information session after a school assembly or at school/preschool pick-up

- Visit local activity groups such as preschools, playgroups, parent education classes, or language classes

- Share social media posts about recruitment on community Facebook groups

- Give out flyers and brochures at the end of kindergarten, preschool, or school

- Bring an enthusiastic parent or Tutor along to promotional activities

- Organise a 'have a go' session or expo at a family-friendly venue to showcase HIPPY, the HIPPY model, and the curriculum. This is also an opportunity to meet and hear stories from Tutors and other parents

- Encourage enrolled families to promote the program to friends living in the catchment area

Community-focused strategies

- Develop collaborative partnerships with local service providers that support families, such as:
  - early childhood settings - preschools, childcare, occasional care, and playgroups
  - local health providers - maternal child health, community health, early childhood doctors, early intervention services
  - local community organisations - community neighbourhood houses, sports and/or recreation clubs, local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and groups, and migrant refugee support services.
- Hold information sessions for local service providers and formalise referral processes
- Ask local service providers to display your flyers and brochures
- Advertise on social media, in the local paper, or on community radio
- Set up a stall at local community events, the supermarket, or a park
- Have a sausage sizzle at a local early childhood service, school, or community house
- Use your site's HIPPY promotional materials to hand out to prospective families
- Put posters in the windows of local shops and community venues
- Be a visible presence in the community
- Consider creating a 'HIPPY uniform' such as a T-shirt or polo shirt for your staff to wear
- For more information about recruiting families, please visit the LMS > Recruitment and Retention Guide

Enrolling families

While recruitment involves talking to families and obtaining expressions of interest, enrolment is only complete once a family returns their enrolment form and formally commits to joining HIPPY. Families must be enrolled before the annual enrolment cut-off date.

When planning recruitment, sites carefully consider where families are living, any transport issues, and each families' capacity to undertake the program. This allows sites to identify families within the community who are most likely to be interested in enrolling and benefit from participating in HIPPY.

At enrolment, Coordinators should help families work through their enrolment form as needed. Coordinators should also revisit information provided to families and respond to any questions regarding:

- the roles and responsibilities of Tutors

- home visits and Gatherings

- the HIPPY tools (especially the importance of role play)

- expectations of participating in HIPPY

- confirming HIPPY is appropriate for the family

- reasons why there are some personal questions on the enrolment form

- the 'acknowledgement' and 'privacy' sections of the form so families understand what they are signing.

The following are additional benefits to Coordinators helping families complete their enrolment forms:

- conducting the home safety check while the enrolment form is being completed at the HIPPY family's home (for sites that don't have a safe home visiting policy, please visit the LMS > HIPPY Australia Guidelines for Developing a Safe Home Visiting Policy)

- finding out what families would like to achieve by doing HIPPY

- begin building a relationship with the HIPPY family, which will help later when allocating Tutors to families.

Coordinators should take the following materials to the enrolment visit:

- HIPPY Australia enrolment form

- an activity pack and storybook

- HIPPY shapes

- home visit and Gathering schedules

- a site brochure

- HIPPY provider documentation (if required)

Key messages for enrolment

Influencing factors for enrolment and participation in HIPPY

- HIPPY is a two-year, home-based, early learning and parenting program for families with young children

- It is voluntary and provided at no cost to families

- The program is supported by research showing that children's most powerful early learning comes from their family and getting a confident start at school sets them up for life

- Families enrol in HIPPY two years before their child start school (at around three years of age) and the program takes two years

- The delivery incorporates home visits and Gatherings

- Tutors schedule regular fortnightly visits (Age 3) or weekly visits (Age 4) with each family to role-play activities together

- Home visits can be either in a family's home or another place where the parent or carer and Tutor can run through activities together

- Families spend 10–15 minutes a day, five days a week, doing the activities with their child

- HIPPY Australia Providers offer some parents and carers paid employment as Tutors.

There are a range of situations, life experiences, and factors that may influence a family's interest and capacity to enrol and participate in HIPPY.

Sites have found that families enrolling in HIPPY are willing to:

- support their child's learning

- attend Gatherings

- have a Tutor visit at home or another convenient community space

- access transport if this is required to travel to Gatherings.

Sites have also found that families suitable for enrolment often:

- are new to the community

- express that they have not had positive education and learning experiences themselves

- are experiencing isolation

- identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

- are actively looking to increase connections in the community

- newly arrived in Australia

Retention

Once families have started HIPPY and are accustomed to how it operates, Coordinators and Tutors need to focus on keeping them engaged. Every family will participate in HIPPY according to their own needs, skills, and abilities. Strong, supportive HIPPY staff and parent and carer relationships are critical in retaining families, and both Coordinators and Tutors have a role to play.

Successful Coordinators are a trusted, knowledgeable link between families, the HIPPY provider, other HIPPY families, referral services such as local health, welfare, and family services, and government agencies. For their part, Tutors provide flexible, friendly, professional, trusting, and non-judgmental support to families.

Strategies for retaining families in the program

• Remember that some families will need to take a break from HIPPY for a variety of reasons (family illness, new baby, travel, moving to a new house, etc). During this time, the Coordinator or Tutor can maintain a connection with the family through regular phone calls or friendly text messages to check how they are going and offer support as required

• Use a range of tools to stay in contact with families. Many HIPPY sites find that their use of social media platforms (like Facebook), help keep families engaged in and informed about the program, and use it to pass on positive messages, share information and resources, and remind families of upcoming events

• Celebrate success stories, children's birthdays, and important cultural days at Gatherings and on closed social media forums.

• Provide regular positive feedback and use positive reinforcement strategies that focus on the strength and effort that parents put into HIPPY

• Encourage other family members, such as siblings and other adults, to get involved in the program, especially for parents who lack confidence about teaching their child

• Offer occasional incentives to attend Gatherings, including organising discounts to community events, gift vouchers, door prizes, and events especially for parents

• Build community by hosting both HIPPY-related and other events, such as extended family days, picnics during holiday periods, meeting at libraries, and so on

• Hold Gatherings that entice families to come and participate, such as meeting at a highly valued location or inviting an unusual or popular guest speaker

• Discuss with parents what they want to get out of the program for themselves and their children, and help them achieve these goals

• Remind families at regular intervals (including via Tutors) that HIPPY can be flexible to meet their individual learning needs and allay fears they have failed if they don't do HIPPY the 'right' way.

Community engagement

Community engagement is essential for the success of HIPPY, as reflected in Outcome Area 4, Communities. HIPPY communities experience a level of disadvantage and vulnerability usually associated with limited services and opportunities. It is therefore particularly important to provide an inclusive program that assists families reduce the barriers of isolation and connects parents with others in their community.

Attending Gatherings, for example is an opportunity for parents and carers to develop a network of friends. The positive impact of high engagement in the program then trickles down, with children whose parent or carer attends Gatherings shown to have greater developmental outcomes from HIPPY.1

Community engagement has many avenues in HIPPY, such as:

- inviting local services and/or subject matter experts (including parents and carers) to deliver enrichment at Gatherings

- holding joint events with other services

- referring families to local services

Feedback from parents and carers demonstrates that they benefit from HIPPY's engagement in, and with, the wider community.

In **2022**, data from the Family Outcomes ETO report, **92% of parents** stated they were more connected to their community because of HIPPY.

Referring families

Coordinators and Tutors assist parents and carers to understand their child's development, including initiating sensitive conversations and helping them navigate local services if and/or when necessary. As a generalist program, HIPPY complements the specialist support and services provided to parents and carers and their children.

Recording the referral effort by Coordinators and Tutors allows HIPPY Australia to inform DSS of issues within a community, analyse any trends, and advocate for services across Australia. Our referral data shows that families are predominantly referred to family support and mental health services, followed by medical practitioners

Networking with community services and programs

Line Managers and Coordinators network and work alongside a range of services within their organisation and community to support family engagement in HIPPY and referral to relevant local services. Early years' learning networks and services, schools, and health and community services enable an integrated approach for families. A coordinated effort leads to improved outcomes for both families and communities.

Referrals to other services and information about community resources were also reported by parents as contributing to engagement and retention in HIPPY.[2]

Early years networks

Establishing or joining an early years network supports successful program delivery in the community. This includes building referral pathways, connecting with other services, and implementing and operating the HIPPY Program within the catchment area.

As part of the HIPPY Sublicence and Funding agreement, the Coordinator and/or Line Manager are required to engage in a local Early Years Network (or similar) at least three times per year.

The purpose of attending is to seek advice and support on the successful operation of HIPPY in the local community, including:

Advise

Helping guide the growth and development of the program's delivery to meet the needs of the community.

Support

Encouraging and contributing to continuous service improvement.

Source: [1] Connolly, J & Mallett, S 2020, Changing children's trajectories: results of the HIPPY Longitudinal Study, Brotherhood of St. Laurence, p.7; p.52.

[2] Fatoumata Diallo Roost, Nicky McColl Jones, Malita Allan and Eric Dommers, 'Recruiting and retaining families' in HIPPY Final Report, 2014.

Connect

- Developing partnerships with services, community groups, early childhood, and family support programs.

- Supporting the recruitment and engagement of HIPPY families.

- Strengthening connections and accessibility between HIPPY families and local services.

Empower

Identifying and providing staff and families with opportunities to meaningfully engage in their communities and reach strong outcomes.

Program delivery

There are two main elements of HIPPY Australia's program delivery: home visits and Gatherings.

Home visits

Home visits provide regular opportunities for families to speak and build a positive relationship with their Tutor; review how families found the previous week's activities; discuss and role-play the upcoming week's activities; and receive tailored support that meets their needs.

At the first home visit, it is recommended that Tutors explain to families how HIPPY works, as well as their role in delivering the program. They also set up a regular visiting schedule, help families find appropriate space/s to do the activities, and make arrangements for contact if either party needs to change or cancel a home visit. In addition to role-playing activities, home visits are also a chance for Tutors to discuss with families how the previous week's activities went; complete the 'home visit form', and, when appropriate, collect the parent or carer's feedback form and a picture or sample of a child's work to take away.

Gatherings

Our 2019 HIPPY Longitudinal Study found that Parent and Carers' participation in Gatherings relates to improved development outcomes in the program for their child.

Gatherings are held at a place within the local catchment area that is conveniently located and, where possible, within walking distance or accessible by public transport for most families. While there are many similarities between Age 3 and Age 4 Gatherings, the main differences are:

Time

- As younger children generally attend the Age 3 Gatherings, they are usually shorter than Age 4 Gatherings.

- Age 4 Gatherings are longer to allow enough time to deliver the new activity pack.

Structure

- Age 3 Gatherings include 'learning together' activities that are specifically designed for parents and children to do together.

- Age 4 Gatherings include delivery of an Age 4 Activity pack to parents and carers, as well as supervised free play activities for any children attending.

Table: Breakdown of Gatherings

Age 3	Age 4
Family contact time is approximately 2-3 hours	Family contact time is approximately 1.5-2 hours long
Welcome	Welcome
Free play	Free play
'Learning together' activities	Activity pack delivery
Snack time (child-focused)	Sharing food (parent- and carer-focused)
Parent and carer enrichment	Parent and carer enrichment
Farewell	Farewell
Feedback from families	Feedback from families

For more information on how to run a Gathering, visit the LMS > Gathering Handbook.

HIPPY Australia's delivery cycle

HIPPY is delivered by Tutors to families during school terms through a cycle of home visits and Gatherings.

Coordinators will allocate families to their Tutors and organise their hours according to how many families each Tutor has. Tutors work an average of 30 hours a fortnight. They may be employed with flexible hours based on their allocated families and the training required. The following table shows the Tutor workload over a fortnight. It can also support them in mapping their fortnightly delivery schedule. The table is an example only, based on a Tutor with 12 families. Note that travel time or site visits may be longer than allocated.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that Coordinators provide support and training to their Tutors.

### Table: Age 3 Fortnightly contact hours for Tutors

Based on 12 families	Week 1	Week 2
Tutor training	3 hours	
Home visits	1 hour per family (12 hours)	
Travel time to home visits	2.5 hours	
Gatherings (Monthly)	-	2-3 hours Family Contact time
Supervision	30 minutes	30 minutes
Administration	1 hour	1 hour
Pathways to Possibilities (P2P)	-	1 hour
Weekly Total	**19 hours**	**5.5 hours**
Total f/Nightly hours	**24.5 hours**	

Table: Age 4 Weekly contact hours for Tutors

Based on 12 families	Week 1	Week 2
Tutor training	3 hours	3 hours
Home visits	1 hour per family (12 hours)	
Travel time to home visits	2.5 hours	
Gatherings (Fortnightly)		1.5-2 hours Family Contact time
Supervision	30 minutes	30 minutes
Admin & skill development	1 hour	1 hour
Pathways to possibilities		1 hour
WEEKLY TOTAL	**19 hours**	**8.5 hours**
Total f/nightly hours	**27.5 hours**	

Below are diagrammatic representations of the Age 3 and Age 4 delivery cycles over a term, for quick reference.

Figure: Age 3 delivery cycle
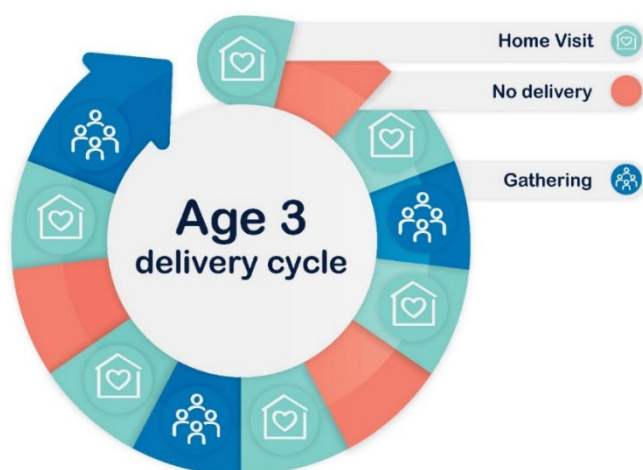
This diagram outlines the Age 3 program delivery cycle over a term.
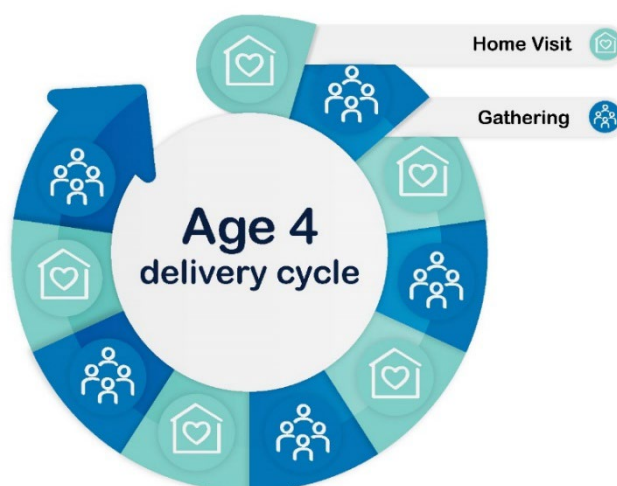
It includes:

- fortnightly home visits with pack delivery
- monthly Gatherings (no pack delivery).

Figure: Age 4 delivery cycle

This diagram outlines the Age 4 program delivery cycle over a term.

It includes:

- fortnightly home visits with pack delivery
- (alternating) fortnightly Gatherings with pack delivery.

Graduation

When families reach the end of their second and final year of HIPPY, sites celebrate the occasion with a graduation. Each celebration may look different within individual communities, but generally they involve a ceremony where children, as well as Tutors, parents and carers, receive certificates and enjoy some special food.

Other family members, siblings, and even special guests like the site's leadership staff and local MPs are encouraged to attend. Many sites like to incorporate graduation gowns and hats for the children, and music or entertainment. Sites may invite Age 3 families to attend to build excitement and retain them as participants through to the end of Age 4 when they will enjoy their own ceremony.

Graduation may be held in conjunction with an end-of-year celebration or may be a separate event.

The Coordinator generally manages the organisation of the graduation, supported by the Tutors.

As part of their professional development, Tutors may like to plan and manage certain elements of the graduation.

HIPPY's approach to learning

Exposure, opportunity and practice

The HIPPY approach to learning is based on 'experiencing' tasks rather than 'mastering' them. Above all, activities are designed to provide children with:

- exposure to fun, stimulating, and varied learning experiences

- the confidence to build new skills

- a positive learning environment that encourages them to have a go and feel safe while exploring

- the opportunity to learn new concepts and consolidate emerging skills through practice and repetition.

Children do not need to get an activity 'right' before moving on to another one. Coordinators and Tutors play a critical role in making parents comfortable with the idea of children learning by 'having a go' over doing things perfectly.

Creating a positive home learning environment

In positive learning environments, children become enthusiastic, resilient, and persistent learners who are keen to discover new information, feel confident to try new things, and safe to make mistakes and learn from them.

Coordinators should encourage Tutors to:

- create a positive learning environment at home with their own children

- model and talk about the 3Cs and behaviour-specific praise (BSP) with families

- share with other parents and carers about how their own children learn, are challenged by the activities, and what they do to overcome these challenges (such as simplifying, modifying or extending the activities to meet their child's needs).

Parent learning

Just like children, parents and carers learn at different rates and have different learning styles. Below, the 'parent learning tool' shows the stages that parents and carers usually reach when learning and using the HIPPY approach. The stages have no linear progression, and parents and carers may go back and forth between stages.

Parents and carers have built positive relationships with their child and Tutor when they:

- talk positively about doing HIPPY with their child
- talk openly about their HIPPY experiences with their Tutor (both positive and negative feedback)
- welcome their Tutor at home visits
- describe what they do to make sure their child is successful in HIPPY
- ask questions about how to ensure their child is successful in their learning
- feel comfortable with role play
- are willing to take on the role of parent or child during role play
- say they have fun with their child during the activities.

Parents and carers understand the HIPPY language and model when they:

- can match developmental terms with descriptions
- use developmental terms when describing what their child can learn in an activity
- can describe why role play is used in HIPPY
- use the 3Cs in role play with their Tutor
- report they are using the 3Cs with their child
- provide examples of BSP during role play.

Parents and carers have gotten into the HIPPY rhythm when they:

- set a regular time for home visits, are always available for them or advise when they can't make it
- can describe their routine for doing the activities with their child
- regularly attend Gatherings or advise if they can't make it
- have a HIPPY box and completed activity pack ready for their home visit
- complete most of or all the activities each week.

Parents and carers are learning more about their child when they:

- ask their Tutor questions about their child learning and development
- tune into their child's learning style
- talk about what they have tried with their child and what has worked or not
- give their Tutor feedback on motivation and encouragement strategies that have worked with their child

- talk about how they follow their child's lead

- talk about what their child enjoys and does not enjoy

- talk about what their child is good at and what they need help with

- motivate their child using BSP and encouragement

- have realistic expectations of their child's development.

Parents and carers are gaining confidence with activities when they:

- role-play as both parent and child

- rely less on scripting and use more natural conversation when doing activities with their child

- use more natural language and less script during role play with their Tutor

- talk to their Tutor about using materials other than the ones outlined in activities

- change the order of activities based on their child's interest and motivation.

Parents and carers are beginning to see opportunities for learning in everyday routines when they:

- swap a HIPPY activity for a home-based activity that shares the same learning

- ask their Tutors about other ideas for activities at home

- describe other activities they have done at home and discuss the learning in that activity.

Parents and carers support their child's Everywhere Learning across a range of everyday scenarios, such as:

- go to the swimming pool and use concepts like 'wet and dry', 'shallow and deep', 'fast and slow'

- encourage their child to count apples when they buy them at the supermarket

- name body parts and talk about actions like washing, scrubbing and cleaning during bath time

- talk to their child about what they see on the way to kindergarten, school or the shops

- give their child instructions to complete simple tasks at home

- read their child a book of the child's choice

- use what they learn in HIPPY with their other children.

The HIPPY curriculum

HIPPY teaches children foundational numeracy and literacy concepts while also developing their creative, social, emotional and physical skills, and connection to family and community through play and fun activities.

These activities are designed to build children's love of learning, confidence, and school-readiness.

The HIPPY curriculum is informed and guided by our HIPPY curriculum framework and contemporary learning approaches. HIPPY Australia aligns to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Australian National Curriculum (for school), and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children's voices

We recognise the importance of collecting feedback from children and using their ideas, views, and expertise to improve the program.

HIPPY Australia's Engaging Children's Voices in the Early Years Practice Guidelines (2019) was developed in conversation with HIPPY children and covers the steps required to meaningfully engage with young children. It also provides practical tips and tools to embed children's voices and child agency in the program.

To locate the report and other valuable resources, visit the **LMS >** Children's Voices.

Features of the curriculum

HIPPY Australia's curriculum encompasses the activity packs, storybooks and materials used during delivery, which include the HIPPY shapes and height chart. Coordinators are tasked with providing families with a 'HIPPY box' to collect and store their curriculum and materials.

HIPPY activities are fun and engaging, and, critically, deemed developmentally appropriate for children aged 3 and 4. Activities are easy and enjoyable, broken down into small, manageable steps for parents and carers to engage their child.

Each activity is designed to take around 15 to 20 minutes a day. The degree of difficulty and pacing are carefully graded over our two-year program. Our activity packs and storybooks are written with the aim of being accessible to families of all languages and/or cultural backgrounds. We understand the benefits of speaking and learning in first languages, and, where possible, encourage sites to deliver activities to families in their language. Further, in line with our Guiding Principles, the storybooks embrace and celebrate cultural diversity and also incorporate Australian landscapes and animals where possible.

All HIPPY materials are distributed and supplied free to sites at a quantity of each site's maximum enrolment target plus an additional eight to cover Tutor training and participant movement.

HIPPY box

HIPPY sites provide basic resources and materials so families can work through the activities together at home. Families are encouraged to store their HIPPY materials in a box or container, known as a 'HIPPY box'. Children are given the opportunity to decorate their HIPPY box early in the Age 3 activities.

HIPPY box supplies (and their distribution) will differ in every community, but could include:

- **binder or folder to store the HIPPY activity packs**

- **child-safe crayons or pencils in a variety of colours**

- **ruler**

- **glue**

- **pencil case.**

- **lead pencil/s**

- **acrylic paint and paintbrush**

- **child-safe scissors**

- **chalk**

The HIPPY Australia tools

Role play, the 3Cs, BSP, and Everywhere learning are all tools used to effectively deliver activity packs. This includes delivery with Tutors during tutor training as well as parents and carers at home visits and Age 4 Gatherings.

Role play

Tutors are trained on how to role play at Tutor training. Tutors then role play each activity with parents and carers, allowing them to practise and experience activities from the perspectives of both parents and children.

Some parents and carers may be shy or nervous about role-playing, but it is crucial for Coordinators and Tutors to establish it as a fun and regular element of delivery. This is because actively practising and engaging in activities noticeably improves a parent or carer's confidence and understanding when doing it later with their child. An effective way to ensure families understand the importance of role play is to introduce the concept early in the enrolment process, and even try role-playing with them before they commit to the program.

Why use role play?

As a method of delivery, role play offers learning and development opportunities for Tutors as well as parents and carers.

Table: Role play learnings for Tutors and parents, and carers

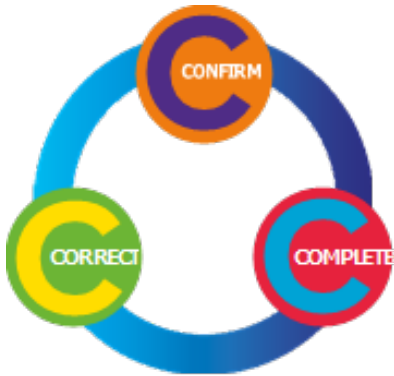| Tutors	Parents and carers
- Reflecting on the needs of both parents and children - Developing mentoring and relationship-building skills - Identifying materials needed for each activity - Practising and supporting parents and carers to use 3Cs and BSP	- Learning a new way of interacting with their child - Seeing the activity and learning from their child's perspective - Understanding more about the developmental capabilities of their child and identifying any modifications if needed - Identifying whether problems may arise when doing activities with their child - Identifying learning opportunities in everyday activities and routines ('Everywhere Learning') - Practising the 3Cs - Identifying and devising ways to deal with any literacy or language difficulties their child may experience

The role play sequence

The table below outlines the four steps involved in a role play sequence.

Table: Role play sequence for HIPPY learning activity

Step one	Step two	Step three	Step four
• Introducing the activity to parents and carers	• Role-playing the activity	• Reviewing	• Identifying opportunities for Everywhere Learning
• Talk about what their child can learn from the activity • Talk about the activity's icon • Discuss what materials are needed to complete the activity • Invite the parent or carer to choose a role (parent/child)	• Tutors and parents and carers take turns playing the parent and child • Swap roles • Practise BSP • Purposefully make some mistakes to practise the 3Cs	• Discuss how the role play went for each activity • Identify any problems & come up with ideas to solve them	• Practise extending learning in everyday activities or routines

The 3Cs

The '3Cs' stand for the three ways we respond to children when working through the activities. They can also be used when adults want to give children positive reinforcement while they are learning.


Many parents and carers need support when using the 3Cs as this way of responding may be quite new for them. Using the 3Cs guides parents to:

- be positive in the way they respond to their child's efforts

- encourage their child to, above all, just have a go

- create a safe place for children to make mistakes.

Children will hear a positive response when parents use the 3Cs. Even when the response is a correction, they will feel confident to move on and try again.

Below is an example of the 3Cs applied during a learning activity

Figure: Parent applying 3Cs
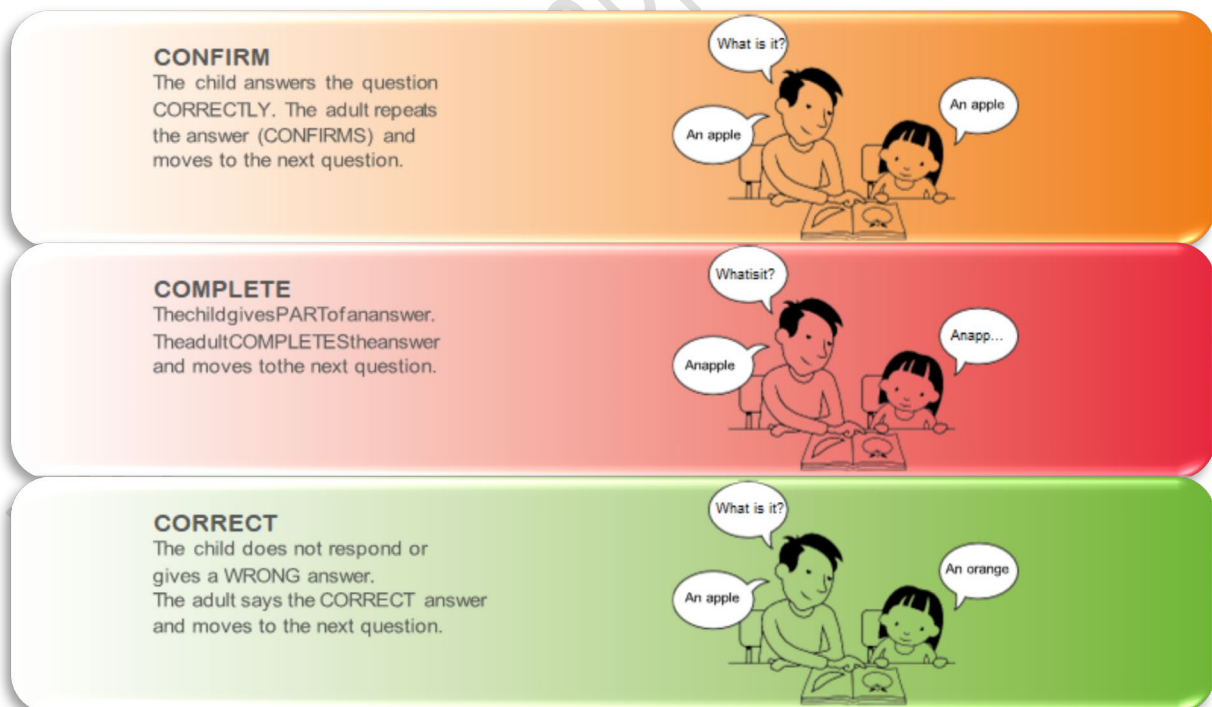
Behaviour-specific praise (BSP)

BSP is a method of encouraging children that makes it clear what they are being praised for, rather than making general yet positive statements like 'Well done!'. When children receive positive reinforcement for particular actions, their brains form connections that make them aware of what they are doing and encourages them to repeat that behaviour.

Table: BSP in action

| General praise	Behaviour-specific praise
Great job!	I noticed you kept trying hard even when the problem became difficult
I am proud of you	You took your time to think and answer all the questions I asked
You got them all right!	I like how you have been practising learning colours
You are so smart	Wow, you thought of a really creative story to share with me

Everywhere Learning

'Everywhere Learning' is a core HIPPY tool. Everywhere Learning refers to practising and reinforcing the learning from the HIPPY activities in everyday situations, other places, and with other people. The 'Everywhere Learning' sections in activity packs encourage Tutors and parents, and carers to think about other ways to practise and extend learning from the activities at home and in their community.

Tutors learn about Everywhere Learning in their ongoing Tutor training. Coordinators help Tutors brainstorm Everywhere Learning ideas to share with parents and carers, and support them to devise their own. Everywhere Learning is also a perfect topic for enrichment activities at Gatherings.

Each HIPPY activity includes suggested Everywhere Learning examples.

Section 3
Risk Management
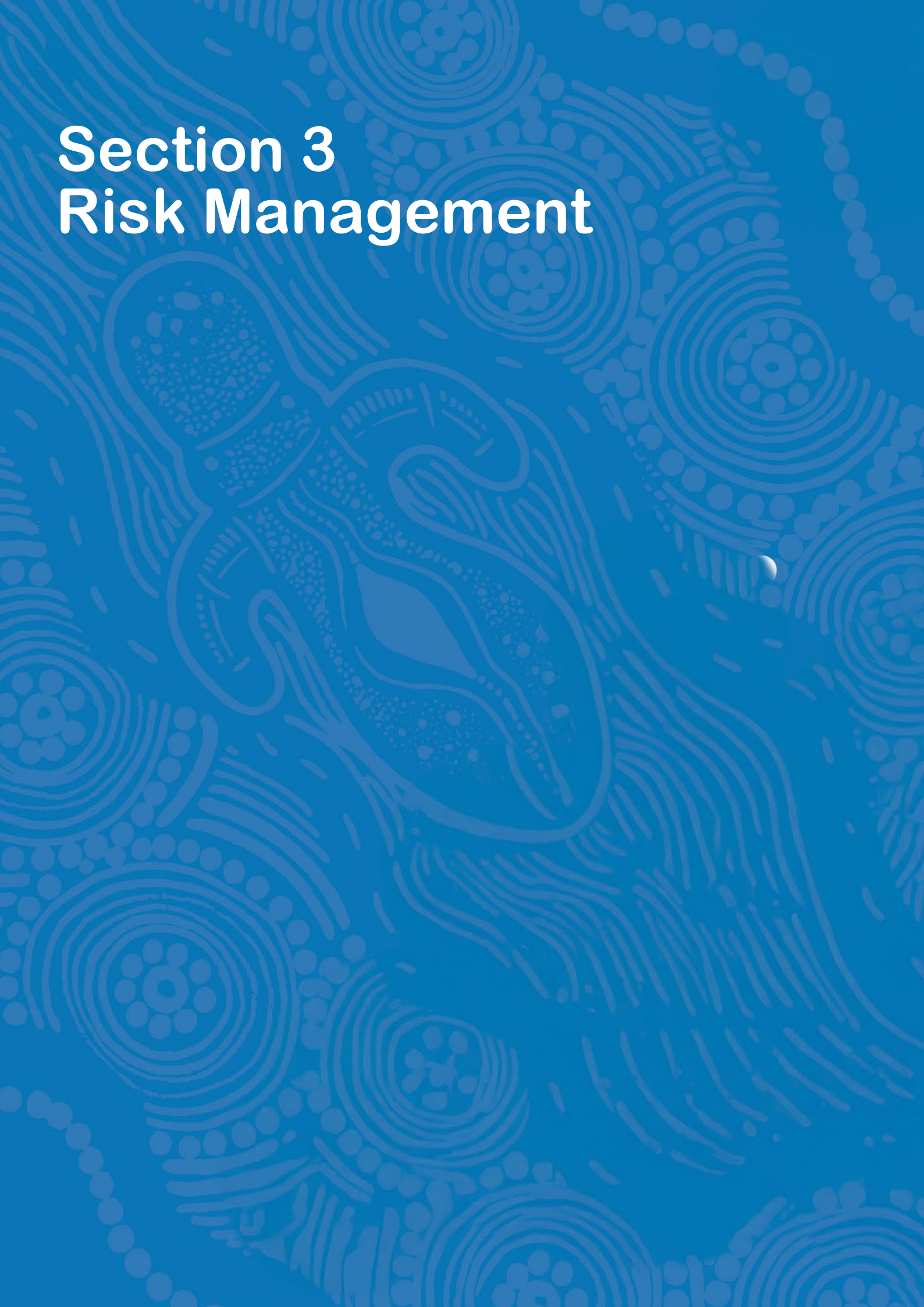
RISK MANAGEMENT

HIPPY Australia is dedicated to being a safe organisation for staff and participants. As outlined below, our risk management framework includes critical incident and safeguarding guidelines and policies which are informed not only by our legal obligations but also national and state standards as well as a moral duty of care.

Critical incidents

Critical incidents are defined in Providers' Sublicence and Funding Agreement as:

(a) A traumatic event, or the threat of such, which may cause stress, fear or injury to a Program Participant, the HIPPY Provider's Personnel or HIPPY Australia's Personnel, including (but not limited to):

    (i) severe verbal or psychological aggression or violence

    (ii) death, serious injury, missing children or Personnel, deprivation of liberty, assault, or sexual assault

    (iii) natural disasters.

(b) The theft or damage of property occurring in connection with the provision of the HIPPY Program.

(c) Matters relating to, or which may impact upon, child safety in the Catchment Area.

(d) The unauthorised access to or unauthorised disclosure or loss of:

    (i) personal information that the HIPPY Provider or its personnel holds;

    (ii) personal information of a program participant;

    (iii) staff records

    (iv) information recorded in the ETO Database; or

(e) Actual or suspected instances of fraud.

Critical incident guidelines

HIPPY Australia's Critical Incident Guidelines encompass critical incidents or the threat of a critical incident, which causes extreme stress, fear, injury or illness to HIPPY Australia and/or HIPPY provider employees and volunteers that contribute to the delivery of HIPPY.

As each critical incident or data breach is unique, the aim of HIPPY Australia's Critical Incident Guidelines and any 'critical incident plan' is to provide a general framework to be followed by sites when a critical incident occurs.

> Under sections 2.4, 2.9, 15.2 and 15.3 of their Sublicence and Funding Agreement, Providers are required to manage and report critical incidents.
>
> For more information, visit the **LMS >** Critical Incident Guidelines.

Critical incident procedure

Providers **must** report any critical incident to HIPPY Australia, including all reasonable details, within two working days.

Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, it may be reported by either the Coordinator or Line Manager as appropriate. Providers must manage critical incidents in accordance with our Critical Incident Policy as well as their organisation's own critical incident policy.

While HIPPY Australia Providers are required to adhere to the HIPPY Australia Critical Incident Policy, in the first instance, Providers should follow their own critical incident policy. It is therefore essential that each provider has a critical incident policy in place. HIPPY Australia has developed a document that provides an overview of some key areas to consider when developing or reviewing your own organisation's critical incident policy.

For more information, visit **the LMS >** Provider Guidelines to Support the Development or Review of a Critical Incident Policy

Safeguarding for Children and Vulnerable People

Together with BSL, HIPPY Australia is especially committed to child safety. We consider it among our core responsibilities to prioritise the wellbeing and protection of children and vulnerable people in all our sites.

'Safeguarding' describes the measures implemented to protect the health, wellbeing and human rights of individuals. Such measures are designed to support children, young people and vulnerable adults in particular to live free from abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.

In the context of HIPPY Australia, safeguarding measures include preventing, reporting and responding to the harm or abuse of children, young people and vulnerable people involved in our HIPPY communities, at our sites and the HIPPY Australia office.

Under each Providers' supervision, every HIPPY employee must fulfill their responsibility to exercise duty of care and safeguard the wellbeing of children and vulnerable people. Any behaviour violating child protection and safeguarding laws is strictly prohibited, and a policy is in place to terminate the employment of those convicted of serious offences and/or child-related offences.

> *All reported allegations and safety issues will be treated with utmost seriousness and promptly addressed. HIPPY Australia is bound by legal and moral obligations to promptly notify authorities in cases where there are substantial concerns regarding a child's safety.*

We aim to ensure the safety of all children and vulnerable people within our HIPPY communities. HIPPY Australia has developed clear processes and guidelines that Providers must abide by, as stated in their Sublicence and Funding Agreement and the current relevant legislation.

All Provider staff, volunteers and affiliates have a responsibility to promote and provide an environment in which children and vulnerable people are encouraged to speak up when they are uncomfortable or concerned.

This includes:

- recognising that the safety of children is everyone's responsibility

- following your provider organisation's incident reporting process to immediately report allegations of abuse, harm, exploitation or neglect.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

HIPPY Australia adheres to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The National Office for Child Safety introduced principles to establish a uniform national approach to organisational cultures that promote the safety and well-being of children. These principles are known as the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (the National Principles), which have been endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments.

The National Principles are designed to allow flexibility in implementation, recognising the variety of organisation types, sizes and capacities. By implementing the National Principles, Commonwealth entities are aligning their approaches to child safety and therefore providing children the same level of safety, regardless of which entity they interact with.

The National Principles are:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.

2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.

7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Victorian Child Safe Standards

As the HIPPY contract owner, BSL is required to oversee the implementation of the National Principles according to Victorian legislation. The **Victorian Child Safe Standards** are consistent with the National Principles but include an additional standard on cultural safety.

The 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards are:

1. Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.

3. Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously.

4. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

5. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

6. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.

8. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

9. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

10. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

11. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Defining key terms

As safeguarding is at the forefront of HIPPY Australia's approach to operations and the delivery of the program, it is important to describe, in plain English, the meaning of keywords used in this context that have not yet been addressed.

Child

'Child' means an individual under the age of 18. 'Children' is a group of individuals under the age of 18.

Vulnerable person

'Vulnerable person' refers to an individual under the age of 18, or an individual aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation for any reason, including age, physical or mental illness, trauma or disability, pregnancy, the influence or past or existing use of alcohol, drugs or substances or any other reason.

'Vulnerable people' refers to a group of vulnerable persons.

Child-related personnel

'Child-related personnel' refers to the officers, employees, contractors (including subcontractors), agents and volunteers of the provider involved with any of the HIPPY provider's obligations under their Sublicence and Funding Agreement (including the provision of the HIPPY program) who, as part of that involvement, may interact with children, have access to children's data or whose work is paid (including in part) with HIPPY funding.

Legislation

'Legislation' means a provision of a statute or subordinate legislation of the Commonwealth, or of a state, territory or local authority.

Relevant Legislation

'Relevant legislation' refers to legislation in force in any jurisdiction where any part of the HIPPY provider's obligations under this agreement (including the provision of the HIPPY Program) may be carried out.

Abuse, harm, neglect, or exploitation

Child abuse can take many forms and occur in many different settings. It can have lifelong and devastating impacts.

Forms of child abuse include:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16
- physical violence against a child

- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child

- serious neglect of a child.

'Vulnerable person abuse' is any knowing, intentional, or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or risk of harm to a vulnerable person.

Forms of abuse against vulnerable people include:

- inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm

- threats of or actual violence, such as verbal, emotional, or social abuse

- cultural or identity abuse, such as racial, sexual, or gender-based discrimination or violence

- coercion (the practice of persuading someone to do something by using force or threats)

- sexual exploitation (actual or attempted abuse of someone's position of vulnerability, differential power or trust to obtain sexual favours, including but not only by offering money or other social and/or economic advantages. It includes trafficking and prostitution)

- abuse of power (improper use of a position of influence, power, or authority against another person).

Staff compliance checks

Police checks and Working with Children Checks

HIPPY provider staff are required to have a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) and a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC) while working for HIPPY Australia. In some cases, staff may also require an International Police Check (ICHC).

HIPPY Australia's staff check procedure outlines Providers' responsibilities regarding obtaining all the required checks for HIPPY Australia provider staff. It also provides a step-by-step process to follow if a Disclosable Court Outcome is listed on the NPC of one of your HIPPY staff members.

HIPPY staff are not permitted to commence work until all checks have been received, are cleared, and have been entered in ETO.

Annual safeguarding training

This training supports all HIPPY staff to apply a safeguarding lens to their roles and responsibilities in protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

The HIPPY safeguarding module must be completed in addition to your Provider's mandatory reporting and safeguarding training, as per the legislation in your state or territory.

Annual statement of compliance

Sections 14 and 15 of your HIPPY Sublicence and Funding Agreement outline your legal responsibilities and HIPPY Australia Providers' obligations to comply with your state or territory's safeguarding legislation.

The annual statement of compliance is sent by HIPPY Australia and must be completed by your organisation's CEO (or equivalent) each year to ensure Providers are compliant with their Sublicence and Funding Agreement. HIPPY Australia is then required to report back to DSS annually about whether Providers are compliant with the requirements outlined in the report.

Compliance checklist

The compliance checklist is part of the quality assurance framework, and ensures sites meet the Sublicence and Funding Agreement and Deed of Variation requirements. Compliance is assessed using the checklist and is completed by Site Advisors.

Feedback and complaints

HIPPY Australia also has established procedures for handling feedback and complaints that fall outside the remit of critical incidents and safeguarding. To ensure consistent quality across the network, each provider is required to have an effective system for capturing and responding to such feedback and complaints.

Firstly, HIPPY Australia must be promptly notified of any complaints received by Providers regarding the program.

This ensures that complaints are:

• handled and investigated by the appropriate manager

- acknowledged, considered, and responded to in a timely manner

- accurately recorded for evaluation purposes.

All complaints made about HIPPY Australia are then graded by the Head of HIPPY. If necessary, HIPPY Australia will assign an investigator to work with the complainant to determine the best outcome.

On the other hand, it is possible that HIPPY Australia may receive complaints about Providers. If so, we will work with the provider - in line with both its own complaints policy and the site's HIPPY Sublicence and Funding Agreement - to reach a solution.

We also value constructive suggestions on how to improve the program that do not require a formal investigative process. This kind of feedback plays an integral role in the continuous improvement of our resources, delivery to community and training.

To provide feedback or a complaint, visit the **HIPPY Australia website** > select 'feedback' from the menu at the bottom of the page > follow the prompts.

Section 4
Performance and Quality
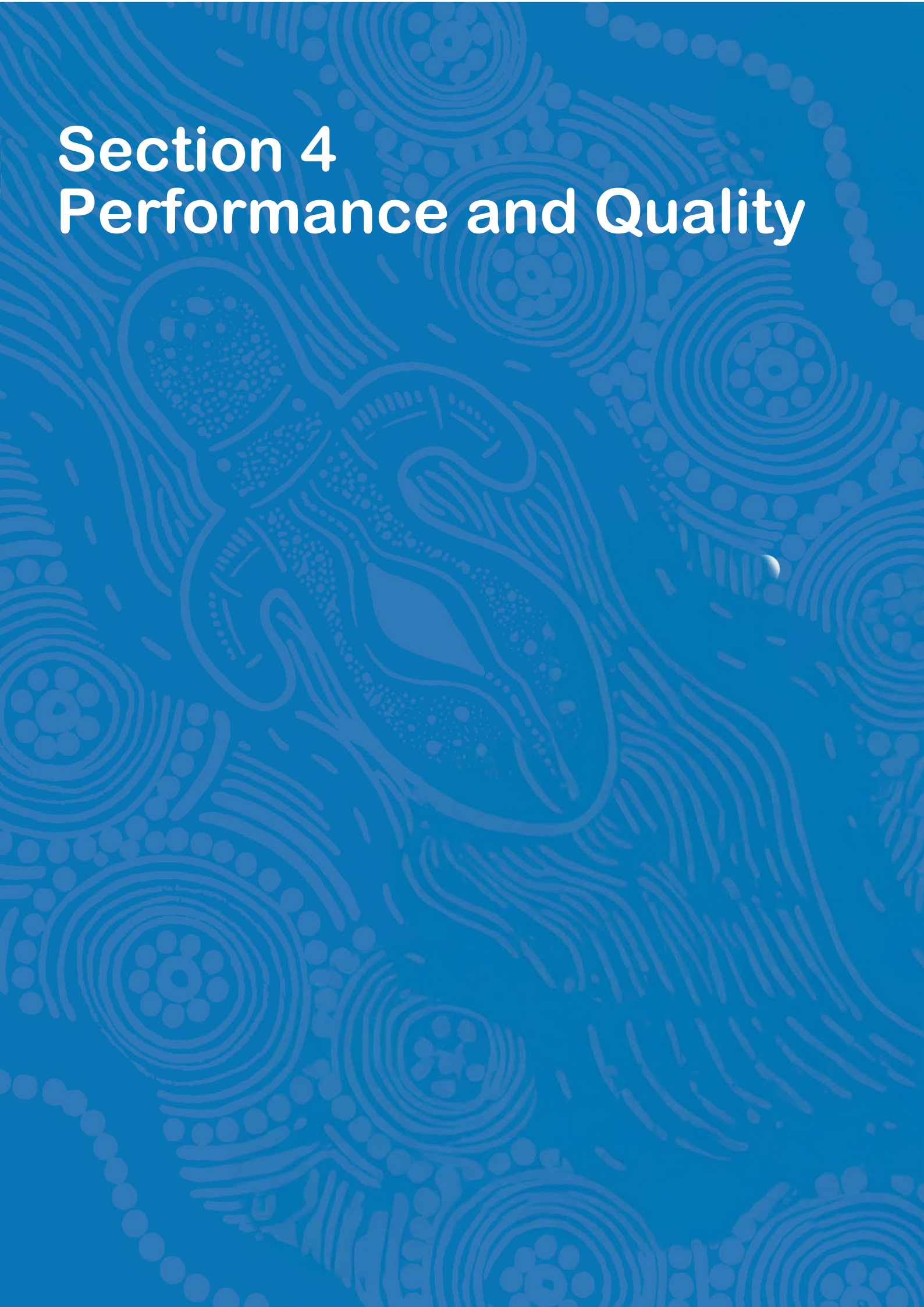
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY

HIPPY Australia is committed to supporting all sites achieve the Outcome Areas. To measure outcomes, we use both data collected from ETO and a quality assurance cycle with several components.

Online ETO monitoring

ETO records data relating to program delivery across the network. Data collection is key to measuring the impact of HIPPY for participants, to add to our evidence base for both ongoing service delivery improvements, and to continue our advocacy for government and private funding.

ETO data entry is a requirement of the Sublicence and Funding Agreement. All data must be entered in ETO within 10 business days of the activity occurring.

HIPPY data is also uploaded to the DSS data exchange database, known as DEX, on a quarterly basis. To ensure that all data for the quarter is ready for uploading to DEX, data must be entered in ETO within 10 business days of the end of quarter. Any missing data will not be uploaded and counted against your site. This has significant ramifications for the program and should be avoided.

Coordinators are primarily responsible for recording, collecting and monitoring their site's data using ETO as well as the mandatory standardized form, which mirror the touchpoints (online forms on ETO). They may not be modified for use by sites.

It is the responsibility of Line Managers to support and supervise Coordinators to ensure that all data is entered and meets quality standards. Data is then collated and analysed by the Quality, Performance and Administration (QPA) team. Examples of data the team collects includes:

- the number of families enrolled in the program
- Tutor caseloads
- frequency and dates of home visits
- which activity pack each family is up to
- the number of home visits each family receives
- the number of Gatherings attended by families, and what enrichment topics are covered
- families' goals for their time in HIPPY and whether the program has helped to achieve them
- the number of families that have left the programs and the reasons they decided to exit
- the number of Tutor training sessions attended by Tutors and what enrichment topics were covered in these sessions
- a list of professional development opportunities Tutors have participated in.

For more information about data collection and entry requirements, see the ETO Data Collection guide on the LMS.

Site reporting

In addition to regular data entry in ETO, Coordinators and Line Managers must report on their local program both biannually and annually using the following reporting mechanisms.

Coordinator report

Completed biannually and entered in ETO. Coordinators include information about:

- ◦ recruitment and retention
- ◦ delivery to families
- ◦ Tutor training and development
- ◦ support needs
- ◦ HIPPY stories.

Line Manager report

Completed biannually and entered in ETO. In it, the Line Manager focuses on their role in supporting the Coordinator and the operation of the program.

Both the Line Manager report and Coordinator report cover the following reporting periods:

- ◦ 1 January - 30 June (data due 14 July).
- ◦ 1 July - 31 December (data due 14 January).

In addition to Coordinator and Line Manager reporting, there is an annual financial report, a budget, and biannual actuals that must be completed each year. Reporting due dates are outlined in the Data Collection Guide, which forms part of the ETO Manual.

Failure to submit reports has the following implications on HIPPY Australia Providers:

- • impacting the assessment and approval of surplus proposal applications
- • impacting the site's eligibility for performance payments
- • site is listed as 'non-compliant' to the Sublicence and Funding Agreement at Quality Assurance Cycle visits, which is then included in the site's Development Plan.

Compliance checklist

The compliance checklist is currently being updated.

Compliance ensures sites meet the Sublicence and Funding Agreement and Deed of Variation requirements. Compliance is assessed using the checklist and is completed by Providers.

For more information, visit the **LMS** > HIPPY Quality Assurance.

Development plans

These are for the sites to set goals to improve practice and better outcomes for families, Tutors, and communities. Plans should be monitored regularly by both the site and HIPPY Australia and reviewed six-monthly.

Finance reporting
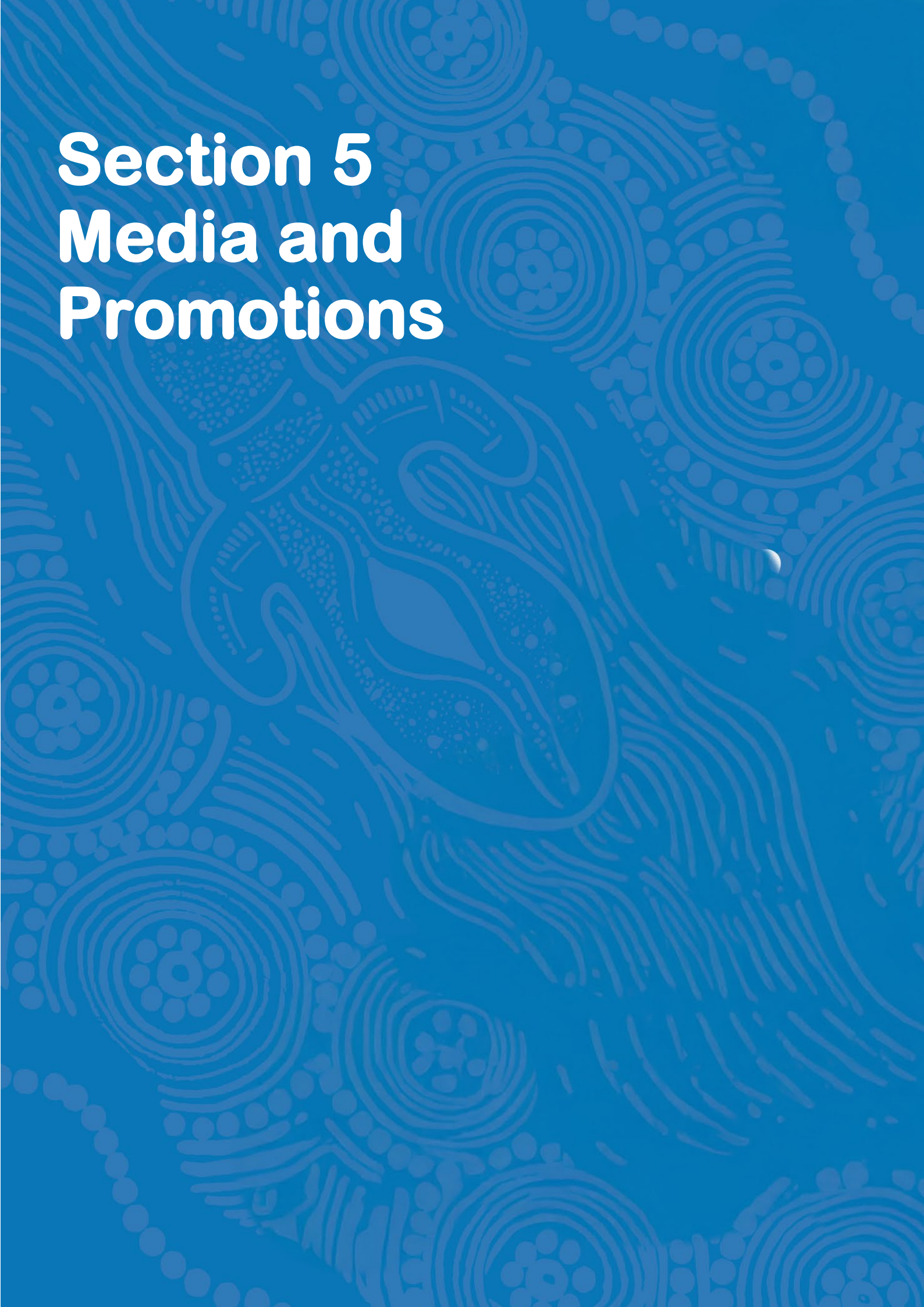
Please see **Section 6 >** HIPPY Finances.

Quality assurance framework

The quality assurance framework is currently being reviewed.

HIPPY Australia will notify sites when documents flagged as 'being updated' are finalised and published.

Section 5
Media and
Promotions

MEDIA AND PROMOTIONS

Media and communications play an important role at our sites and are key to your community engagement strategies.

HIPPY Australia supports sites with promotional activities through:

guidelines: processes and procedures that must be followed

branding, including site logos and animals

ready-to-use branded promotional materials, such as flyers, bunting, banners, and stickers.

Each site is then responsible for designing, organising, and sourcing additional merchandise and promotional items using allocated funds.

Guidelines

HIPPY Australia has created guidelines for sites wanting to use HIPPY Australia materials, contact the media about a story at their site or create their own materials. These guidelines are set out in the LMS and will assist Providers to promote the program locally.

HIPPY sites should use this document and talk to their Site Advisor when planning to develop promotional or communications materials.

Permissions and privacy

Sites are required to seek written permission to use photographs, videos or stories in HIPPY promotional materials and any communications, whether internal or external.

At enrolment, each family should be provided with a copy of the HIPPY Australia photo/video/story permission form. Families that wish to consent to their image or words being used by HIPPY Australia and BSL should submit the completed form to their Coordinator. HIPPY Australia Providers should always check their own organisation's policies regarding media permissions and privacy as they will inevitably have their own forms and procedures for capturing and sharing media. HIPPY staff should ensure that they always abide by these policies.

Promotional materials

Promotional materials include banners, flyers, brochures, and posters. Promotional materials developed by HIPPY sites must first be approved by their Provider and then by HIPPY Australia prior to production and distribution. Site Advisors and our communications team can help Providers produce promotional materials. HIPPY site logos and the acknowledgment specified below must be placed on all promotional materials.

HIPPY Australia is supportive of sites creating their own promotional and communication materials, though sites must keep the following in mind when creating them:

• the HIPPY site logo should be alongside the HIPPY Provider's logo

• sites are encouraged to use the design elements and branding materials we have developed (**note:** This **does not** include photos)

- before finalising and printing any promotional materials, sites must seek final approval from the communications team

- all communications and promotional materials must include the following acknowledgment:
  'The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Social Services.
  The Brotherhood of St Laurence holds the licence to operate HIPPY in Australia.'

- for any promotional materials that include the curriculum animals, sites must also include the following acknowledgement: 'HIPPY Australia acknowledges Lena Smith for the use of her artworks in our curriculum and promotional materials. Lena Smith is a Kamilaroi Yinarr woman from Moree, NSW.'

Logos

Each HIPPY site receives a set of five logos in a number of formats (such as .jpeg, .png) to use for branding purposes. These logos are in the following colour schemes:

- 'Standard' blue and orange logo

This is to be used when promotional materials or communications will be displayed in colour.

- 'Mono' black logo

This version of the logo is to be used when promotional materials or communications are to be printed or displayed in black.

- 'Mono' white logo

This version of the logo is to be used when promotional materials or communications are to be printed or displayed in white.

- 'Aboriginal' red, gold and black logo

This logo should be used when highlighting links to Aboriginal communities.

- 'Torres Strait Islander' blue, green and white logo

This logo is to be used when highlighting links to Torres Strait Islander communities.

Site logos should not be altered in any way (colour, shape, or image details) when being used.

The HIPPY Australia logo should also not be used by sites unless with the express permission from the HIPPY Australia communications team.

Digital

HIPPY Australia's website provides a comprehensive overview of the program. It is a useful promotional tool, supporting enrolment and helping participants locate and contact their local site. It is also useful for Coordinators to access media and key messages that demonstrate HIPPY Australia's impact and benefits.

Social media is another excellent tool for sharing information with families and the general public. Some HIPPY sites have their own social media pages, such as on Facebook, that they use to stay in touch with their families and send reminders about local events and group meetings, and share links to other appropriate service providers. HIPPY Australia has Facebook and Instagram pages that it uses to share information with the public.

Sites that choose to use social media should always keep privacy and photo, video, and story permissions in mind when sharing media. It is recommended that Coordinators decide whether their social media pages are visible to the public or only accessible by HIPPY families from the start.

It is important to remember that images of children (and their families) or stories/ media that contain personal information are sensitive and are not suitable to use on 'public-facing' social media without the families' express permission.

Please be aware that sites are required to remove any identifying information when posting photos of children (for example, their names must not be visible on name tags or posted in captions, and so on).

It is also important for sites to refer to HIPPY Australia's media policy and procedure documents for guidelines and tips, as well as their own organisation's media (and social media) policies and procedures.

Section 6
HIPPY Finances
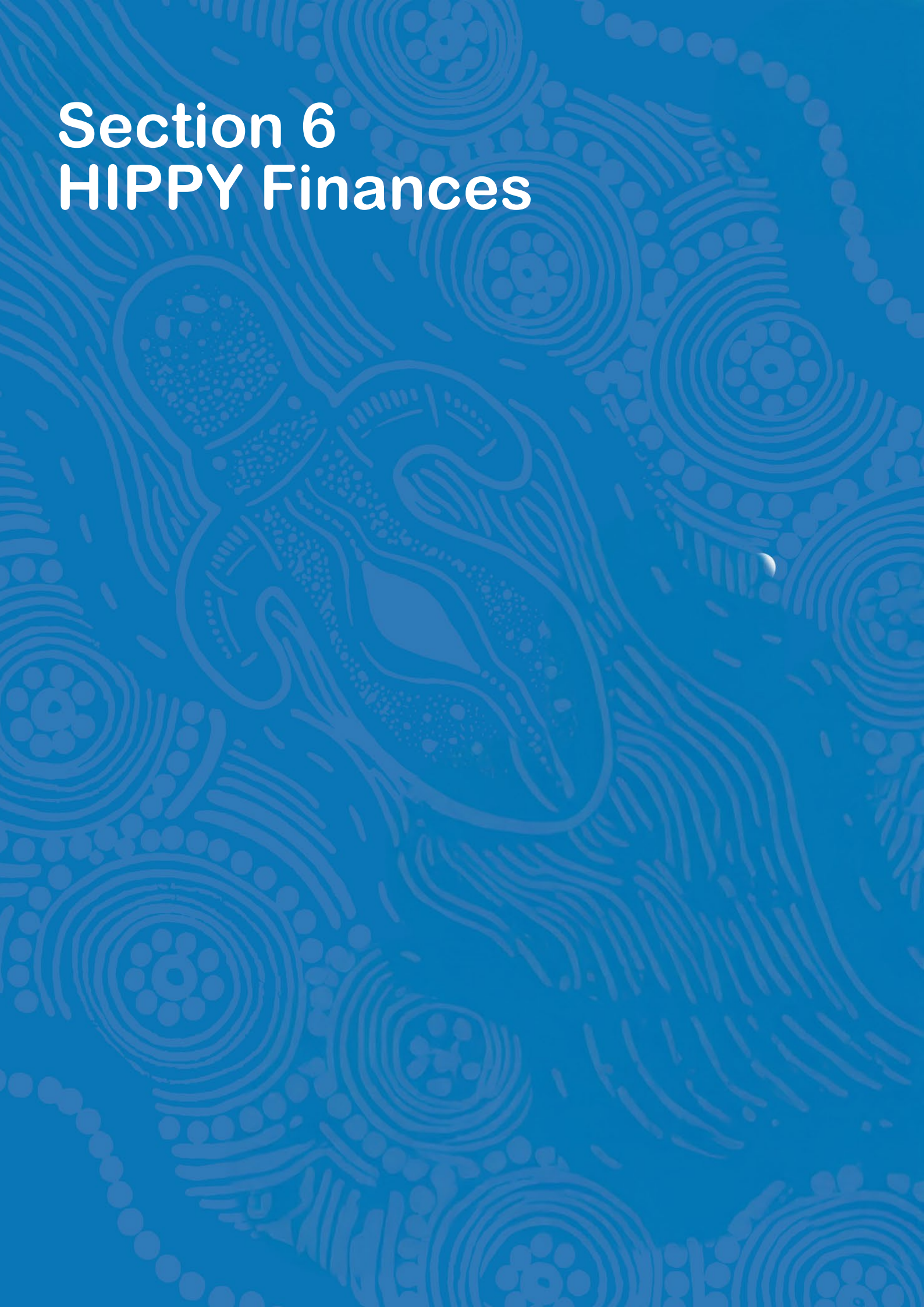
HIPPY FINANCES

HIPPY Australia is funded in full by DSS and managed under a Sublicence and Funding Agreement by BSL through HIPPY Australia. Accurate and timely financial reporting is critically important to secure continued Government funding and sustain the program's delivery in communities across Australia.

The funding model

HIPPY funding is provided in a single stream, combining **operational**, **enhancement** and **Tutor training funding**.

Payments are allocated biannually. There is also an establishment allowance allocated to HIPPY Australia Providers in their first year of operation.

HIPPY Australia Providers biannually invoice HIPPY Australia for their funding allocation.

For a more in-depth breakdown of the HIPPY Australia funding model and payments, refer to your site's Sublicence and Funding Agreement.

Fixed Payment

- Its purpose is to cover the program's first six months, including fixed costs

- The first payment is $155,000 (plus GST)

- The second payment is $90,916 (plus GST)

    ◦ Supplementation payment (plus GST).

> Please note: The supplementation payment covers increased CPI for operational costs. The supplementation payment is an indicative figure; for FY 2024–25, it is $24,242. This payment is scheduled for January 2025, *after BSL has received the funding from DSS. (Any increase in DSS supplementation funding beyond this figure will be equally distributed to sites.)*
>
> *The supplementation payment can be included on the same invoice as the January 2025 payment, but it must be itemised separately. HIPPY Australia will send out a purchase order in January 2025 that will itemise the January 2025 funding payment and supplementary payment to make invoicing easier.*

Establishment allowance

As stated above, an 'establishment allowance' of $25,000 is distributed to new HIPPY Australia Providers in their first year of operation to facilitate the development and adaptation to the HIPPY program. This is outlined in greater detail in your Sublicence and Funding Agreement.

Budget

HIPPY Australia Provider budgets must be submitted in advance and cover the following financial year.

To assist Providers with budgeting requirements, HIPPY Australia developed a financial template. This template provides a dashboard to compare actual figures against those budgeted. It also includes a glossary with the information needed to differentiate between costing categories and allocate appropriately. Together, the dashboard and the glossary work to identify budgetary trends and funding needs, and thereby help to forecast sites' future costs more accurately. The financial template includes the costing categories 'income', 'employment expenses' and 'operating expenses'.

To access the template, visit **the LMS >** Financial Template 2024 or email <u>HIPPYAustralia@bsl.org</u>.<u>au</u>.

Budget cost overview

Income

Income from HIPPY Australia

• All funding received by HIPPY Australia from DSS for the financial year.

Other income

• All other income received by HIPPY Australia, including donations, grants, and funding from other sources.

Employment expenses

Each HIPPY site's employee salaries depend on the award or enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA) used by Providers. This information needs to be itemised in the 'remuneration' section of the budget submitted to HIPPY Australia, including the gross annual figure and the FTE for each HIPPY employee.

Coordinator(s)

• Allocate the Coordinator(s) gross salary based on the full time equivalent (FTE) or work hours per year. This should be a minimum of 0.8 FTE

• **Does not include** on-costs such as payroll tax, work compensation, work cover, superannuation, PAYG, allowances, or entitlements such as personal leave, maternity leave, annual leave loading, annual leave or long service leave.

Line Manager(s)

• Allocate the Line Manager(s) gross salary based on the FTE or work hours per year. This is typically between 0.1 and 0.2 FTE, with costs to not exceed $20,000

• **Does not include** on-costs such as payroll tax, work compensation, work cover, superannuation, PAYG, allowances, or entitlements such as personal leave, maternity leave, annual leave loading, annual leave or long service leave.

Tutor(s)

• Allocate the Tutor(s) gross salary based on the FTE or work hours per year. This should be a minimum of 15 hours per week, equating to 0.4 FTE

• **Does not include** on-costs such as payroll tax, work compensation, work cover, superannuation, PAYG, allowances, or entitlements such as personal leave, maternity leave, annual leave loading, annual leave or long service leave.

Other employment

• Allocate all employment expenses directly incurred for the HIPPY Staff, including on-costs such as work compensation, work cover insurance, superannuation guarantee, additional superannuation, employment

allowances, FBT payments, or entitlements such as personal leave, maternity leave, annual leave loading, annual leave or long service leave.

Note: Childcare is sometimes required when Gatherings are held with parents and Tutors. An allowance of 30 hours of childcare per year may be required. An appropriate casual rate plus on-costs should be provided.

• Sites can also include recruitment costs when incurred for any HIPPY staff, Working With Children Checks (WWCCs), Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHCs), and any other expenses incurred by HIPPY staff.

Operating expenses

Property costs

• This includes any costs related to the lease or rental of premises where HIPPY staff and/or the program operates or is delivered. That includes physical locations such as shared offices, owned offices, leased desks, etc. It can also include 'outgoings' such as water and council rates, utilities, fire and safety checks, owner corporations' fees, etc.

• Sites must budget to ensure that appropriate office accommodation and meeting space is available for their HIPPY Coordinator and Tutors

• Only allocate 100% of the property costs if the premises in which HIPPY staff and families meet are leased exclusively for the HIPPY program

• If the premises are shared with other organisations, only allocate a portion of the costs. A site may be asked for the details and calculations of the shared expenses if the allocations seem excessive or unreasonable.

Materials and resources

• Any other materials required to run the program other than the supplied Curriculum. This could include the costs of materials such as printing and stationery, art supplies and resources used in HIPPY graduation celebrations, and so on.

Meetings and Gatherings

• Any expense relating to conducting Gatherings such as room hire, catering and paying guest speakers.

Office costs

• Any purchase or lease of minor equipment such as office equipment, stationery, furniture, shared services (such as photocopier leases) and internet used or partially used by the HIPPY program.

Promotional costs

• Any costs incurred while promoting, distributing and/or advertising any merchandise or material that helps to promote the HIPPY program in the local community, assisting in the recruitment and retention of families and Tutors.

- This includes local radio and/or TV advertising, HIPPY-branded staff shirts, and other one-off promotional materials.

Travel

- Any costs incurred by HIPPY staff when travelling to deliver the HIPPY program, such as car rental, taxi, transport cards, fuel, airfares and accommodation, meal allowances while travelling. For example, a Coordinator could attend pre-service Coordinator training, home visits, Gatherings, and other meetings or training sessions, while Tutors will travel from home visit to home visit.

Professional development - Coordinator

- Any cost incurred relating to Coordinators' external professional development, including the costs of any training, webinars and/or courses.
- Allocate up to $4,000 for training and professional development.

Professional development - Tutor

- Any cost incurred relating to Tutors' external professional development, including the costs of any training, webinars, and courses.
- Allocate up to $13,000 for training and professional development.

Other

- Any additional costs relevant to the program not identified above. Please always provide a breakdown in the comments.
- HIPPY Australia may request details and calculations from sites for other costs if the allocations seem excessive or unreasonable.

Overhead costs

- The provider can incur an actual or reasonable allocation of overhead costs in running HIPPY. There is a requirement for administrative assistance in running the program, which includes entering statistical and financial data in ETO and providing financial statements for both the Provider and HIPPY Australia.
- Overhead costs commonly include a portion of management, administration, payroll, finance and human resources time. The allocations may differ from site to site, however, there is an expectation of what 'reasonable' means for each site. **It is expected that the site spends no more than 15% of the block funding on overhead costs**.
- HIPPY Australia may request details and calculations from sites for the costs associated with this category if the allocations seem excessive or unreasonable.

Prohibited expenses

HIPPY funding **must not** be used for:

- activities outside of the HIPPY model

- purchase of land or vehicles

- capital costs, such as the purchase of a training room

- wages for Provider staff not in the HIPPY program

- major capital expenditure

- covering retrospective costs

- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation

- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent

- major construction/capital works

- overseas travel

- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility.

Financial reporting

Every HIPPY site is required to submit an Annual Financial Report (via ETO) by 14 October for the previous financial year. Each reporting cycle, HIPPY Australia sends reminders to sites about due dates and where to find relevant documents and/or templates.

The Annual Financial Report must separately and clearly identify the amount of each HIPPY funding payment in their respective categories (for example, block funds or other income). Sites must also separately and clearly identify employment, operating expenses, as well as detailed expenditure in each costing category (including comments where relevant).

> The Annual Financial Report must be submitted in accordance with the requirements set out in the site's Sublicence and Funding Agreement.
>
> To access the template, visit **the LMS >** ETO forms and information > Financial Template 2024. Alternatively, email HIPPYAustralia@bsl.org.au.

Complete the annual financial reporting process by following these steps:

- Complete the Annual Financial Report template, ensuring that

    - It is signed by both the CEO (or equivalent) and the CFO. For the CFO or Financial Officer to be approved to sign off on the report, they need to be a member of **one** of the following:

        Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA)

        Institute of Public Accountants in Australia

        Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia

    - If the CEO is not available, a Board Member (or equivalent) can sign the reports on their behalf.

    - If the CFO is not available, the Finance Manager (or equivalent) can sign the reports on their behalf as long as they are members of one of the above certified bodies.

- If the CFO (or equivalent) is not a member of the above certified bodies, the report needs an auditor's opinion that reviews and certifies the use of HIPPY funding. The auditor must sign the report and the auditor's opinion must be uploaded to ETO in addition to this report.

- The two parties signing this report are certifying that:
  - these details provided are a true and accurate representation of the HIPPY program being delivered at their site at the time of certification
  - they are lodging an official statement and can be held accountable for providing false, inaccurate or misleading information.

- Lastly, enter the line item data in ETO with the signed report attached.

Surplus funds

Some sites may report surpluses after submitting their Annual Financial Report for the financial year. Reported surplus funds are assessed against an established criteria and a threshold. The result of this assessment determines their eligibility to retain all or part of the surplus for that financial year.

Surplus Evaluation process

Where sites have a surplus above the threshold, HIPPY Australia implements the 'surplus evaluation process'. The process considers the following performance criteria per site (in line with their individual Sublicence and Funding Agreement) to determine their eligibility to retain the surplus:

- recruitment rates for the current year

- at least a 75% retention rate for the previous year

- surplus level in the previous financial year

- reporting performance.

Sites assessed as 'not eligible' to retain any surplus are advised by HIPPY Australia via email to return the funds. Surplus funds are collected by reducing the next payment invoice by the amount of the surplus reported in the Annual Financial Report or by the amount the HIPPY Management Advisory Team deems appropriate for the site.

Sites assessed as 'eligible' to retain any surplus funds receive a 'notification of surplus' advice via email as well as a surplus proposal template, which they may be required to complete.

> **Note**: Eligible sites can roll over up to $25,000 of surplus funds without completing a surplus proposal. Where a surplus is over $25,000, sites are required to submit a surplus proposal for approval, nominating the total amount of the surplus they want to retain. The surplus proposal must be submitted to HIPPY Australia
> (via HIPPYAustralia@bsl.org.au) **within 10 business days** of receiving the 'Notification of surplus' email advice.

If rejected, sites can modify the proposal and send it again. If approved, they need to report the surplus as 'carried over' for the next financial year.

Where a surplus proposal is unsuccessful, or a site elects not to apply to carry forward their surplus funds, sites will have their next funding payment(s) adjusted/reduced in line with the surplus amount.

Deficits

If a site reports a deficit in their Annual Budget Report, HIPPY Australia conducts an evaluation to better understand the site's funding and expenditure. At the conclusion of the evaluation, the site may be eligible for additional payments that cover over and above what has been allocated in the financial model. Where this is the case, they will be contacted by HIPPY Australia. As each site is different, context is essential to evaluating site expenditure and financial performance.

Fundraising

Before undertaking any fundraising activities for HIPPY in the catchment area, a site's Line Manager submits a 'fundraising plan' to HIPPY Australia for approval. The plan must include:

• proposed fundraising activities

• intended source of funds

• any other information relating to the proposed fundraising that HIPPY Australia may reasonably require.

HIPPY Australia may, at its discretion, reject the proposed fundraising activities as set out in the Provider's plan, in which case the Provider must not undertake such activities.

		HIPPY_MAN_163_Operations_Guide

Version	Date	Author	Revision history	Status	Approved by
	August 2025			**Yes**	**RP**