

Why this domain is included

The relationships between children and young people and their families are among the most important influences on a child's development and wellbeing.⁴⁰⁰ For most children and young people, their family is the primary source of security, support and development.⁴⁰¹ As children grow older, the influence of peers increases, and forms an important source of support and socialisation.

The Commissioner for Children and Young People has consulted with children and young people across the State concerning a range of issues and themes which influence their wellbeing.

The views of children and young people gained through this work have been published in a series of 'Speaking Out' publications. These include:

- Speaking Out About Wellbeing (2010)
- Speaking Out About Mental Health (2011)
- Speaking Out About Living in Regional and Remote WA (2013)
- Speaking Out About Disability (2013).

In all of these projects, children and young people emphasised the importance of family and friends to positive wellbeing.

Commentary

The previous edition of this report included two measures in the Family and Peer Relationships domain: 'What children and young people value' and 'Obtaining advice and support to manage personal problems'.

Some of the data sources on which these measures were based have changed and the measures were reconsidered. The new measures fitted more appropriately in other domains and, as a result, there are no appropriate measures available for this domain.

The lack of measures for this domain does not represent any reduced significance of family and peer relationships on the wellbeing of children and young people. As outlined above, there is significant evidence that points to these relationships being vital in establishing a strong foundation for lifelong wellbeing.

Rather, the lack of any measures indicates the complex nature of these relationships and the difficulty identifying and collating relevant data.

Other measures in this report will have relevance to the Family and Peer Relationships domain.

These include the measures:

- 3.16 Family and domestic violence
- 3.17 Parental use of alcohol and drugs
- 4.1 Parents engaging children in informal learning
- 5.4 Homelessness.

Strategies

Parenting WA Strategic Framework, Department for Local Government and Communities (released 2010)

This strategic framework is designed to support policy and provide service delivery to support families in WA. The framework sets out three overarching objectives to Strengthen Parents; Strengthen the Parenting Sector; and Strengthen Communities.

The strategic framework is available at www.communities.wa.gov.au/communities-in-focus/parenting_and_children/parentingwa/Pages/default.aspx

Want to know more?

Research, reports and articles

The Commissioner for Children and Young People WA's research report, *Speaking Out About Wellbeing*, is available at www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/content.aspx?cid=326

The Commissioner for Children and Young People WA has a policy brief on families, *Speaking out about Wellbeing: Children and young people speak out about families*, available at www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/content.aspx?cid=752

The Commissioner has also produced a policy brief on Aboriginal children and young people's views about families, available at www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/content.aspx?cid=752

Other information

The WA Department for Local Government and Communities provides information on parenting and about services to the public through its website www.communities.wa.gov.au/communities-in-focus/parenting_and_children/Pages/default.aspx

