A warm welcome to March of 2026! No images? Click here

Healthy Trajectories

A Child and Youth Disability Research Hub

Welcome to our Healthy Trajectories March newsletter!

A message from Christine

Welcome to March 2026! I am writing this message from Hobart Tasmania - the lands and waterways of the Muwinina peoples. I am here because our teams are participating in the Oceania Academy of Cerebral Palsy and other Childhood-Onset Disability conference. The conference is an opportunity to share what we are learning through our research and to learn from, and network with, others.

It is an important time in Australia, with the development of the Thriving Kids approach, and with changes in response to the NDIS Review. I want to acknowledge that changes bring uncertainty, and uncertainty is unsettling. At Healthy Trajectories, we continue to focus our work on family wellbeing, early childhood initiatives, learning and belonging, and optimising health outcomes. You can read more about our programs and ways to get involved on the website. You can shape what we focus on.

In this newsletter we celebrate Eliza Hull's award, and share opportunities to contribute to research with us and our colleagues - so do read on!

News

Congratulations to Eliza Hull for being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)!

We were so excited to see Eliza Hull being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition for her advocacy work in the disabled community and contribution to the arts! Eliza is a community representative on our Healthy Trajectories Advisory Committee and an integral part of our community. Congratulations Eliza!ratulations to Eliza Hull for being awarded the Order of Australia Medal in recognition for her advocacy work in the disabled community and contribution to the arts!

Read more about Eliza's award here

Thriving Kids Advisory Group Final Report

The Healthy Trajectories team welcomes the recent release of the Thriving Kids Advisory Group (TKAG) Final Report. This

report makes recommendations to governments about a new national approach to supporting children with developmental delay or autism who are aged 0 to 8 years. The Thriving Kids initiative intends to be part of a system of support that includes mainstream services and the NDIS.

The Thriving Kids model puts families at the core, prioritising early identification and provision of support in everyday settings such as in the home and in childcare. This model removes the need for a formal diagnosis to access help. Importantly, the Thriving Kids service principles and recommended approach are fully aligned with the new National Best Practice Framework for Early Childhood Intervention (the Framework), published in October 2025.

Now we need to work together to help families and professionals adopt the new Framework we can provide child and family-centred, strengths-based and culturally safe supports for all children with developmental concerns, delay or disability and their families across Australia. If you are looking for resources, please visit the ECI Framework pages on the Healthy Trajectories website.

Read the Thriving Kisds Advisory group report

Project update: Exploring the need for a strengths-based focus within a quality of life measure – the EQ-5D-Y-5L

Measures that are ‘strengths-based’ focus on what people can do, rather than what they cannot. It is important when measuring health-related quality of life, that children with life-limiting conditions or complex disabilities can say that they have a good quality of life, when they do.

This project aims to understand whether the items in a quality of life (QoL) questionnaire are worded in ways that support children and young people to report on their quality of life accurately. The questionnaire is called the ‘Euro-QoL – 5 dimensions’.

In the next few weeks, we will be looking for young people (aged 14 – 18) and parents of children with a disability to take part in an interview about the the measure. News about recruitment will be posted in our newsletter. You can share how to subscribe to our newsletter with people who might be interested in the study.

Learn more about the EQ-5D-Y-5L project here

Project update: The “2026 Disability Inclusion Needs Survey”

The 2026 Disability Inclusion Needs Survey is being carried out in kindergartens across Victoria in School Term 2. The purpose of the survey is to find out how many children in 3- or 4-year-old kindergarten have additional needs, the functional impact of disability and complex medical needs, and levels of adjustment required for children to participate.

We want to learn more about this so that we can effectively plan and develop how to support kindergarten services and teachers to assist all children in Victoria to participate and learn at kindergarten.

Learn more about the Prevalence study here

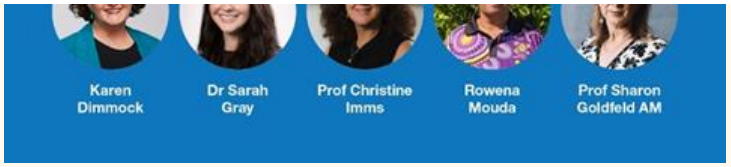
Events

Conference - Oceania Academy's 13th biennial AusACPDM conference: 4 - 7 March, 2026.

You can still register to participate virtually in the 13th Oceania Academy Biennial Conference. Registration is free for people with lived experience of disability. The content will be available on demand following the conference to view in your own time. Please click on the links below to register and attend virtually!

Learn more about the AusACPDM conference

Register for the AusACPDM conference now



Upcoming Webinar — Evidence to action: Strengthening children's development

Join us at this webinar hosted by Professor Sharon Goldfield. Our Director, Professor Christine Imms will be on the panel along with Karen Dimmock, Dr. Sarah Gray, and Rowena Mouda.

Responding early to children's developmental needs delivers long-term benefits for children, families and society. It boosts children's health, development and wellbeing, and is more effective, efficient and financially sustainable. This webinar will focus on how responding to children's needs early can give them a strong start, including support for children with developmental concerns, delay or disability.

- Date: Tuesday 24 March 2026
- Time: 12:30pm-1:30pm AEDT
- Cost: Free

Learn more about the AEDC webinar

Register for the AEDC Webinar now

Opportunities for Consumers

Be part of the CP Movetime research study

REMINDER: CP Movetime – Feasibility and Knowledge Translation study

CP Movetime have developed a mobile app, that when used in conjunction with a wearable sensor can monitor the movement of children with cerebral palsy.

We are looking for children and adolescents with cerebral palsy, aged 5-17 years old who are classified within GMFCS levels IV or V - that is, they use wheelchairs for mobility.

Please contact christine.imms@unimelb.edu.au or carlee.holmes@mcri.edu.au to register your interest.

The study will begin on March 9, 2026.
A knowledge translation phase will begin in May to June 2026 if you miss out on the study.

Learn more about CP Movetime here

Dad-Care is looking for participants!

If you are a father of a child with disability (age 0-5 years) in the first two years post diagnosis, complete the expression of interest form.
Recruitment closes on the 30th of April 2026.

Dad Care Expression of Interest form

Opportunities for Consumers & Practitioners

Fitness for Life – a free to use online guide

The Fitness for Life guide offers practical tips, real stories, and step-by-step guidance – from finding your ‘why’ for getting active to managing pain and navigating community gyms.
This is a pilot project, so your feedback will directly shape improvements.
Young adults with CP, families, and health professionals – check it out and share what you think!

Explore the Fitness for Life guide

ScopeSEND is recruiting!

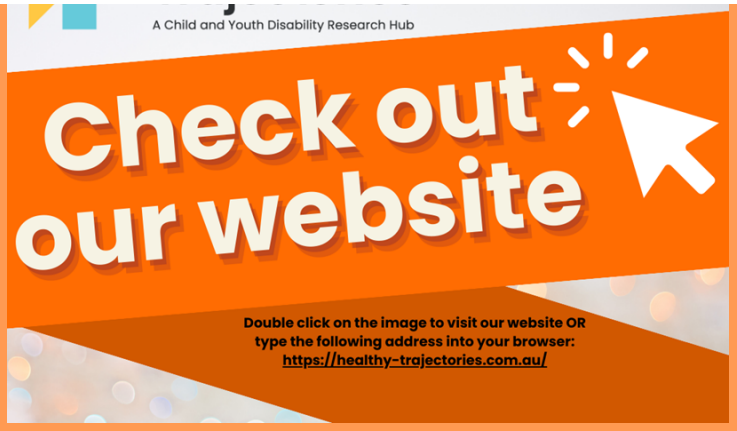
Want to participate in an international study?

This study is for practitioners and children/young people with disabilities and their families. Your participation will contribute to their research on policies and provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in the United Kingdom. You can find more information here at https://www.scopesend.com/. Accessibility provisions available. The project is led by Dr. Susana Castro-Kemp and her team at the Institute of Education in London. Please click link below or email c.antalek@ucl.ac.uk to sign up.

View the flyer for ScopeSEND

Sign up for a ScopeSEND interview

Healthy Trajectories



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Forward

The Healthy Trajectories Child and Youth Disability Research Hub acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways on which we work, and pays

respect to the Elders, past and present.

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