



SHINE for Kids<sup>®</sup>

support - hope - inspire - nurture - empower

# Child and Family Centre Guide



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# What motivates us at SHINE for Kids?



## Our Vision

Building futures where kids can “shine”

## Our Purpose

SHINE for Kids works with and for young Australians affected by family member involvement in the criminal justice system. We **support** them and help create **hope**, we **inspire** them to reach their potential, we **nurture** their growth and we **empower** them to succeed.

## Our Core Values

### Child-focused

- We will focus on the best interests of children and young people at all times
- We will consult children and young people and consider their issues

### Integrity

- We will treat people consistently and with respect
- We will respect confidentiality
- We will act lawfully and ethically
- We will fulfil commitments we have made

### Empowerment

- We will provide children and young people, their families and carers with the necessary tools to achieve each child’s fullest potential
- We will encourage people to accept responsibility and be accountable for their actions
- We will celebrate and recognise achievements, innovation and initiative

SHINE for Kids recognises the Traditional Custodians of Australia and the local Aboriginal communities where SHINE for Kids provides services.



# Welcome to your SHINE for Kids Child and Family Centre

This Child and Family Centre is a service provided free of charge by SHINE for Kids on the site of this correctional facility to support children, families and all visitors.

This Guide shows how the Centre can benefit you and your family.

## Why do we have Child and Family Centres?

Visiting a prison can be a daunting and confusing experience for anyone.

Before SHINE for Kids Child and Family Centres were opened across New South Wales, there was nowhere children and visitors could go before and after visiting a correctional centre.

Child and Family Centres provide child-friendly, supportive venues for families, children and all visitors to “drop in” when visiting prisons, to relax and unwind before or after their visit.

For families, the staff and volunteers provide emotional support, assistance and opportunities to connect with others in the same situation.

For the child, the Child and Family Centres are designed to break up the visit and give them some time out just to be kids, play with others in the same situation and associate a pleasant experience with visiting their parent.

## Our Centres offer three key services

Child and Family Centres provide these important services to visitors:

**Activity Sessions**

(See **page 4**)

**Prison Invisits Program**

(See **page 8**)

**Drop-in Service**

(See **page 9**)

## When to contact or visit us

Child and Family Centres are open to visitors in the following locations\*:

Silverwater	(02) 9714 3000	Monday–Friday	9.30am to 5.00pm
		Saturday–Sunday	9.45am to 3.15pm
Parklea	(02) 9933 7900	Monday, Wednesday–Friday	9.00am to 4.30pm
		Saturday–Sunday	9.45am to 3.15pm
Windsor	(02) 4573 3900	Monday–Friday	9.30am to 5.00pm
		Saturday–Sunday	9.45am to 3.15pm
Bathurst	(02) 6328 9900	Monday–Friday	9.30am to 5.00pm
		Saturday–Sunday	9.30am to 4.30pm
Cessnock	(02) 4993 6800	Friday	9.30am to 5.00pm
		Saturday–Sunday	10.00am to 3.00pm
Wellington	(02) 6845 5000	Friday	9.00am to 4.30pm
		Saturday–Sunday	9.30am to 3.15pm
Juneë	(02) 6934 6000	Friday	9.00am to 4.00pm
		Saturday–Sunday	9.00am to 4.00pm
Kempsey	(02) 6561 3800	Monday–Friday	9.30am to 5.00pm
		Saturday–Sunday	9.00am to 4.00pm

\* These times were correct as at the time of printing in June 2011. Current opening times for each of our Child and Family Centres can be found at [http://www.shineforkids.org.au/where\\_we\\_are](http://www.shineforkids.org.au/where_we_are)

# Activity Sessions

SHINE for Kids Child and Family Centres offer an opportunity for children to be cared for by trained Child and Family Workers during correctional centre visiting hours so that parents have a chance to discuss important issues and maintain their relationship without their children being present for the whole visit – because the kids have somewhere fun to go!

At our Centres, children and young people up to 18 years of age can participate in a range of activities such as craft, games, toys, computer games, drawing and writing, construction, imaginative play, puzzles and more. The activities and games are tailored to suit all ages.

## How do I access the Activity Sessions?

On weekends and public holidays, the Child and Family Worker and volunteers enter the visits areas of the correctional centre to check whether any families would like their children to attend our Centre after spending a short time with the inmate.

Silverwater and Parklea Centres can also care for children during the week (Parklea is closed on Tuesdays). Please ring to ascertain availability and to make a booking with Centre staff:

Parklea	(02) 9933 7900
Silverwater	(02) 9714 3000

Our staff are easily recognisable in their purple shirts with SHINE for Kids logo and name badge.

## Child Enrolment Form

The SHINE for Kids worker will ask the carer/parent to fill out a Child Enrolment Form. It is important that you provide all the details requested on the form – this will help us ensure that all of the child's needs are properly met.

## Staffing levels

To enable SHINE for Kids to provide a safe environment for all children at all times, the Centre is staffed at all times by a minimum of two adults, one of which is a trained Early Childhood Worker.

The following child/adult ratios are in place:

0–2 years	1:4
2–3 years	1:8
3–6 years	1:10
6+ years	1:15



## Signing in and out

At all times it is vital that all children are accounted for, so as part of the Centre requirements, each time a child attends, he/she needs to be signed into the care of the SHINE for Kids Child and Family Worker and out of their care upon leaving.

## Time limit

There are usually two sessions each day. To enable all children and young people to access the service, attendance at the session is limited to one session per day. If however there are spaces available in the second session for the day, you are more than welcome to utilise this.

## Food

Children are provided with healthy food options for morning and afternoon tea at the Centre.

## Allergies

If your child has any allergies, please notify the Child and Family Worker and note the information on your Child Enrolment Form.

# Activity Sessions

## Child illness

If your child presents with symptoms of any of the following conditions, they will not be accepted at the Centre on that day:

- Head lice
- Chicken pox
- Measles
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Influenza
- Gastroenteritis (diarrhoea/vomiting)
- Conjunctivitis
- Impetigo (school sores)
- Ringworm
- German measles (rubella)
- Mumps
- Infective hepatitis
- Diphtheria
- Polio-myelitis.

If staff determine the child is experiencing symptoms while at the Centre, you will be contacted and requested to collect your child.

## Medication

At the Centre staff members are not able to administer any medication to your child. If your child requires medication please ensure that you administer it before or after the childcare sessions.

## Sun care

Children are to wear sunscreen provided by SHINE for Kids when they are playing outdoors.

## Collecting your children

After your visit, please return to our Centre to collect your child (signing the child out), or stay if it is in between visiting hours.

If you're planning to collect your child after the last visit of the day, please check the Child and Family Centre's closing time.

If you do not collect your child at the agreed time, SHINE for Kids will attempt to contact the person who has signed them into care. If they cannot be located, the emergency contact person will be contacted.

If no-one returns to collect your child after a period of one hour, the Child and Family Worker will contact the Community Services Hotline 133627 and notify them that the child has not been collected, and they will then need to find care for the child.

Volunteers are there to assist the Child and Family Worker and do not take on the responsibility for the children and young people. This is the responsibility of the Child and Family Worker.

## Changes to your details

Please inform staff if:

- Any details to your enrolment has changed
- Somebody different will be picking up your child from the Centre. Please note that person will have to show ID such as a driver's license.



# Prison Invisits Program

Visiting prisons can be a traumatic, confusing and upsetting experience for children. Because visitors are forbidden from taking many items into the visiting area, children have no familiar comforts during visits.

When children encounter a more enjoyable visit, they develop a stronger bond with their parent and feel better about visiting. The Prison Invisits Program provides a variety of arts, craft and diversionary activities for children to share with their parents or enjoy while their parent looks on. Activities also provide entertainment between times spent talking to their parent. Parents and carers have more opportunities to relate with each other in an adult context during the visit, while the activities provide the children with peer support that reduces feelings of isolation and bolsters emotional wellbeing.

SHINE for Kids provides activities in a safe and appropriate manner for children and young people at all times. This program is facilitated by trained staff and/or volunteers.

## **Child Enrolment Form**

The SHINE for Kids worker will ask the carer/parent to fill out a Child Enrolment Form. It is important that you provide all the details requested on the form – this will help us ensure that all of the child's needs are properly met.

## **Children's artwork can be given to the inmate**

If children create a drawing for the person they are visiting, SHINE for Kids workers can facilitate the artwork getting to the person in prison. Please provide the name and MIN of the person to receive the picture.

# Drop-in Service

As well as Activity Sessions, our Child and Family Centres also provide what we call a “drop-in” for families before or after a visit. Visitors can come in and relax, have a coffee/drink, change nappies, use a toilet, and wait for transport or for their visit.

Trained staff are on duty if you just want to have a chat in a safe, non-judgmental environment with people who are aware of the circumstances and issues that affect people when someone goes to prison.

Staff can also provide information about, and referrals to, the many services provided by SHINE for Kids and other organisations who can assist your children and or family. (See **page 14** for publications you can get at our Centres or even download from our website, and **page 15** for our other services that may help you.)

The Drop-in Service is available at all our Child and Family Centres over the weekend and on public holidays. See **page 3** for their opening hours.

## Enrolment Form

The SHINE for Kids worker will ask the carer/parent to fill out an Enrolment Form. It is important that you provide all the details requested on the form – this will help us ensure that all of the child’s needs are properly met.

# About our staff and volunteers

SHINE for Kids employs Child and Family Workers who are trained and qualified early childhood educators to care for your children and offer assistance, support and provide information to you.

If you have any questions about your child's development or any other concerns, our staff will be very happy to answer any of your questions.

The Child and Family Workers are assisted by an enthusiastic team of trained volunteers who have a passion to work with children and young people.

All Child and Family Workers must have the following:

- A Working with Children Check, allowing them to work with children
- A completed Prohibited Person Declaration
- A criminal record check which allows them to enter a correctional centre
- Security awareness training to enter a correctional centre
- Current first aid certificate.

All volunteers must have the following:

- A criminal record check
- A completed Prohibited Person Declaration.

# Are the children unaware that the person they are visiting is in prison?

One of the aims of the Child and Family Centre is to reduce children's feelings of isolation. This is achieved by the children being able to discuss some of their issues and feelings around having a parent or family member imprisoned.

At SHINE for Kids we are aware that it is difficult for families to tell children that a loved one is imprisoned and may not wish to tell the child. Please make sure that you tell our staff and also indicate it on the enrolment form so they can bear this in mind when dealing with the child/ren.

Please bear in mind that it is extremely difficult to prevent other children saying things and being overheard.

At SHINE for Kids we believe that it is important for the children to know the truth about the imprisonment of a parent or family member. Our staff will be happy to assist you with strategies and resources for telling children.

# Rights and responsibilities

SHINE for Kids recognises and upholds the rights of all people who access its services. SHINE for Kids is also committed to ensuring that users of its services are aware of their rights, responsibilities for themselves and that of SHINE for Kids workers.

SHINE for Kids is committed as an organisation to the right to privacy and confidentiality for all people using our services.

## **SHINE for Kids service user rights**

- We will treat you with respect and dignity
- We will provide services free of any form of discrimination based on linguistic, culture or religious background, sexual preference or disability
- We will provide information and support in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner, and respectful of religious or other beliefs
- We will provide safe, secure services
- We will provide services without expecting or accepting gifts
- We will ensure the rights of children and young people are identified, met and respected
- We respect your right to complain and/or to provide feedback on our services
- We respect your individuality and will support your empowerment
- We will provide assistance that is reliable, to a high standard and consistent with funding and program agreements
- We will respect your privacy and confidentiality
- You have the right to access your personal information held by us.

## **SHINE for Kids service user responsibilities**

- Tell us your needs
- Notify us of changes in important things such as your contact details
- Respect the worth and dignity of all other people (including staff) and their right to an environment free from violence, the threat of violence, intimidation, racism, sexism and harassment
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of other clients and staff
- Respect our property and the personal property of others
- Where instructed, follow occupational health and safety guidelines and procedures, including non-smoking rules
- To keep appointments, or tell us as soon as possible when you cannot
- Not to enter any SHINE for Kids premises under the influence of alcohol or other drugs
- Not to use alcohol or other drugs when on SHINE for Kids premises or participating in a service.

## **Privacy – gathering and storing your personal information**

It is a requirement that all children and families utilising our services complete Child Enrolment Forms. This information allows us to provide the best possible service to all people at all times.

Your personal information is stored in a safe, secure place at all times and is only accessible by SHINE for Kids workers.

If at any time you would like to access your information please contact our Administration Officer on (02) 9714 3000.

# Resources available

The following resources may assist you – please ask the Child and Family Worker for a copy. You can also download our publications as PDFs from our website at [www.shineforkids.org.au/publications](http://www.shineforkids.org.au/publications)

## ‘Putting Your Child First’

Coping with all the changes and their emotions when a family member is in jail is very hard for children and young people. This book is a survival guide for families when a parent first goes to prison.



## SHINE for Kids Information Sheets

- The impact of violence on kids
- The impact of substance abuse on kids
- The impact on children in primary school when a parent is in prison
- The impact on young people in high school when a parent is in prison
- Tips on helping children to trust authority figures

## SHINE for Kids Directories of Services

- Aboriginal Support Services – NSW
- Financial and Housing Support Services – NSW
- Legal and Court Support Services – NSW
- Support Services for Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren – NSW
- Support Services for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) People – NSW
- Directory of Community Educational Facilities for Children and Young People in Sydney

## ‘The Visit’ brochure

Available in English, Arabic, Spanish and Vietnamese

## Other publications available from Child and Family Centres

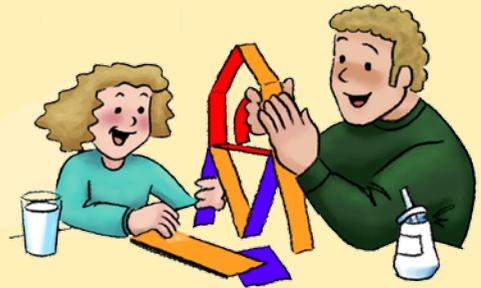
- CRC families’ booklet
- Corrective Services NSW visiting booklet
- Corrective Services NSW travel assistance information



# Other SHINE for Kids services

## Child/Parent Activity Days

Generally held during school holidays, these special days are set aside for children to spend time with their parents. Other family members do not attend – it's specifically for the parent and their children to do things together, like creating art and craft or playing ball. The parent may also make their child's lunch, to feed a bottle, play and create – to participate in everyday parenting tasks that they otherwise can't enjoy.



## Children's Supported Transport Service

This service helps those children or young people who have no possible way of having contact with their imprisoned parent unless we assist them to visit. We safely transport children to visit their parent in prison and help ensure the children have an enjoyable and positive encounter.

## Mentoring Program

Mentors are trained volunteers who meet regularly with the child for a commitment of at least a year. Mentoring offers children or young people with a parent in the criminal justice system a supportive, caring and non-judgmental relationship with an adult mentor, providing consistency and stability in their life without intruding into their family structure.



## Group Work Programs

Peer support groups are held in schools and the local community over a nine-week period for children and young people with parents in the criminal justice system. The programs focus on individual strengths to reduce isolation, stigma and shame. Monthly day trips provide a break for carers and allow their children to get to know others in similar circumstances.

# Other SHINE for Kids services

## **Carers' Group Program**

Weekly carers' groups offer support to women caring for children while their partner is in prison. Group members learn effective parenting techniques and assist with decision-making and lifestyle choices. Women gain support from others in the group, or individually from the group facilitator.

## **Video Visits**

If children are unable to visit a family member in prison because of distance, cost, sickness or other difficulties, the solution may be a Video Visit, where inmates, their families and children can see and talk to each other in a video conference. The facilities available at SHINE for Kids Centres allow up to four adults and any number of children to participate in each Video Visit.

## **Financial Package**

Due to financial hardships and constant change, many children struggle academically or may be unable to participate in standard activities such as music and sport. Under this program, we provide financial assistance for children to participate in camps, tutoring, community events and more.

## **Children and Family Intensive Support**

The program is designed to assist children and families through casework, home visiting, advocacy, and ongoing assistance. The caseworkers will work closely with the children and their carer on a short term basis or on an ongoing basis depending on the family's individual needs. Referrals to other specialised services can be arranged and negotiated through casework.

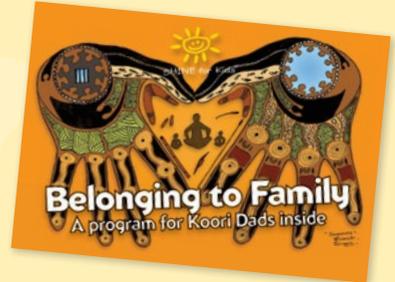


## **Bathurst Education Program**

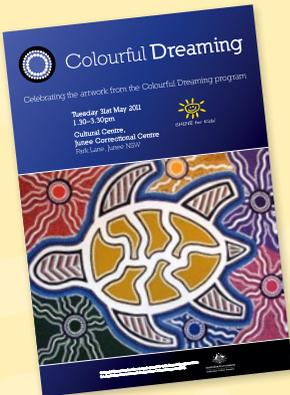
The Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs currently funds this program, which allows a SHINE for Kids Education Support Worker and volunteers to work one-on-one with a child each week. These sessions are conducted within school hours at the child's school.

## ‘Belonging to Family’

This program is for Koori dads in the Mid North Correctional Centre and their families. We help the inmate to become the best dad and partner he can be, developing a closer, healthier bond with his kids. We also support the dad during and after his release to help him stay out of prison and be with his family.



## ‘Colourful Dreaming’



With assistance from the Australian Government’s Indigenous Cultural Support (ICS), this program is being conducted in Wagga Wagga, Junee and Narrandera. It allows Aboriginal children aged 10–15 years with a parent in prison to explore personal challenges and increase their sense of cultural identity through artwork, culminating in a travelling exhibition. Contact is promoted between the children, their imprisoned fathers and Wiradjuri Elders.

## ‘Story Time’

This joint initiative with the Emu Plains Correctional Centre enables parents in custody to still be able to contribute to their child’s education and remain connected to their kids. The parent reads a children’s story book aloud, recording it onto CD, which is sent with the book to the child/ren so that they can read the story and/or listen to their parent’s voice reading it to them.



## Could any of these services assist your family, or a family you know?

The Child and Family Worker at your Centre will have more information. Or phone us on (02) 9714 3000 or email us at [inquiries@shineforkids.org.au](mailto:inquiries@shineforkids.org.au)

# We welcome your feedback

SHINE for Kids is always looking at ways to improve its services and welcomes you to tell us about your experiences accessing and receiving them.

At any time you are not happy with the service you have received please contact the SHINE for Kids Administration Officer who will note your concerns and refer them to the appropriate worker as quickly as possible.

All feedback is treated as confidential and can be addressed to:

Administration Officer, SHINE for Kids  
PO Box 67, Ermington NSW 1700

phone (02) 9714 3000 | fax (02) 9714 3030  
email [inquiries@shineforkids.org.au](mailto:inquiries@shineforkids.org.au)

## Our supporters

Our work is funded by the generous support of State and Federal governments, trusts and foundations, private and general donations.

SHINE for Kids welcomes donations of cash and in-kind support to maintain our programs and services. To find out more go to [www.shineforkids.org.au](http://www.shineforkids.org.au) or contact us on (02) 9714 3000.

## A sincere thank you

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 **THE RAYMOND E PURVES**  
FOUNDATION  
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