

EOI RCLDS Scholarship: Power to Kids

Background

The Residential Care Learning and Development Strategy (RCLDS) aims to improve outcomes for children and young people living in residential care. RCLDS works to achieve this through funding training for Victorian residential care workers. This funding is provided by the Victorian government.

Child sexual exploitation has been highlighted as one of the priority learning areas.

Power to Kids is a professional learning program that upskills residential care professionals to effectively prevent, identify and respond to concerns related to child sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviours and dating violence.

Power to Kids has been referenced in the Commission for Children and Young People's Out of Sight Report (2021) as an example of best-practice and was a key recommendation for state-wide implementation. DFFH have broadly endorsed and accepted the recommendations from this report.

Power to Kids has demonstrated outcomes in delivering:

- Increased knowledge around harmful sexual behaviour, child sexual exploitation & dating violence.
- Improved capabilities to identify harmful sexual behaviour, child sexual exploitation & dating violence and to ensure advocacy, exit & support.
- Increased self-efficacy in having sexual health & safety conversations with children & young people.

The Scholarship Opportunity

RCLDS is offering to fund up to 80% of an organisation's training and implementation fee of the Power to Kids program, up to a maximum of \$44,000 (excl GST).

This funding endeavours to enable an organisation to invest in the training of all residential care staff and leadership, and ensure sustainable implementation planning.



Eligibility

- All Victorian residential care providers are welcome to express interest. Preference will be given to ACCOs and regional providers.
- For organisations with a national presence, funding can only be used for staff based in Victoria.
- Demonstration of commitment to implementation and readiness for change (See EOI process).
- Organisation must be ready to commence the program in the FY 2024-25 financial year.

EOI Application Process

1. Express your interest by 30 October by completing [our application form](#).
2. Shortlisted organisations must nominate representatives, including at least one representative from Senior Leadership (with decision-making and budget responsibilities) to attend a 30-minute consultation with Power to Kids to discuss your needs and proposed implementation plans. *Meetings to occur between October and mid-November.*
3. Power to Kids and RCLDS will meet to assess all interested organisation proposals. Assessment criteria will include commitment, readiness, sustainability, need, reach and impact.
4. The successful recipient of the scholarship will be selected and announced by end of November. Any unsuccessful organisations will be automatically reconsidered in the case of further funding.



The Power to Kids Program

Context of Power to Kids

Power to Kids takes a multidisciplinary approach, developed by MacKillop Family Services and the University of Melbourne to address several recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Despite accounting for only 5% of all children in care, children in residential care account for 33% of child sexual exploitation reports to child protection in Australia.

Program Overview

Power to Kids is a professional learning program that upskills out-of-home care professionals to effectively prevent, identify and respond to concerns related to child sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviours and dating violence.

The program is built on three evidence-based strategies to maximise its impact including a 'whole of house' education approach, early identification and prevention, and improving sexual safety responses. Participants explore embedding implementation with trauma-informed, relationship and strength-based practice and cultural safety at the core of individual and organisational approaches.

Participants gain confidence to have brave conversations with young people around sexual health and safety. By strengthening the confidence and capacity of carers, Power to Kids aims to increase young people's understanding of healthy relationships and sexual safety.



Program Framework



Course topics

- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Child sexual exploitation
- Dating violence
- Rights and responsibilities
- Cultural practice
- Gender and diversity
- Sexual health and contraception
- Sexual behaviour
- Respectful relationships and love
- Consent and age
- Grooming and abuse
- Disclosure and informed friend
- Online safety and pornography

Prevention Strategy 1

- Educate children & young people about respectful relationships and sexual health & safety through trauma-informed, culturally safe Brave conversations using YARN and TALK frameworks, as well as the CARE model.
- Train and coach carers in a trauma informed, culturally safe, whole-of-house approach, including recognising and responding to harmful sexual behaviour, child sexual exploitation and dating violence.
- Develop and regularly review Sexual Health and Safety Plans for every child or young person.

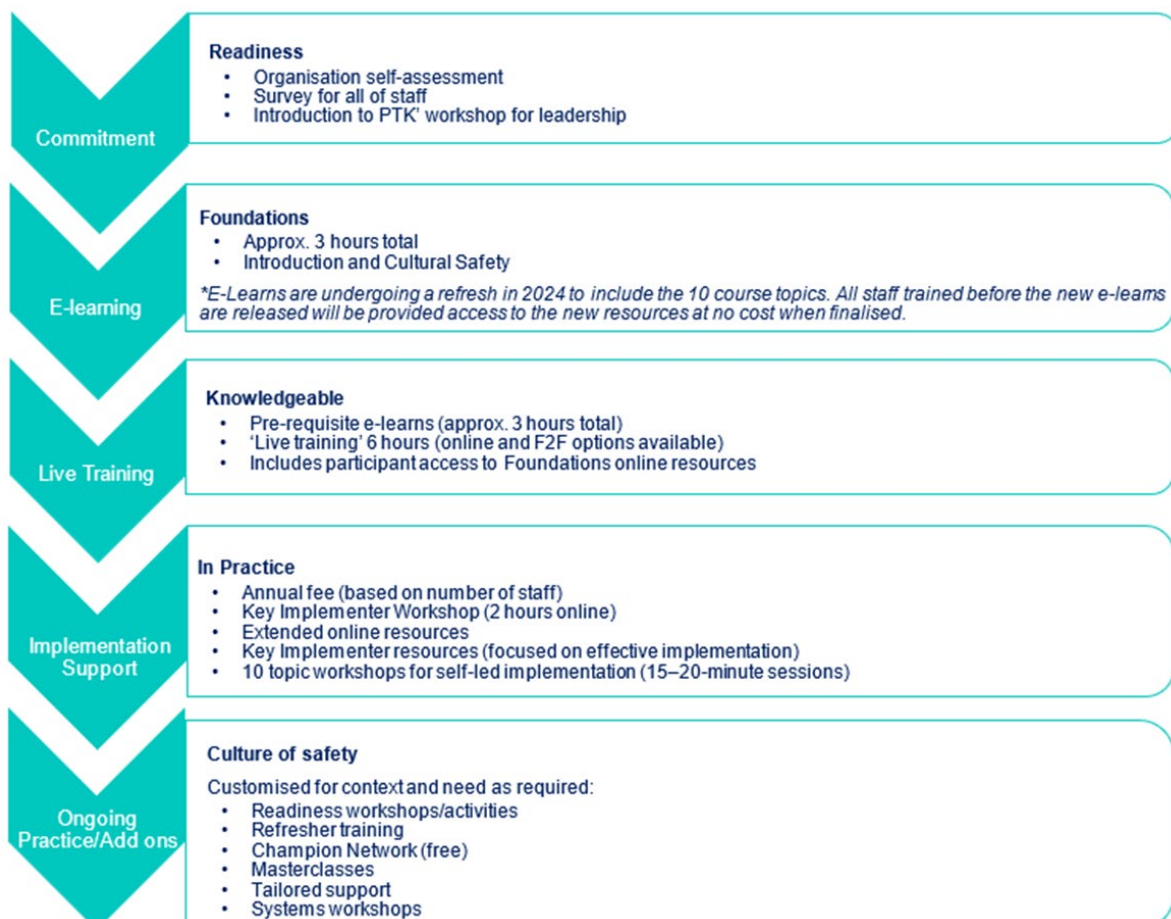
Prevention Strategy 2

- Identify historical and current risk factors and establish culturally safe practice and partnerships between each child or young person and their carers, family and community to increase safety and stability.
- Establish a **Missing from home strategy**, incorporating use of social media and proactive relationship-based engagement.
- Reduce risk factors and increase protective factors around child or young person.

Prevention Strategy 3

- Work from a position of zero tolerance to disrupt child sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour and dating violence.
- Engage multi agencies including local police, Child Protection, Indigenous organisations, multicultural support services, schools and mental health services, disability services, health services, sexual assault services and family violence services where appropriate.
- Escalate to senior managers if interventions stall or are unsuccessful and monitor daily to avoid case drift.

Program Training Overview



Partner Organisation responsibilities for effective implementation

- Commitment to building mechanisms for ongoing implementation and evaluating progress
- Support from leadership in communication and prioritising time for training
- Supporting completion of the e-learns
- Designating roles to lead implementation and supporting reflective practice
- Where more than 20 staff are participating in an online 'live' training session, Partner Organisations will nominate an appropriate staff member to support breakout room and activity facilitation.
- E-learns should be completed ideally within 1 month, and within a maximum 3-month period
- Live training should ideally take place within 1 month of e-learn completion date. If this is not possible due to restraints/barriers, allowance for a 'Refresher' session should be considered
- To accommodate large scale organisations, budgets and pace – e-learns and live training can be phased over time. Implementation nationally has demonstrated that upfront frontloading of training increases the likelihood of training transitioning to practice. *To support large scale organisations who frontload phasing over a multi-year period, substantial discounts are available.*

Questions and Further Information

For further information, details or questions please contact the Power to Kids team on powertokids@mackillop.org.au.

We look forward to discussing how we can partner to strengthen prevention and responses to the sexual abuse of children and young people.