



"I found I was made to feel comfortable on arrival with assistance immediately. The staff are fantastic and I did not hesitate in asking for help, as I felt the staff wanted to help."

"...this program should be compulsory for every parent. The information, knowledge and advice were priceless."

Thank you - QEC

"I can't believe the change in my daughter since we attended 'Day Stay.' It's a wonderful service and I cannot speak more positively of the kindness, warmth and support we received."

"...spending time with me on developing a plan, a routine to suit my specific needs. You recognised that all children and families are different and have different needs."



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EARLY PARENTING

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## Early parenting services

Many parents do not feel fully prepared for some of the challenges of parenthood and seek extra help. The QEC has provided advice and support to tens of thousands of parents in Victoria since 1917. Our mission is to offer specialised support, care and education to families who have children up to three years of age, with the aim of enhancing the health and development of the family.

## Helping parents meet the challenges of parenthood

The Centre provides practical support, education and advice to help parents develop skills to confidently manage the challenges of early parenthood. It may be a concern about a baby's wakeful days and nights, problems with breastfeeding, a toddler refusing to eat, behaviour difficulties, how parents may feel about themselves or others, the possible development of postnatal depression or concerns about how to care for a child.

QEC has many years of experience and is widely recognised for its innovative and caring services.

## Family focus

Our friendly professional staff are ready to hear your concerns and sensitively assist with any parenting difficulties you may be experiencing. Staff are easy to talk to and can provide support, education and advice about parenting when and at the pace you need. We work in partnership with you, acknowledging that families are the principal providers of care and nurture to children.

This sensitive, individual approach to families helps you develop new skills and increase your confidence and enjoyment of parenting.

Mothers, fathers, grandparents or foster parents can access QEC's early parenting services.

## Cost

QEC is a registered public hospital. If you have a Medicare Card and elect to be a public patient, our services are free. There are small charges, however, for visitor meals, nappy laundry or disposal, and for the use of washing machines and dryers. Your baby will need to be registered with Medicare prior to admission.

## Ring for a booking

Are you struggling to meet the challenges of parenting? Have you sought the help of your local nurse, doctor, or family worker and are still having problems? Call QEC direct, or talk to your helping professional, to make a referral to QEC.

Our receptionist will make an appointment with you for a QEC parenting professional to phone you back for a detailed initial consultation. You may find the phone advice she provides is enough or she may book you into another QEC early parenting service.

## Day Stay

Some parents book into QEC's modern and popular Day Stay Unit with their babies or toddlers. During the day you spend with us, you learn and practise new skills related to unsettled babies or difficult toddler behaviour, lactation and breast feeding, infant formula preparation and feeding, weaning, first foods and toddler meals.

Up to six families with similar age children attend on the same day. Each family has a separate room and group discussions take place in the shared family room. Day Stay hours are usually 8.30am to 3.30pm. The program is flexible and can adapt to your needs.

## Residential Services

The Residential Service offers a more intensive style of support and care for families who are experiencing more complex difficulties with their infants and young children.

Our friendly professional staff plan individual learning programs with each family according to your particular needs and the age of your child or children. They will offer one-to-one coaching and counselling. You will meet other families with children of a similar age and will attend group education sessions with other parents. The staff will also make referrals to services in your local community for ongoing care or support if you need it when you go home.

Residential services are generally five or 10 days long. Accommodation is in family suites, each

with a main bedroom containing a double bed, a child/ren's room and en suite bathroom facilities. Each family suite has a garden outlook. The dining room, kitchen, sitting room, playroom, gardens and courtyards are shared.

## Home Visiting Services

Home Visiting Services are available in some Melbourne suburbs and rural districts and can be especially helpful to families who would otherwise have difficulty coming to QEC. If you have had a multiple birth, or if a family member has a disability or chronic illness, or if you are a teenager with a baby or toddler, ask our admission and intake staff, or talk to your helping professional for more information about home visiting services.

## Play Group Programs

QEC deliver a range of group programs focusing on parenting and interaction through play. Phone QEC reception for further information.

## Parenting Skills Development Services

These services are for parents who have reached a critical point in the care of their children and are referred to QEC through a child protection service. If you are referred to one of these intensive services, QEC's supportive staff will plan individual learning programs with you to build on the parenting knowledge and skills you already have. You can learn practical ways to provide safe care for your children and to nurture them as they grow through new stages of development.

Parenting Skills Development Services can help parents and children reunify after a period of separation, such as foster care.

Services may be offered as a 10-day residential stay at Noble Park or as a home visiting service, available in some Melbourne suburbs and rural districts, with each family receiving visits for approximately three months. As with all QEC early parenting programs, staff can arrange referrals to specialists if required, as well as referrals to other ongoing support services in your own community.

## Professional Education & Research Unit

QEC provides education programs for professionals involved with young children and their families including maternal and child health nurses, childcare or family support workers, general practitioners, psychologists and social workers.

We offer professional education seminars on a broad range of early childhood and parenting topics incorporating the latest research and clinical practice information. Topics include parent child interactions, family partnership, engaging and working with vulnerable families and frameworks for assessing and developing parenting skills. QEC can consult with you and develop a training program to address the individual needs of your organisation. Training programs are available throughout Australia.

Clinical preceptorship is available for professionals wanting to advance their clinical skills on a range of early parenting topics such as promoting parent-child attachment, assessing parent-child interactions, strengths based approaches to developing parenting skills and engaging with families including those who are hard to reach, in residential, day stay and home based settings. The clinical preceptorship program can be customised to suit your individual training needs and may take place at Noble Park or regional sites.

The QEC research program aims to advance scientific knowledge in the early parenting field. Professionals and students are welcome to conduct research within our various programs and sites, use physical resources and apply for funding.

**For further information please contact the QEC Training Unit.**

## Conference Facilities Hire

QEC's conference and meeting rooms are available for hire and are ideal for workshops, seminars, meetings or training sessions. Groups of up to 20, 40 or 70 can be accommodated. Equipment includes electronic whiteboards and overhead and multimedia projectors. We can also organise catering.

**For further information contact the Manager, Operations Support.**

