

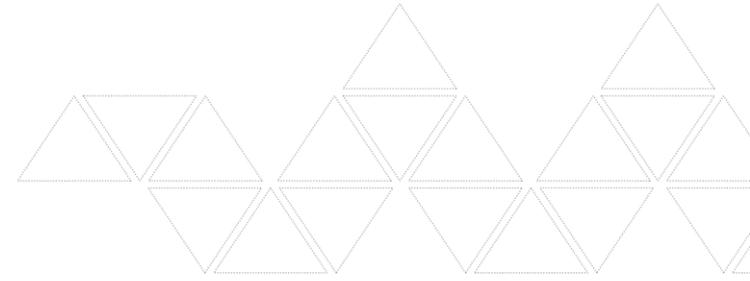


Merri Health



Healthcare that moves with you

Family Foundations



Merri Health

Healthcare that moves with you

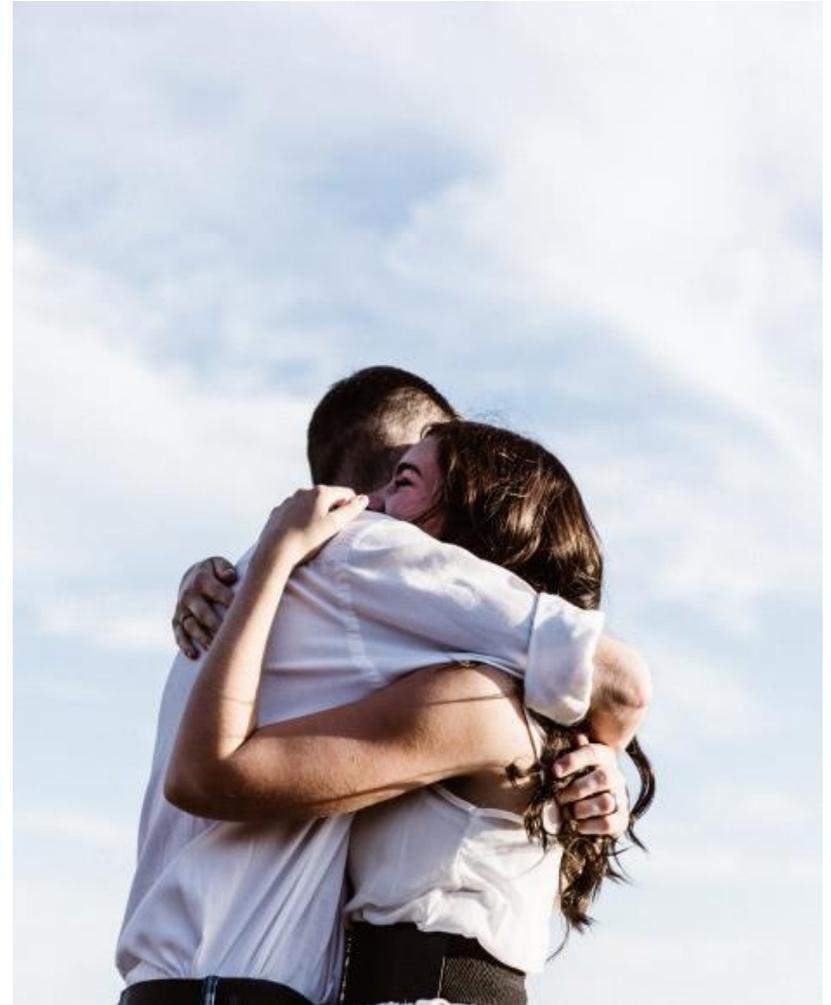
A non-for-profit community health provider committed to creating and supporting healthy and connected communities.

We're here for you at every age and stage of life.

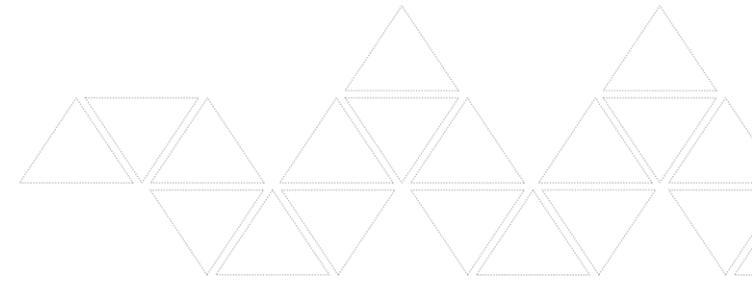
Child and Family services, Allied health, Mental Health, NDIS, Carer Support, Aged Care.

Family Foundations at a Glance

Family Foundations is an innovative, evidence-based early intervention to promote parent mental health, reduce conflict and strengthen parenting partnerships during pregnancy and the critical early years of their lives.



How did Family Foundations come about?



- Developed by Professor Mark Feinberg (Penn State University)
- Adapted for Australian context by Rebecca Giallo, Monique Seymour and Lorraine Skinner (Murdoch Children's Research Institute)
- Funding Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services from the tender 'Building Evidence Based Programs and Practice in Child, Youth and Family Services. This was part of the Victorian Government official Roadmap for Reform: ***Strong families, safe children.***



Family Foundations

- 10-week manualized intervention for families expecting a baby and/or with an infant (aged 0-12 months).
- Focuses on the co-parenting relationship and build parents' skills to:
 - (a) manage common challenges in early parenthood (relationship changes, life stress, adjusting to parenthood);
 - (b) decrease anxiety and stress (relaxation, self-care);

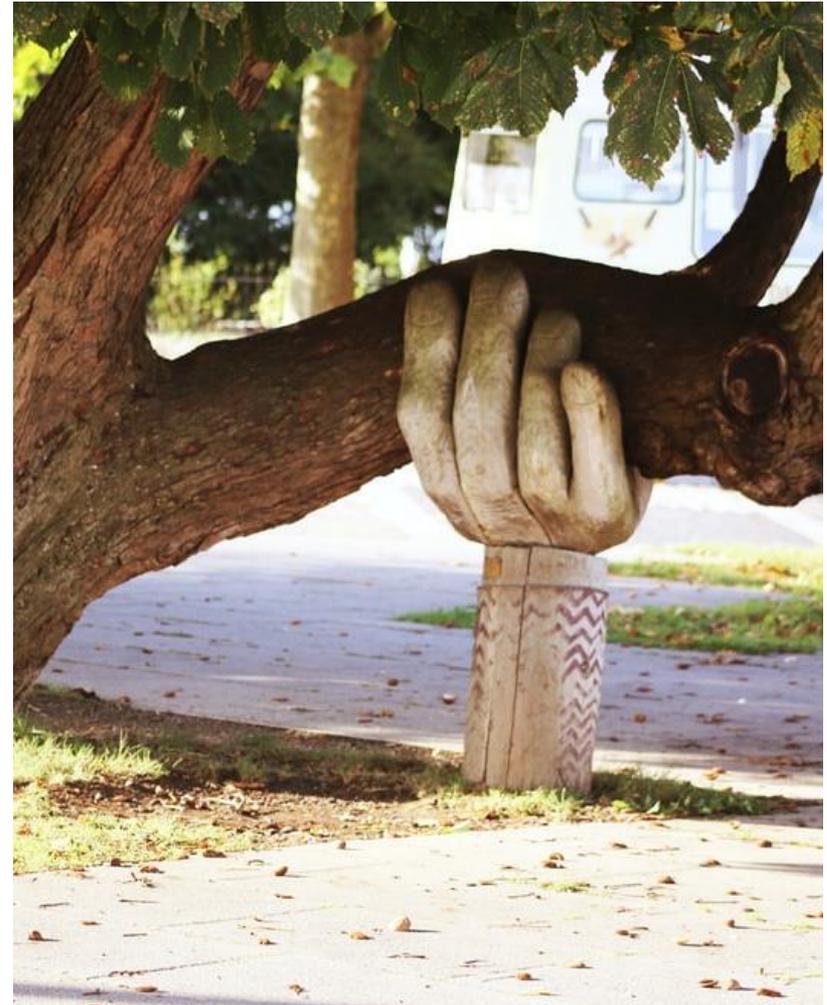




c) strengthen co-parenting relationships (decision-making, mutual support); and

(d) reduce conflict (listening, problem-solving).

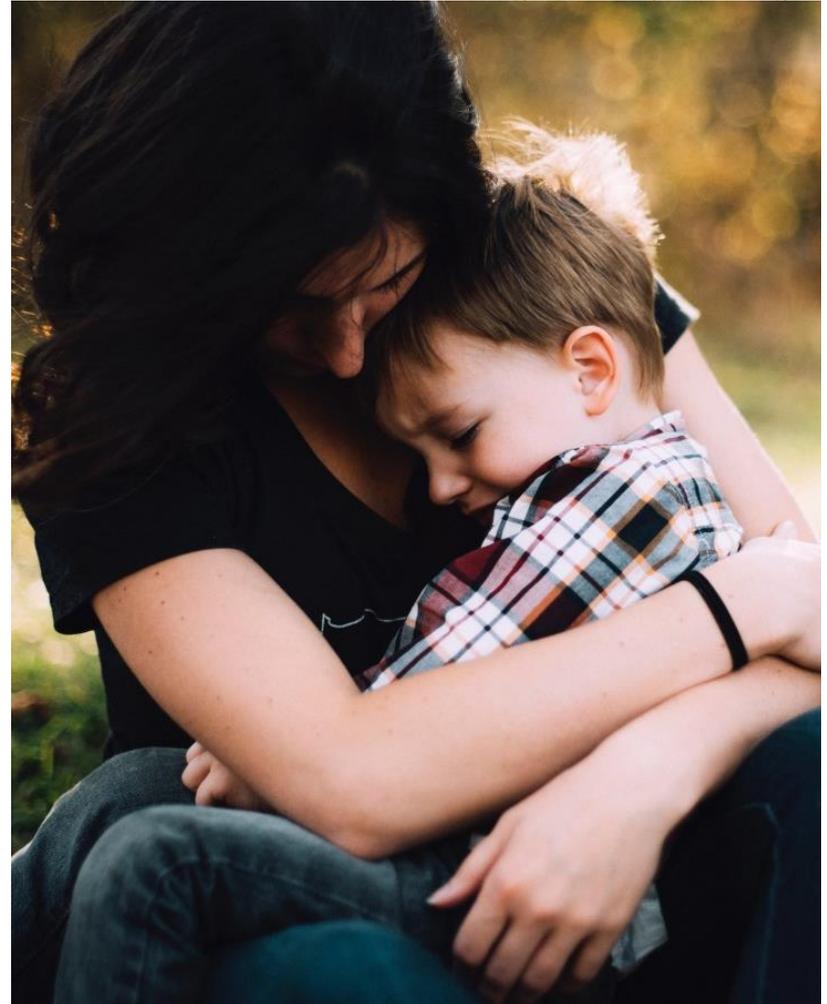
Each 1-hour session is delivered to both parents/caregivers by 2 professionals (social work or counselling trained) using discussion-based activities, modelling, and skills practice.

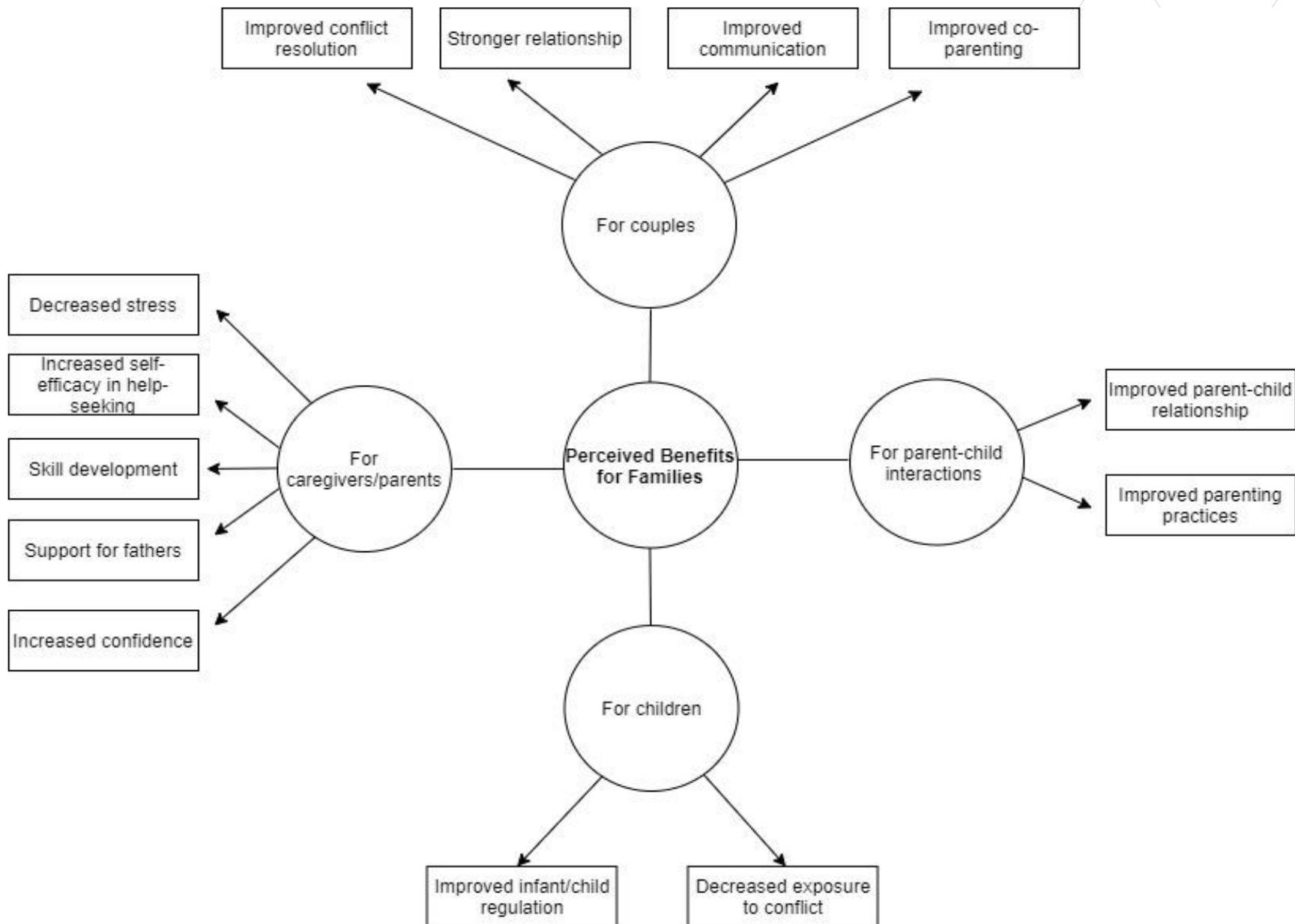


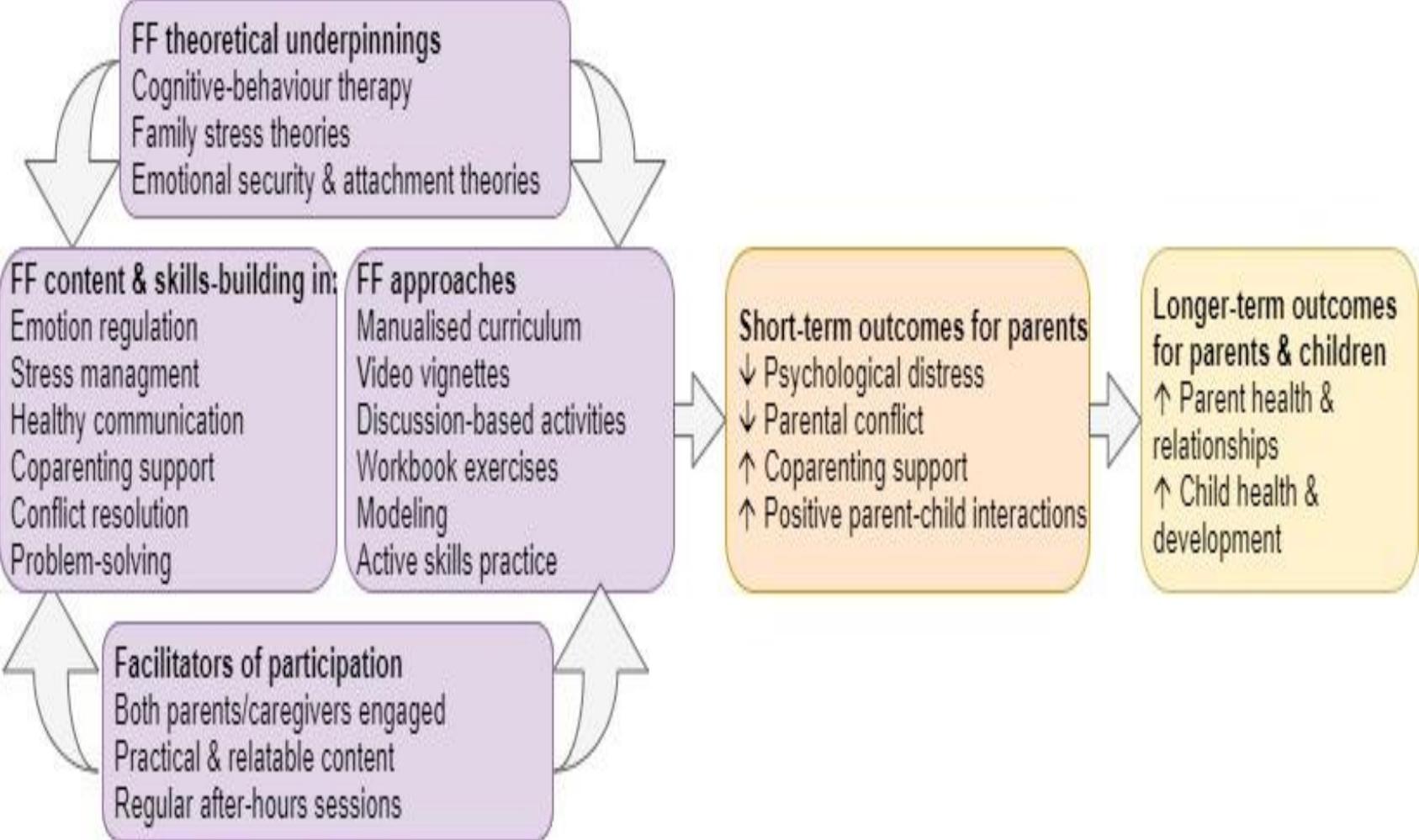
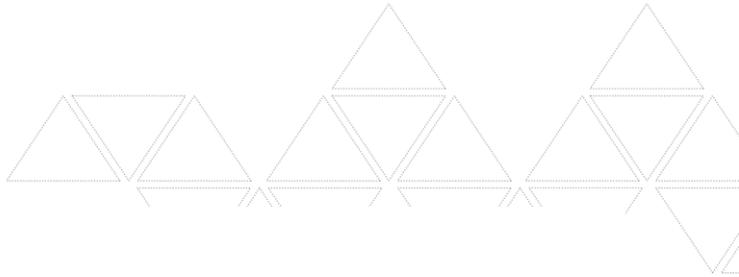
Family Foundations

building skills around

- emotional regulation,
- stress management,
- conflict resolution,
- attachment,
- healthy communication,
- co-parenting support,
- problem solving.







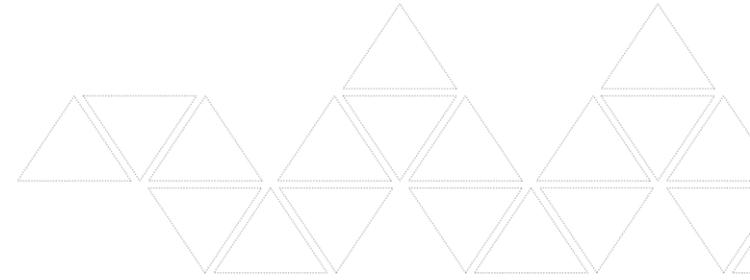
In the words of participants

“the techniques that are taught in it are about trying to manager yourself and stress and manage how you communicate with people when you are stressed.”

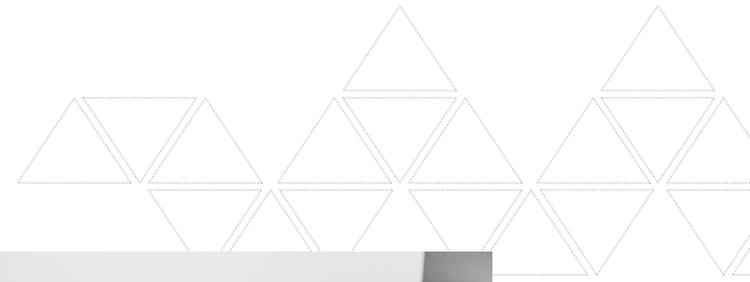
“Understand the other person’s perspective and listen to that- speak out/listen up has been so valuable. We’ve been going through a rough spot and this has been invaluable for us. I don’t think we would have done so well.”

“It has been a really good thing, we are improving our relationship. Discussing our problems more now which is a direct reaction to doing the program.”

“Its been really good. At first I thought it wouldn’t help because we weren’t talking about our issues but talking generally really helped gaining some skills and has been really helpful.”



Challenges and Opportunities



- Costs
- Program Fidelity
- Manualised program
- Available for all
- After hours appointments to further engage working parent
- Engaging Men – 2 parent coaches, Male and Female co- facilitation

“Its been really good- it’s a great opening to helping my partner see that getting help from outside is not a bad thing for our relationship. Having a mediator help guide our discussions has been very valuable for our relationship and its longevity. Great springboard for conversations into the future.”



Challenges and Opportunities (cont)

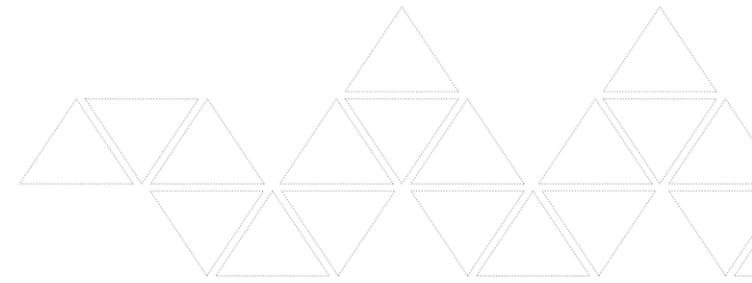
- Engaging clients prenatally
- Re-engaging after birth
- CALD families- ESL
- In home delivery – convenience

“Come at the right time. Its been a brilliant course to do. We are getting so much out of it. I think its saved our marriage. We weren’t enjoying each other and negativity was spiralling. Home visits are great for engaging men. My husband is really engaged and participating; he doesn’t feel judged like you can in couples counselling; as it’s in a book he doesn’t feel like it’s directed specifically at him and he’s open to doing things differently.”

- Covid-19



The Journey



In American

- Developed by Prof. Mark Feinberg Penn State University
- Group based delivery
- 2 RCT showed decreased parent depressive and anxiety symptoms (effect sizes: 0.4-0.6), verbal and physical conflict (effect sizes: 0.4-0.7), and increased levels of co-parenting (effect sizes: ~0.4)
- Follow up: 6mths, 12mths and 3 years, 7yrs
- Recent follow up at 10 years during Covid: found sustained intervention effects including fewer angry outbursts by fathers, high family cohesion, a high level of adherence to social distancing rules, less hostile parenting interactions, and fewer child emotional-behavioural difficulties.

Family Foundations Research in the United States



Two randomised controlled trials of group-based FF (Prof Mark Feinberg)
Compared to families who did not receive FF, those who did:

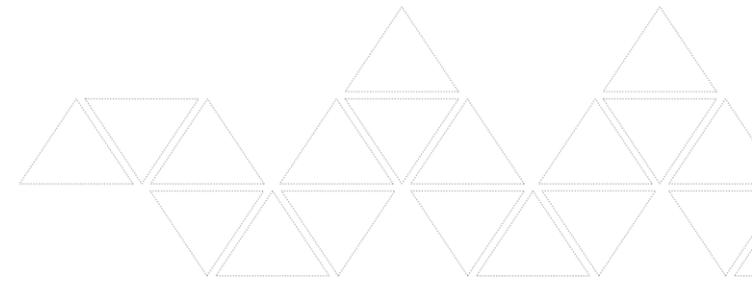
- ↓ Parental psychological and physical violence
- ↓ Parental depressive and anxiety symptoms
- ↑ Co-parenting support
- ↓ Co-parenting hostility
- ↑ Positive couple communication
- ↓ Negative parent-child interactions
- ↑ Positive parent-child interactions
- ↓ Infant sleep problems
- ↑ Infant sooth-ability
- ↓ Child emotional and behavioural (3.5 years later)

Australian Journey so far

- Initial 9 month Trail commenced in January 2018 with funding Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services
- Trial Funding extended
- Phase I; 52 families
- Phase II: Snap shot Interim report. Jan 2019- August 2020. 106 families so far
- Covid-19
- Funding extended for three years till end of financial year 2024
- Entering Phase III planned late 2021



Learning Outcomes



<u>Parents</u>	<u>Children</u>
<p>Decreased stress</p> <p>Decrease in Depressive symptoms (Mother)</p>	<p>Increased social competence</p> <p>Decreased behaviour problems (US Studies)</p>
<p><u>Parenting</u></p> <p>Increased sensitivity and warmth</p> <p>Decreased conflict in front of child</p>	<p><u>Couple Relationship</u></p> <p>Improved positive co-parenting</p> <p>More overall warmth and closeness</p>

Parent satisfaction with FF



Very high satisfaction with number and duration of sessions, home visits, opportunities for discussion and having two parent coaches

“It's been super-helpful & potentially saved us. Thanks.”

“FF has completely changed the way our family operates for the better and made my relationship with my husband and child stronger.”

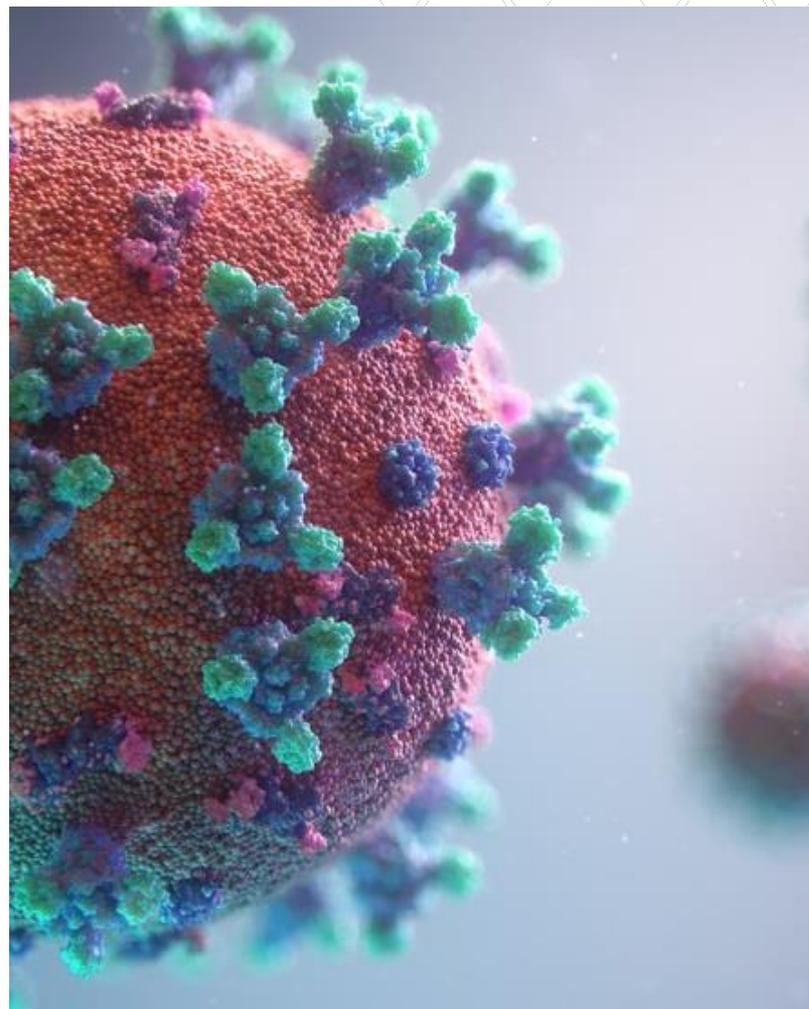
“I consider myself so lucky to be able to participate in such a program. I think its so relevant to so many and I would highly recommend it to anyone in a similar situation. Thank you so much!”

“Understanding ourselves as parents & learning how this influences our approach to our children & to conflict with each other.”

Covid-19 Challenge and Opportunity

Covid -19

- More need for support
- Moving to tele-health
- After hours not so bad
- Who's left holding the baby?
- No need to clean the house or cancel if baby sick
- Backed up by evidence- MCRI



Quotes about Family Foundations during the COVID-19 pandemic

“Recently, myself and my partner have found it very difficult and, I think we’re still very lucky that we’re actually doing the Family Foundations program, because that gave us the time and the opportunity to sit down together and spend that time working or not. We actually – we’re actually pretty good going into the last session, which was a nice good thing to do or to have, but it’s been really up and down. At times, things have been really difficult.”

“The techniques that is taught in it about trying to manage yourself and stress and manage how you communicate with people when you are stressed. And, particularly, in the last couple of months. But then, yeah, just trying to remember those things that really help us and – because it is a particularly stressful time.”

“I think we’re just a lot happier with one another, especially now, you know we see each other 24/7 since we’re in lockdown, and it’s actually been really good and I’d like to think that the programme helped us to, yeah be able to live with each other in close proximity for such long periods of time without getting on each other’s nerves constantly.”

Quotes about Family Foundations during the COVID-19 pandemic

“The thing that was really profound for me was separating our conflict with each other about parenting matters from our issues as a couple. We have to co-parent because we share our lives together. I felt like it would help us even if we separated. Regardless of the status of our relationship, it was going to improve our ability to parent together. It helped my commitment toward the parenting stuff because I was thinking that even if the relationship is in turmoil or difficult, we still want to get this parenting stuff right and we can focus on that as distinct from our relationship.”



Learning Outcomes

- Evidence based material transferable
- Male and Female co-facilitation engages male care giver

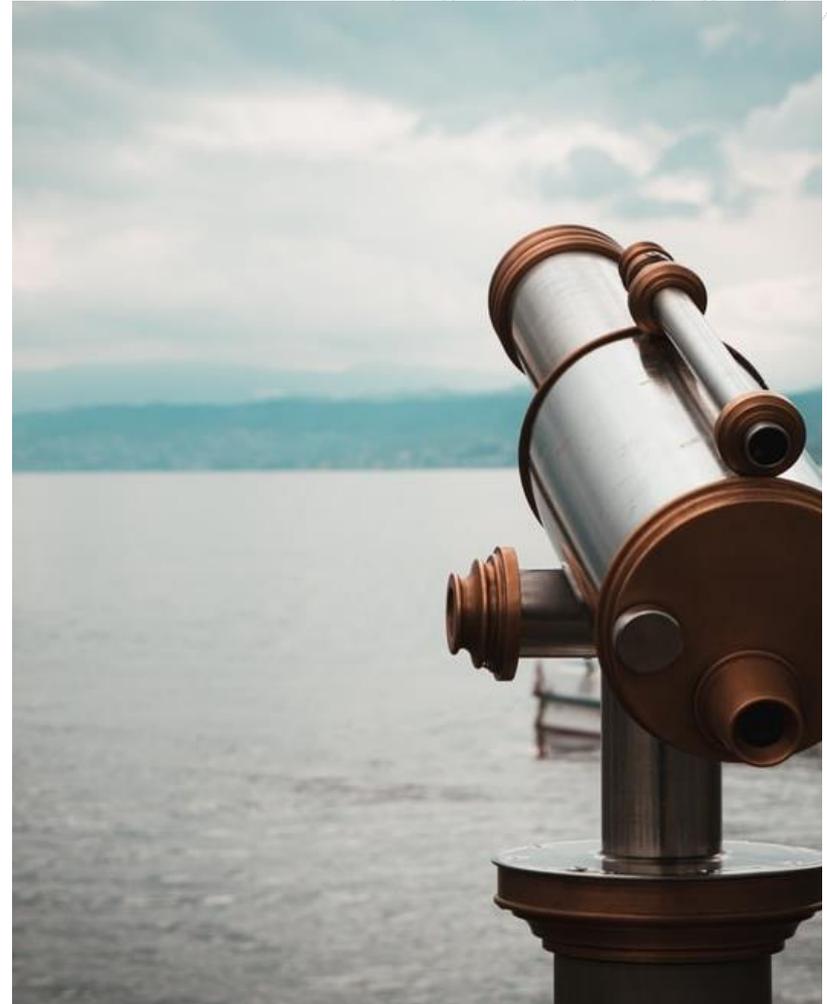
“I think its really good- especially for us- therapy wasn’t in our budget so its been great for us. The counsellors are lovely and definitely know what they are doing. Great being a male and female. Having a male presence has helped partner to open up.”

- Trust the evidence



The Future: Looking Forward

- Funding for another 3 years
- Phase III of research with MCRI – long term follow up
- Hybrid model of delivery:
 - Telehealth
 - Home visit
 - Group work and telehealth/home visit
- Engaging CALD Families – same-sex couples
- Online delivery- access for more, further afield
- Family Foundations finalist for 2021 Victorian Early Years



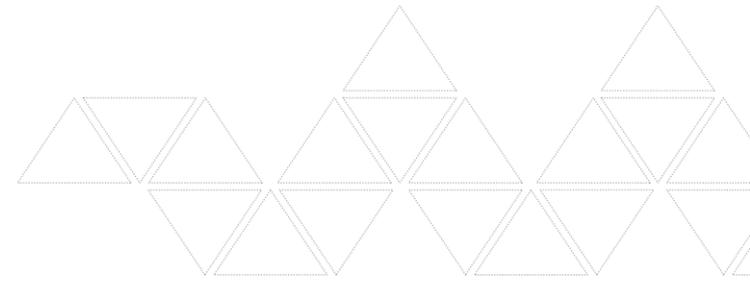
Award finalist

Supporting Parents
to Build their
Capacity &
Confidence

The logo for the 'Victorian Early Years Awards 2021' is centered within a white circle. It features a stylized white 'V' shape on the left, composed of dots. To the right of the 'V', the words 'VICTORIAN EARLY YEARS AWARDS' are stacked vertically in a white, sans-serif font, with '2021' below them. The background of the slide is dark blue with a pattern of colorful dots (red, yellow, green, cyan) arranged in a circular pattern around the central logo.

VICTORIAN
EARLY YEARS
AWARDS
2021

Thankyou for your attention
Family Foundations



Thankyou for your attention
Family Foundations