

Considerations for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children and young people

Children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities may bring different cultural, religious, and linguistic understandings of sexual development, relationships, and behaviour.

These differences can influence how expected, problematic or harmful sexual behaviours are understood, discussed, and responded to.



Access to information, education and services

Some children and young people may have had limited access to:

- Sex and relationships education
- Information about consent, boundaries, and bodies

This may contribute to misunderstandings rather than intentional harm.

Families may also experience barriers to accessing services due to:

- language barriers
- limited access to interpreters or culturally responsive services
- fear or mistrust of services or systems.



Migration, stress, and trauma

Some children and families may be managing:

- migration-related stress or displacement
- trauma experiences
- ongoing adjustment to new cultural environments.

These factors may influence emotional regulation, relationships, and behaviour.



Helpful responses

- Explore the family's beliefs about development, privacy, and behaviour. "Every family has different ways of talking about things like growing up, relationships puberty or sexual behaviours. Can you tell me what it's like in your family?"
- Discuss how open discussion of sexual development usually happens in the family. "How are these kinds of topics usually talked about at home, if they come up at all?"



Cultural understandings and approaches to sex and development

Some families may have:

- limited open discussion about sex, bodies or sexual identity
- strong cultural or religious values about privacy, modesty, or relationships
- different views about what is appropriate for children to know.

This may impact a child's knowledge of boundaries and how families respond to concerns.

In some contexts, sexual behaviour may be associated with shame, stigma family honour, or fear of judgement. This can affect:

- willingness to seek help
- openness in conversations
- engagement with services.

- Ask about previous learning or exposure to information. “Has your child had any teaching or information about growing up, changing bodies, puberty, relationships, or safety before now?”
- Explore the family’s experiences of accessing services and support. “Families often have concerns about children’s behaviours. Have you had other experiences of getting help and support?”
- “We can use an interpreter so everything is clear and comfortable if you would like this.”

Further information

Together We Can is currently being piloted. Public access to the site is expected to be available in coming months.

