



Parents Advisory Group – Meeting 11

Communique

The Parents Advisory Group (the Group) held its eleventh meeting virtually on 23 April 2026. The Group consists of parent representatives, community organisations and an academic expert. The community organisations who attended the meeting included:

- Australian Council of Social Service
- Brave Foundation
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Council of Single Mothers and their Children
- Single Mother Families Australia

The Department provided an update on the Parent Pathways service, including an overview of the Parent Pathways service data as at 28 February 2026 (<https://www.dewr.gov.au/employment-services-data/parent-pathways-data>). The Department noted it is closely monitoring the current fuel supply issue and advised that it is providing ongoing guidance to providers to ensure participants are supported through flexible, tailored servicing that responds to individual needs and circumstances.

The Department also covered a range of IT enhancements and Guideline updates for the service, including:

- the inclusion of the Launch into Work program as an eligible Parent Pathways activity,
- the release of the Parent Journey Application, and
- a System and Guideline update to enable the transfer of participants within and across Employment Regions.

The Department acknowledged the Group's ongoing advocacy for changes to the eligibility settings for Parent Pathways. The Department confirmed that, at this stage, the current eligibility criteria will remain in place and assured members that all suggestions raised by the Group have been documented and will be drawn upon for consideration should opportunities for changes to the service arise in the future.

The Department provided an overview of upcoming changes to the Group. As Parent Pathways transitions from its early design and implementation phase into ongoing service delivery, and in line with a review of the Parents Advisory Group Terms of Reference, the Department noted this as an appropriate point to reexamine whether the Group remains positioned in the most effective way to support the service moving forward.

To align with current service needs and strengthen continuous improvement, the Department advised that the objective and scope of the Group are being revised to place a stronger emphasis on insights relating to current service delivery settings, operational challenges and participant needs. To support this shift, the Department has updated the definition of lived experience for parent representatives on the Parents Advisory Group. Going forward, lived experience will refer to parents and carers with current or very recent experience of Parent Pathways.

These changes are intended to provide the Department with more timely, real-world insights to help identify issues earlier, respond more effectively, and support the ongoing improvement of the service as it is delivered. The revised approach will also help ensure the Group's advice is practical, actionable and aligned with the current operating environment of Parent Pathways.

The Department advised that the updated definition of lived experience means some current parent representatives may no longer meet the criteria and will be supported to transition off the Group. Community organisations represented on the Parents Advisory Group will be invited to nominate new parent representatives in line with the revised definition. The Department acknowledged the significant contributions of current parent representatives and expressed its sincere appreciation for their insights, courage, and willingness to share their experiences, which have helped shape and strengthen the foundations of Parent Pathways.

The Department advised that membership changes will occur through a phased transition, including a period of overlap between current and incoming members to support relationship-building, knowledge sharing and mentorship. Feedback was sought from members to help inform the Department's approach to managing this transition.

The Nous Group facilitated a short workshop with members to inform the development of a Capability Building Framework for Parent Pathways and employment services providers. Focussing on Parent Pathways, members shared insights on the capabilities that would make the greatest difference to parents. This feedback will be used to inform the ongoing development of frontline workforce capabilities, as well as tools to support providers and other stakeholders in applying the framework.

The date of the next meeting has not yet been set but will take place in mid-2026.