

Positive Special Needs Parenting

Help & support for parents & providers



School Programs

Positive Special Needs Parenting (PSNP) can offer a range of programs to schools, tailored to your specific needs. Whether you are a mainstream primary or high school, an independent college or a special education institution, PSNP can deliver information sessions, professional development or consulting services to suit your unique requirements.

Information Sessions

PSNP can deliver one hour information sessions to teachers, staff and volunteers, providing insight into what it's like to parent children with additional needs. This insight can help foster more meaningful relationships and lead to improved outcomes for students. All sessions are tailored to meet identified needs, to ensure the effectiveness of the session.

Information sessions cover the following:

- What it's like to receive a diagnosis for your child (long road, emotions, lack of support and understanding, challenge to access support and funding, uncertainty, fear of future)
- What parents wish you knew (we are doing the best we can, we need understanding and kindness, we want professional advice and guidance, we have the need of our whole family to consider, we know our kids best but want to know how to best help them)
- What parents need (care for our kids, get to know them, celebrate strengths, no judgment, respect our input, be honest with us, regular communication)
- What you can do (give us tools to help our kids, provide a safe space for our kids and us, listen to us, teach us to be better advocates, help us network with others, support us in our parenting)
- What a good relationship should look like (partnership, communication, trust, understanding, respect, commitment).

In-service Presentations

PSNP can deliver one to two hour in-service sessions to teachers, staff and volunteers, on a range of topics relating to parent-teacher relationships. These sessions are prepared in consultation with the school to ensure they meet your requirements. They are designed to increase awareness and understanding of the parent experience and provide practical strategies to help schools cultivate better relationships with parents.

In-service presentations cover the following:

- Guiding parents & students through school transitions
- Relationship management principles: practical ways to improve parent-school relationships
- How to develop a communication plan to better engage parents and manage interactions
- Involving parents in the education process - strategies for success

Professional Development

PSNP can deliver half day professional development sessions, aligning with 7.3.4 of the Australian Professional Standard for Teachers (Engage with parents/carers). Aimed at leaders, this professional development package gives participants the knowledge and the opportunity to “Identify, initiate and build on opportunities that engage parents/carers in both the progress of their children’s learning and the educational priorities of the school.” (APST 7.3.4)

Professional development covers the following:

Insight into the Reality of Special Needs Parenting

- Jenga activity (simulating ongoing daily pressures on parents)
- Overview of parental pressure in special needs families
- Impact of previous experiences on parental behaviour
- Understanding expectations of parents
- Personal story/case study

Effective Strategies to Engage Parents

- What should parent engagement look like?
- Overview of Parental Engagement Approach from Commonwealth Department of Education and Training
- Research findings on the value of good family-school partnerships for students, families and the school
- Value of collaboration to student outcomes, parent engagement and the school
- Strategies to engage parents using relationship management principles

Develop Action Plan

Focus Questions: How can you anticipate parent need, funnel them through to the right person & manage expectations? How can you strategically & systematically improve the parent experience & streamline the process for your school?

- Undertake SWOT analysis of current parent engagement processes & existing communication channels
- Identify ways to improve engagement focusing on existing relationship touch-points (enrolment, IEPs, transition meetings, parent-teacher nights, etc.)
- Examine how forms can be more effectively used to collect & provide information
- Develop a calendar of potential events, to regularly promote interaction and engagement
- Examine existing touchpoints & note clear paths of communication & escalation for parents
- Create draft parent engagement and communication plan & take back to school

Parent Sessions

For every school program, PSNP offers a complimentary parent information session to help parents develop strong relationships with the school. These sessions are conducted on site, in consultation with the principal and executive team. Parent sessions are designed to share effective relationship management strategies with parents, inform them of optimal ways to engage with the school, and encourage ongoing participation and advocacy.

Information sessions can cover any combination of the following:

- Principles of relationship management
- How to become a better advocate
- Awareness of mindset and how it can colour relationships
- How to maintain positivity as a special needs parent
- Adopting a strengths based approach to your child's education
- Managing transitions
- How to overcome bumps in the education road
- Strategies for school success

If you're interested in finding out more, please contact Kirsty Russell on 0418 669 653 or send an email to kirsty@positivespecialneedsparenting.com