

Reframing Children's Mental Health – a communications toolkit

The words we use make a difference. This communications toolkit has been developed to help child mental health experts communicate in ways that will resonate with broader practitioner groups working with children, parents/adults, and families.

Background

Child mental health is more than the absence of mental illness. It is a positive state of wellbeing; the result of a complex set of influences, including environments and social conditions and the culture and public policies that shape them. However, conversations about children's mental health often focus on visible symptoms rather than the underlying systemic factors. When visible symptoms are the focus, preventive, systems-based solutions recommended by child mental health experts can drop out of sight.

Who is the toolkit for?

This online toolkit is for child mental health experts and organisations who communicate with practitioners about child mental health.

How was the toolkit developed?

Communicating effectively about infant and child mental health requires a clear sense of the key ideas emerging from the science and a deeper understanding of how target audiences, such as those who work with children and families, think about the issue.

In developing this toolkit, the FrameWorks Institute conducted interviews with child mental health experts and practitioners working with children, parents and families. They also applied previous research in this area.



Findings showed that while both groups share many ways of thinking, there are also notable differences between the two perspectives. This toolkit has been developed to help bridge the gap between specialties to ensure the best outcomes for children and families in the long term.

Why was the toolkit developed?

This toolkit aims to assist child mental health experts to communicate more effectively with a broad base of practitioner groups. It has been designed to support the creation of communications strategies and materials that deepen understanding of child mental health and build support for proactive solutions.

It has been developed from research on how practitioners understand children's mental health, and how this impacts their support for policies to promote better mental health outcomes for Australia's children.

It is freely available and we invite you to explore it, use it, and share it with your colleagues.

Visit the toolkit today at:
www.emergingminds.com.au/our-work/reframing-childrens-mental-health