

How can relational practice deliver an equitable early years system?

Hosts: Lauren Heery and Paul Prichard

Guests: M'Lynda Stubbs, Fiona Watts, Morgan Moore and Jamie Rawlinson



Tuesday 14 July 2026



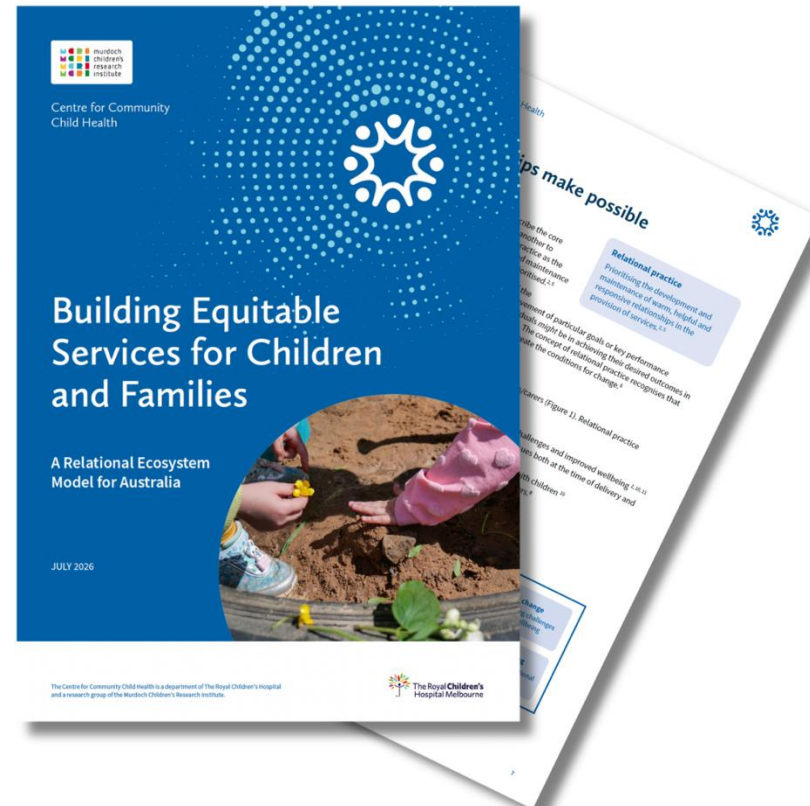
We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and pay our respects to Elders past and present.



A relational conversation across the early years system

Building Equitable Services for Children and Families

A relational ecosystem model for Australia



Our guests

A relational conversation across the early years system.



M'Lynda Stubbs



Fiona Watts



Morgan Moore



Jamie Rawlinson



Please use the **Q & A** to post your questions for the speakers.

What is relational practice?



- Prioritising the development and maintenance of warm, helpful and responsive relationships in the provision of service
- Relationships understood as the foundation for change



What relationships make possible



For children and parent/carers

- Stronger relationships with services
- Confidence and agency
- Behaviour change
- Relational parenting



For professionals

- Job satisfaction
- Enhanced interpersonal skills
- Team cohesion



System-wide benefits

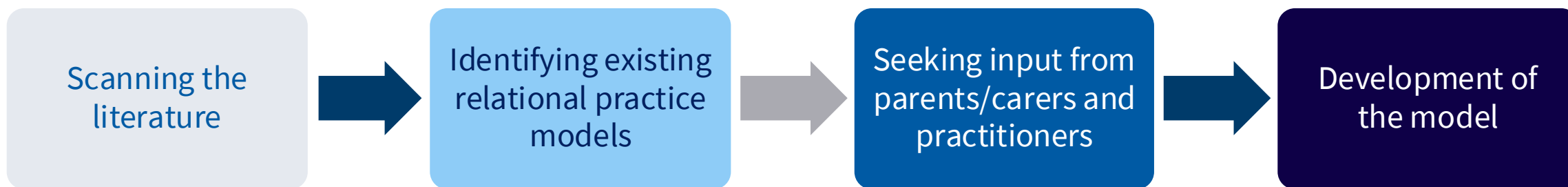
- Fairer health access and outcomes
- Service collaboration
- Community engagement

Why a Relational Ecosystem Model?

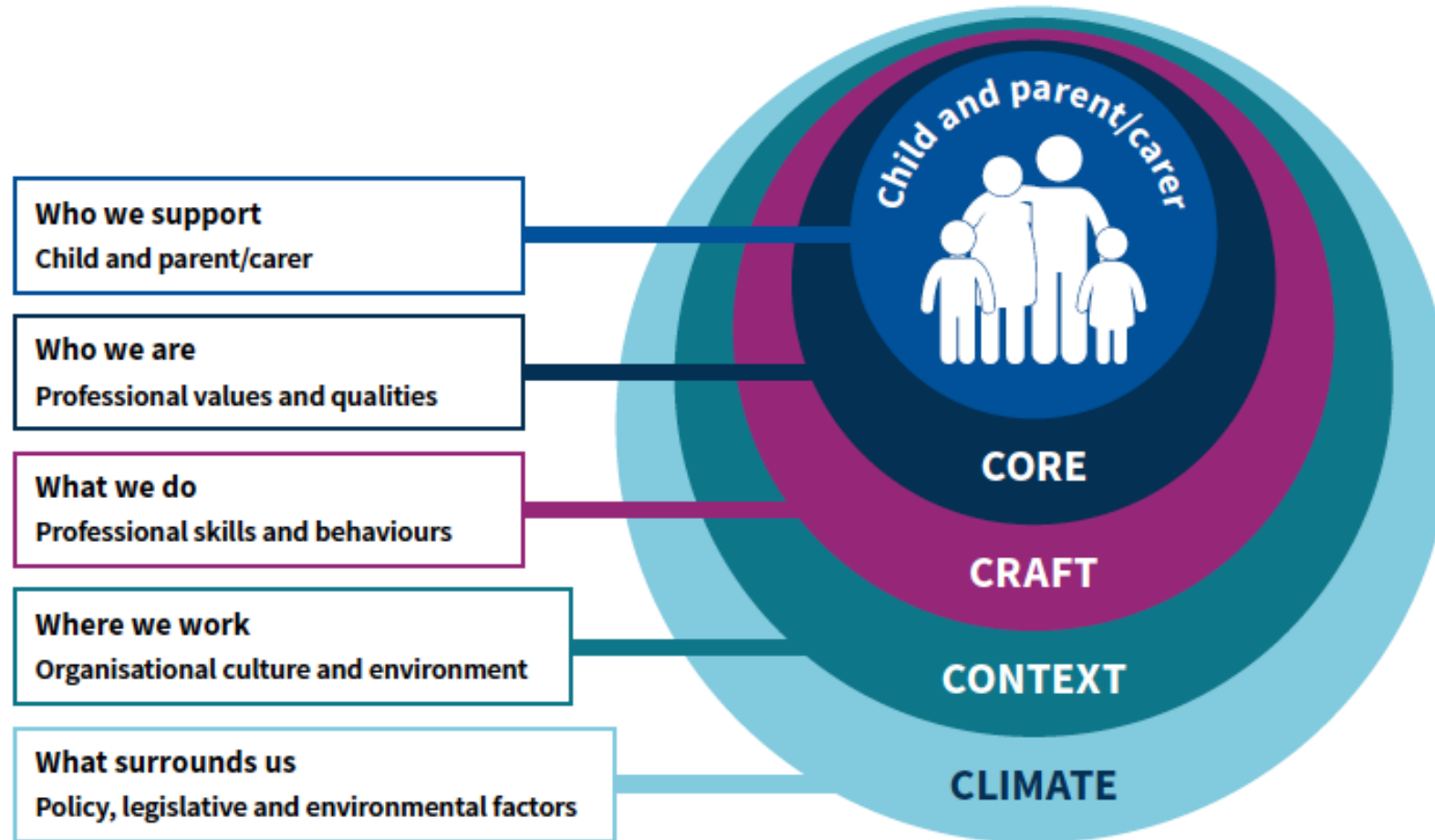


- Systems often default to transactional ways of working
- Relational practice is often located at the individual level
- But relationships are influenced by the whole system

Developing the Relational Ecosystem Model



The Relational Ecosystem Model



Parent ↔ Practitioner



Parent → Practitioner

‘When you’re working with families, what do you notice yourself doing that really helps build trust and connection — and what helps you to show up that way?’

Practitioner → Parent

‘Thinking about your experiences, what have practitioners done that made you feel genuinely listened to and safe to engage?’

Practitioner ↔ Organisational Leader



Practitioner → Leader

‘In your leadership, what do you do that makes it easier for me to prioritise relationships with families — especially when things feel pressured?’

Leader → Practitioner

‘From your experience, how do you feel the way I lead — things like time, expectations or support — actually shapes how you’re able to show up with families?’

Organisational Leader ↔ Policymaker



Leader → Policymaker

‘From where I sit some things in the system help us build strong relationships, and some things get in the way. What parts of the system do you think help our organisation build strong relationships, and what parts make this harder?’

Policymaker → Leader

‘From your experience what do you wish people in policy or system roles need to know to support relational practice in our organisation?’

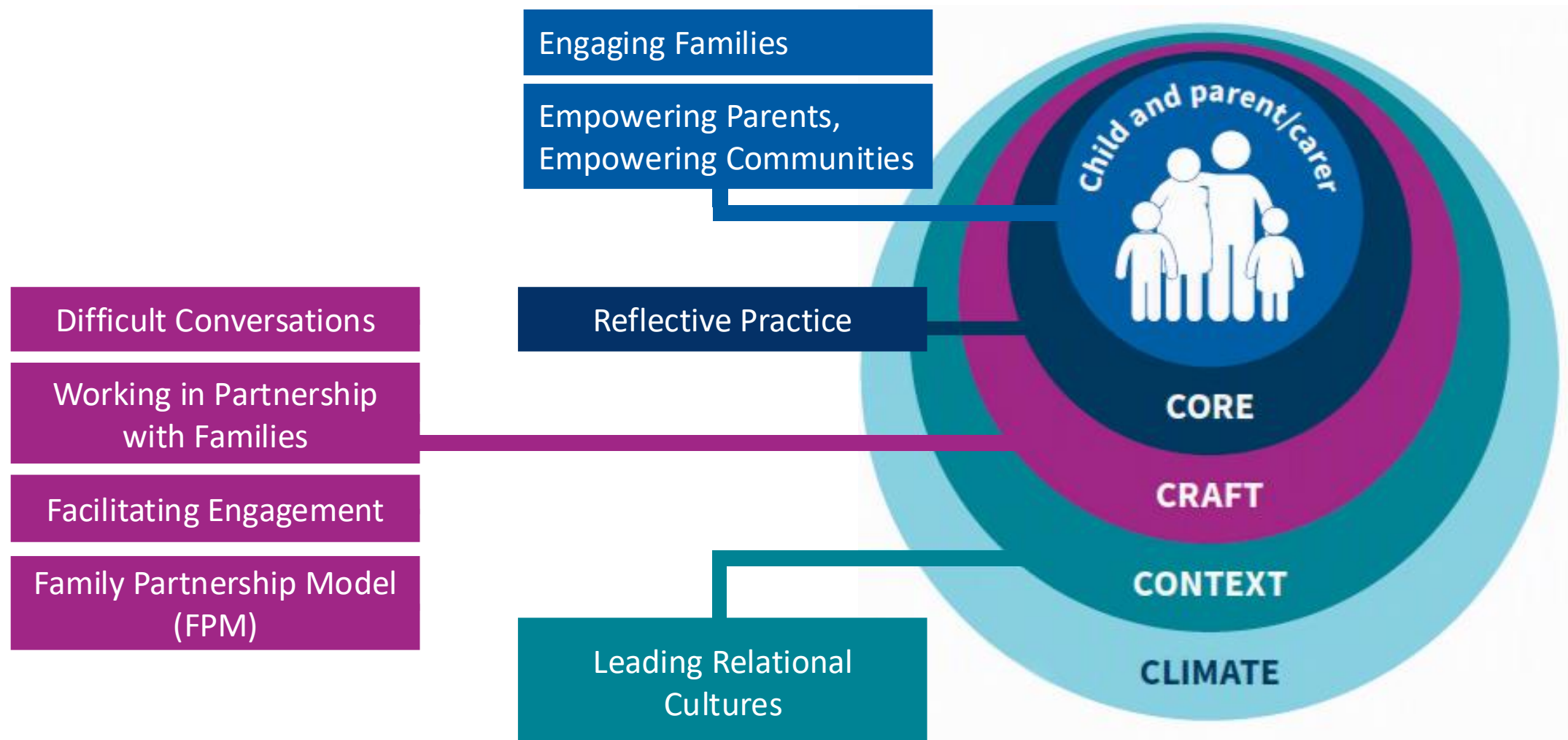
Your reflections



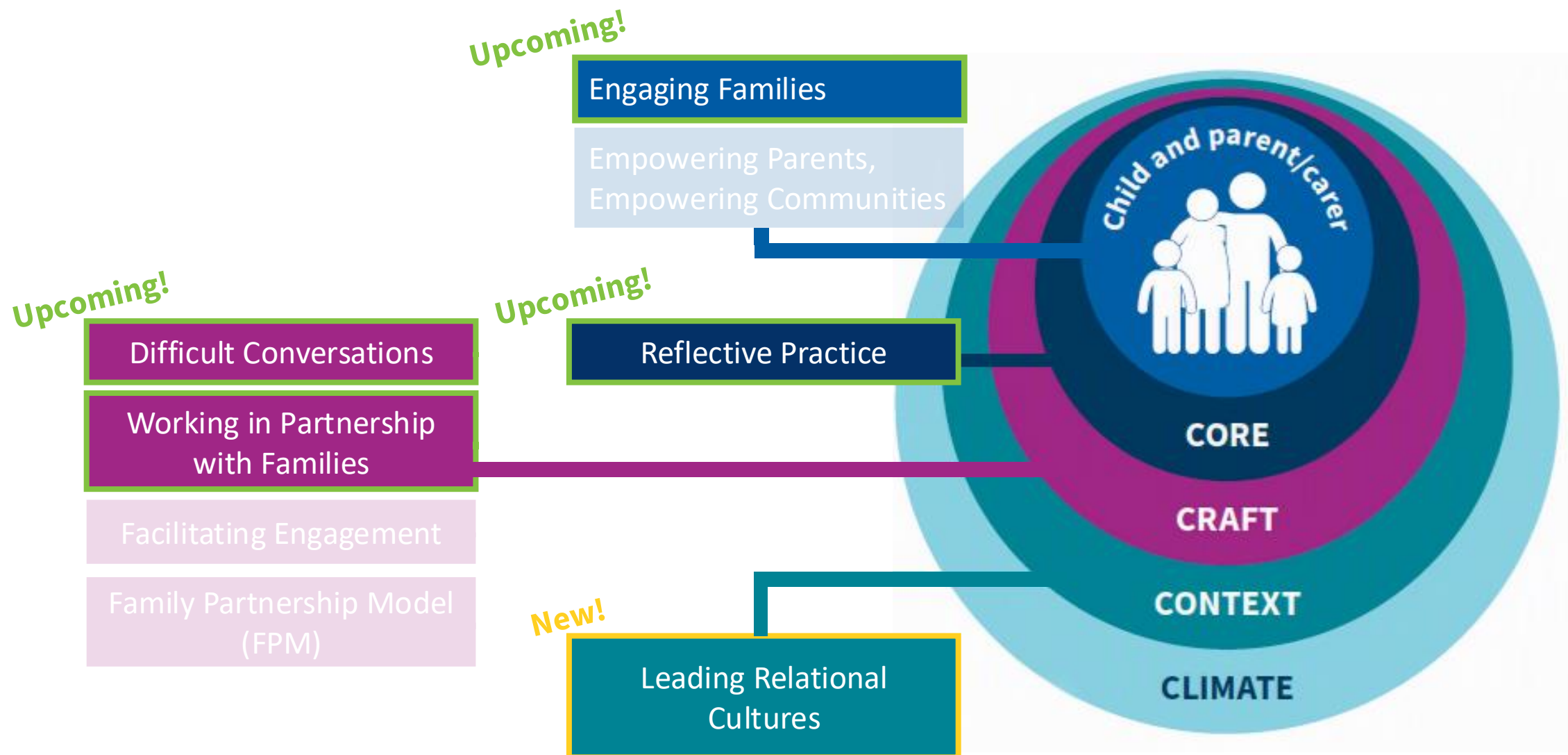
- What resonated?
- What challenges you?
- What might you do differently?



From insight to action: our offerings



From insight to action: our offerings



From insight to action: upcoming workshop



Engaging Families:

Building and sustaining helpful relationships

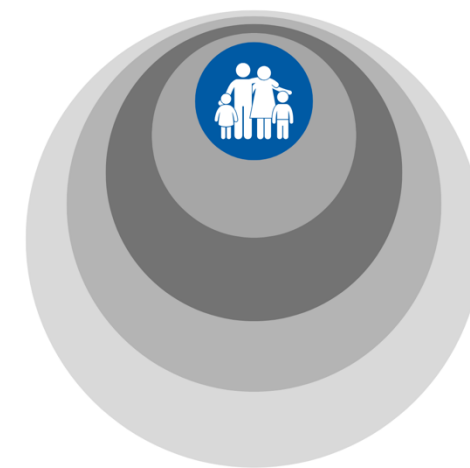


- Understanding who families are, their histories, access challenges, and relational contexts
- Concrete relational behaviours and strategies for engagement

Dates: 30 July and 6 August

Time: 4:00pm-5:30pm

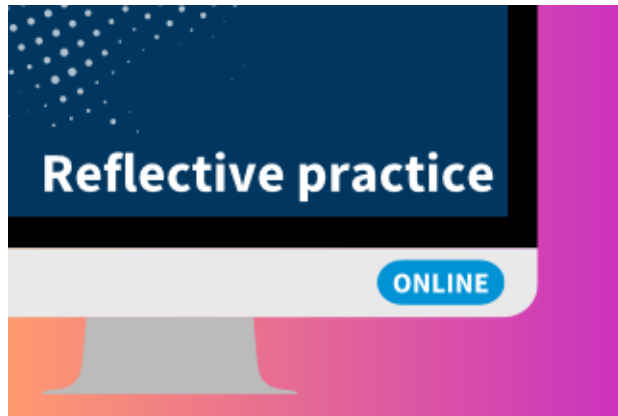
Cost: \$255-\$268



From insight to action: upcoming workshop



Reflective Practice

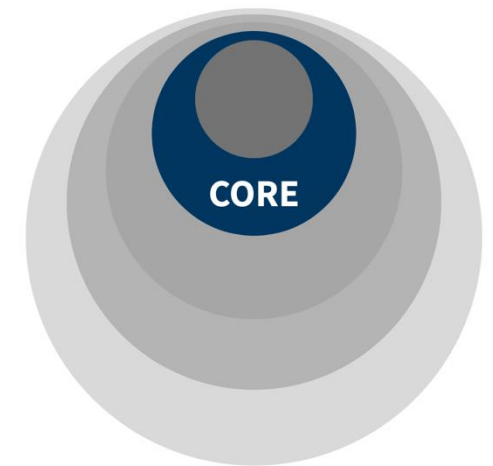


- Cultivating self-awareness, humility, curiosity, and congruence
- Using structured reflective practices as an everyday professional tool

Dates: 9, 16 and 26 November

Time: 4:00pm-5:15pm

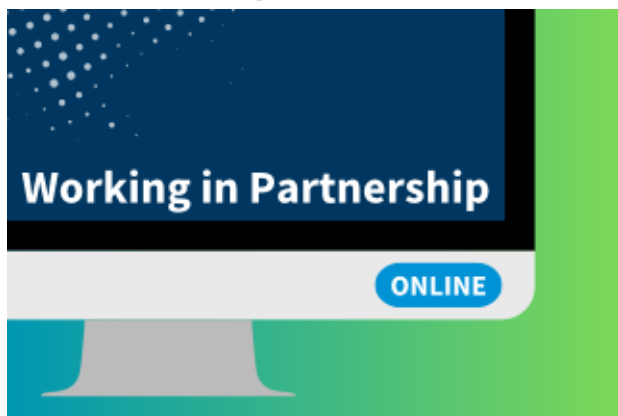
Cost: \$285-\$299



From insight to action: upcoming workshops



Working in Partnership with Families



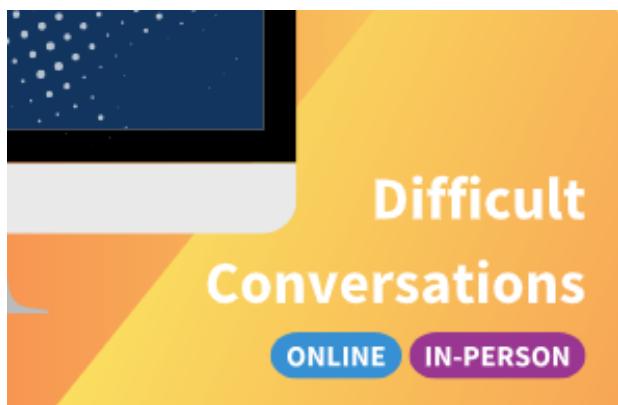
- Centring families as partners with expertise
- Relational processes, tools and approaches for partnership

Dates: 5 and 12 November

Time: 4:00pm-5:30pm

Cost: \$255-\$268

Difficult Conversations: How do we have them?



- Specific, relational communication practices and techniques
- Development of qualities such as empathy, humility, emotional regulation, and self-reflection

Dates: 22 and 29 October

Time: 4:00pm-5:30pm

Cost: \$255-\$268



From insight to action: new workshop



Leading Relational Cultures: Applying the REM in your context

New!

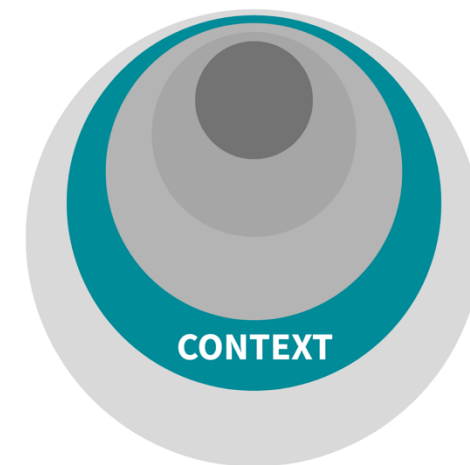
- Identify organisational factors that enable or constrain relational practice
- Develop strategies to create environments that support staff to deliver high-quality relational practice
- Consider your role as a system steward, influencing the broader conditions that affect children, families and services

Duration: 2 days

Timing: TBC – October/November

Format: Online and in-person

Cost: TBA – discounted for our first two cohorts



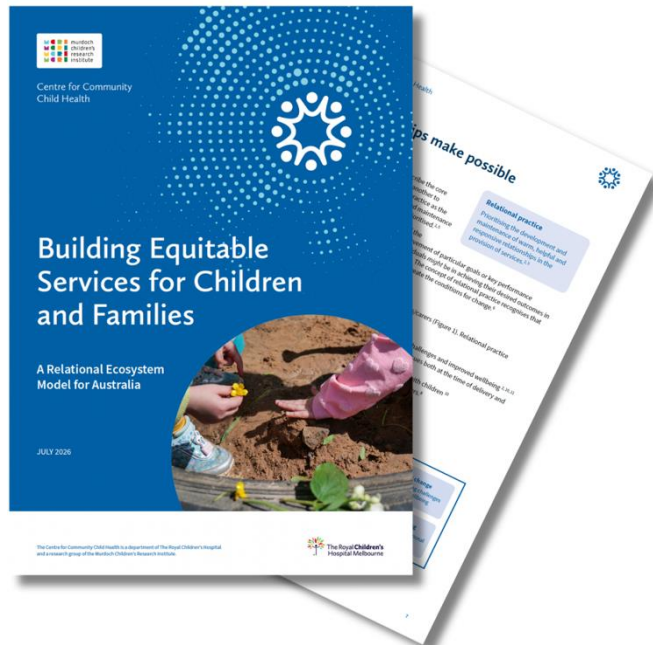
To be notified when registrations are open for this workshop, you can provide your details at the end of our webinar feedback survey.

Resources



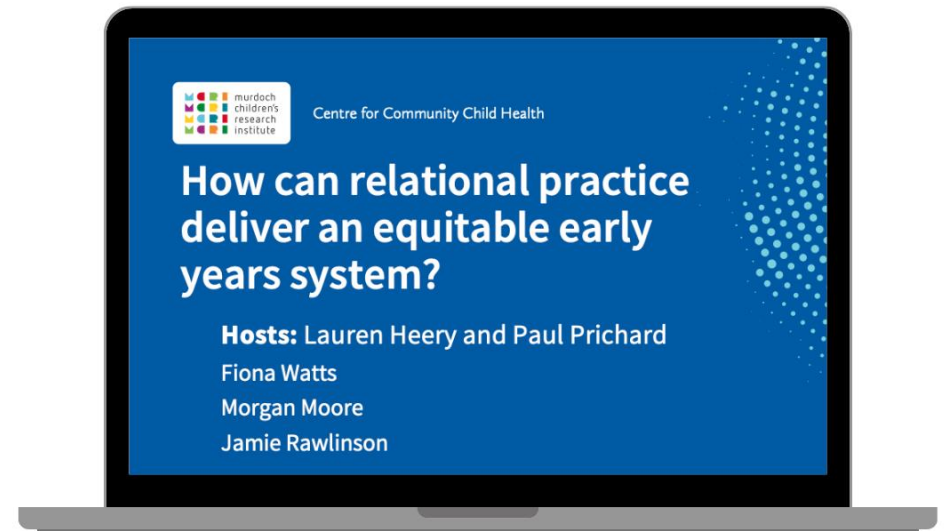
Building Equitable Services for Children and Families

A relational ecosystem model for Australia



Webinar recording

A link to the webinar recording will be sent out next week



Closing reflection



What might you pay attention to differently in your work next week, if relationships were truly at the centre?

Submit your answers here!



bitly

<https://bit.ly/4h3ADLO>

Thank you for attending our webinar.

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www.ccch.org.au

The Centre for Community Child Health is a department of The Royal Children's Hospital and a research group of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.



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