



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

CHCFAM510B Work with separated fathers

Release: 1

CHCFAM510B Work with separated fathers

Modification History

Not Applicable

Unit Descriptor

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the skills and knowledge required to work with fathers who experience relationship separation

Application of the Unit

Application

The unit applies to the facilitation of group sessions for fathers who experience relationship separation and who are most likely to not be the primary carer of their children

It requires thorough understanding of issues affecting separated men and the systems and services they may experience

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not Applicable

Pre-Requisites

Pre-requisites

This unit must be assessed after achievement of the following related units of competency:

- CHCFAM407B Work effectively in relationship work
- CHCGROUP403D Plan and conduct group activities

Employability Skills Information

Employability Skills

This unit contains Employability Skills

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements define the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

The Performance Criteria specify the level of performance required to demonstrate achievement of the Element. Terms in *italics* are elaborated in the Range Statement.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Demonstrate knowledge of key separation issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1 Demonstrate <i>understanding of roles and impact of fathers</i> in their children/s lives1.2 Recognise fathers' aspirations for their children's well being and the <i>experience, knowledge and skills</i> that they bring to fathering1.3 Identify <i>key issues facing fathers experiencing separation</i> and explain the implications1.4 Describe <i>issues faced by women and children</i> experiencing separation1.5 Describe the <i>range of responses to separation</i>1.6 Identify <i>common needs of separated fathers</i>1.7 Listen and affirm with empathy the situations, experiences and family dynamics of group participants1.8 Match pace and framing of questions to specific needs1.9 <i>Respond appropriately</i> to expressions of anger, grief and other strong emotions from separated fathers1.10 Manage effectively group content and participation to achieve group outcomes |
| 2. Demonstrate knowledge of relevant services and systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1 Explain the functions and processes of <i>key agencies</i>2.2 Identify access and referral mechanisms of key agencies2.3 Listen empathetically and respond appropriately to group participants' reports of experiences of key agencies2.4 Support and provide information to participants regarding how to access help and information from <i>key agencies</i> |

ELEMENT**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA****3. Support separated fathers to achieve positive outcomes**

- 3.1 Assist fathers to set *realistic* and positive goals to improve their situation and relationships
- 3.2 Explore strategies with fathers for building positive working relationships with the other parent and other relevant people
- 3.3 Explore strategies with fathers for staying connected and in relationship with children
- 3.4 Explore strategies with fathers for self care and support
- 3.5 Explore strategies with fathers for improving their situation and relationships

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level required for this unit.

Essential knowledge:

The candidate must be able to demonstrate essential knowledge required to effectively do the task outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit, manage the task and manage contingencies in the context of the identified work role

These include:

- Good understanding of and ability to articulate issues facing women and men today particularly those issues associated with separation and divorce including associated legal procedures
- General understanding of a range of theoretical frameworks regarding men's roles, the inherent assumptions, strengths and weaknesses of these frameworks
- Knowledge of differences in communication styles, masculine and feminine world views and ways of being, gender stereo-types and impacts of these
- Good knowledge of models that explain the development and functioning of personal and family relationships
- Knowledge of fathers and stepfathers drawn from experience with a wide range of people including fathers and stepfathers from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Knowledge of the similarities and differences in the experiences that a range of people face
- Aspects of loss and phases of grief including the range of responses to loss and grief and potential impacts of these on men and relationships
- Understanding of the diversity of family structure and the impact this can have on interpersonal relationships
- Information resources and relevant local services including networks and support systems available to separated fathers
- Characteristics of target group/s and strategies for engaging them
- Models to explain power issues in relationships and relationship systems as well as to understand and inform responses to abuse and conflict in relationships
- The nature of domestic and family violence including key indicators, effects, and appropriate responses to ensure the safety of self, clients, their families, colleagues and others within appropriate cultural contexts
- Principles and practice of conflict resolution
- Understanding of the development and importance of self-esteem

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Elements which contribute to healthy, effective and lasting relationships
- Knowledge of child development and the impact of fathers and mothers and family life on child development
- Knowledge of the difficulties for children whose parents are separating or have separated and for children living with step parents and in step families

Essential skills:

It is critical that the candidate demonstrate the ability to:

- Identify and manage a range of responses to separation
- Assist fathers to identify strategies for improving their circumstances
- Assist fathers to develop strategies to remain connected to children
- Assist fathers to develop and maintain self care strategies including strategies to reduce stress and anxiety and to establish and maintain healthy routines for food, rest and exercise
- Engage effectively with separated fathers
- Deal with unexpected (and sometimes inappropriate) reactions and input from participants
- Respond appropriately to strong emotions in self and clients
- Be aware and responsive to diverse groups of people who may challenge practitioner's values and beliefs
- Affirm and acknowledge participant experience including empathising with the experiences of separated fathers, normalising where appropriate and sensitively challenging where required
- Give and receive constructive feedback in a sensitive way
- Establish and maintain boundaries of practice with program participants

continued ...

Essential skills (contd):

In addition, the candidate must be able to effectively do the task outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit, manage the task and manage contingencies in the context of the identified work role

These include the ability to:

- Model effective, respectful and inclusive communication skills including listening, empathetic responding, paraphrasing, summarising, questioning, body language, models of conflict resolution, assertiveness, tact and sensitivity when working with men
- Work as part of a team, including multi-disciplinary professional groups and with a co-facilitator
- Effectively manage time

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Deal with conflict in an open, assertive and appropriate manner
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality
- Empower and support clients who are experiencing difficulties as they make decisions and seek help
- Monitor self and capabilities to minimise the negative impact of work on own personal health and well being
- Work inclusively with the whole client, considering the full range of possible influences in their lives including:
 - personality, culture, language, religion, age, gender, family of origin, education levels, learning abilities, economic situation, social context, health, disabilities and issues
 - the interplay and dynamics of each of the above
 - ability to respond respectfully to the whole person demonstrating inclusive practice through competently valuing each and every person as a whole unique individual

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the Performance Criteria, Required Skills and Knowledge, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for this Training Package.

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate this unit of competency:

- The individual being assessed must provide evidence of specified essential knowledge as well as skills in the application of working effectively with separated fathers
- Evidence of competency in this unit will need to be assessed over a period of time in order to gather evidence of performance
- This will include contexts applicable to the work environment, such as actual or simulated workplace situations involving a combination of direct, indirect and supplementary forms of evidence.
- Assessment must confirm sufficient ability to work effectively with separated fathers in a group setting

EVIDENCE GUIDE

- Access and equity considerations:*
- All workers in community services should be aware of access, equity and human rights issues in relation to their own area of work
 - All workers should develop their ability to work in a culturally diverse environment
 - In recognition of particular issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, workers should be aware of cultural, historical and current issues impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
 - Assessors and trainers must take into account relevant access and equity issues, in particular relating to factors impacting on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients and communities
- Context of and specific resources for assessment:*
- This unit can be assessed independently, however holistic assessment practice with other community services units of competency is encouraged
 - Resource requirements for assessment include access to:
 - a relevant workplace or an appropriately simulated environment where assessment may take place

EVIDENCE GUIDE

Method of assessment:

- Evidence for assessment of competence may be gathered by appropriate combination of the following:
 - demonstration of competency within the working environment through the facilitation of groups for separated fathers
 - realistic simulations, projects, previous relevant experience or oral questioning on 'what if?' scenarios, case presentations, written assessment
 - observation of processes and procedures, oral and/or written questions on essential knowledge and skills and consideration of required attitudes
 - where performance is not directly observed and/or is required to be demonstrated over a period of time and/or in a number of locations, any evidence should be authenticated by colleagues, supervisors, clients or other appropriate persons
- The assessment environment should not disadvantage the candidate
- Assessment practices should take into account any relevant language or cultural issues related to Aboriginality, gender or language barriers other than English
- Where the candidate has a disability, reasonable adjustment may be applied during assessment
- Language and literacy demands of the assessment task should not be higher than those of the work role

Range Statement

RANGE STATEMENT

The Range Statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Add any essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts.

RANGE STATEMENT

Understanding of roles and impact of fathers may include but is not limited to:

- Understanding that fathering and the roles of fathers are as unique and varied as there are fathers
- Recognising that fathers can bring with them a range of fathering roles both conceptually and in practice
- Understanding a number of current and relevant theoretical frameworks regarding roles for men and their potential impact on roles of fathers, e.g.
 - theoretical frameworks which view the nature of men as fixed
 - theoretical frameworks which view the nature of men as dynamic, learned and changeable
 - attachment theory
 - family systems theory
 - feminist theory (and critiques of feminist theory)
 - family life-cycle theory
 - generative fatherhood
 - evolutionary psychology
 - neurobiology
- Recognition of the impact on identity that fatherhood can have on men
- Recognition of the roles fathers are assumed to have in children's lives
- Recognition that parenting is a practice and not a biological function
- Fathers may be:
 - birth fathers
 - step fathers
 - foster fathers
 - non-biological fathers
 - uncles
 - grandfathers
 - carers
- Fathering includes the establishment of a relationship between the father and child
- Where fathers/a father figure play/s an active role in their children's lives this can have positive outcomes on the development of literacy, numeracy and social skills, self-esteem and the development of resilience in both boys and girls

RANGE STATEMENT

Experience, knowledge and skills fathers bring to their fathering may include but is not limited to:

- The ability and will to commit to the physical and ongoing support that a father provides and the involvement with the child/ren throughout their lives
- The capacity to make day to day decisions for the child/children that meet the children's needs
- The ability to care about and attend to the important transitions in a child's life and work to provide the optimal conditions to maximise their growth
- The ability to change and adapt as children grow older and the fathers mature in their relationship with their children
- The ability to create resources for material well being and the resolution of problems that allow opportunities for the development of emotional well being
- The ability to form lasting and healthy attachments with their children which can grow and change over time
- The capacity to relate with children by sharing meaningfully with them, both verbally and non-verbally
- Understanding of developmental needs of children including social, emotional, cognitive, physical and psychological needs
- Ways fathers can actively contribute to the developmental needs of child/ren
- Factors which can negatively impact on the establishment and maintenance of positive relationships with child/children including self limiting concepts that may hold men back from achieving their full potential as fathers

RANGE STATEMENT

Key issues facing fathers experiencing separation may include:

- Anxiety
- Stress
- Depression
- Stress and anxiety levels in separated men can be so high that these must be addressed as a priority before they are able to affect any other positive change or deal with other issues
- Separation and loss of family structure
- Social isolation from:
 - extended family
 - immediate family
 - friends of former couple
- Financial hardship
- Loss and grief
- Pride/shame
- Unemployment
- Issues faced by partner and child after separation
- Communication and relationship with ex-partner
- Shared parenting/co-parenting
- Effect on children
- Child focus/importance of maintaining this
- Importance of reassurance for child/ren regarding their ongoing importance in their parent's lives regardless of separation
- Care and contact issues
- Changes in parenting role
- Conflict between being a good father and limited physical contact
- Alternative housing requirements/homelessness
- Loss of power
- Family Court proceedings and frustration with 'family law system'
- Property settlement
- Maintenance
- Interaction with counsellors and mediators
- Re-partnering of ex-partner
- Relationship Conflict and Breakdown
- Developing a relationship with a new partner and the dynamics between the new partner, and any child/ren they have, and own child/ren
- Step-fathering

RANGE STATEMENT*continued ...*

Key issues facing fathers experiencing separation may include: (contd)

- Responses of family and friends
- Mental illness
- Family violence and abuse

Issues faced by women and children may include but are not limited to:

- Guilt
- Sadness
- Torn loyalties
- Financial hardship
- Loss and grief
- Confusion
- Insecurity
- Loss of self-esteem
- Housing/homelessness

Range of responses to separation may include:

- Denial
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Depression
- Stress
- Violence
- Withdrawal
- Self-harm, suicide
- Remorse
- Overcompensation
- Relief
- Optimism

RANGE STATEMENT

Common needs of separated fathers may include:

- Regain self-esteem/confidence
- To be heard/tell story
- Hear others' stories/situations/responses
- Overcome isolation
- Gain information/support
- Advocacy
- Manage emotional responses
- Meet legal obligations
- Improve parenting/communication/relationship skills
- Accommodation/housing
- Learning housekeeping and cooking skills
- Financial advice
- Practical support

Respond appropriately may include:

- Heard, acknowledged and affirmed
- Contained if necessary
- Reframed if necessary
- Normalised as a valid response if appropriate
- Sensitively challenged if required
- Assist clients to address issues of stress, anxiety and depression to allow them to move toward a stage where they are able to engage constructively in planning and working toward the future

Key agencies include but are not limited to:

- Child Support Agency
- Family Magistrate Service
- Centrelink
- Legal aide
- Housing/accommodation services
- Mediation centres
- Australian Taxation Office
- Family Court of Australia
- Phone support services, e.g. Mensline/Lifeline
- Family Relationship Centres
- Other agencies providing support and counselling
- Websites for example MENDS and Parenting Children
- Stepfamily Association of Australia

RANGE STATEMENT

Realistic must include:

- Within the constraints of their personal context
- Where consideration is given for self care including addressing issues of stress, depression, and anxiety
- According to current legal obligations

Unit Sector(s)

Not Applicable