



**Newpin Australia**

*Courage to change together*



# Newpin

Supporting reunification of  
children in care with their parents



A SERVICE OF

**UNITING**  
COMMUNITIES

# Newpin

Newpin is a therapeutic reunification program that supports and empowers families to break the cycle of abuse and neglect and provide a safe, nurturing environment for children to return home.

Newpin specialises in engaging parents whose children are in the out of home care system, where reunification may be viable.

Parents, children and staff work together towards reunification under the Newpin core values of Safety, Equality, Empathy, Respect and Self-determination.

Many parents who attend Newpin have experienced significant abuse and trauma in their childhoods. The aim of the program is to provide parents with the opportunity to address their own social and emotional issues, to improve bonding with their children and to develop positive parenting skills.

Parents attend Newpin for up to nine months prior to reunification and then for the same length of time again post reunification.

The post reunification period in Newpin is critical to facilitating the smooth transition of children from care.

The commitment from families includes regular attendance at the Newpin centre and participation in therapeutic and educational parenting groups. In addition, parents are assisted as they integrate the knowledge and skills developed at Newpin into their home environment.



Newpin's assessment of a parent's capacity to meet the physical, emotional and developmental needs of their children is a process that takes place throughout the eighteen months (on average) that a family spends attending the program. Newpin uses the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS) to set goals and to review the progress of parents across twelve domains.

An essential part of the Newpin program is the quality time spent with a parent and their child together. This allows Newpin staff to observe parent and child interactions, to work with the parent to build healthy attachments and to develop the parent's understanding of

the changing and often complex needs of their children over time. Consequently, it is imperative that children who are in foster care have regular contact with their parent at the Newpin centre.

For children under school age, contact takes place at the Newpin centre between 12.30pm and 2.30pm, a minimum of once a week (preferably twice), while primary school aged children attend Newpin between 3pm and 5pm, one afternoon per week.

The Newpin program combines both group and individual work within the centres and at home. The key components are outlined on pages 4 and 5.

## **Referral**

All referrals come from the Department for Child Protection (DCP) when families are seen as viable for reunification.

## **Centre visit**

Newpin arranges for parents and DCP to attend the centre for the first time. During this session we provide an overview of the program, outline expectations of the family and discuss possible days for them to attend. Once engaged, the family will attend the centre on a minimum of two days a week for up to 18 months.

## **Initial home visit**

The initial visit is conducted in the family home by a Newpin staff member. We commence the family's overall assessment, start to build a positive relationship, discuss goals and complete initial intake forms.



## **Assessments and review**

NCFAS is completed when a parent first joins Newpin and then at 6 monthly intervals or as required. Newpin staff meet with the family, DCP and other services involved to review progress and support.

## **Contact visits**

Regular contact visits take place in the Newpin centre between children and their parents.

## **Personal Development Program (PDP)**

When they are ready, the parent joins their weekly PDP. Post reunification, the children are looked after in the play room while they attend group sessions.

## **Therapeutic Support Group (TSG)**

When the parent and children are settled into the program, the parent joins a weekly TSG.

## **Home visits**

Home visits to both parents (where applicable) are carried out during completion of each NCFAS, as well as prior to and post reunification of each child and prior to case closure.

## **Partners' parenting groups**

Once the primary parent has attached to the program, their partner joins a PDP one or two days a week.

## **Therapeutic play**

Formal and informal time is spent with parents and children, supporting healthy attachments through therapeutic play.



## **Program completion**

Three months prior to expected completion of the program, Newpin staff work with the family to develop a transition plan. Families are considered to have completed Newpin once they have met their goals. Information regarding readiness to leave is gathered via assessments, observations and participation in the PDPs and TSG.

## Eligibility criteria

There are three Newpin centres operating in metropolitan Adelaide - north (Smithfield), west (operational late 2021) and outer south (operational early 2022).

In addition, each centre runs programs for partners of the primary carers, ensuring that where there are two caregivers, both parents are engaged with the Newpin program and are learning new parenting skills at the same time.

Families need to have at least one child under the age of 6 and be willing to attend the Centre two days per week.

DCP need to identify the family as viable for reunification and arrange transport for the children to and from the centre a minimum of two days per week.

All potential Newpin referrals can be discussed with the Newpin Senior Coordinator at the local Centre or the Newpin Service Manager.

## Information for carers

Newpin staff provide a comfortable and safe environment for children to spend time with their parents. We provide important opportunities for the development of healthy attachments. These visits allow mothers and fathers to put new parenting skills and strategies into practice whilst their children also enjoy regular routines and playtime at the centre.

DCP may require carers to support transport of the child(ren) to and from Newpin, which will be negotiated prior to commencement in the program.

Newpin staff will meet carers at the front gate to drop off and collect children from the centre. This supports carers who do not wish to have their identity shared with families, and provides consistency amongst the group of parents and for the children.

Each child has a communication book where parents and carers can share key information and stories about their time together.

Carers will be required to pack a bag for the children with their lunch or healthy snacks, bottles, formula, dummies or any special toys/blankets/comforters that will support the children's transition to the program. Over time this responsibility will move to the parents to prepare for children returning home. This will be communicated with the carers through our communication book.





**Newpin Australia**

*Courage to change together*

**unitingcommunities.org**



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Child Protection



**Social  
Ventures  
Australia**



A SERVICE OF  
**UNITING  
COMMUNITIES**