

Information for Early Childhood Professionals

Determining your Language Support Needs

INTERPRETER, TRANSLATOR OR COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SUPPORT WORKER?

The Victorian Multicultural Commission offers the following definitions of language services.

Translators only deal with written information. They should also possess training in interpreting and have formal credentials in this area.

Interpreters are qualified professionals who enable communication between people who speak or sign a different language. Interpreters take a spoken or sign language and convert it accurately and objectively into another language to enable communication between two parties who do not share a common language. An interpreter should possess training in interpreting and have formal credentials in this area.

Language Aides are employees who use a language other than English in the course of their work. Language aides do not necessarily hold NAATI credentials and should not be expected to perform the role of an interpreter. They assist with low-risk and non-critical communication, i.e. providing directions, making appointments or obtaining basic information.

fkaCS Community Language Support Workers work under the direction of fkaCS Consultants and the early childhood education and care service staff to support children's identity, wellbeing and belonging in the early childhood service. They typically:

- Talk to the child in their home language to create a bridge between the home and the new unfamiliar environment
- Support communication between the child and educator/s in order to progress the development of a relationship between them, providing the child an opportunity to exercise agency
- Facilitate communication between the child and other children in the service to encourage the development of secure friendships

Community Language Support Workers must not interpret information that is legally binding or puts either the family or the organisation at risk.

ACCESSING AN INTERPRETER

The Department of Education has a contract with the Victorian Interpreting and Translation Service (VITS) to provide interpreting services to Department funded early childhood services.

The free service is available for eligible providers to access via telephone, video and on-site. Information on the service plus useful tips can be found on the Department of Education website: <https://www.vic.gov.au/use-interpreter-early-childhood-education-services>

ACCESSING A COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SUPPORT WORKER

A Community Language Support Worker is best used as part of a cultural inclusion strategy, which can help you identify the unintended barriers for multilingual and newly arrived children and families and support the identity, wellbeing and belonging of children in your service.

HOW WE CAN HELP

fka Children's Services (fkaCS) advocates for children's cultural and linguistic rights and provides support to education and care services in the provision of culturally rich environments that support a civil society.

We offer early childhood education and care services access to skilled and experienced pedagogy and practice consultants. We also offer a range of multilingual resources and professional learning opportunities for services, which are customised according to individual needs.

Contact us to discuss support

03 9428 4471 · culturalinclusion@fka.org.au

More resources available at www.fka.org.au