



The Power of Collective Practice

It starts with the Relationship!

Brave Foundation



Supporting Young Parents to Thrive

- Vidya Surajbali - Brave Foundation Team Leader
- Leah Clark – Brave Foundation Mentor (TAS)
- Mentors at the heart of our work
- Building trust, reducing risk, strengthening families



Why This Moment Matters

- Young parents are disproportionately represented in Child Protection
- Early support is critical
- Collective practice shapes outcomes



Collective Practice Starts Closer Than We Think

- Begins with relationships
- Young parent & mentor partnership
- Listening, empathy, respect
- Bridge to services





The Heartbeat: Brave Mentoring

- Walking alongside young parents
- Supporting safe & healthy beginnings
- Listening without judgement
- Strengthening futures for babies & families

Supporting Expecting & Parenting Teens Program (SEPT)

The personalised program matches a pregnant or parenting young person with a professional SEPT Mentor working, from local hub sites, community organisations or via outreach across most Australian States & Territories.

- A core program co-designed with young parents
- Underpinned by evidence of the First 1000 Days
- Provides support to young parents for 12 months (flexible to circumstance)
- Voluntary with no minimum participation requirements

 **B R A V E**

Role of the Mentor

SEPT Program

Mentors walk
alongside their
participants on
their parenting
journey



Support & guidance



Participant-led goal setting



Resources



Connection to other services



Empowerment & advocacy

Eligibility

Priority cohorts

Brave supports
young mothers &
young fathers



Parents aged under 25 who began parenting at 19 years or under



First Nations & CALD parents aged under 25 who began parenting at 21 years or under



Parents aged under 25 living with disability



Parents aged under 25 living in rural, regional, & remote locations

Why Brave Mentorship Matters

- Infant safety begins with the parent
- Confidence builds capability
- Support nurtures resilience



The Hub of Support: Safe First Stop

- A safe first stop
- No judgment
- Trusted guidance
- Open conversation



The Heartbeat Mentor & Participant Relationship

- Trust
- Capacity
- Empowerment
- Confidence grows safety



Being a Cheerleader & a Champion

- Encouragement
- Small steps
- Celebration
- Positive reinforcement



The Barriers

- Stigma
- Instability
- Complex challenges



The Power of Showing Up

- Consistency
- Authenticity
- Non-judgment



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A Supported Parent Is a Safer Parent

- Confidence through support
- Strong relationships strengthen families
- Parents who feel capable make safer decisions
- Supporting parents protects infants

Lived Experience Helps Inform Support

- Insight into real barriers
- Support is co-designed
- Trust improves engagement
- Early help becomes accessible



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Participation, Rights & Accountability



- Young parents included in decisions
Voices shape support
- Services respond effectively
- Systems become accountable





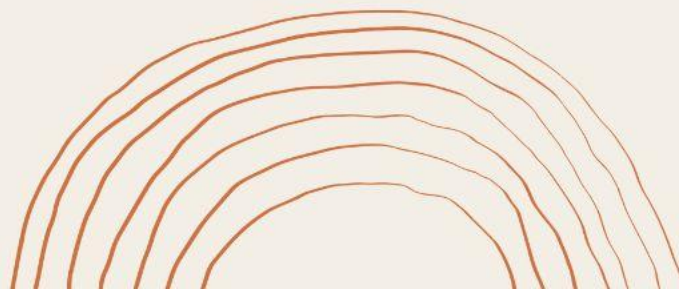
From Practice to System Influence: EVYP

- Empowering the Voices of Young People (EVYP)
- Former young parents shaping program
- Lived experience informing advocacy
- Challenging deficit-based assumptions
- Voices influencing policy & systems



A Centre of Excellence at a National Turning Point

- Addressing fragmented national systems
- Connecting practice, research, & policy
- Collective responses to complex challenges
- Young parents recognised as partners



The Turning Point Is Collective Practice

*Safer infants begin with
supported parents!*

