



Inclusion starts
with 'welcome'

Community & me





About Us

Plumtree is a not-for-profit, community-based organisation that helps families thrive. Trusted for over 30 years, we provide therapies and support for children aged birth to 8 years with a disability or developmental delay and their families. Our free online and centre-based playgroups and programs support all families.

At Plumtree Preschool, children of all abilities and cultural backgrounds learn and thrive together.

Our innovative, evidence-based programs have changed lives and won awards.

Community & Me aims to nurture more inclusive communities as our children grow and discover the world. We invite you to contribute to this research project and promote positive change.

Contact

[Community & Me | Plumtree](#) | kayleen.doyle@plumtree.org.au |

Community and Me – what is it about?

We envisage a more inclusive future for our children.

Plumtree is asking Australian families of children with development delay and disability aged 0–14 years to complete a [Family Survey](#). The information will help organisations and businesses improve their services for better inclusion as our children learn and explore their community.

We also invite families to participate in our [PhotoVoice](#) Inclusion survey. Photovoice enables children to communicate what they do and do not enjoy doing in their community in a visual way through taking photos.

The research is being conducted by Dr Genevieve Johnsson at the University of Sydney, who can be contacted on genevieve.johnsson@sydney.edu.au if you have any questions. You can read more about the research study in the [Family Survey Study Information sheet](#) & [Photovoice Study Information sheet](#).

We are aiming to hear from over 1,000 families and need your help to spread the word and achieve our goal.

Why should families do the survey?

Parents and caregivers of a child with developmental delay or disability have many insights and experiences on participating in the community. By completing the [Family Survey](#), they can help us understand the barriers to enjoying community activities, and what is working well.

The information is vital for places in the community to work towards making all children feel welcome and included. It is an opportunity to build a more inclusive future.

Why are we conducting this survey?

“Being excluded from the community is a reality for many young children with developmental delays or disabilities. We want to change that, and this survey will help us to understand these experiences and take action to change this for the better.” Sylvana Mahmic, Plumtree CEO.

Children with disabilities thrive when they have equal opportunities to participate in social and community activities with their peers. This provides them with opportunities to experience belonging, develop an identity, make friends, and learn. However, there are often multiple barriers for children with a disability and their families to successfully participate in the community.

The Australia Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) lists “children with disability” as a population group for which data is not readily available to inform “matters of equity (providing services and resources based on need)”.

[Australia's children, Overarching data gaps - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](https://www.aihw.gov.au/australias-children/overarching-data-gaps)

With the survey, we aim to gather this currently missing data and shine a light on the experiences of children with disability and their families, as well as their desires for the future.

It is our hope that this gap closes as we move towards a more inclusive society. One that acknowledges the need for social and environmental change on matters of disability.

357,000 Australian children 0-14 with disability



A fathers voice for change

Being a parent of a child with a disability, I have had more than my share of surveys, forms and questionnaires to fill out. What I've learnt is that when it comes to my daughter, her needs matter, and if change is to take place, then my voice to represent me as a parent and the voice of my child matters too. Especially when it comes to the things that are important - the wellbeing, development and inclusion of our children, and families.

An important element to measure inclusion is how welcome we feel in our communities. The opportunities to engage in the activities we desire, to choose and participate with our friends and the friends we have not yet met. It is important to obtain a better understanding of both where we are, and where we hope to be.

Plumtree's Community and Me project aims to explore how children with a disability aged 0-14 years and their families participate in activities in the community in Australia. This national survey is part of the project. The survey has 34 questions and will take you about 15-20 minutes to complete. There are a set of 5 questions you can also ask your child.

I welcome you to add your voice to this survey. Your lived experience matters, your child's voice and experience matters, and if we are going to influence and design the future that we hope for everyone, then your feedback will help add to how we can shape what that might look like.

From one parent of a child with a disability to another... thank you. Melo, Plumtree Peer Worker





Family Survey

The [Family Survey](#) captures the community participation and inclusion experience of children with a developmental delay or disability aged 0–14 years and their families.

The survey research has ethics approval from the University of Sydney. The information will be used to inform government and communities. It will also help close the data gap about these families.

The survey is open to all caregivers across Australia and includes a set of picture and text questions to ask their child.

TAKE THE SURVEY



PhotoVoice

[PhotoVoice](#) enables children to share their unique community perspectives and experiences with others through photography.

Our aim is for all children to participate and have their voices heard, but we understand support may be needed.

Parents or carers can help their child by holding the phone or camera, making suggestions on what to photograph, or interpreting their child's behaviour as something they like or don't like in the community.

START PHOTOVOICE

Social Media Resources

Example social media post wording:

Do you have a child aged 0-14 who has a disability or developmental delay?

Share your experience of community participation and inclusion: https://plumtree.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6J9j4E8z1X9HQA6

Complete the survey to go into a prize draw.

To find out more go to [Community & Me | Plumtree](#)

Pictures you can use on your website and social media:



How does your child with disability participate in their local community?

Contribute to this nation wide survey on community inclusion!!

Survey participants go into a prize draw

Please like and share this post to spread the word



Does your child with disability feel welcome in their local community?

Contribute to this nation wide survey on community inclusion!!

Survey participants go into a prize draw

Please like and share this post to spread the word



**POSTER YOU CAN USE TO INVITE YOUR FAMILIES,
MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY TO DO THE SURVEY**



How does your child with
disability participate in their
community?

Contribute to this nation
wide survey so all children
feel welcome and thrive.



**Start the Family
Survey**

For more information go to
<https://plumtree.org.au/for-families-by-families/community-and-me/>

Email you can use to invite families and community members to do the survey:

Hello!

You are invited to take part in an online Family Survey about **how children with a disability and their families participate in community activities in Australia**. This might include playing a sport, going for a walk, going to the beach or an event, shopping or eating out.

If you are an Australian **parent or caregiver with a child with a developmental delay or disability aged 0 – 14 years old**, we would love to hear from you and your child. Your survey responses are confidential, and the information we collect will help us understand the current barriers and enablers of inclusion and participation across different community experiences.

The following link takes you to the online survey which takes about 15 minutes to complete. Our priority is to also capture the voice of children with disability and therefore, the **survey also includes a set of questions you can answer with your child too**.

https://plumtree.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6J9j4E8z1X9HQA6

This survey is being conducted as part of Plumtree Children's Services **Community & Me** a peer-led, co-designed community inclusion project funded by the Department of Social Services. Dr Genevieve Johnsson from the University of Sydney is leading the research and can be contacted if you have any questions (genevieve.johnsson@sydney.edu.au). You can also read more about the research study in the [Family Survey Study Information sheet](#) & [Photovoice Study Information sheet](#).

We encourage you to share this email and survey link with other families who also have a child with a delay or disability. **We want to hear all your voices across Australia.**

Testimonials

I am very grateful and look forward to growing, sharing and learning more as a parent who has a supportive team of professionals around me and my child.

Parent

I appreciate all the great work Plumtree and its excellent specialists have, and still are, bringing to our family. You all have made a measurable difference in our lives.

Parent

Plumtree is the most innovative organisation of its kind and has the most committed staff.

Researcher



Let's Make Inclusive Communities Together

Please share the surveys with your members, families and community via email, newsletters, posters, your website and social media.



Plumtree Children's Services | Inclusion starts with 'welcome'

For more information contact:

Kayleen Doyle, Project Lead – kayleen.doyle@plumtree.org.au

Dr Genevieve Johnsson, PhD, MAPS, Researcher - genevieve.johnsson@sydney.edu.au