

Sent: 15 February 2024

Dear DSCP/ASEAN scholars,

Some of you will be bringing young children (ie not yet eligible to attend school in Australia) and may wish to consider placing them in child-care for one or more days per week while they are in Australia. This will give them an opportunity to meet other young children and fully experience life in Australia.

Please refer to the [Family Members](#) page of the DCSP website for more information.

Childcare centres

For information about approved childcare services in your local area, search the [Starting Blocks website](#). The type of child-care you will be looking for is “Long Day Care” which is an approved childcare service with professionally trained and qualified staff. This will be the best option for your child to ensure that they have a regular routine, and you and your spouse will also be able to plan accordingly.

In terms of location, you should wait until you have found permanent accommodation so you can then search for the nearest childcare centre. The only exception to this is if there are childcare centres on campus.

If you have any questions about searching for childcare centres, you can contact the **Childcare Access Hotline on 1800 670 305**. A service is also available if you need information in a language other than English.

Remember that there is likely to be a waiting list at childcare centres. Start making arrangements for your children as soon as you have your permanent accommodation confirmed – you don’t have to wait until they arrive in Australia to get started.

Childcare Subsidy

Childcare in Australia is very expensive! Based on your visa class, and the fact that you are being sponsored by the Department of Defence, you should be eligible for the Childcare Subsidy. If your application is successful, this will help to reduce the cost of sending your child to a registered childcare provider.

Information and application forms for the Childcare Subsidy are listed below:

- Childcare Subsidy: www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy
- Application process: www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy/how-claim
You will need to set up a [myGov](#) account that links to your Centrelink account before submitting a claim. You will be required to visit a Services Australia centre to verify your ID, as Digital ID will not be available for non-citizens.

When you lodge your application, please ensure that you provide all required documentation, to ensure that your application is not delayed, including (but not limited to):

- A copy of your university offer
- A copy of the supporting letter provided by the Defence Section of the Australian Embassy/High Commission as part of your visa application
- A copy of your DCSP reference letter
- A copy of the visa grant letters for you and your child
- A copy of your child's immunisation records, in English. See separate section below for more information about which immunisations are required.

You are able to submit your application online or in person at your nearest [Services Australia Centre](#). Enter your suburb or postcode and make sure you select 'Service Centres' before hitting 'locate'.

Please be aware that the process for applying for the Childcare Subsidy can be extremely time-consuming – it could take several months to be processed.

If you have specific questions about the Childcare Subsidy, you can contact the Centrelink family's line directly on 136 150, between 0800 and 2000 Monday to Friday (Australian Eastern Standard Time). An interpreter service is available through the Multilingual Phone Service – call 131 202 between 0800 and 1700 Monday to Friday (Australian Eastern Standard Time).

Some childcare centres will allow you to pay the reduced rate in anticipation of your application being successful. However, this is not guaranteed and cannot be expected. Therefore, you should be prepared to pay the full cost of childcare until your application is processed and approved. You will not end up out of pocket due to delays but need to be prepared to pay the full amount up-front just in case. You should submit your application for the childcare subsidy as soon as you have found a child-care place as your payments will only be back-dated to the date you submitted your application.

Tax File Number

While you will not need to pay tax on your DCSP allowances, you will not be able to lodge an application for the Childcare subsidy without first having a Tax File Number (TFN). If you are accompanied by your spouse, they will also need to apply for a Tax File Number, even if they do not plan to work while in Australia. You can apply for a [TFN online](#); you should apply as soon as you have confirmed your permanent accommodation (as you will need to provide this address in your application – **you cannot use DITC or Palladium DCSP Team's address**).

Playgroups

Another option for you to consider is community or church playgroups, which are generally unofficial groups that also involve parents getting together with other parents and children – more information is available on the relevant website:

- [ACT Playgroups \(Canberra\)](#)
- [Playgroup NSW \(Sydney and Wollongong\)](#)
- [Play Matters \(Brisbane\)](#)
- [Playgroup SA \(Adelaide\)](#)
- [Playgroup Victoria \(Melbourne\)](#)
- [Playgroup TAS \(Launceston\)](#)

Immunisations

In order to be able to place children in schools or childcare, you will be required to demonstrate that they are fully immunised for their age group. A list of immunisations required is provided on the [Family Members](#) page of the DCSP Website. The full immunisation schedule applicable in Australia (according to age) is available from the [Department of Health website](#).

You will need to bring a letter from your family doctor or hospital listing the immunisations (and dates given) – if this is not available/provided in English, you will need to make arrangements for the document to be translated. You may need to have your child's proof of immunisation verified for consistency with Australia's requirements. In some cases, top-up vaccinations may be required. We recommend that you make arrangements to do this as soon as your children arrive in Australia – refer to [this section](#) of the Department of Health's website for more information and guidance.