



18th July, 2024

New app function bridges the gap

A Telethon Kids Institute's parenting app has received a funding boost of \$417,000 from Healthway to develop mental health content that will support a child's development in the early years.

The Bright Tomorrows app, which helps families access resources to support the health, development and learning of 0-5-year-old children, will also highlight the integral relationship between good nutrition and mental health.

Since 2019, the app has been downloaded by more than 65,000 families and has demonstrated that experiences in the early years can shape a child's future learning.

Telethon Kids Institute project manager Karen Forde said research suggests that there was a gap in early child mental health development support and programs for families with children aged 0-5 years of age.

"We conducted a comprehensive analysis in 2020 and found that existing mental health programs and services predominantly target older children and adults," she said.

"Studies also show that diet during early life can affect neurodevelopment and neurocognitive functions later in life."

"Healthway's funding will allow us to increase support and deliver new content in the important areas of early years mental health and extend it into nutrition for positive mental health and wellbeing."

Healthway CEO Colin Smith said having resources digitally available is important when trying to reach a wide audience, especially those in remote areas where mental health and nutrition support services could not always be easily accessed.

"The home learning environment can have a profound and lasting impact on a child's development, so it's important that parents and caregivers can access the support they need no matter where they live," he said.

"The Bright Tomorrows app is a fantastic resource for families, which can be used within normal daily life, and we are proud to be able to support expanding its content to address community need."

Media contact: Hermione Coleman & Karmen Grzetic 9488 6711