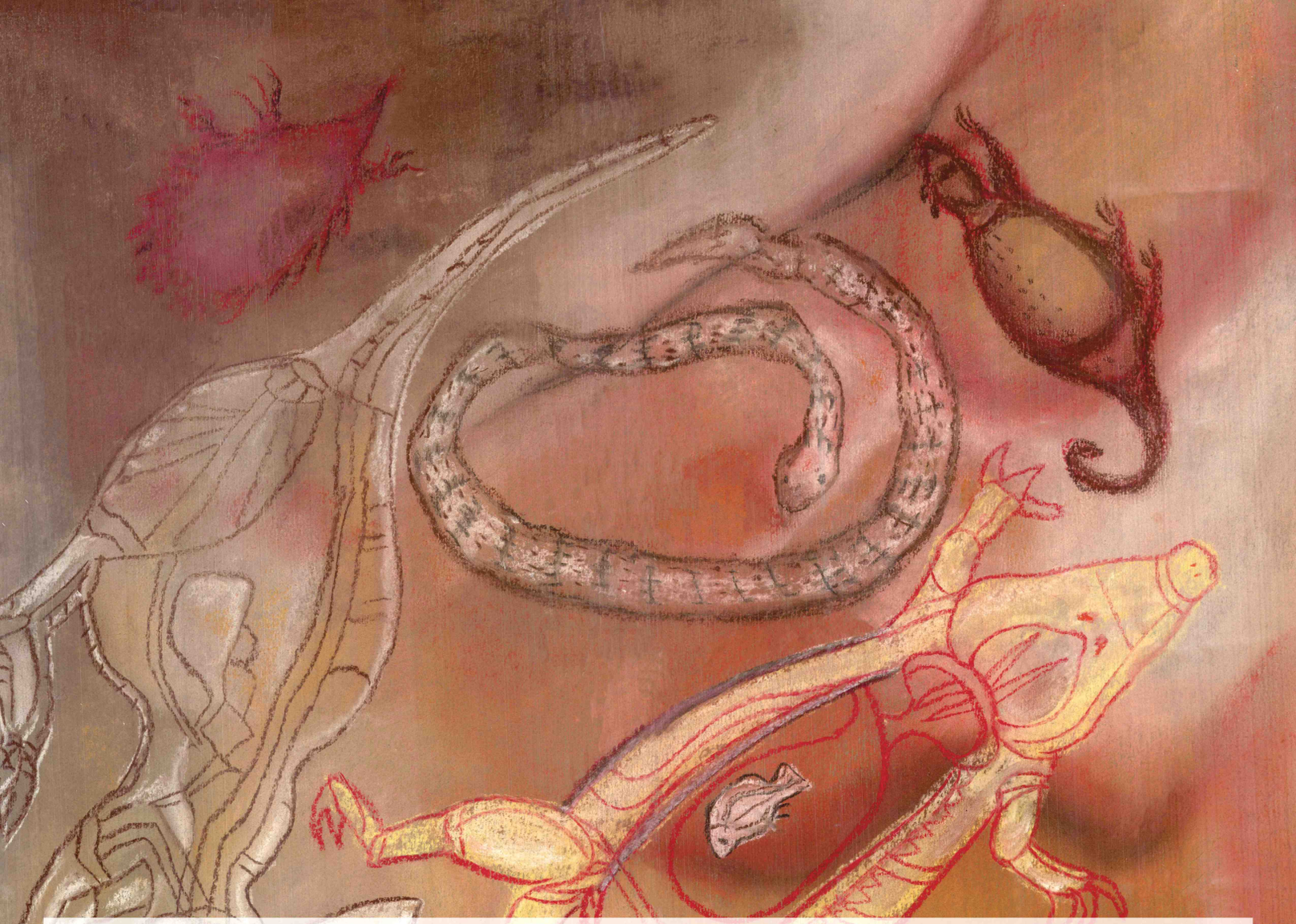

I'm a Dad!



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Parents on Yolŋu, Gurindji, Jawoyn, Mangarayi, Mara, Ngalakan, and Ngarinyman country in the Northern Territory of Australia

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Welcome

Having a baby is an exciting time for families. Dads are very important for growing their kids up strong, and they need good information and support from people around them.

This booklet was made for dads, through lots of yarns with parents in communities across East Arnhem and the Big Rivers Region in the Northern Territory. Men talked about what it is like being a dad, what they want for their family and how they look after their little ones as they grow.

This story follows a character, Sam, as he finds out he's going to be a dad, the good choices he makes, and what he learns along the way. His partner Kiara, grandma Dorothy, uncle Jake, friend Thomas and all the families are there to help each other and look after the new baby. There are questions and empty spaces in the book for dads to write in or draw, to yarn with others, or just to think about. We hope you enjoy the adventure!

Characters[1]


Sam


Baby


Kiara


Dorothy


Wilfred


Jake


Rosemary


Paul


Thomas


Robby


Ross

1 Ideas from parents are included in the comic scenarios, but the characters are made up and do not represent any one person's story.

We're Having a Baby!




Hey, you got some fish for us, nice!
I wanted to surprise you.
We're having a baby!
I saw that snake before.
Jake reckons it might be a sign.
• • • •
I want to grow up this baby together.
Yeah. me too.
But am I ready to be a dad?


Hey, I heard you and Kiara are having a baby!
Yeah I'm happy, can't wait to be a father.
But I'm a bit worried...
What life do you want for your family?
I need a strong direction.
Hey Sam, come sit with us.
You're having a baby, what makes you strong?
And think about Kiara's foundation.


I think I understand !
Now I see how the baby joins me and Kiara and all our families!

Things dads might think about:

- ☐ Who am I, what makes me strong as a person?
- ☐ How is my relationship with my partner?
- ☐ How does my child connect me and my partner and all the families?
- ☐ How can I be a good role model?
- ☐ What does being a dad mean to me?

What am I looking forward to as a dad?

Is there anything I'm worried about?

What could help?


I'M A DAD!


Who is there to support me as a father?
How could they support me?

Big Changes Happening




HONK HONK
Hey, Sam! You ready for that job interview!?
Ugh I don't want to get up ...
What's life going to be like once the baby comes?
Yep, coming!
That job is a ticket to my future.


Hey Sam, you got $50?
I have to draw the line somewhere.
I've got nothing, we have a baby on the way.
But come and have a feed with us.



What do I want to do?

What steps can I take to get there?



What good things am I doing already?

Supporting in Pregnancy



How can I support my partner ?

Are there any questions I want to ask the clinic?


TO BUY
-Nappies
-Baby Bath
-Pram
-Clothes
We've nearly got everything on the list.
Hey cuz!
Lucky we started saving early.
You never told me you were in town.
Yeah, we came for check up, bub's due soon.
Me and the boys are going out tonight, you should come.
Nah, I'm not drinking anymore.
Why don't you help me with the shopping and Kiara can have a rest.


Yeah, I'm tired, that would be good.
You've really grown up Sam.
I can see you're going to be a good dad.
GO LONG!



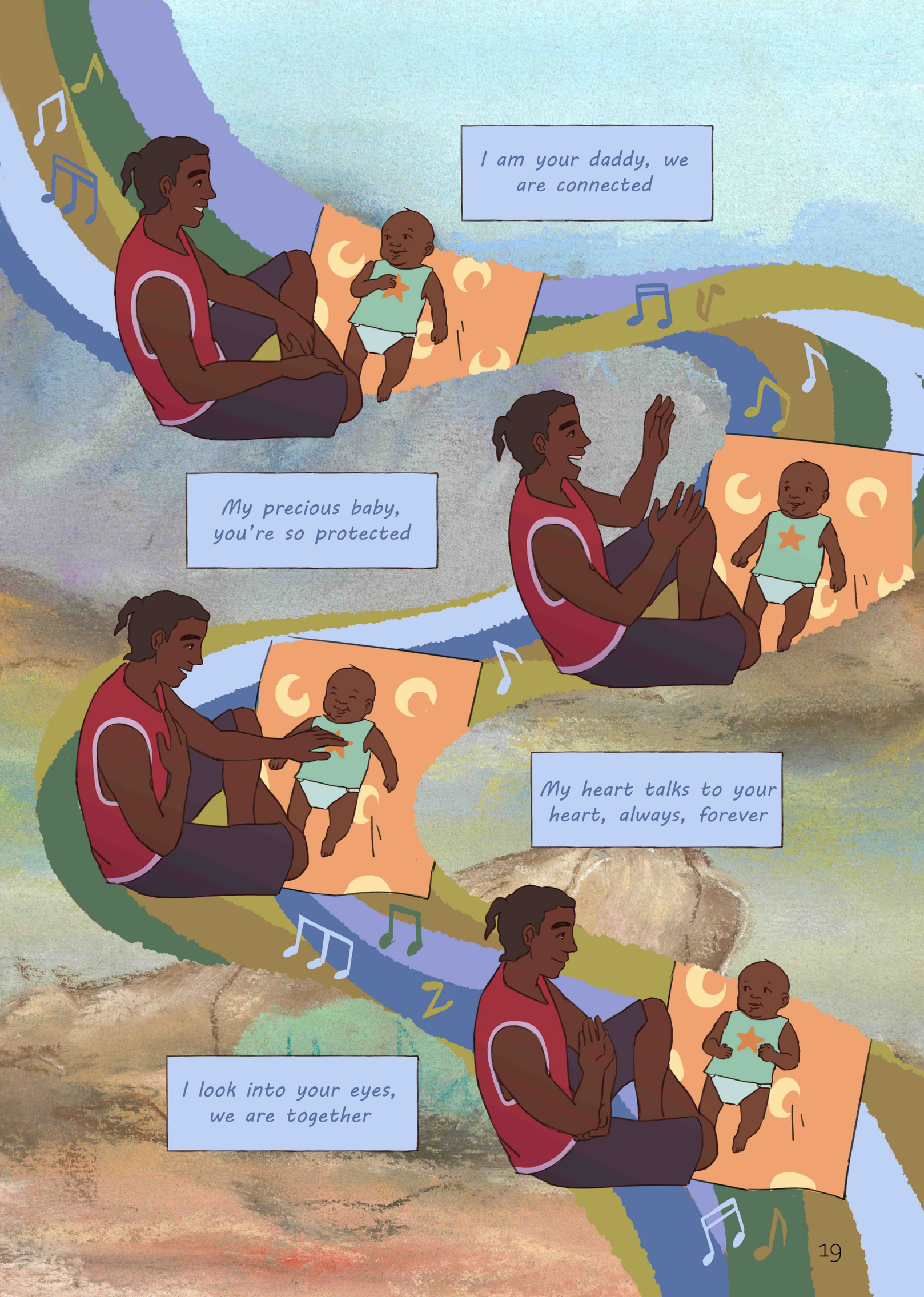
Things I've got done already

What do I want to do to get ready for bub coming?

Who can help?

Baby is Here


Bub's got a lot of family looking out for 'em.
Hey, I wrote a song for the baby,
do you want to hear it?


I am your daddy, we are connected
My precious baby, you're so protected
My heart talks to your heart, always, forever
I look into your eyes, we are together


Bub's looking at you!
Gets a huge smile when I sing.
He's such a good dad.
You feeling OK?
I'm still feeling tired and weak from the birth.
You're a great mum. I'm proud of you.
Why don't you finish your dinner and have a rest.
I'll take bub for a walk.

Things to think about with a new baby:

- ☐ Make a quiet space for mum and the baby
- ☐ Tell your partner she's doing a good job
- ☐ Ask your partner how she's feeling
- ☐ Help around the house, so mum can rest up
- ☐ Change nappies, bath the baby
- ☐ Take baby for a walk, sing to them, hold them and cuddle them
- ☐ Take care of the other kids. Give them lots of attention and talk about how they are feeling
- ☐ Talk to grandparents, family and other dads about how to grow kids up strong
- ☐ Think about ceremonies you want for the baby

Good things I'm doing for bub

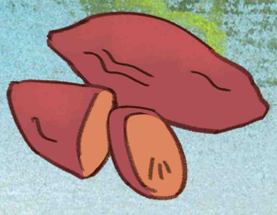
Good things I'm doing for my partner

Good things I'm doing for myself

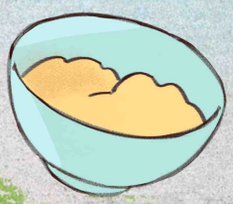
Baby's Getting Bigger







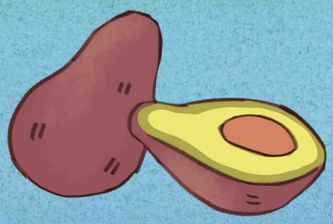


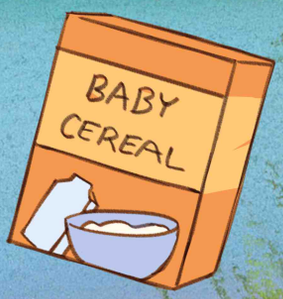


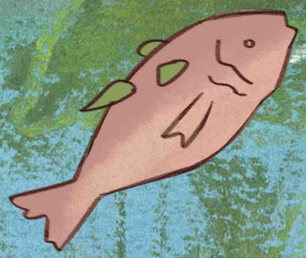












When bub's ready for food you can give them soft foods to eat.

- ☐ Mash with a fork or spoon so it's smooth
- ☐ Take out pieces of food for bub before you add salt or sugar
- ☐ Give food when bub's happy and relaxed, not too tired
- ☐ Use a small spoon or clean hands to feed them
- ☐ Give bub pieces of soft food to hold
- ☐ Stay with them while they're eating
- ☐ Have fun!

My own recipes...

Parenting Together



Talking about parenting together:

- ☐ Talk with your partner about how you want to grow up the kids
- ☐ Don't argue in front of the kids
- ☐ Talk about worries when you are both calm
- ☐ Think about the good things from your own childhood, and what would make life good for your kids
- ☐ Work as a team
- ☐ Let people know when you need help
- ☐ Make a safe environment for your family

What helps me stay calm?

How do we want to grow up our kids?

Dads Supporting Each Other





Which dads do I know who have been through this before?

Dads look after themselves by:

- ☐ Spending time with friends and family
- ☐ Getting involved in community things like sport and dad's groups
- ☐ Being on country, and connecting with culture, church
- ☐ Talking with partner, family or friends about any worries
- ☐ Connecting in with other services they need
- ☐ Letting off steam in a healthy way, like going fishing

Things that make me happy

Keep Baby Growing Strong





When they grow up, they'll pass on their knowledge and take good care of us family and community too.

Things that help kids grow up strong:

- ☐ *Being with the kids, spending time together doing things they like*
- ☐ *Connecting with other dads and doing active things in the community*
- ☐ *Baby knowing family and how they are connected*
- ☐ *Baby knowing their identity, their skin, totem, homeland*
- ☐ *Learning language, ancestors, dreamtime stories, ceremony*
- ☐ *Taking baby to playgroup, getting them ready for school*
- ☐ *Eating healthy food, and good sleep*

Things I want to teach my child

What are my dreams for bub's future?

Contact details:

Clinic name: _____

Contact person: _____

Phone number: _____

Further support available:

SMS4dads (sms4dads.com.au) – Receive text messages, information and tips for new dads.

13YARN (13 92 76) – 24/7 crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Baby Coming You Ready? (babycomingyouready.org.au) – Website to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, includes videos from dads.

Raising Children Network (raisingchildren.net.au) – Australian parenting website with lots of topics and videos.

Breastfeeding Helpline (1800 686 268) – Information and support from qualified breastfeeding counsellors.

Beyond Blue (1300 224 636) – 24/7 confidential counselling and support for anxiety, depression and suicide.

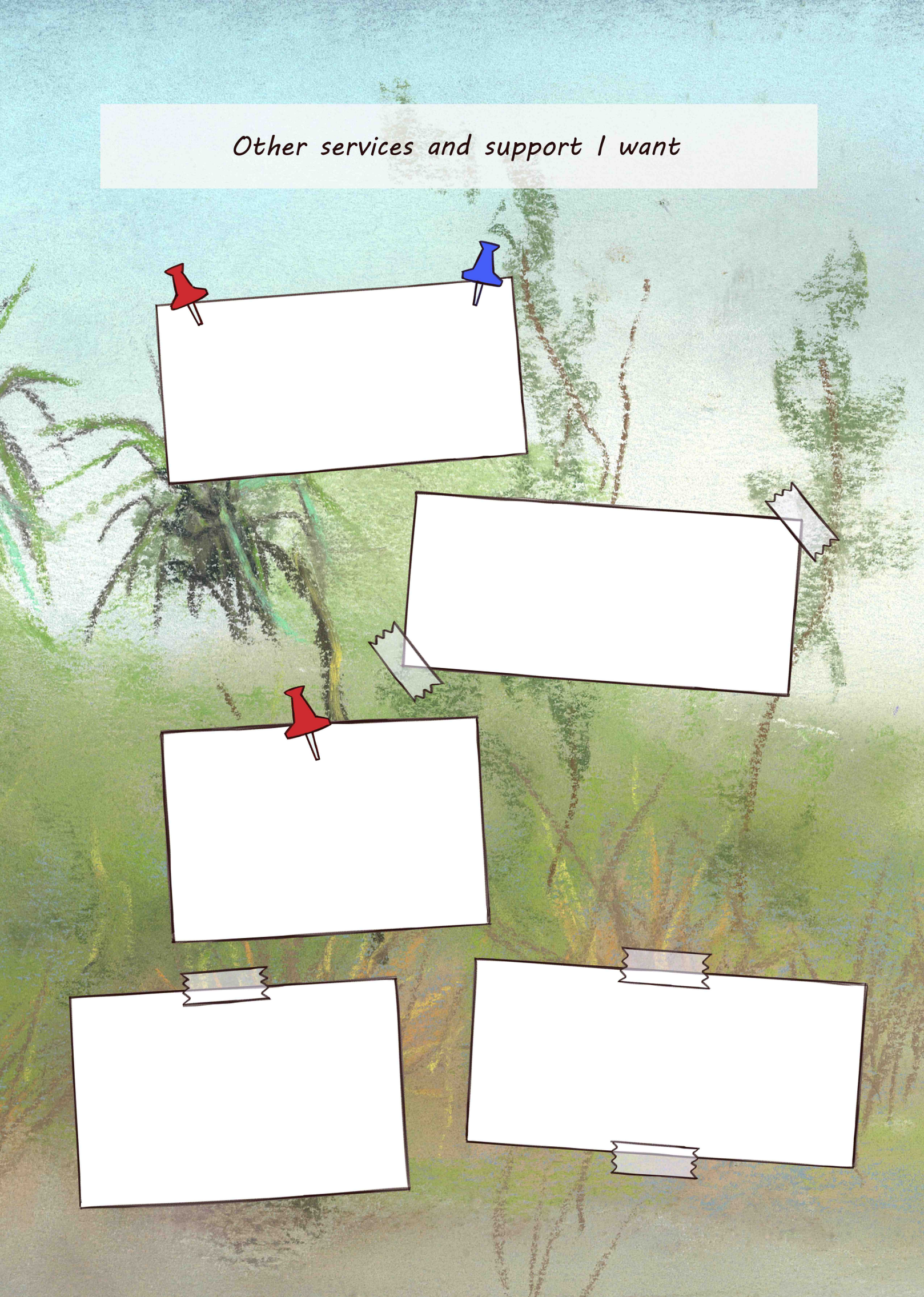
Centrelink (1300 169 468) – Social security payments and services.

PANDA (1300 726 306) – Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of expecting, new and growing families.

1800RESPECT (1800 737 732) – Confidential information, counselling and support services for people impacted by domestic, family or sexual violence.

Gambling helpline (1800 858 858) – 24/7 support for gambling worries.

Other services and support I want



Information about being a father, from yarning with parents on Yolŋu, Jawoyn, Gurindji, Mangarayi, Mara, Ngalakan and Ngarinman country in the Northern Territory.





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