

# Safe & Supported: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Outcomes Framework



## VISION

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up safe and supported in their family, community and culture.

## GOAL

To reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45% by the year 2031, per Target 12 of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.

## AREAS OF WORK

### 10-YEAR OUTCOMES

### SUB-OUTCOMES

**1. Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families' access to quality, culturally safe services necessary for children and young people to thrive.**

#### CHILD AND FAMILY-LEVEL

**SFN1(a)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families know they can easily access the services and supports they need and that those services will be safe and respectful of their cultures, trauma-informed, child-centred and family-focused.

#### SYSTEM-LEVEL

**SFN1(b)** High-quality child and family wellbeing services are designed and delivered by ACCOs to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families, in line with families' needs, and focus on supporting families to stay safe together.

**SFN1.1** ACCOs are sustainably resourced to deliver child and family services tailored for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including prevention and healing services, commensurate with need and the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (clause 55 (a), (b) – Priority Reform Two).

**SFN1.2** The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family wellbeing workforce is expanded and sees improved retention, in line with the *Closing the Gap* Early Childhood Care and Development Sector Strengthening Plan.

**SFN1.3** The non-Indigenous child and family workforce and sector are more culturally responsive, trauma-aware and healing-informed.

**SFN1.4** Systems prioritise resourcing and strengthening families to stay safe together. Where children and young people have been removed, they and their families and communities are supported to maintain connections and achieve reunification through healing.

**2. Reshaping legislation, policies, programs & practices in child and family welfare to be culturally safe and responsive for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.**

**SFN2(a)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families in contact with child protection systems have their cultural needs (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices) and kinship networks supported. Their right to make decisions about their own lives, within their unique cultural parameters, is recognised.

**SFN2(b)** Systems and services uphold children's and young people's rights to their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identities and the wellbeing needs arising from those identities, including self-determination and connection to family, community, Country and culture.

**SFN2.1** Governments undertake active efforts to implement all 5 elements of the ATSCPP. All jurisdictions demonstrate transparency and accountability for their performance against the Principle, via timely reporting of high-quality data.

**SFN2.2** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples exercise self-determination by leading service design and workforce development, including through the development of culturally valid assessment and decision-making tools.

**SFN2.3** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers (both formal and informal) receive equitable supports to meet the holistic needs of the children and young people they care for.

**SFN2.4** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have greater confidence in child protection and family support systems.

**3. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to participate in and have control over decisions that affect children and young people.**

**SFN3(a)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families lead care and protection decision-making for their children (with children and young people involved in all decisions), and participate in policy and program design through their own community leadership and institutions.

**SFN3(b)** ACCOs and community leadership have authority in system design and child protection processes. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and evidence drives best practice.

**SFN3.1** ACCOs have ongoing roles as partners in formal structures for shared decision-making in the design, implementation and monitoring of child protection legislation, policy, programs, practice frameworks and commissioning, consistent with the actions and activities within the agreed Action Plans and the principles of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.

**SFN3.2** ACCOs exercise greater authority in frontline child protection processes and are sustainably resourced to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families to lead decision-making at all points of engagement with child protection systems.

**SFN3.3** Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leadership structures have the authority and infrastructure to lead the commissioning of child and family wellbeing services for their communities.

**4. Making child protection systems and service providers accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, communities and organisations.**

**SFN4(a)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families access the information and supports they need to feel confident and empowered when engaging with child and family welfare systems.

**SFN4(b)** The design, implementation and evaluation of all aspects of child protection systems are continuously overseen by robust Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-designed governance and accountability mechanisms, with governments held genuinely accountable to progress against their commitments.

**SFN4.1** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families in every jurisdiction are well-represented on a continuous basis by empowered, sustainably-resourced oversight and advocacy mechanisms, including: community-controlled child and family peak bodies, per the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (clause 45 (c), (d) – Priority Reform Two); and independent Commissioners for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People or similar roles.

**SFN4.2** Through expanded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research leadership and community control of data, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evidence base grows in size and influence.

**SFN4.3** The collection and analysis of child and family wellbeing data are undertaken in line with the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (Priority Reform Four) and the principles of Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Governance (led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and based on their priorities, knowledges and expertise).

Culturally safe and prevention-focused systems

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander systems leadership

## INTERFACE OUTCOMES

### 10-YEAR OUTCOMES

### SUB-OUTCOMES

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*Cross-portfolio action to strengthen child safety and wellbeing will form a key foundation for successfully achieving outcomes across the Areas of Work.*

**SFN5(a)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, families and communities have their holistic needs fulfilled. As such, fewer families experience social, emotional or economic risk factors for child neglect or abuse.

**SFN5.1** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families have improved access to better quality, more equitable, culturally safe services and supports in the following areas:

- safe and stable housing
- stable family employment, financial independence and security
- homes and communities that are free from violence and discrimination

- holistic physical, social and emotional health/wellbeing, including healing services that address the impacts of trauma
- education (early childhood to tertiary) that supports parity of educational attainment with non-Indigenous children/young people
- family law systems, including culturally safe and responsive legal advice and representation
- therapeutic and restorative justice
- disability services and supports, including disability-responsive resources and options in each of the above sectors.

**SFN5.2** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, families, communities and organisations participate in the design, implementation and oversight of these services and supports. This supports children and young people to grow as leaders in their community and culture.

**SFN5.3** Inter-jurisdictional and inter-departmental leadership supports improved connections and collaborations across systems, jurisdictions and policy areas.

## MEASURING OUTCOMES

There will be a strong focus on measuring progress towards the *Safe and Supported* outcomes, recognising the work different jurisdictions are doing to address child safety. A mixed methods approach to measurement and evaluation will be used, in recognition of the complexity of the

outcomes. This approach will include quantitative trend data supported by more detailed qualitative analysis and storytelling.

The indicators will be included in the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy.

## MEASURING OUTCOMES

They will be chosen with regards to what we are aiming to measure and how this can best be achieved.

**Potential data sources include:**

- the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set
- other national datasets relevant to child and family safety and wellbeing

- other government reporting
- case studies
- surveys
- program evaluations
- data linkage projects
- targeted analysis projects.