

# About the Artwork

The artwork by **Jordan Lovegrove**, Ngarrindjeri, of Dreamtime Creative represents *Safe & Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031* and how all governments and the non-government sector are working together to help children, young people and families in need of support.

The four meeting places are the four priority groups and the four different sections are the four focus areas. The middle sections represents communities and government coming together to improve outcomes and supports for First Nations children and families. The many different coloured and sized dots shows the diversity of First Nations children and families.



# Safe & Supported: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Theory of Change



## STARTING POINT

What are the issues that need to be addressed?

Embedded systemic & structural racism continues to affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

Intergenerational trauma persists – healing requires active & holistic efforts.

Non-Indigenous people, processes and worldviews still dominate decisions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children – contrary to the right to self-determination.

Social determinants of wellbeing have detrimental effects on many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

Systems require reorientation – away from tertiary intervention, towards early support and family preservation.

Improvements are needed across *all* stages of child and family engagement with service systems: from universal service provision, to early identification of and responses to family challenges, to out-of-home care systems and children leaving care.

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## COMMITMENT

All levels of government have committed to reducing 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*.

Under the Priority Reforms they have committed to establishing formal partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for shared decision-making; building the community-controlled sector; transforming government institutions by eliminating racism and improving transparency; and enabling shared access to data and information at a regional level.

## KEY ENABLERS OF CHANGE

Self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is core to improving outcomes at the system, service and family levels.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities know what is needed to support safety and wellbeing – they must be partners in decision-making.

The strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and child-rearing practices are protective and underpin quality care for children.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations achieve better results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, and more often provide the holistic and culturally safe services that are needed to generate long-term improvements in family wellbeing.

## AREAS OF WORK FOR PRIORITY SYSTEM REFORMS

How do systems need to change overall for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families' access to quality, culturally safe services necessary for children to thrive.



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



Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children.



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

## ACTIVITIES TO DRIVE CHANGE: FIRST ACTION PLAN

What will stakeholders do/support/develop?

### CULTURALLY SAFE AND PREVENTION-FOCUSED SYSTEMS

Action 2: Investing in the community-controlled sector.

Action 5: Active efforts to implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.

Action 8: Social determinants of child safety and wellbeing.

Action 4: First Nations workforce.

*Safe and Supported* Focus Area 4: Strengthening the child and family sector and workforce capability.

Action 6: Legal supports.

### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP

Action 1: Transfer of authority to ACCOs.

Action 7: Advocating for accountability and oversight – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commissioners.

Action 3: Data sovereignty  
*Safe and Supported* Focus Area 3: Improved information sharing, data development and analysis.

## HOW THESE ACTIVITIES WILL HELP US ACHIEVE THE 10-YEAR OUTCOMES ...

Increased availability & accessibility of quality, culturally safe, trauma-responsive services addressing drivers of child protection intervention.

Systems and services prioritise children's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities.

Systems prioritise prevention and early intervention/support – strengthening and resourcing families to stay together safely.

A larger, sustainably-resourced ACCO sector delivers services proportionately to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander client base.

*Safe and Supported* Focus Area 1: A national approach to early intervention and targeted support for children and families experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.

Children and families have equitable access to the universal services needed for all children to thrive and to targeted services that address the drivers of child protection intervention, delivered in ways that are culturally safe and responsive.

Children and families who encounter the child protection system are treated in a trauma-informed way and supported to maintain strong connections to family, kin, culture and Country, in line with the ATSICPP.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities have their holistic needs fulfilled across more domains of wellbeing, and are less likely to experience the social determinants of wellbeing in ways that put the safety and development of children at risk.

## SEE THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK FOR THESE OUTCOMES

ACCOs and community leadership structures have shared decision-making authority in system design and child protection processes.

Best practice reflects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, priorities and evidence.

Families lead care and protection decision-making for their children, with access to the information and supports needed to feel confident and empowered engaging with systems.

Children and families participate in policy and program design through their own community leadership and institutions, supported by ACCOs.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities are empowered and self-determining in all matters of child and family safety, development and wellbeing – legislation, policy, programs and service delivery. They have greater trust and confidence in child protection systems.

... AT THE LEVEL OF SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

... AT THE LEVEL OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

... AT THE LEVEL OF WHOLE COMMUNITIES

... SO THAT WE CAN REACH THE *SAFE AND SUPPORTED* GOALS

Reduced incidence of child abuse and neglect within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.



Better processes and outcomes for children and families involved in child protection systems – reducing the intergenerational impact of that involvement.

*Safe and Supported* Focus Area 2: Addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems.