

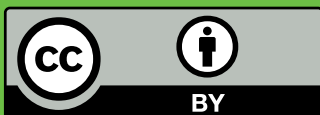
# Protecting children is Everyone's Business

National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020





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*All illustrations kindly donated by children, including some children living in care*

**Second three-year action plan, 2012-2015**

# Protecting children is Everyone's Business

**National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020**

**An initiative of the Council of Australian Governments**







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# Foreword

On 30 April 2009, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020* (the National Framework)—an ambitious and long-term agenda to improve the safety and wellbeing of Australia's children.

The First Action Plan 2009–2012 laid a firm foundation for the National Framework by building the evidence base for future actions to protect children and families at-risk. Over the life of the Plan, we made significant achievements across a large number of priority projects, including the establishment of the first National Children's Commissioner and the development of National Standards for out-of-home care. These achievements would not have been possible without strong collaborative work between governments at all levels and the non-government sector.

The Second Action Plan 2012–2015 was developed through close collaboration between the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, and the Coalition of Organisations Committed to the Safety and Wellbeing of Australia's Children. This approach reflects the National Framework's key message that 'protecting children is everyone's business' and has been a critical element of the success achieved under the National Framework to date.

The critical focus of the Second Action Plan is 'working together' across governments and non-government sectors to improve the safety and wellbeing of Australia's children. This will be achieved by strengthening families, early intervention, prevention and collaboration through joining up service delivery with mental health, domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol, education, health and other services. This work will be progressed within the child protection system as well as across other sectors, including those that are not traditionally thought of as child centred.

The Second Action Plan will also emphasise the development of local partnerships for local solutions, recognising that a 'one size fits all' approach does not work across Australia's diverse communities and that Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse families and communities need strategies that are sensitive to their needs and circumstances.

Some of the actions outlined in the priorities will require commitment by the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and the non-government sector. Others will require action by the Commonwealth or by individual State and Territory governments. As a result of local priorities and reforms occurring in the child protection and broader service systems not all actions will be progressed by jurisdictions in the same way and at the same time.

Building on the strong partnerships and achievements of the First Action Plan, we are confident that the Second Action Plan will significantly advance us towards our goal of ensuring that:

***Australia's children grow up safe and well***

Endorsed at the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services, 17 August 2012, by:

The Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Commonwealth

The Hon Julie Collins MP, Minister for Community Services, Commonwealth

The Hon Pru Goward MP, Minister for Families and Community Services, New South Wales

The Hon Mary Wooldridge MP, Minister for Community Services, Victoria

The Hon Wendy Lovell MP, Minister for Children & Early Childhood Development, Victoria

The Hon Tracy Davis MP, Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, Queensland

The Hon Ian Hunter MP, Minister for Communities & Social Inclusion, South Australia

The Hon Grace Portolesi MP, Minister for Education & Child Development, South Australia

The Hon Robyn McSweeney MLC, Minister for Child Protection, Western Australia

The Hon Cassy O'Connor MP, Minister for Human Services, Tasmania

The Hon Michelle O'Byrne MP, Minister for Health and Children, Tasmania

Ms Joy Burch MLA, Minister for Disability, Housing & Community Services, Australian Capital Territory

The Hon Konstantine Vatskalis MLA, Minister for Child Protection, Northern Territory



## Section 1:

Achievements in the First Action Plan





# 1. Achievements in the First Action Plan

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020* (the National Framework) on 30 April 2009. The National Framework represents the first time that all Australian governments have agreed to work together, alongside the non-government sector, to ensure that Australia's children are safe and well.

Under the First Action Plan (2009–2012), Commonwealth and State and Territory governments, together with the Coalition of Organisations Committed to the Safety and Wellbeing of Australia's Children, worked in partnership to build strong foundations for change. This involved the identification of twelve national priorities that, when taken together, aim to achieve the high level outcome—'Australia's children are safe and well':

- > Joining Up Service Delivery
- > Closing the Gap
- > Seeing Early Warning Signs and Taking Early Action
- > Improving Support for Carers
- > Developing National Standards for out-of-home care
- > Building Capacity and Expertise
- > Enhancing the Evidence Base
- > Filling the Research Gaps
- > Transitioning to Independence
- > Responding to Sexual Abuse
- > Advocating Nationally for Children and Young People
- > Sharing Information

The Commonwealth Government committed \$63 million over four years to support the implementation of the First Action Plan. This included a significant investment in the evidence base to help us gain a clearer picture of the state of child wellbeing in Australia, funding for key National Leadership Projects, increased support for care leavers, and enhanced access to quality child care for vulnerable children.

State and Territory governments made considerable contributions towards the key national achievements of the First Action Plan, along with leading the way in best practice initiatives for reforming the child protection system and support programs for children and families within their jurisdiction.

Key national achievements in the First Action Plan include:

- > The establishment of the first **National Children's Commissioner**, to promote the rights, wellbeing and development of children and young people in Australia
- > The development and implementation of **National Standards for out-of-home care**, which seek to drive improvements in the quality of care so that children and young people in out-of-home care have the same opportunities as other children and young people to reach their potential
- > The development and agreement of a **Priorities Plan for Indigenous Children**, which prioritises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in all future national priority projects under the National Framework
- > The establishment of 50 new **Indigenous Parenting Support Services** to promote positive outcomes for vulnerable Indigenous families with young children



- > The development of a **biennial survey of children and young people in out-of-home care**, which will be piloted in partnership with jurisdictions in 2012 as a measure of the National Standards for out-of-home care. This will be complemented by Australian Government surveys in the other years to explore specific areas of interest
- > The development of '**Transitioning from out-of-home Care to Independence: A Nationally Consistent Approach to Planning**', which improves consistency across jurisdictions by outlining best practice in leaving-care planning
- > An increase in the **Transition to Independent Living Allowance**, from \$1,000 to \$1,500
- > The development and agreement of the position paper, '**Toward a Nationally Consistent Approach to Working with Children Checks**' which will guide future cross-jurisdictional action on Working with Children Checks
- > The establishment of a 12-month pilot of the national **Exchange of Criminal History Information for People Working with Children**, to evaluate its utility in providing more comprehensive information across jurisdictions to strengthen Working with Children Checks
- > The completion of the first **national study on Australia's response to sexualised or sexually abusive behaviours in children and young people**
- > The development and publication of a **learning resource** to support family-based and residential carers and staff to respond to **concerning sexual behaviours**
- > The development and trial of a **Common Approach to Assessment, Referral and Support** to help practitioners better identify and refer children at-risk, increase consistency among jurisdictions and promote information sharing
- > The publication of a **landmark research report** that explores the payments and services available to carers, including an analysis of gaps and inequities in support
- > The development and implementation of an **online resource** to improve carers' access to information about available services and payments
- > The development and production of the **Winangay Indigenous kinship carer resource** to support carers and staff working in the field
- > The introduction of 25 '**MyTime for Grandparents**' peer support groups and six **Centrelink Grandparent Advisors** in selected locations nationally
- > The development and roll out of **Building Capacity, Building Bridges** workshops and training programs to boost the capacity of community service workers to identify and respond effectively to at-risk children and families
- > Undertaking the first national **analysis of workforce trends** and approaches impacting on statutory child protection workforces
- > The development of a **National Research Agenda for Protecting Children**, to identify research priorities and opportunities that will inform future policy and service delivery
- > A funding commitment of \$600,000 over three years (2011–12 to 2013–14) for research under the **National Research Agenda** on prevention, protection and therapeutic responses, care, systems and maltreatment types
- > Developing **headline indicators for children's health and wellbeing** and working towards developing a child protection unit data collection
- > The approval and implementation of an **information sharing protocol** between State and Territory child protection agencies and the Commonwealth Department of Human Services (encompassing Medicare Australia, the Child Support Agency and Centrelink)—more than 26,000 requests for information had been received under this protocol as at December 2011
- > The realignment and transition of all **Communities for Children** sites under the Family Support Program to strengthen families and provide more effective and comprehensive services to vulnerable families and children at risk of entering the child protection system.

In addition to these considerable national achievements, each State and Territory has been working on key projects aimed at local reform. Further information about these key reforms can be found on each of their websites as outlined in Appendix A.

Throughout the implementation of the First Action Plan, non-government organisations have continued to develop programs and contribute to the development of knowledge about practice. Non-government organisations have worked in partnership with government programs and on committees dedicated to bringing improvements to reduce the abuse and neglect of Australia's children and young people.

Central to the significant achievements of the First Action Plan of the National Framework has been the collaboration between the Commonwealth Government, the State and Territory governments and a large group of non-government organisations, through the Coalition of Organisations Committed to the Safety and Wellbeing of Australia's Children.



## Section 2: A Partnership Approach



## ➔ 2. A Partnership Approach

### The National Framework

The National Framework recognises that child abuse and neglect remains one of Australia’s most serious concerns and that it requires action from all levels of government and the non-government sector to make a difference. The high level outcome of the National Framework—‘Australia’s children and young people are safe and well’—cannot be achieved by one level of government alone. Collaborative effort is required to improve the lives and opportunities of children and families, and ensure that there is ‘a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia over time.’

The National Framework sets out six supporting outcomes that need to be achieved if Australia’s children and young people are to be safe and well. They are:

1. Children live in safe and supportive families and communities
2. Children and families access adequate support to promote safety and intervene early
3. Risk factors for child abuse and neglect are addressed
4. Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing
5. Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities
6. Child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support.

In line with Australia’s obligations as a signatory to the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child, the National Framework is underpinned by the following principles:

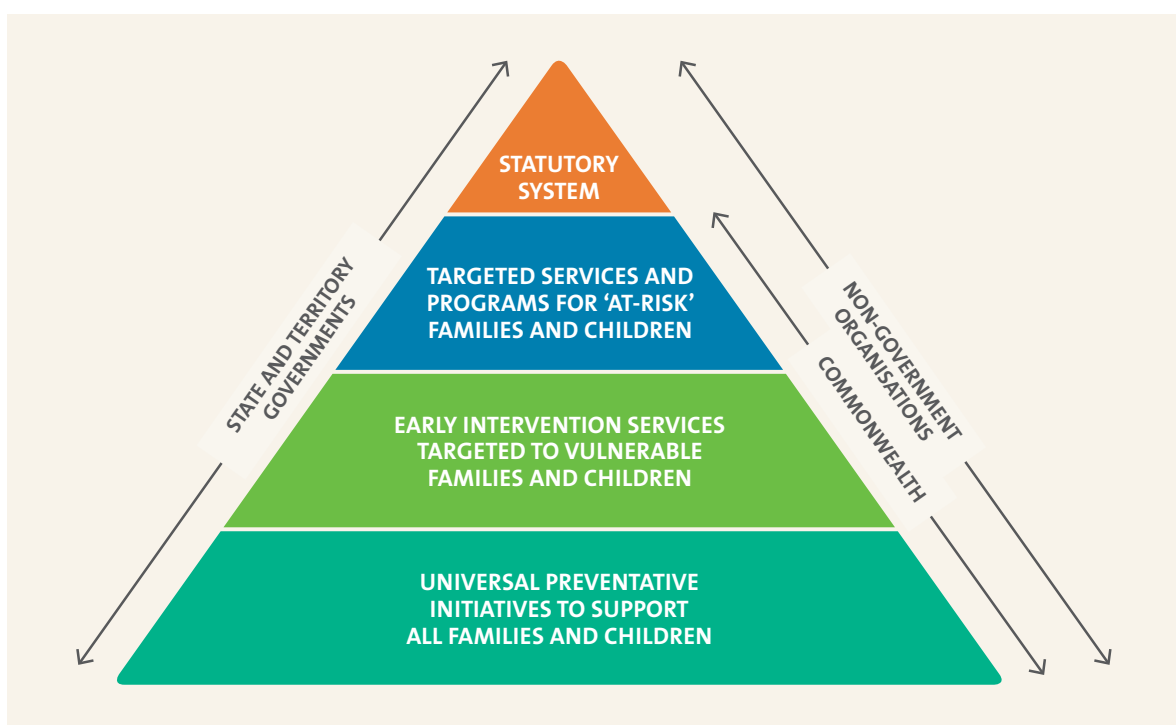
- > All children have a right to grow up in an environment free from neglect and abuse. Their best interests are paramount in all decisions affecting them
- > Children and their families have a right to participate in decisions affecting them
- > Improving the safety and wellbeing of children is a national priority
- > The safety and wellbeing of children is primarily the responsibility of their families, who should be supported by their communities and governments
- > Australian society values, supports and works in partnership with parents, families and others in fulfilling their caring responsibilities for children
- > Children’s rights are upheld by systems and institutions
- > Policies and interventions are evidence based.

## Public Health Model

The National Framework promotes a public health model approach to child protection. Under this model, illustrated in Figure 1 below, priority is placed on having universal supports (for example, health and education) available for all families. More intensive (secondary) prevention interventions are provided to those families who need additional assistance, with a focus on early intervention. Tertiary child protection services are a last resort for families and governments.

The First Action Plan put this model into practice by working towards a stronger universal and early intervention service system. The Second Action Plan, and each subsequent three-year plan, will build on this foundation by committing to, and implementing, actions that address the continuum of services in the public health model.

Figure 1 – Public health model for protecting Australia’s children



## Linkages with Other Major Reforms

The National Framework builds on a number of significant national reform agendas. In varying ways, these agendas intersect to contribute towards addressing the needs of vulnerable children and families. Strengthening the focus of other national reform agendas to keep Australia's children safe and well will be an important part of the work to be undertaken as part of the Second Action Plan. This can only be achieved through the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments working together in a partnership approach to develop and deliver on these broader social reform agendas.

Some key national reform agendas that impact on Australia's children and families include:

- > Investing in the Early Years—A National Early Childhood Development Strategy
- > Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage
- > The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children
- > National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness with a focus on intervening early for children and their families at risk of homelessness
- > National Disability Insurance Scheme launch sites
- > National Disability Strategy
- > National Affordable Housing Agreement
- > National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care
- > National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education
- > National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development
- > National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities
- > National Anti-Racism Strategy
- > Building Australia's Future Workforce package
- > National Mental Health Strategy
- > National Compact between the Australian Government and the Third Sector.



## Section 3:

Outline of the Second Action Plan





# 3. Outline of the Second Action Plan

The theme for the Second Action Plan is:

*'Working together to improve the safety and wellbeing of Australia's children through strengthening families, early intervention, prevention and collaboration through joining up service delivery with mental health, domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol, education, health and other services.'*

This theme underpins the twenty priorities that have been identified for joint action under the Second Action Plan. Each of these priorities is based on a partnership approach that is family centred, focused on outcomes and includes performance measures. These priorities fall into three groupings based on how they build on the First Action Plan:

- 1. Embedding National Priorities from the First Action Plan**  
The Second Action Plan will embed and build on achievements from the First Action Plan such as continuing to improve the effectiveness of Working with Children Checks, improving the evidence base and exploring the expansion of information sharing protocols between child protection agencies and other Commonwealth agencies
- 2. Delivering on National Priorities in the Second Action Plan**  
The Second Action Plan will build on and strengthen delivery of six significant National Priorities from the First Action Plan including Closing the Gap, National Standards for out-of-home care, joining up service delivery and responding to sexual abuse
- 3. Exploring new priorities for the Second Action Plan and beyond**  
The Second Action Plan will explore opportunities for joint work in new areas (including early childhood, education, domestic and family violence, disability, health and mental health) and will seek to strengthen the focus of these agendas to keep Australia's children safe and well.

EMBEDDING NATIONAL PRIORITIES	DELIVERING ON NATIONAL PRIORITIES	EXPLORING NEW PRIORITIES
1. Advocating Nationally for Children and Young People	1. National Standards for out-of-home care	1. Early Childhood
2. Sharing Information	2. Transitioning to Independence	2. Education
3. Building Capacity and Expertise	3. Joining up Service Delivery	3. Domestic and Family Violence
4. Working with Children Checks	4. Closing the Gap	4. Health and Mental Health
5. Enhancing the Evidence Base	5. Improving Support for Carers	5. Disability
6. Filling Research Gaps	6. Responding to Sexual Abuse	6. Sector Development
7. Seeing Early Warning Signs and Taking Early Action		7. Community and Business

Some of the actions outlined in the priorities will require commitment by the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and the non-government sector. Others will require action by the Commonwealth or by individual State and Territory governments. As a result of local priorities and reforms occurring in the child protection and broader service systems, not all actions will be progressed by jurisdictions in the same way and at the same time.





## Section 4:

Building on the First Three Years



## 4. Building on the First Three Years

The First Action Plan 2009–2012 laid out specific areas that would be the foundation for action over the remaining years of the National Framework. A significant amount of work was focused on establishing the evidence base through research and data for action in further years and investing in practical supports for vulnerable children and families.

Outcomes and lessons learnt from actions undertaken in the first three years have been used to inform the Second Action Plan 2012–2015. The Second Action Plan builds on the foundations of the First Action Plan and embeds the success of its National Priorities into our ongoing commitment to ensuring Australia’s children are safe and well.

### ADVOCATING NATIONALLY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

#### Achievements in the First Action Plan

Agreement to establish the first National Children’s Commissioner to promote the rights, wellbeing and development of children and young people.

#### Embedding this in the Second Action Plan

Supporting the establishment of the National Children’s Commissioner and acknowledging the Commissioner’s role as an advocate for children at the national level, in addition to State and Territory government commissioners. Continuing to support education initiatives to improve awareness amongst the broader community of children’s rights.

### SHARING INFORMATION

#### Achievements in the First Action Plan

Establishment of an information sharing protocol between State and Territory child protection agencies and the Commonwealth Department of Human Services (encompassing Medicare, the Child Support Agency and Centrelink) has resulted in the sharing of thousands of pieces of information to protect vulnerable families.

#### Embedding this in the Second Action Plan

Continuing to explore and improve information sharing protocols across all levels of government, including between State and Territory governments, the Commonwealth Department of Human Services, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Attorney-General’s Department.

### BUILDING WORKFORCE CAPACITY AND EXPERTISE

#### Achievements in the First Action Plan

Development and roll out of Building Capacity, Building Bridges workshops and training programs in 12 communities to boost the capacity of community service workers to identify and respond effectively to at-risk children and families. Development of the Community Services Workforce Profile Project final report *Who Works in Community Services – a profile of Australian workforces in child protection, juvenile justice, disability services and general community services*.

#### Embedding this in the Second Action Plan

Exploring options to broaden child and family sensitive practice through increased access to training. Findings of the Community Service Workforce Profile Project final report have provided the foundations for proposed work to support Australia’s statutory child protection workforce.

## WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

### Achievements in the First Action Plan

Development and agreement of the position paper, 'Toward a Nationally Consistent Approach to Working with Children Checks,' which will guide future cross jurisdictional action on Working with Children Checks.

### Embedding this in the Second Action Plan

Continuing to improve the effectiveness of Working with Children Checks across jurisdictions.

## ENHANCING THE EVIDENCE BASE

### Achievements in the First Action Plan

Development of headline indicators for children's health, development and wellbeing, and indicators to measure the progress of the National Framework (at Appendix B), and the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set (based on unit data records).

### Embedding this in the Second Action Plan

Improving the evidence base about Indigenous children, culturally and linguistically diverse children and children with disability, including disaggregating indicators by these statuses wherever possible.

Continuing to embed the consistency and quality of data collections through improving the National Minimum Data Sets, and the collection of data about implementation of the National Standards for out-of-home care.

## FILLING RESEARCH GAPS

### Achievements in the First Action Plan

Development of a National Research Agenda focused on protecting Australia's children, underpinned by an ongoing national research program.

### Embedding this in the Second Action Plan

Undertaking research in the priority areas of community awareness, including diverse communities and Indigenous children and young people.

Sharing best practice through the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse and the Child Family Community Australia Information Exchange.

## SEEING EARLY WARNING SIGNS AND TAKING EARLY ACTION

### Achievements in the First Action Plan

Development of the Common Approach to Assessment, Referral and Support (CAARS), with the pilot finishing in late 2012.

### Embedding this in the Second Action Plan

Testing CAARS' applicability in different settings—including 13 Family Mental Health Support Services across Australia.

Exploring options to further embed the tool in services.



## Section 5:

Delivering on National Priorities





## 5. Delivering on National Priorities

The Second Action Plan will build on and strengthen delivery of six significant National Priorities from the First Action Plan. These National Priorities are critical areas for joint action to improve the lives of vulnerable children and their families. Working with Commonwealth, State and Territory governments as well as non-government organisations in a partnership approach is essential to delivering on these National Priorities over the three years of the Plan.

The Second Action Plan recognises that solutions to improve the lives of vulnerable children must take into account the diverse backgrounds and needs of children and families. In particular, the Second Action Plan strengthens a focus on responding to the needs of Indigenous children, families and communities, and places a new focus on children with disability and children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Addressing risk factors for child abuse and neglect, with a particular focus on domestic and family violence is an important part of the Second Action Plan.

Each of the National Priorities contains a number of actions that have been identified as important steps on the way towards ensuring Australia's children and young people are safe and well. Each National Priority also contains one or more measures drawn from the National Framework indicators (at Appendix B) that will help us to gauge our progress towards this goal.

### NATIONAL PRIORITIES

1. National Standards for out-of-home care
2. Transitioning to Independence
3. Joining Up Service Delivery
4. Closing the Gap
5. Improving Support for Carers
6. Responding to Sexual Abuse

Further detail on each National Priority is available over the following pages.

### National Standards for Out-of-Home Care

***Supporting Outcome 4—Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing***

Out-of-home care plays a significant role in shaping the lives and development of children and young people who cannot live safely with their birth families. Safe and stable out-of-home care can help children and young people to recover from the experience of abuse and neglect and improve their developmental outcomes.

The National Standards for out-of-home care seek to drive improvements in the quality of care, so that children and young people in out-of-home care have the same opportunities as other children and young people to reach their potential.

The actions in this priority address key issues in the out-of-home care system, such as: improving the stability of out-of-home care placements; enhancing the application and nationally consistent reporting of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle; developing quality benchmarks; and listening to the voices of children and young people in out-of-home care.

As a society, we need to find ways of working together to provide enduring care and support for these children and young people so that they can achieve their full potential.

ACTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the application and nationally consistent reporting of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop minimum quality benchmarks for each of the out-of-home care standards and deliver full reporting on the standards in 2015</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct the first national survey of children and young people in care under the National Standards for out-of-home care</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve stability of placements for children in out-of-home care, including through permanency planning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope options to more effectively manage the transfer of children and young people in child protection who relocate to a different State or Territory.</li> </ul>

Measure

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Placement stability	4.2 Proportion of children aged 0–17 years exiting out-of-home care during the year who had 1 or 2 placements	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) National Child Protection Data Collection

## Transitioning to Independence

**Supporting Outcome 4—Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing**

Many young people experience an effective transition from out-of-home care arrangements and achieve very positive outcomes. Those who experience a difficult transition can face challenges in areas such as finances, relationships and housing—some of which may extend into the long term and affect life outcomes.

All young people deserve to have the opportunity to learn, work, engage in community life and influence decisions that affect them. Vulnerable young people, such as those transitioning from out-of-home care, require additional support to overcome barriers and achieve positive outcomes in all life domains, including health, housing, education and employment.

As a society, we need to work together to provide young people leaving care with enduring support, so they can secure their social and economic independence and build successful lives.

## ACTIONS

- Integrate support for young people leaving care that is tailored to their individual needs and builds on a lifespan approach, including the Transition to Independent Living Allowance and State and Territory leaving care packages for care leavers
- Provide support and incentives that sustain engagement in school, and for young people leaving care, to help them overcome barriers to engaging in further education, employment and training
- Continue to implement practical mechanisms to ensure that there are appropriate housing options and supports for young people leaving care
- Identify and disseminate information on best practice housing models for young people leaving care, including through a literature review of current best practice models
- Explore options for community mentoring programs for children and young people who are soon to be transitioning from out-of-home care to build enduring support bases and facilitate ongoing positive engagement in the community.

To support these reforms, work will continue, including through the Protocol for Case Management of Unsupported Young People (Youth Protocol), to improve case management and the integration of services needed to achieve positive outcomes for young people leaving care.

This includes ensuring that unsupported, homeless and at-risk young people have access to appropriate assessment and assistance that provides for their immediate safety and wellbeing, and that service providers engage with these young people in a way that results in a planned and appropriate response to their longer-term needs.

## Measures

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
<b>Leaving care plans</b>	4.6 Proportion of young people aged 15 years and over who have a leaving care plan	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
<b>Cross-sector clients</b>	4.7 Proportion of child protection clients aged 0–17 years who enter juvenile corrective services or seek assistance from homelessness services	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection

## Joining Up Service Delivery

### *Supporting Outcome 1—Children live in safe and supportive families and communities*

The public health model underpinning the National Framework emphasises the provision of universal and targeted services to reduce the need for statutory intervention. However, families who experience multiple or complex needs may find it difficult to access these services.

Research has found that challenges such as domestic and family violence, mental illness and substance abuse are significant risk factors for child abuse and neglect.

Targeting locally based responses by bringing together the efforts of government and non-government organisations to meet the needs of these families is a priority because, as a society, we need to find better ways to support the most vulnerable children and families to prevent child abuse and neglect.

#### ACTIONS

- Trial locally based strategies for working with households with complex needs with a cost benefit analysis to inform future service models
- Develop local initiatives based on person-centred approaches through localised pilots of pooled funds
- Develop and implement local place-based initiatives to support the safety and wellbeing of children in Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory
- Develop approaches and support responses through collaboration with Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol and Domestic and Family Violence services in a way that focuses on eliminating violence and retaining a vulnerable child at-risk within a strengthened family unit
- Identify and share best practice in Child Aware Approaches to promote a better understanding of the relationship between the risk factors for child abuse and neglect
- Coordinate service supports between the Commonwealth Department of Human Services and statutory child protection agencies.

To support these reforms, there will be additional work to identify and share best practice in working with Indigenous communities through the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory* package, and also in working with children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Additional supporting initiatives include the National Collaboration Framework for Family Support Services, which aims to create a more efficient and effective alignment of Commonwealth and State and Territory government investment and effort. Work will also continue to support other locally based strategies, including Communities for Children, Community Playgroups, Children and Family Centres and Building Australia's Future Workforce local sites.



## Measures

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
<b>Parental mental health</b>	3.3	Proportion of parents with children aged 0–14 years who have a mental health problem
<b>Domestic violence</b>	3.5	Proportion of adults who experienced current partner violence and their children saw or heard the violence in the previous 12 months

## Closing the Gap

### *Supporting Outcome 5—Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities*

Indigenous children continue to be over-represented in the child protection system throughout Australia. According to the AIHW *Child Protection Australia 2010–11* report, Indigenous children are almost eight times more likely to be the subject of a child maltreatment substantiation when compared to non-Indigenous children, and more than nine times as likely to be on a child protection order.

Indigenous children are more likely than non-Indigenous children to be disadvantaged across a broad range of health, development and wellbeing indicators. A long-term investment is needed to address the varied and complex needs of Indigenous communities, including risk and protective factors for child abuse and neglect. Focusing efforts on community-based strategies is an important part of improving the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children.

The Closing the Gap priority under the National Framework aims to ensure that Indigenous families and communities are in a position to provide their children with the safe and supportive environments they need to reach their full potential.

### ACTIONS

- Explore collaborative approaches to child safety and wellbeing where children and families move between jurisdictions, particularly in Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory
- Build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations through partnerships with mainstream providers
- Work towards building a community development approach to child protection in remote Indigenous communities
- Share strategies to encourage Indigenous people to work in child protection and family support.

These actions will be supported by broader work in Indigenous communities, including disseminating information about what is working to meet the needs of vulnerable Indigenous families, the delivery of Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory and the whole-of-government strategy to Close the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage.

Additionally, as agreed in the Priorities Plan for Indigenous Children, each National Priority includes specific actions to ensure that the needs of Indigenous children and families are considered across all domains.

The following actions will have a specific focus on addressing the needs of Indigenous children, families and communities.

ACTIONS	NATIONAL PRIORITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the application and nationally consistent reporting of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle</li> </ul>	National Standards for out-of-home care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore options for community mentoring programs for children and young people who are soon to be transitioning from out-of-home care</li> </ul>	Transitioning to Independence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trial locally based strategies for working with households with complex needs</li> </ul>	Joining Up Service Delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement local place-based initiatives to support the safety and wellbeing of children in Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory</li> </ul>	Joining Up Service Delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand training and support for grandparent and kinship carers</li> </ul>	Improving Support for Carers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and trial programs to prevent sexual abuse and keep children safe</li> </ul>	Responding to Sexual Abuse

## Measures

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
<b>Placement of Indigenous Children</b>	5.1	To be developed (Aboriginal Child Placement Principle compliance indicator)
	5.2	Proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–17 years in out-of-home care placed with extended family or other Indigenous caregivers
	5.3	Proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–17 years placed through Indigenous-specific out-of-home care agencies
<b>Cultural support plans</b>	5.4	Proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–17 years in care who have a cultural support plan

## Improving Support for Carers

*Supporting Outcome 4—Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing*

Australia’s child protection system relies upon people who volunteer to act as out-of-home carers, giving of themselves—including their time, their home and other personal resources—to care for children and young people unable to live at home with their own families. In order to provide a high level of quality care for these vulnerable children and improve their life outcomes, out-of-home carers need assistance and support.

All jurisdictions are experiencing difficulties in recruiting and retaining carers. Australia’s diverse kinship carers are now the fastest growing demographic of carers, and it is important for governments and non-government organisations and the community to support them in their valuable role. As a society, we need to acknowledge and recognise the carers of our most vulnerable children and young people.

The actions in this priority are aimed at addressing issues facing carers, including potential carers, by exploring opportunities for professional care, removing barriers to caring for working families and developing a national survey to better understand what carers need.

### ACTIONS

- Investigate the barriers and opportunities for developing models of professional carers
- Improve opportunities and remove barriers to enable working families to become carers
- Develop a national carer survey to better understand carer demographics and their support needs
- Expand training and support for grandparent and kinship carers, including Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse kinship carers.

These measures build on the landmark research about carer payments and services that was conducted as part of the First Action Plan. They will provide practical support in addition to the online carers’ resource, Winangay Indigenous kinship carer assessment tool, ‘MyTime for Grandparents’ peer support groups and Centrelink Grandparent Advisors.

### Measure

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Carer retention	4.3 Proportion of out-of-home carer households that were retained in a given year	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection

## Responding to Sexual Abuse

### *Supporting Outcome 6—Child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented, and survivors receive adequate support*

Childhood sexual abuse is associated with a range of negative outcomes, including mental health problems, substance abuse, homelessness and behavioural problems. We know that 40 per cent of all sexual assault victims in 2009–10 were aged between 0 and 14 years. As a society, we need to be more aware of the impacts of childhood sexual abuse and to work together to find ways of preventing it.

Complex trauma can be caused by any form of childhood abuse and neglect, including growing up in an environment with domestic or family violence. Exposure to traumatic experiences in childhood can lead to emotional difficulties as well as loss of security, capacity to learn and the ability to detect or respond to danger cues. The effects of trauma can continue throughout life, impacting on future mental health, relationships and parenting, financial security and often leading to subsequent or repeated trauma exposure in adolescence and adulthood.

As a society we need to provide trauma-informed support to assist children, young people and adults who are survivors of child abuse and neglect, including those who have witnessed or experienced domestic or family violence and/or sexual assault.

#### ACTIONS

- Develop and trial programs to prevent sexual abuse and keep children safe, including specific programs for remote Indigenous communities, such as the cyber smart outreach program
- Review and support strategies to assist children, young people and adults who have experienced complex trauma to engage with the service system
- Share best practice in therapeutic and trauma-informed care across jurisdictions.
- Explore ways to respond nationally to the sexualisation of children.

These reforms will be supported by the whole-of-government commitment in the National Safe Schools Framework to teach skills and understandings related to personal safety and protective behaviours and appropriately monitor and respond to child protection issues in schools.

#### Measure

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
<b>Sexual abuse substantiations</b>	6.1 Proportion of children aged 0–17 years who were the subject of a child protection substantiation for sexual abuse	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection



## Section 6: Exploring New Priorities





## 6. Exploring New Priorities

It is important for vulnerable children and their families to be considered across all areas of service provision, by all levels of government and the non-government sector. The Second Action Plan will explore opportunities to integrate the National Framework with a number of significant national social reform agendas (including early childhood, education, disability, domestic and family violence, health and mental health) and seek to strengthen the focus of these agendas to keep Australia's children safe and well.

The areas below will be explored through the Second Action Plan.

### Early Childhood

The first five years of a child's life shape their future, including health, learning and social development, and we want to make sure their future is bright. There is significant evidence to show that, no matter what the cultural background, quality early childhood experiences can significantly improve the outcomes for vulnerable and at-risk children; however, it is these children who continue to fall through the gaps.

This priority will explore opportunities to link in with the National Partnerships on Early Childhood Education and Indigenous Early Childhood Development and the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care.

Work will be undertaken to:

- > Identify communities where children are at-risk through available data (including the Australian Early Development Index)
- > Review the current supports that encourage hard-to-reach families to engage in early childhood (child care and preschool), including through place-based and joined up approaches.

### Education

For the majority of children, school builds on and complements the emotional and financial resources that their families provide for their development. However, some children may require additional support. These children are often at risk of dropping out of education. Appropriate intervention at the right point in the school life of these children can greatly increase their chances of completing and succeeding in education.

This priority will look for opportunities to link with the National Partnership Agreement on Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities, the National Partnership Agreement on Empowering Local Schools, and the National Partnership Agreement for More Support for Students with Disabilities.

Work will be undertaken to:

- > Improve student performance, attendance and post-school outcomes for children and young people in care, including through exploring alternatives to suspension
- > Explore options for strengthening the role education plays in early identification and support of children at-risk.

## Domestic and Family Violence

Growing up in a family experiencing domestic and family violence can have a profound effect on a child, impacting on future relationships, health and emotional wellbeing and engagement in work and community life. There is a strong link between domestic and family violence, and child abuse and neglect. Research is increasingly recognising exposure to domestic and family violence as a form of child abuse — a fact acknowledged by the strong connection between the National Framework and the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.

This priority will look to strengthen families so children and young people grow up in a safe household free from domestic and family violence.

Work will be undertaken to:

- > Identify priority areas to be progressed under the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their children
- > Work towards the development of a National Centre for Excellence to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children to coordinate and share research, data collection, analysis and review in the areas of sexual assault and domestic and family violence.

## Health and Mental Health

Vulnerable and at-risk children, including children and young people in out-of-home care, are likely to have poorer physical, mental and developmental health than their peers. They are also more likely to have ongoing unmet health needs, such as poor uptake of immunisation, inadequate oral health care and chronic medical conditions.

This priority will look for opportunities to improve maternal care and mental health services for women with mental illness such as home visits and culturally appropriate supports for women and babies. The priority will also look to strengthen links with the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health — Healthy Children Initiative, and the National Partnership Agreement on Supporting Mental Health Reform.

Work will be undertaken to:

- > Review options for ensuring ongoing and substantive health assessments and interventions for children and young people in out-of-home care, including mechanisms to track health histories
- > Track outcomes for children in care using available data sets and explore the potential links with the work of the National Mental Health Commission
- > Implement the expanded Medicare Healthy Kids Check
- > Explore options to better meet the mental health needs of children and young people in out-of-home care.

## Disability

In Australia, the population of children with disability in child protection systems is unclear. However, existing international research indicates that children and young people with disability experience abuse and neglect at rates higher than their peers who do not have disability.

This priority will look for opportunities to link with the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the National Disability Strategy.

Work will be undertaken to:

- > Explore the interface between disability, child protection, and primary service systems, including through the National Disability Insurance Scheme launch sites
- > Review the service response for children with disability in the out-of-home care system
- > Explore evidence-based models of working with families where disability of the child or adult is impacting on the safety and wellbeing of children, including working with adult service providers.

## Sector Development

Services for children and young people in the child protection system, including specialist support, are increasingly being delivered in partnership with the non-government sector. Taking a broad industry development perspective will help strengthen the capacity of the non-government sector.

Sharing knowledge about what works and local innovations being undertaken in each jurisdiction, will help us to understand how best to support the education, professional development and retention of the child protection workforce, including enabling the Indigenous workforce to be more actively involved in the Tertiary child protection system.

This can be achieved by undertaking work to:

- > Explore the development of a para-professional workforce
- > Explore competency frameworks and professional representation for workers
- > Explore options to strengthen vocational and training pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers
- > Explore options for building professional and cultural expertise in remote service provision
- > Research mandatory reporting schemes in each jurisdiction to identify elements that enhance their success
- > Establish a collaborative approach to industry development and identify capabilities of high performing non-government organisations
- > Explore options for building the capacity of non-government organisations that provide out-of-home care
- > Share information about what works for statutory child protection workers and the family support workforce.

## Community and Business

The National Framework acknowledges that everyone has a role to play in protecting Australia's children. Further work is needed to encourage greater community awareness, support and action to ensure that protecting Australia's children is truly everyone's business. This includes supporting the community to better tackle issues critical to the safety and wellbeing of Australia's children such as domestic and family violence and sexual abuse.

Work will be undertaken to:

- > Work with the non-government sector to strengthen community engagement and development of enduring social supports for families, children and young people in, or at risk of entry into, care
- > Explore options for developing stronger engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities and in particular, newly arrived cultural groups, to enhance their understanding of child wellbeing and available support systems
- > Increase community awareness of, and engagement with, issues affecting the safety and wellbeing of children, to help ensure that the wider community understands the importance of their role in reducing child abuse and neglect
- > Work with the media to foster appropriate reporting of child abuse and neglect in order to protect the interests of the child
- > Highlight outstanding work in the field of child protection, early intervention and targeted services
- > Engage community leaders, including leaders from Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, to build support for protecting children and young people
- > Explore options for engaging business in the protection and wellbeing of children.





## Section 7: Reporting on Progress





## 7. Reporting on Progress

The National Framework is an ambitious and long-term agenda that involves actions by all levels of government and the non-government sector, so it is critical that we are able to measure progress over time.

The Second Action Plan includes a number of monitoring and reporting elements that will enable us to provide ongoing information about the progress of the National Framework. The main monitoring and reporting elements for the Second Action Plan are:

- > Indicators of change for the National Framework's six supporting outcomes
- > Further development of demographic and administrative data about children in, and at risk of entering, the child protection system
- > Research projects based on the National Research Agenda
- > Biennial surveys of children and young people in out-of-home care, supported by Australian Government surveys of specific groups
- > Annual Reports to COAG on the progress of the National Framework
- > Information from bodies such as the Australian Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ACCG).

### Performance Indicators

Identifying and developing performance indicators is essential for measuring progress. The First Action Plan agreed the key performance indicators that will be used over twelve years of the National Framework to identify progress (at Appendix B). All these indicators will be reported on during the period of the Second Action Plan.

### Data Collection

Collecting data that can be compared across jurisdictions is also a priority. We have commissioned improvements in the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set (CP-NMDS) that collects data on children and family demographics, children's pathways into the child protection system, the type of abuse or neglect children experience, and demographic information about their carers. This data will include information on Indigenous, disability and culturally and linguistically diverse status, where possible. The results will be published by AIHW in their annual Child Protection Australia reports as well as the National Framework Annual Reports to COAG.

### Research Projects

Under the First Action Plan, a National Research Agenda was developed to identify areas that need a broader evidence base to fill gaps in policy or practice knowledge. The Research Agenda was developed with key stakeholders, including non-government organisations, universities and the wider community, and was released in 2011.

The initial research priorities for the Second Action Plan are:

- > Making a community safe and supportive for its children—understanding the conditions necessary to create a safe and child friendly community
- > What family-based and community-based strategies work best to keep Indigenous children and young people safe?

The results from projects that contribute to the Research Agenda will be distributed broadly and outlined in the National Framework Annual Reports to COAG.

## Surveys of Children and Young People in Care

The first national biennial survey of children and young people in care will be undertaken by 2014. This survey will cover key areas such as sense of security, participation, community activity, family connection, sense of community, significant others and leaving care.

## Commonwealth Surveys

In the alternate years to the Survey of Children and Young People, the Commonwealth will undertake focused surveys on particular areas of interest.

## National Carer Survey

A new survey of the demographics and support needs of out-of-home carers will be undertaken in the Second Action Plan to help us learn more about the carer population, and how they could be assisted in their vital role.

## Annual Reports

Reporting to COAG through Annual Reports will continue under the Second Action Plan of the National Framework. These reports will track our progress towards the high level outcome that Australia's children and young people are safe and well and against each of the supporting outcomes. The reports will measure our progress over time against agreed performance indicators and highlight our achievements through case studies.

Each of the Annual Reports under the Second Action Plan will assess: how governments and the non-government sector are working together with the community to embed the national priorities from the First Action Plan into Australia's ongoing response to protecting children; what outcomes we achieve from delivering national priorities; and what we accomplish through exploring new priorities.

## Commissioners and Guardians

The Australian Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ACCG) aims to promote children's rights and participation and ensure the best interests of children are considered in public policy and program development across Australia, including in the statutory child protection system. The ACCG has particular regard for children and young people who are most vulnerable or disadvantaged and is well placed to monitor outcomes for children and young people under the National Framework.

The National Children's Commissioner will also play a role in monitoring and examining Commonwealth legislation, policies and programs that relate to children's human rights, wellbeing and development. This will complement the work of the State and Territory children's commissioners and guardians.

## National Framework Evaluation

The National Framework sets the target of 'a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia over time.' The success of the National Framework will ultimately be measured against progress on this target. While there are difficulties in isolating the impact of specific actions on broader social outcomes, the National Framework identifies a suite of indicators to provide a basis for measuring progress at a more detailed level and to provide information about progress in different areas.

A baseline evaluation will provide a blueprint for future evaluations and a platform from which to build an evidence base on progress. This evidence will be used to inform adjustments and enhancements to the National Framework over time and ultimately, help us work out whether we have achieved long-term change.

All jurisdictions are providing funding to support the development of the evaluation plan.

A core element of the National Framework evaluation will be an agreed set of performance indicators (at Appendix B). Another important element will be to recognise the numerous other national reform agendas that have links with the National Framework, outlined previously.

The strategic evaluation plan will be finalised in December 2012. The plan will set out how the evaluation of the National Framework at three yearly intervals will measure our progress towards achieving our high level and supporting outcomes as well as our success against a number of the key, broad elements of the National Framework including:

1. the implementation of the public health model approach to 'protecting children'
2. the recognition that the best way to protect children is to prevent child abuse and neglect from occurring in the first place
3. the need for a shared agenda for change with the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and the non-government sector
4. the underpinning principles of the National Framework, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Australia is a signatory
5. the philosophy that protecting children is everyone's responsibility.

The final evaluation for the National Framework, anticipated in 2020, will synthesise the findings from all information sources and previous three-year evaluations.

## Community Engagement

It is important that the achievements of the Second Action Plan are communicated to the wider community, to help encourage awareness and engagement with the goals of the National Framework.

Each part of this Second Action Plan needs effective engagement of business and the broader Australian community.



## Section 8:

Governance Arrangements





## 8. Governance Arrangements

The National Framework is an unprecedented example of collaboration between the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and the non-government sector. All parties have been brought together by one of Australia's most significant concerns — child abuse and neglect — and the commitment that has been demonstrated to date reinforces the National Framework's message that 'protecting Australia's children is everyone's responsibility.'

The high level goal of the National Framework — that 'Australia's children and young people are safe and well' — cannot be achieved by one level of government alone. Collaborative effort with all levels of government and the non-government sector is required to improve the lives and opportunities of children and families in Australia.

The cooperative approach of the National Framework does not change the responsibilities of governments. States and Territories retain responsibility for statutory child protection, as the Commonwealth Government retains responsibility for income support payments.

The governance arrangements for the Second Action Plan include:

**COAG** will continue to perform an oversight role and will monitor progress through Annual Reports. Given its high level role, COAG has an equal interest in all types of actions in the Plan.

The **Standing Council on Community and Disability Services (SCCDS)** has responsibility for delivering the Second Action Plan and submitting Annual Reports to COAG. SCCDS consists of Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers responsible for portfolios such as family, community, disability, youth, children, child protection and social welfare. It is responsible for tracking the progress of the National Framework and making decisions regarding its overall direction.

The **Standing Council on Community and Disability Services Advisory Council (SCCDSAC)** is responsible for the overall management of the National Framework. It consists of senior officials from relevant departments and is tasked with supporting and addressing strategic directions set by Ministers.

In the First Action Plan, the Community and Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Council (CDSMAC, now SCCDSAC) had a broad range of responsibilities for a large number of policy areas, including child protection, juvenile justice, adoption and unaccompanied humanitarian minors. Following a review of these responsibilities, SCCDSAC's role has been reframed to enable it to take a more strategic role in capturing relevant work across systems and to give it the authority to tackle systemic changes.

The **Children, Youth and Community Services Policy and Research Working Group (CYCSPRWG)** has been established as a new high level sub-committee of SCCDSAC, comprising senior representatives and chief executives from relevant government departments and agencies across Australia. It has been established to take a broad-based and comprehensive look across systems relating to community services, child protection and welfare, and it will support SCCDS to progress strategic national reforms that are high profile and critical to reforming child protection systems nationally.

The **National Framework Implementation Working Group** (NFIWG) is a trilateral body consisting of Commonwealth, State and Territory, and community representatives, including the Coalition of Organisations Committed to the Safety and Wellbeing of Australia's Children (the NGO Coalition). Through NFIWG, the NGO Coalition is a partner in the promotion, negotiation and implementation of the National Framework and takes a lead role in engaging with the non-government sector and community more broadly in relation to the National Framework.

Under the Second Action Plan, NFIWG will be responsible for developing and managing local responses and partnerships and will continue to jointly explore complex issues by seeking input from stakeholders.

Taken together, these governance and consultation arrangements bring together governments, communities, business, children and families to drive home the message that protecting Australia's children is everyone's responsibility.





Appendix







## Appendix A: Where to find further information

WHERE TO FIND FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT STATE AND TERRITORY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES		
Australian Capital Territory—Community Services Directorate	Responsible for providing services to children, young people and their families in the ACT	<a href="http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au">www.dhcs.act.gov.au</a>
New South Wales—Family and Community Services	Responsible for the care and protection of children and young people and support for their families in NSW	<a href="http://www.community.nsw.gov.au">www.community.nsw.gov.au</a>
Northern Territory—Department of Children and Families	Responsible for providing support and services to children and their families in the NT	<a href="http://www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au">www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au</a>
Queensland—Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services	Responsible for the provision of Child Safety Services in Queensland	<a href="http://www.communities.qld.gov.au">www.communities.qld.gov.au</a>
South Australia—Department for Education and Child Development	Responsible for providing education, care and protection, and support services for children and families in South Australia	<a href="http://www.decd.sa.gov.au">www.decd.sa.gov.au</a>
Tasmania—Department of Health and Human Services	Responsible for providing support and services to children and their families across Tasmania	<a href="http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au">www.dhhs.tas.gov.au</a>
Victoria—Department of Human Services	Responsible for providing support for children, families and young people in Victoria	<a href="http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au">www.dhs.vic.gov.au</a>
Western Australia—Department for Child Protection	Responsible for supporting and protecting children, young people and their families in WA	<a href="http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au">www.dcp.wa.gov.au</a>

ORGANISATION	ROLE	WEBSITE
<b>COMMONWEALTH</b>		
<b>Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)</b>	Supports the Government to deliver on a broad range of social policy outcomes. FaHCSIA's vision is a strong and fair society for all Australians	<a href="http://www.fahcsia.gov.au">www.fahcsia.gov.au</a>
<b>Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA)</b>	Promotes, develops and funds health care services. Aims to achieve better health for all Australians	<a href="http://www.health.gov.au">www.health.gov.au</a>
<b>Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)</b>	Provides national leadership in education and workplace training, transition to work and conditions and values in the workplace	<a href="http://www.deewr.gov.au">www.deewr.gov.au</a>
<b>Department of Human Services (DHS)/Centrelink</b>	DHS is responsible for the development of service delivery policy and provides access to social, health and other payments and services	<a href="http://www.humanservices.gov.au">www.humanservices.gov.au</a>
<b>Attorney-General's Department (AG)</b>	Provides support to the Government in the maintenance and improvement of Australia's system of law and justice and its national security and emergency management systems	<a href="http://www.ag.gov.au">www.ag.gov.au</a>
<b>Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS)</b>	Conducts research and communicates findings that affect family wellbeing to policy makers, service providers and the broader community	<a href="http://www.aifs.gov.au">www.aifs.gov.au</a>
<b>Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE)</b>	Develops and delivers communications policy and programs	<a href="http://www.dbcde.gov.au">www.dbcde.gov.au</a>
<b>Australian Federal Police</b>	Combats crime nationally and internationally	<a href="http://www.afp.gov.au">www.afp.gov.au</a>
<b>Australian Communications and Media Authority</b>	Regulates broadcasting, the internet, radio communications and telecommunications	<a href="http://www.acma.gov.au">www.acma.gov.au</a>
<b>COALITION OF ORGANISATIONS COMMITTED TO THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF AUSTRALIA'S CHILDREN</b>		
For further information on the role and members of the NGO Coalition, visit <a href="http://www.familiesaustralia.org.au/coalition">www.familiesaustralia.org.au/coalition</a>		

# Appendix B: Summary of indicators for the National Framework

DOMAIN	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE	
<b>HIGH LEVEL OUTCOME: AUSTRALIA'S CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SAFE AND WELL</b>			
Child protection substantiations	0.1	Rate of children aged 0–17 years who were the subject of child protection substantiation	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
Out-of-home care	0.2	Rate of children aged 0–17 years who are in out-of-home care	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
Teenage births	0.3	Age-specific fertility rate for women aged 15–19 years	AIHW National Perinatal Data Collection
Low birthweight	0.4	Proportion of live born infants of low birthweight	AIHW National Perinatal Data Collection
Child homicide	0.5	Assault (homicide) death rate for children aged 0–17 years	AIC National Homicide Monitoring Program
Early childhood development	0.6	Proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDI	Australian Early Development Index
Child social and emotional wellbeing	0.7	Proportion of children aged 0-17 years scoring 'of concern' on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	To be determined
Family economic situation	0.8	Proportion of households with children aged 0–14 years where at least 50% of gross household income is from government pensions and allowances.	ABS Survey of Income and Housing
<b>SUPPORTING OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN LIVE IN SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES</b>			
Pending AIHW development work in progress.			

### SUPPORTING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACCESS ADEQUATE SUPPORT TO PROMOTE SAFETY AND INTERVENE EARLY

Family support service use	2.1	Number of children aged 0–17 years seeking assistance through treatment and support services	Proxy data source: AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
Early childhood education	2.2	Attendance rate of children aged 4–5 years at preschool programs	ABS Early Childhood Education and Care national data collection
Antenatal care	2.3	Proportion of women who had at least five antenatal visits during pregnancy	AIHW National Perinatal Data Collection

### SUPPORTING OUTCOME 3: RISK FACTORS FOR ABUSE AND NEGLECT ARE ADDRESSED

Parental substance use	3.1	Proportion of parents with children aged 0–14 years who used any illicit drug within the last 12 months	AIHW National Drug Strategy Household Survey
	3.2	Proportion of parents with children aged 0–14 years who drank alcohol at risky levels	AIHW National Drug Strategy Household Survey
Parental mental health	3.3	Proportion of parents with children aged 0–14 years who have a mental health problem	Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey
Homelessness	3.4	Rate of children aged 0–17 years who receive assistance through homelessness services (accompanied and unaccompanied)	AIHW Specialist Homelessness Services data collection
Domestic violence	3.5	Proportion of adults who experienced current partner violence and their children saw or heard the violence in the previous 12 months	ABS Personal Safety Survey

### SUPPORTING OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN ABUSED OR NEGLECTED RECEIVE THE SUPPORT AND CARE THEY NEED FOR THEIR SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Child protection resubstantiations	4.1	Rate of children aged 0–17 years who were the subject of a child protection resubstantiation in a given year	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
Placement stability	4.2	Proportion of children aged 0–17 years exiting out-of-home care during the year who had 1 or 2 placements	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection

Carer retention	4.3	Proportion of out-of-home carer households that were retained in a given year	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
Rebuilding resilience of abuse survivors	4.4	Proportion of children aged 0-17 years leaving care and scoring 'of concern' on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	To be determined
Literacy and numeracy	4.5	Proportion of children on guardianship and custody orders achieving at or above the national minimum standards for literacy and numeracy	To be determined
Leaving care plans	4.6	Proportion of young people aged 15 years and over who have a leaving care plan	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
Cross-sector clients	4.7	Proportion of child protection clients aged 0–17 years who enter juvenile corrective services or seek assistance from homelessness services	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection

#### **SUPPORTING OUTCOME 5: INDIGENOUS CHILDREN ARE SUPPORTED AND SAFE IN THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

Placement of Indigenous Children	5.1	To be developed (Aboriginal Child Placement Principle compliance indicator)	To be determined
	5.2	Proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–17 years in out-of-home care placed with extended family or other Indigenous caregivers	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
	5.3	Proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–17 years placed through Indigenous-specific out-of-home care agencies	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
Cultural support plans	5.4	Proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–17 years in care who have a cultural support plan	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection

#### **SUPPORTING OUTCOME 6: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION IS PREVENTED AND SURVIVORS RECEIVE ADEQUATE SUPPORT**

Sexual abuse substantiations	6.1	Proportion of children aged 0–17 years who were the subject of a child protection substantiation for sexual abuse	AIHW National Child Protection Data Collection
Child sexual assault	6.2	Rate of children aged 0–14 years who have been the victim of sexual assault	ABS Recorded Crime – Victims Collection

