



SAFE & SUPPORTED

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROTECTING
AUSTRALIA'S CHILDREN 2021 - 2031

2844.11.22

Fact Sheet - Safe and Supported: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan 2023 - 2026

What is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan?

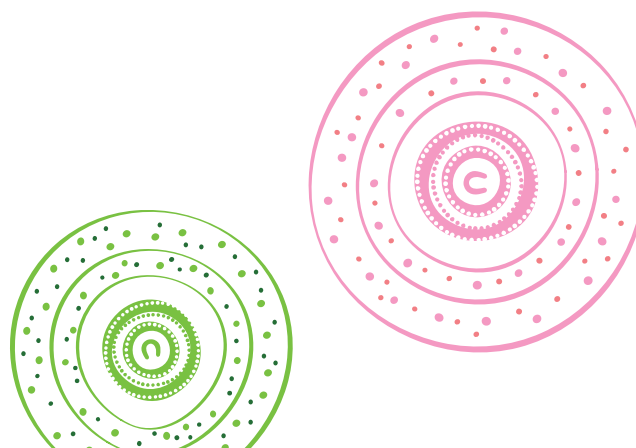
The Australian Government, state and territory governments, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives and the non-government sector are working together through *Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031* (Safe and Supported) towards the shared goal of making significant and sustained progress in reducing the rate of child abuse and neglect and its intergenerational impacts.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan is one of two Safe and Supported action plans. It outlines how all Australian governments will work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, and in consultation with the non-government sector through the National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group, to deliver on the goal of Safe and Supported, and will address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. It has a targeted approach, with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families who are experiencing disadvantage and who are vulnerable. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan is complemented by the Safe and Supported:

First Action Plan 2023-2026 which looks to address the needs of all children and young people, with an emphasis on the four Priority Groups of Safe and Supported.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan sets out the targeted actions and activities to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems. It also responds to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Closing the Gap) Target 12 (*to reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45% by 2031*).

All of its actions and activities will be implemented in partnership and shared decision-making with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group, consisting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and experts from around the country in the child and family sector. This shared decision-making process is guided by Priority Reform One under Closing the Gap.



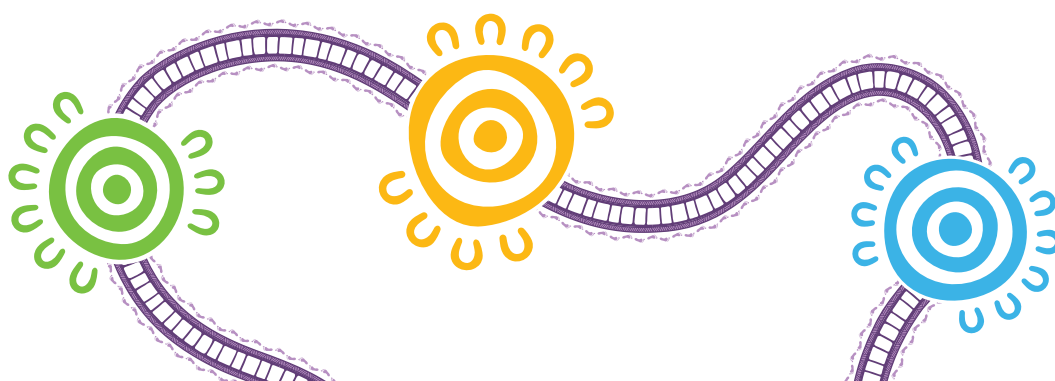
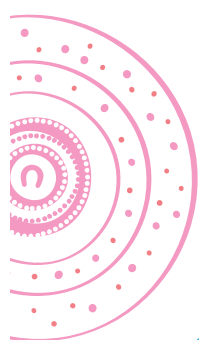
What will the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan do?

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan sets out eight actions for all parties to focus their collective effort on:

Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 4
<p>Delegated Authority</p> <p>Commit to progressive systems transformation that has First Nations self-determination at its centre.</p>	<p>Investing in the Community Controlled Sector</p> <p>Shift toward adequate and coordinated funding of early, targeted and culturally safe supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.</p>	<p>Data Sovereignty</p> <p>Build Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infrastructure for sovereignty of data and improve the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evidence base.</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce</p> <p>Develop a national approach to continue building a sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family sector workforce.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Define ‘delegation of legislative authority’ and capture jurisdictional approaches. b. Develop best practice elements or principles to guide jurisdictions in delegating authority. c. Develop plans for legislative reform. d. Implement plans and report on progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a National Child and Family Investment Strategy. b. Co-design a plan to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs). c. Develop jurisdictional ACCOs market development strategies. d. Develop jurisdictional commissioning frameworks and investment strategies. e. Develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-led, place-based commissioning models. f. Implement new commissioning models. g. Reform funding models and procurement policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support data capability of ACCOs. b. Implement an approach to data sovereignty. c. Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governance groups to identify the data needs of jurisdictions. d. Scope options for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Support (Centre). e. Establish the Centre. f. Consider and work towards ongoing funding arrangements for the Centre. g. Provide support for review and evaluation of initiatives and knowledge sharing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Scope current and future needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. b. Develop strategies to grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. c. Implement actions under the Sector Strengthening Plan: Early Childhood Care and Development. d. Align actions under the Disability Sector Strengthening Plan.



Action 5	Action 6	Action 7	Action 8
<p>Active Efforts</p> <p>Implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) to the standard of active efforts.</p>	<p>Legal Supports</p> <p>Improve availability and quality of legal support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families engaged with child protection systems.</p>	<p>Advocating for Accountability and Oversight</p> <p>Establish and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commissioners and similar roles.</p>	<p>Social Determinants of Child Safety and Wellbeing</p> <p>Work across portfolios impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop national standards for active efforts to implement all 5 elements of the ATSICPP. b. Develop jurisdictional plans to implement the ATSICPP across the system elements. c. Review existing indicator set and continue to progress development and implementation of national reporting. d. Report annually on ATSICPP indicators and progress on implementation of these. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify issues and barriers in accessing legal supports. b. Identify and address areas for improvement. c. Develop and implement joint proposals with Attorney General's Departments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop minimum requirements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioners (or similar). b. In jurisdictions without a Commissioner, undertake work to establish this role (or similar). c. Determine the specific parameters and functions of a National Advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strengthen the interface between policies and service systems supporting children and families, and those addressing the social determinants of child safety and wellbeing. b. Actively support a holistic and coordinated response to the achievement of the targets under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. c. Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their organisations to develop responsive services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, parents and/or carers who live with disability or developmental concerns. d. Support related disability initiatives such as the Disability Sector Strengthening Plan and Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031.



What will we achieve?

The table below outlines the 10-Year Outcomes Safe and Supported aims to achieve for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations over its 10-year life span. This includes changes we wish to see in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families, as well as changes in the design and delivery of the services and systems with which they engage.

Child and Family Level	System Level
*SFN1(a): Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and families know they can easily access the services and supports they need, that those services will be safe and respectful of their cultures, and that they will be trauma-informed, child-centred and family-focused.	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.
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 rights 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.
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 institutions.	SFN3(b): ACCOs and community leadership have authority in systems design and child protection processes. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and evidence drives best practice.
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.

**SFN means 'Safe and Supported First Nations' and refers to outcomes in the Safe and Supported: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Outcomes Framework.*

Outcomes for all children, young people and families are outlined in the Safe and Supported Outcomes Framework (for more information see Safe and Supported: First Action Plan 2023-2026).

Safe and Supported will also collaborate with a broad range of policy and program areas (e.g. health, education) to achieve outcomes that cross over with these areas, including the 10-Year Outcome:

- **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.

Progress under Safe and Supported will be assessed through regular monitoring and reporting under the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy.

Where can I find out more?

Safe and Supported, the Action Plans, Outcomes Frameworks and Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy can all be found on the [Australian Government Department of Social Services' website](#).

