Queensland First Children and Families Board

Changing Tracks

Progress Report

May 2017–December 2018
We respectfully acknowledge the First Nations people in the State of Queensland, we acknowledge the cultural and spiritual connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with the land and sea.

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as two unique and diverse peoples with their own rich and distinct cultures.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present as well as the emerging leaders who walk together with us in partnership on this journey.

We acknowledge the work of our partner agencies who have been instrumental in the success of Changing Tracks. We look forward to continuing this great partnership throughout the Our Way strategy.
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The Queensland Government is committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture. This is why, in a national first, the Queensland Government partnered with Family Matters to co-design and launch the ambitious *Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017–2037* and *Changing Tracks: An action plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, 2017–2019*, to close the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system by 2037.

The Family Matters building blocks sets the foundation for the *Our Way* strategy and action plans.

The *Our Way* strategy and *Changing Tracks* action plan, vision, target, enablers, outcomes and priority areas for the first three years, along with the Family Matters building blocks, are outlined at Appendix 1.

The *Our Way* strategy is supported by three cycles for change, underpinned by seven action plans, over the life of the strategy.

The *Changing Tracks* action plan comprises 35 whole-of-government actions across six priority areas of focus and builds on or leverages off existing Queensland Government initiatives. The first action plan is on track to be completed by the end of 2019 as outlined in Appendix 2.

A key action under the *Changing Tracks* action plan was the establishment of the Queensland First Children and Families Board. The Board will strategically oversee the implementation of the *Our Way* strategy and associated action plans, to achieve the vision, targets and outcomes over the life of the strategy.

The Queensland First Children and Families Board is required to report annually on the progress of the strategy and action plans to the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women, the Queensland Government and Family Matters.

This is the Board’s first progress report, and provides an overview of the progress from launch in May 2017 to December 2018 against the six priority areas under the *Changing Tracks* action plan. Board member profiles are available at Appendix 3.
Queensland First Children and Families Board message

It is with mixed emotions that the Queensland First Children and Families Board presents the first Changing Tracks Progress Report. The Progress Report is our accountability mechanism to the Queensland community on how the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women and partner agencies are working towards meeting the commitments made in the *Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017–2037* and the *Changing Tracks: An action plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017–2019*.

As a Board we despair of the situation of our children being massively over represented in both the child protection and youth justice systems. We know only too well of the challenges facing all of us here in Queensland as we go about overseeing the reforms committed to by our Government.

We know to halt and reverse this trend we must have a child focused approach, ensuring the best interests of children are paramount.

However, we recognise and are heartened by the commitment made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members, Family Matters, government and non-government organisations who embrace the principles of co-design and partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

We have seen the government enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by providing services and supports that are run by, and tailored to, the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the strength and the right to lead change for their own children.

We recognise that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, connections to family, community and culture are protective factors critical to their wellbeing and identity and that is why their right to live in culture is one of the ‘non-negotiables’ upon which our work will be based.

We advocate for the self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and for their right to participate in decisions that affect them, as we know, with the right support, communities have the capacity and capability to safely care for their children. We believe that setting high expectations and positive norms can create a transformational shift in practice that improves outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and their children experiencing vulnerability, distress and dysfunction.

So far 23 of the 35 actions are complete or complete and being embedded. The remaining 12 actions are on track to be completed on schedule. We are quietly confident that the progress made so far will be critical building blocks in creating better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

While there is work still to be done, we are convinced that with the collaboration of our agency partners and the determination of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we will achieve all that we set out to do and more.

*Mick Gooda and Prof Boni Robertson*
Co-chairs, Queensland First Children and Families Board
Family Wellbeing Services, Investment and Commissioning

2017–2018 saw significant milestones in the delivery of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

The statewide rollout of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services was completed and there is now an operational network of 33 services delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations across the state.

Family Wellbeing Services provide culturally responsive support to improve families’ social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and build their capacity to safely care for and protect their children. The services offer prevention and early intervention support to help families at the earliest possible opportunity, through to intensive support for families already in contact with the child protection system.

The Queensland and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak has supported the establishment of the program through the provision of training and practice support, to ensure families receive assistance from highly skilled practitioners.

This initiative represents a doubling of the investment in family support delivered by community-controlled organisations, and recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies are more likely to be accessed by, and be responsive to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families than mainstream services.

The newly funded Family Participation Program commenced in November 2018 and is delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations. This program facilitates independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family-led decision making, a process whereby authority is given to parents, families and children to work together to solve problems and lead decision-making in a culturally safe space.
The First 1000 Days Australia initiative achieved significant milestones in 2017–2018 including the inaugural First 1000 Days Summit held in Brisbane in October 2017, the appointment of Regional Implementation Managers in Townsville and Moreton Bay, and the establishment of local governance arrangements in both trial sites. In both sites planning has commenced for the delivery of activities to strengthen cultural connections and gather the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers.

First 1000 Days Australia is already influencing program and service design, with its focus on enhancing the strengths of parents and families so they can achieve their hopes and aspirations for their children.
Highlights

**Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2017**

*The Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2017* (the Amendment Act), which commenced on 29 October 2018 supports the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determination and acknowledge families and communities as the best source of cultural knowledge in relation to themselves and their children.

The Amendment Act embeds the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in the administration of the *Child Protection Act 1999*, placing a greater emphasis on culture as a protective factor and supporting ongoing connections.

The Amendment Act sees the introduction of delegated authority — the ability of the chief executive to delegate one or more of their functions or powers in relation to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisation or agency.

Families can be supported through the introduction of the independent person, who is chosen by the family, to facilitate their meaningful participation in decision-making.

The Family Participation Program, enabled by the Amendment Act, is supporting family-led decision making, building personal and collective cultural capability, and continues to be a significant focus for Queensland Government agencies, the court system and funded non-government organisations.
94% of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kids aged 4-5 years old accessed early childhood education.

Investment of approximately $29.6 million 2017–2018 is supporting targeted initiatives to increase access to quality early childhood education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship carers increased by 6.2% over the past year.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers increased by 5% over the past year.

Data snapshot

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, the proportion placed with kin, other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residential care services (proxy for the Indigenous Child Placement Principle) remained stable at 56.4%, compared to 56.7% in the previous year (2017).

Investment of $34.34 million per annum to roll out all 33 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services across Queensland making it easier for families and build their capacity to safely care for and protect their children.

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2017-2018
imunisation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 5 year old children is 96.6% compared to 94.3% of non-Indigenous children.
Meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women under 25 years, and their partners, before and during pregnancy and parenting, especially during the first 1000 days.

A great start

Welcome Baby to Country events were re-invigorated in communities across Queensland following the implementation of First 1000 Days Australia.

Our progress so far

- Launched the First 1000 Days Australia initiative in Townsville and Moreton Bay. This collective impact approach supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to give their children the best start in life, through improved health and wellbeing, positive aspirations and cultural connections, with a focus on the critical period from pre-conception through to the child’s second birthday.

- Hosted the inaugural First 1000 Days Australia Summit in Brisbane in October 2017. The summit brought together 176 participants from across community, research, training, front-line delivery and policy areas, who are working to strengthen resilience, innovation and aspiration in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

- Trialed the Pepi-Pod® Program to improve safe sleeping practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies across Queensland. The program provided 600 Pepi-Pods® to participating maternal and child health services along with safe sleep education and messages.

- Funded Deaf Services Queensland to provide the Support with Interpreting, Translating and Communication program. This initiative assists funded non-government service providers to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who are hearing impaired and/or vision impaired.

- 16 Hospital and Health Services are being supported to develop local disability service plans with a focus on vulnerable groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

- Developed processes to enable better access to and experience of the health system by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disabilities, their carers and families. Information made available to health staff that support delivery of more culturally responsive health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities and their carers, families and communities.
Change story

The First 1000 Days Australia is a First Nations led national child health initiative, founded on a global movement that was brought to Queensland as a Changing Tracks action.

The First 1000 Days Australia initiative acknowledges culture as a protective factor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families that continues to inform parenting practices today and the initiative is reviving ceremony as a way to empower families.

For the first time in 80 years, the Gubbi Gubbi Traditional Owners welcomed 53 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies onto Gubbi Gubbi country at Welcome to Country ceremonies in Caboolture and Deception Bay.

During the ceremonies, families gathered to acknowledge and celebrate the babies who were born on Gubbi Gubbi country.

Ceremonies like these provide the first building block for children to have a strong grounding into their culture. It is hoped that strong families and strong culture will deliver major improvements to the health and wellbeing of First Nations children.

“...So much empowerment came from this Summit for me as a younger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person. This reminded me why it’s important to be part of this movement, assisting in brighter futures for our mob.”

First 1000 Days Australia Summit participant
Priority area 2

Increasing access to, and involvement in, early years, health and disability programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged two to five years.

**Kids achieving**

In 2018, approximately 455 kindergarten children aged 4-5 years old are registered to attend kindergarten services in remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, an increase of 8% from 2017.

**Families as First Teachers sites**

16 now operational across Queensland to improve development outcome for children from birth and prior to school entry.

**Our progress so far**

- Invested approximately $29.6 million in 2017-2018 to support targeted initiatives to increase access to quality early childhood education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, a $2.86 million increase from the previous year.

- 93.8% of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were enrolled in a kindergarten program in 2018, a 2.1 percent increase from the previous year.

- Invested in Early Years Places in 54 communities across Queensland. Ten of these services specifically target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

- Invested in other key initiatives including Deadly Kindies; Ready Together: Remote Early Years Transitions in Doomadgee, Mornington Island, Mount Isa and Palm Island; Pathways for Early Learning and Development; Elders as Storytellers social media campaign; and delivering kindergartens in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

- The Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program is available in 16 sites across Queensland. FaFT upskills adults, enabling them to understand the importance of quality early years education for children aged birth to four years. FaFT engages parents in their children’s early learning of formal school literacy and numeracy skills, strengthens and builds the skills and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander FaFT educators, and increases school readiness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children between birth to four years old.
• Delivered $3.33 million in targeted participant, provider and workforce readiness activities funded through the Australian Government’s National Disability Insurance Sector (NDIS) Development Fund. Activities included participant readiness in remote communities to help families understand and access the NDIS.

• Delivered a two-day Disability Yarn Up event designed to support people in accessing information and resources regarding the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The event was attended by 83 individuals during the two days.

Change story

Through the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health network of Aboriginal Medical Services, the Deadly Kindies program supports children across South East Queensland with access to free, pre-kindergarten health checks. Deadly Kindies Ambassador, Johnathan Thurston, attends community events to promote the benefits of kindy.

Children who have received all their age-appropriate health checks and have registered their interest in kindy receive a Kindy Kit containing a backpack, shirt, hat, lunch box, drink bottle, library bag, sheets and a blanket.

Since 2016 Deadly Kindies has engaged more than 530 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, providing access to a range of services like speech therapy, audiology and eye health checks. The program has supported the enrolment of 66% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4–5 years old in South East Queensland into an approved kindergarten program.
Providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who have complex needs and children at risk with the right services.

**Helping families at risk**

5227 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families have been referred to **Family Wellbeing Services**.

and 67% of families who accessed Family Wellbeing Services had their cases closed with all or the majority of their needs met or at least some of their needs met.

**Our progress so far**

- Invested $34.34 million per annum to roll out all 33 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services across Queensland to make it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to access support to improve their social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and build their capacity to safely care for and protect their children. These services were designed by and are being delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services to ensure support and responses are culturally safe and responsive, and they reflect community and family needs and aspirations.

- Invested $1 million in Family Wellbeing Services to trial integrated support packages to help families stay safe and together, by providing additional services, resources and intense support.

- Conducted trial projects under the Child and Family Service Reform initiatives in Cherbourg, Woorabinda and the Torres Strait. The trials in Cherbourg and Woorabinda have focused on delivery of the community-based intake and referral model in remote communities. The Torres Strait Islands project has enabled the provision of specialist support services to families across all island clusters complementing Family Wellbeing Services.

- Facilitated community-led research on domestic and family violence across three remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop services specifically targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants led the research.

- Reviewed and updated Office of the Child and Family Official Solicitor resources to support the Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2017 and developed a more culturally appropriate affidavit template for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
Two boys were in a family where both parents were using ice and perpetrating domestic violence against each other. The mother, who was pregnant, was sentenced and gave birth in jail. Child Safety intervention was required and the boys were placed with their grandmother.

The Family Wellbeing Service supported the mother to address her drug usage while she was in jail and she was able to look after her new baby and plan for her return home.

Family Wellbeing Service support continued after she was released from jail so she could be reunited with her two boys. After six months the boys returned home to live with their mother and the new baby. Family Wellbeing Service continue to be involved, along with foster and kinship care staff.
Priority area 4

Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care to thrive, and re-engaging those disconnected from family and kin.

Our progress so far

- Initiated steps towards delegating statutory child protection functions and powers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations and agencies through the legislative changes in the Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2017.

- The reforms include the Safe Care and Connection provisions that recognise the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination, the ongoing connection to community, culture and country, and the application of the five elements of the Child Placement Principle.

- Established Regional Youth Engagement Hubs in each educational region to work in partnership with government agencies, schools, registered training organisations, community-based organisations and other stakeholders to help young people to re-engage in education, training or employment. In reaching young people from every background experiencing disengagement, the hubs helped to provide pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care.

- Launched the Navigate Your Health pilot, a place-based, co-designed model to improve the health and wellbeing of children in care. Facilitated health screenings through Navigate Your Health for children and young people entering or already in care in Brisbane.

- 63 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people from across the Brisbane district have had health assessments undertaken as part of their enrolment in Navigate your Health.

- Statewide rollout of preliminary and comprehensive health assessment tools for health providers to identify health and developmental concerns for children and young people in care.

Achievements to date

Regional Youth Engagement Hubs re-engaged

504 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in semester 1 of 2018.

63 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people participated in the Navigate Your Health trial.
A 17 year old young Indigenous woman was referred to Navigate Your Health by Child Safety for a comprehensive health assessment and coordination of health care. Child protection issues included a number of concerns potentially leading to homelessness. The young woman had a significant intellectual impairment and she was placed in a residential care facility for young people with disability.

Navigate Your Health liaised with many stakeholders to provide a range of medical supports for her, including oral health, vision and hearing screenings. This young person will now have more collaborative support between disability support workers and her treating doctor.

The result of her comprehensive client Health Management Plan is that this young woman is receiving the care she needs and all stakeholders are communicating with each other to provide the best outcome for her.
Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people aged 15 to 21 years in or leaving out-of-home care to learn and earn, and stay safe and well.

Positive steps to date

1045 Go Your Own Way kits were distributed to young people in care in Queensland.

42 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people between the ages of 12 and 25 years participated in a statewide consultation project to share their experiences of being in care.

Our progress so far

- Developed and distributed the Go Your Own Way (GYOW) kits. The GYOW resource kits assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in care to plan for their transition to adulthood.

- Conducted a statewide consultation project, through the First Nation Voices initiative (formerly called Deadly Voices) enabling young people to share their in-care experiences to help influence and improve policy and practice in the child protection sector.

- Commissioned a provider to design and construct two new Youth Foyers to be built on the Gold Coast and in Townsville and approved the expansion of the Logan Youth Foyer. Youth Foyers will provide housing for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and support them to achieve independence. The Gold Coast and Townsville Youth Foyers are expected to be constructed in 2019–20.

- Allocated funding to the Sustaining Young People’s Tenancies Pilot Project to provide support services to highly vulnerable young people aged 16 to 25 years who are living in social housing and at risk of losing their tenancy and becoming homeless. Client data identified 17% of the clients who the service assisted identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

- Commenced Mobile Support Services for young people across five regions: Cairns, Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast from 1 July 2018 until 30 September 2018. This service provides a case management approach to engaging with young people, including those who are sleeping rough, couch surfing or living at home. Support workers work in collaboration with the young people and their families (where appropriate) to resolve issues such as housing affordability, drug and alcohol misuse, and health-related matters that put them at risk of homelessness. During this period 73 young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were assisted.
Change story

“I wasn’t expecting it. It gave me an idea of what to do and how to go about independence, and what I should keep an eye out for, financially and getting a job.”

Feedback from Go Your Own Way evaluation

“Aboriginal people need Aboriginal staff. Kids would connect more to Child Safety Officers that are Indigenous. It’s a spiritual connection.”

First Nation Voices participant

“My schooling has improved and there’s heaps more opportunities than if I’d stayed in community.”

First Nation Voices participant

“They need to work on how they keep families together. They should let us stay in touch with our family every fortnight by visits or phone contact.”

First Nation Voices participant
Priority area 6

Governments and community organisations will change tracks to focus more on the child and how to enable families, respect cultural knowledge and authority, partner better and shift investment, innovate and learn, and be more accountable.

Progress so far

$1.34 million in Empowering Families Innovation Grants was awarded to 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

33 young people referred to Youth CONNECT.

Our progress so far

• Established a Queensland First Children and Families Board with representation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members from across the state, Family Matters Queensland and the Queensland Government. The Board guides and oversees the implementation of the Our Way strategy and all associated action plan, whilst championing the strategy and working to create shared responsibility and accountability between government, community and business sectors to achieve the vision.

• Piloted family-led decision making in Ipswich, Mount Isa, Cairns and the Torres Strait, with each location focusing on a different stage of the child safety continuum. Evaluation of the trial informed the design of the new Family Participation Program.

• Implemented the Empowering Families Innovation Grants ($1.34 million) to support new initiatives aimed at reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.

• Continued working with agency partners towards presenting information that can assist government and the community in building a stronger child and family sector. A literature review of best practice service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families has been completed and data collection and analysis commenced.
• Explored opportunities to establish a Queensland First Children and Families Centre for Excellence aimed at policy and practice improvements.

• Reviewed, refined and published the structured decision making tools, with the assistance of a cultural reference group, to recognise cultural knowledge and strengths including revised cultural considerations to guide assessments.

• Led the Creating Pathways to Prevention research project to strengthen the development system for children, with a long-term view of reducing youth crime and promoting both human and community development.

• Partnered with the Australian Government to co-design and trial a new model of Youth Through-Care to address offending behaviors among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples (aged 10 to 17 years). The model provides intensive case management to holistically support the young person during their time in detention, and when transitioning back into their community.

• Commenced the Youth CONNECT Social Benefit Bond service in Logan, Ipswich, Townsville and surrounding districts. Social Benefit Bonds provide innovative investment responses to complex social issues, structured around payment for outcomes.

• Youth CONNECT is focusing on young people exiting, or who have exited, statutory care and re-homeless or at risk of homelessness. Between 1 December 2017 and 30 November 2018, 33 young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people received a service. Outlined an investment approach to deliver the most effective interventions, reflecting the Domestic and Family Violence Investment Principles.

• Partnered with the Australian Government through the Closing the Gap refresh agenda, to advocate for a COAG-endorsed National Closing the Gap target to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in child protection systems.
Change story

A 17 year old young woman was referred to the Youth CONNECT program. She was known to Child Safety as an at-risk young parent and at the time of referral, her baby had been removed from her care.

As a result of accessing stable housing through Youth CONNECT, her baby was returned to her primary care with ongoing monitoring by Child Safety.

Soon after settling into her accommodation she disclosed that she and her baby were at significant risk of harm from the father of her child and other members of his family.

Youth CONNECT supported her to find alternative accommodation and apply for a domestic violence order to protect herself and her child.

Throughout a very stressful period, the young woman developed a strong relationship with her case manager and remained engaged with the program despite experiencing significant adversity. Youth CONNECT also supported her to connect with family members, community and other services to provide a holistic response that met her and her child’s needs.
Overview of strategic priorities for 2019

- Design a healing strategy to address the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland.

- Design an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family Wellbeing Outcomes Framework and Investment Plan to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.

- Implement a Family and Kin Mapping project for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in out-of-home care who are not already connected to family or kin. The project will aim to produce genealogical reports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care.

- Work with partners to analyse current investment in sector capacity and workforce capacity to help inform future investment in the child and family sector with a focus on funding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services.

- Invest $12 million over four years from 2018–19 to respond to priority actions to address youth sexual violence and abuse.
Appendix 1
Our strategy at a glance

Our **vision** is that all **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children** and young people in Queensland **grow up safe and cared for** in family, community and culture.

Our **target** is to **close the gap in life outcomes** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and **eliminate the disproportionate representation** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system by 2037.

The **outcome** we want to achieve is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children experience parity across the following:

- Safety
- Health
- Culture and connections
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing

![Wellbeing domains](image)

**Building blocks**

All families enjoy **access to quality, culturally safe universal and targeted services** necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations **participate in and have control over decisions** that affect their children

Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are **culturally safe and responsive**

Governments and community services are **accountable** to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

**Focus on the child** | **Empower parents, families and communities**
---|---
Enable self-determination | **Set high expectations and positive norms**
Take a holistic and life-course approach | **Recognise culture as a protective factor**
Address trauma and enable healing | **Share power, responsibility and accountability**
Shift and balance investment | **Provide accessible and coordinated services**
Create partnerships | **Innovate, build evidence and adjust**
Who benefits

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in contact with family support and child protection systems
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in or leaving out-of-home care

Priority areas for first three years

Meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women under 25 years, and their partners, before and during pregnancy and parenting, especially during the first 1000 days
Increasing access to, and involvement in, early years, health and disability programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 2–5 years
Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care to thrive, and re-engaging those disconnected from family and kin
Providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who have complex needs and children at risk with the right services

Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care to learn and earn, and stay safe and well

Implementation framework

Changing Tracks
First and second action plans
2017–2019
2020–2022

Breaking Cycles
Third, fourth and fifth action plans
2023–2025
2026–2028
2029–2031

Hitting Targets
Sixth and seventh action plans
2032–2034
2035–2037

Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and review

* These proposed wellbeing domains derive from a range of sources, including the ARACY Common Approach Wellbeing Wheel, and the OECD's Better Life Index. Development of a Queensland Child and Family Outcomes Framework is underway, and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Wellbeing Outcomes Framework as a part of this will be advanced in the first action plan.
Appendix 2
Implementation schedule

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<td>Completed</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Completed and Embedding</td>
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A total of 23 actions have been completed or completed and being embedded and 12 are in progress and on track to be delivered by the end of 2019.

List of acronyms

- **ATSILS**: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service
- **CREATE**: CREATE Foundation
- **DATSIP**: Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
- **DCSYW**: Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women
- **DoE**: Department of Education
- **DHPW**: Department of Housing and Public Works
- **DJAG**: Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- **DPC**: Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- **NDIA**: National Disability Insurance Agency
- **QAIHC**: Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council
- **QATSICPP**: Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak
- **QFCC**: Queensland Family and Child Commission
- **QH**: Queensland Health
- **DCDSS**: Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
- **QMHC**: Queensland Mental Health Commission
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<th>Priority area and action</th>
<th>Agency lead and partners</th>
<th>2017–2018</th>
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<td><strong>Priority 1: Meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women under 25 years, and their partners, before and during pregnancy and parenting, especially during the first 1000 days</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 Implement the First 1000 Days program to help children get the best start in life</td>
<td>DCSYW, QH, DATSIP, University of Melbourne</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop and trial a Safe Sleeping Baby program to assist young parents prepare for postnatal care and infant health</td>
<td>DCSYW, QH, QAIHC, University of the Sunshine Coast</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to improve health and access to disability services</td>
<td>QH, QAIHC, DCSYW, DCDSS</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Priority 2: Increasing access to, and involvement in, early years, health and disability programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged two to five years</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1 Improve participation in and access to early childhood education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children</td>
<td>DoE, DCSYW, DATSIP</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Increase access to programs that empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to support their children’s learning and development</td>
<td>DoE, DCSYW, DATSIP</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3 Support Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability to prepare for the NDIS</td>
<td>DCSYW, QAIHC, DATSIP, NDIA, DCDSS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Improve health and developmental milestones for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged two to five years by ensuring access to health, early years and disability services</td>
<td>DoE, QH, QAIHC, DCDSS</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Priority 3: Providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who have complex needs and children at risk with the right services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1 Develop and trial Family Wellbeing packages and integrated support to help families stay safe and together</td>
<td>DCSYW, QATSICPP</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2 Partner with three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote communities to build a coordinated, place-based universal and secondary service system</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, DPC</td>
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### Priority area and action

**Agency lead and partners**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority area and action</th>
<th>Agency Lead and Partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017–2018</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP</td>
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<td>2018 Jul–Dec</td>
<td>DJAG, DCSYW, ATSILS, QFCC</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
<td>DCSYW, QATSICPP</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, QATSICPP</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>DCSYW, QATSICPP, QFCC</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>DCSYW, DoE, DATSIP</td>
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<td>4.2</td>
<td>DCSYW, DHHS, QFCC</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
<td>DATSIP, DCSYW</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, QFCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, QFCC</td>
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</table>

**Priority 3: Developing future service delivery models for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on the findings from trials of domestic and family violence prevention and family support systems**

- Supported and empowered to participate in a culturally safe way in Children’s Court proceedings for child protection matters
- Complete implementation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services, delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations

**Priority 4: Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care to thrive, and re-engaging those disconnected from family and kin**

- Strengthen kinship care investment, supports and resources to maximise the use of kinship care placements
- Enable statutory child protection functions and powers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are subject to a child protection order to be delegated to the chief executives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies
- Design and trial an education and employment service commitment to improve education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out-of-home care
- Undertake family and kin mapping for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in out-of-home care who are not already connected to family and kin

**Appendix 1: Implementation schedule**

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<tr>
<th>Priority area and action</th>
<th>Implementation schedule</th>
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<tr>
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<td>DCSYW, QATSICPP</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, QATSICPP</td>
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<td>DCSYW, QATSICPP, QFCC</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>DCSYW, DoE, DATSIP</td>
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<td>DATSIP, DCSYW</td>
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<td>4.4</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, QFCC</td>
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</table>
### Priority 5: Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people aged 15 to 21 years in or leaving out-of-home care to learn and earn, and stay safe and well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 5.1</th>
<th>Support all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in out-of-home care to set their aspirations and plan their transition to independence</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
<td>CREATE, DCSYW</td>
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<td>2017–2018</td>
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<td>2018 Jul–Dec</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 5.2</th>
<th>Empower young people to actively engage in influencing policy and practice in the child protection sector through the First Nation Voices initiative (formerly Deadly Voices initiative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
<td>DCSYW, CREATE, DATSIP</td>
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<td>2017–2018</td>
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<tr>
<th>Priority 5.3</th>
<th>Improve access to a wide range of appropriate housing solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and young people who are involved in the child protection system</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
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### Priority 6: Governments and community organisations will change tracks to: focus more on the child and how to enable families; respect cultural knowledge and authority; partner better and shift investment; innovate and learn; be more accountable

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 6.1</th>
<th>Establish a Queensland First Children and Families Board with representation from Family Matters Queensland, Queensland Government and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, Family Matters Queensland</td>
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<tr>
<th>Priority 6.2</th>
<th>Invest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations to implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family-led decision-making across the state</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
<td>DCSYW, QATSICPP</td>
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<tr>
<th>Priority 6.3</th>
<th>Open applications for the Empowering Families Innovation Grants</th>
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<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
<td>DCSYW</td>
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<tr>
<th>Priority 6.4</th>
<th>Design a holistic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family wellbeing outcomes framework and investment plan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, Family Matters Queensland, QFCC</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 6.5</th>
<th>Negotiate a Queensland First Children and Families partnership agreement between Family Matters Queensland and the Queensland Government to assist in implementing Our Way and Changing Tracks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
<td>DCSYW, DATSIP, Family Matters Queensland</td>
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<tr>
<th>Priority 6.6</th>
<th>Analyse current investment in sector capacity and workforce capability to help inform future investment to build the child and family sector</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
<td>QFCC, DCSYW, QATSICPP, QAIHC</td>
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<td>2017–2018</td>
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<td>Priority area and action</td>
<td>Agency lead and partners</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6.7</strong> Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural capability strategy with mainstream child and family service organisations*</td>
<td>DCSYW, QATSICPP, DATSIP, QAIHC, QFCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.8</strong> Examine the case to establish a Queensland First Children and Families Centre for Excellence</td>
<td>DCSYW, QATSICPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.9</strong> Implement solutions to integrate e-records across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing services to improve service access and responsiveness</td>
<td>DCSYW, QAIHC, QATSICPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.10</strong> Review child protection practices, including assessment and decision-making tools</td>
<td>DCSYW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.11</strong> Design a Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing strategy</td>
<td>DCSYW, Family Matters Queensland, QATSICPP, QMHC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.12</strong> Build an evidence base about what works in preventing entry and re-entry into the child protection and criminal justice systems</td>
<td>DCSYW, DJAG, ATSILS, Family Matters Queensland, QFCC, QATSICPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.13</strong> Develop an investment strategy for culturally safe prevention, early intervention and perpetrator services to address youth sexual violence and recovery services for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who have experienced sexual violence</td>
<td>DCSYW, DJAG, QH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.14</strong> Deliver the Social Benefit Bonds Pilot program to help address complex social issues, including homelessness, re-offending and out-of-home care</td>
<td>DCSYW, Queensland Treasury, DHPW, non-government organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.15</strong> Advocate for a COAG-endorsed National Closing the Gap target and dedicated strategy to eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in child protection systems</td>
<td>Family Matters Queensland, Queensland Government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3
Queensland First Children and Families Board member profiles

Prof Boni Robertson (Co-chair)
Prof Robertson is the Professor of Indigenous Community Engagement, Policy and Practice at Griffith University. Professor Robertson has extensive experience in influencing through government boards (both state and Commonwealth). She brings significant experience in Indigenous tertiary education and social policy and has a background in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and young people. Her skills and experience includes Aboriginal cultural practice, child protection, community development, education, family support, law, social innovation and community engagement.

Mick Gooda (Co-chair)
Mick Gooda’s people are the Ghungalu from the Dawson Valley in Central Queensland. He has spent the last 30 years advocating for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. He was appointed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner in February 2010 and held that position until September 2016 when he was appointed Co-Commissioner on the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory. He has undertaken a wide range of roles such as the CEO of the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health, Native Title Consultant with the Western Australian Aboriginal Legal Service and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, ATSIC. He Chaired the Queensland Stolen Wages Reparation Taskforce and the National Centre of Indigenous Genomics and has been a member of the Expert Panel and the Referendum Council which were convened to advise the Federal Government on the Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Australian constitution.

Rachel Atkinson
Rachel Atkinson is a proud Yorta Yorta woman and is the Co-chair of Family Matters Queensland and Board Executive of SNAICC. Ms Atkinson has extensive expertise in health, family support, child protection and youth justice. She has significant leadership skills and experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations, influencing and advocacy through boards and peak bodies; and the establishment of social enterprise and new programs and projects in remote Indigenous communities. Ms Atkinson has long-term experience working with remote and discrete Aboriginal communities in the North Queensland region and in managing and developing Indigenous organisations. Her identified skills and experience include: Aboriginal cultural practice, child protection, child rearing, community development, education, family support, health, law and social innovation.
Nyoka Fetoa’i

Nyoka Fetoa’i is a proud Darumbal woman from Central Queensland. She is the Chief Executive Officer of Darumbal Community Youth Services Inc and Board Director of Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service. Ms Fetoa’i has considerable experience in youth work with a focus on young people at risk (homelessness, drug and alcohol, education and other supports). She is experienced in managing Indigenous organisations and supporting families experiencing domestic violence. Ms Fetoa’i has experience and skills in Aboriginal cultural practice, youth support, child protection, child rearing, community development, domestic and family violence and family support.

Natalie Lewis

Natalie Lewis is Chief Executive Officer of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak; National Executive, Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC); member of the Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council; member of the Queensland Youth Sexual Violence and Abuse Steering Committee; and National Co-Chair Family Matters Campaign. Ms Lewis has extensive experience in working with, and advocating for children, young people and families in Australia and internationally. She provides expert advice to government and has provided advice to a range of inquiries including the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry. She has skills and experience in Aboriginal cultural practice, youth justice, child protection, domestic and family violence and family support.

Latoya Nakata

Latoya Nakata is Manager of Mura Kosker Sorority Incorporated, a not-for-profit women’s advocacy group that works toward uniting women of all ages in the Torres Strait, and taking steps to meet the social, emotional, education, economical, health, cultural, spiritual and welfare needs of women and their children. Ms Nakata is a strong advocate for Torres Strait Islander women. She brings significant knowledge and experience in early childhood development, domestic and family violence counselling, community and family support services.
Appendix 3: Queensland First Children and Families Board member profiles

Clinton Schultz

Clinton Schultz is a registered Psychologist; Senior Teaching Fellow (Bond University Medical School); Director Marumali Consultations; and Queensland Child Death Case Review Panel member. Mr Schultz has extensive experience in health with a focus on social and emotional wellbeing and mental health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Mr Schultz has experience in the development and implementation of programs providing cultural advice. He has experience and skills in Aboriginal cultural practice, child protection, community development, education, health, psychology and social innovation. Mr Schultz is a Gamilaroi man, descending from the people of Gunnedah/Manilla NSW.

Commissioner Ada Woolla OAM

Ada Woolla is Commissioner of the Family Responsibilities Commission; Councillor of Aurukun Shire Council; and former Domestic and Family Violence Taskforce member. Ms Woolla has significant leadership experience in working with Aboriginal families and supporting children; and leadership in Aboriginal communities and at a local government level. Ms Woolla has experience in establishing and developing programs, services and organisations and is a registered foster and kinship carer. She has skills and experience in Aboriginal cultural practice, domestic and family violence, child protection and community development.

Dr Gerald Featherstone

Dr Gerald Featherstone is the State Co-chair for Family Matters Queensland, he is a Director for multiple Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled NGOs and is the CEO for Kummara Association. Dr Featherstone has clinical experiencing in working with Queensland Health and Education Queensland and with Kummara Association family support and early learning services. His interest in Aboriginal parenting led him to complete his PhD in 2017. His thesis centred on understandings of ‘What makes well-functioning families in Brisbane’. Dr Featherstone has extensive experience in advocating for families and children and providing therapeutic services as well as service development and research in the human services field. Dr Featherstone is passionate about the use of evidence in guiding service responses and education and is currently a member of UQ’s Social Work and Community Industry Advisory Committee.
Appendix 3: Queensland First Children and Families Board member profiles

Dr Chris Sarra

Chris Sarra founded the Stronger Smarter Institute in 2005, which works with schools and community leaders across Australia to deliver the stronger smarter approach to Indigenous students. In 2016, Dr Sarra was named the NAIDOC Person of the Year in recognition of his efforts to improve Aboriginal educational outcomes throughout Australia. He received the Anthony Mundine Award for Courage at the National Indigenous Human Rights Awards in 2017. In August 2018, Dr Sarra commenced as the Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Dr Sarra holds a PhD in Psychology with his thesis Strong and Smart — Towards a Pedagogy for Emancipation: Education for First Peoples published by Routledge in 2012. He was named Queenslander of the Year in 2004, and was Queensland's Australian of the Year in 2010. He was also an Australian Rugby League commissioner from 2012–2018. Dr Sarra is Taribelang/Gurang Gurang Aboriginal man from Bundaberg.

Michael Hogan

Michael Hogan was appointed as Director-General for the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women in December 2017. Prior to this, he was the Director-General for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for 4 years. Michael was previously Deputy Director-General, Community Engagement, in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and chaired the organising committee for the joint United Nations/Queensland Government International Conference on Engaging Communities in Brisbane in 2005. Before coming to Queensland in 2002, Michael was in the New South Wales Premier’s Department, responsible for the Strengthening Communities Unit. Michael also spent 10 years until 1996 at the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, a community-based legal and policy organisation, including 5 years as its Executive Director.
**Story of the motif**

The motif artwork was created by Rachael Sarra, an Indigenous artist and designer from creative agency Gilimbaa. Rachael originates from the Bunda People in Goreng Goreng country.

The motif design is a reflection of equal partners joining together in conversation and positive action. It represents a clear and focused pathway that began as the dispersed energy of many that has now fused to channel clarity, momentum and strength. It shows the power of unity and simplicity that evolves from complexity. The artwork shows the journey of the child, depicted as the hands, connected to and supported by structures that nurture and guide. Through the woven orange line it acknowledges culture, kin and the strength of learning from the past to act in the present and grow for the future.