



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

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

Our next plan

We want to know what you think

Easy Read version



How to use this document



The Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) wrote this document with other state and territory governments.



When you see the word 'we', it means:

- the Australian government
- other state and territory governments.



We wrote this document in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Not bold
Bold

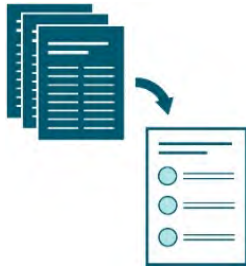
We have written some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 27.



This Easy Read document is a summary of another document. This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other document on our website at engage.dss.gov.au.



You can ask for help to read this document. A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What's in this document?

What is this document about?	5
Our vision	8
Our priority areas	10
1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children	11
2. Supports and services for children and families	15
3. Sharing information	20
4. A stronger child and family workforce	23
How to tell us what you think	26
Word list	27
Where to send your answers to our questions	31

What is this document about?



We know that some children might be **vulnerable**.

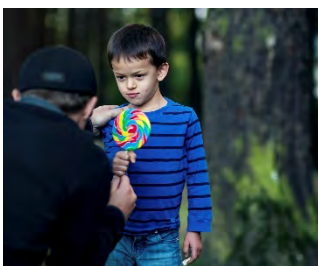
When a child is vulnerable, they might be in danger of:



- being hurt



- getting sick



- someone taking advantage of them.



We know that some children might be **disadvantaged**.

When a child is disadvantaged, they might not:



- have a home



- have enough money for day-to-day things, like food



- be able to fully take part in life.



We want to help and support children who are:

- vulnerable
- disadvantaged.

We also want to be able to:



- find problems early



- stop them.



That is why we are making a new plan to follow the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children.



The new plan will help children who are:

- vulnerable
- disadvantaged.



We want to find out what people think about how we can make things better for children in the new plan.

We explain how you can tell us what you think on page 26.

Our vision



Our **vision** is what we want Australia to be in the future.



We want Australian children to grow up in safe homes.



We want children in Australia to be safe from **abuse**.



Abuse is when someone treats you badly.



We want children in Australia to be safe from **neglect**.



Neglect is when someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you.



We want to keep children safe from bad experiences.

Our priority areas



Our **priority areas** are areas we need to focus on to achieve our vision.

We have 4 priority areas:



1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children



2. Supports and services for children and families



3. Sharing information



4. A stronger child and family sector

We talk about our priority areas in more detail in this document.

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are more likely to be in **child protection services**.

Child protection services step in when a child:



- is not safe in their home



- can't live with their family.



There are too many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection services.



There are lots of reasons why there are too many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection services.

Some of the reasons include:



- **intergenerational trauma**



- not enough supports that show respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander **culture**



- being treated badly because of something about them they can't change, like where they come from.



Intergenerational trauma is when you pass your feelings about a bad experience on to the next **generations**.



A generation is all the people who were born and lived at about the same time.



Intergenerational trauma might make you feel:

- fear
- worry
- stress.



Your culture is:

- your way of life
- the way you think or act because of the way you grew up.

What we think can help



We want to make services more respectful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.



This will make services better when they help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.



We want to make sure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children get support to stay with their families.

We want to share information to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:



- families



- communities



- services.

2. Supports and services for children and families



Supports and services don't always meet the needs of families.

This can mean people don't get the help they need for problems such as:



- mental health problems



- using drugs or drinking too much alcohol

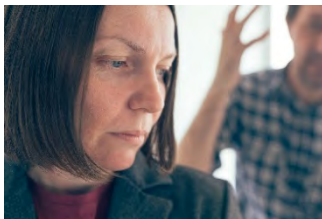


- domestic and family violence.

Domestic and family violence is when you are hurt by someone close to you, such as:



- your boyfriend or girlfriend



- your husband or wife



- a member of your family



- someone who takes care of you.



Families might face **barriers** when they try to find and use supports and services.



A barrier is something that stops you from doing something you:

- need to do
- want to do.



Children with disability may need more supports and services than other children.

These supports and services can be from:



- health services



- places where they go to learn, like schools.



These supports and services can help children with disability stay safe in their home.

What we think can help



We want to make supports and services easier to find and use.

We want to hear what:



- children have to say



- young people have to say



- families and carers have to say



- organisations have to say.



We will think about what children and young people have to say when we make decisions that affect them.



We want to make sure all levels of government work together to make their services better.

3. Sharing information

When we say everyone, it means:



- the Australian Government



- state and territory governments



- organisations that aren't run by the government.



Everyone needs to work together to share information about supports and services for:

- children
- young people
- families.



Sharing this information can help all levels of government make **policies** that can help children.



Policies are:

- government plans for how to do things
- where rules come from.

Sharing information can help make some supports and services:



- better



- easier to find and use.

What we think can help



We want to understand how to make policies that will make life better for children.

We want to understand which information should be shared between:



- organisations that aren't run by the government



- Australian, state and territory governments.



We want to keep track of how well our next plan is going.

4. A stronger child and family workforce



Some people in the child and family **workforce** work with children who are:

- disadvantaged
- vulnerable.

A workforce is a group of people who:



- work in the same type of job



- offer the same services.



Some people in the child and family workforce don't have the right skills to support children who are:

- disadvantaged
- vulnerable.

There are people in the child and family workforce who:



- leave their jobs



- are too tired from their work



- don't have what they need to do their jobs.

What we think can help



We want to make sure people in the child and family workforce can support children who are:

- disadvantaged
- vulnerable.



We want to make parts of the child and family workforce better.



This will help us support people who work in the child and family workforce.

How to tell us what you think



We want to know what you think about our ideas to help children who are:

- vulnerable
- disadvantaged.



You can tell us what you think by answering our questions in another document.



You don't need to answer all of our questions.



There is a box below each question where you can write your answer.

Word list



Abuse

Abuse is when someone treats you badly.

Barriers



A barrier is something that stops you from doing something you:

- need to do
- want to do.



Child protection services

Child protection services can decide if a child:

- is not safe in their home
- can't live with their family.

Culture



Your culture is:

- your way of life
- the way you think or act because of the way you grew up.

Disadvantaged



When a child is disadvantaged, they might not:

- have a home
- have enough money for day-to-day things, like food
- be able to take part in life.

Domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence is when you are hurt by someone close to you, such as:



- your boyfriend or girlfriend
- your husband or wife
- a member of your family
- someone who takes care of you.



Generation

A generation is all the people who were born and lived at about the same time.

Intergenerational trauma



Intergenerational trauma is when you pass your feelings about a bad experience on to the next generations.

You might feel:

- fear
- worry
- stress.



Neglect

Neglect is when someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you.



Policies

Policies are:

- government plans for how to do things
- where rules come from.



Priority areas

Our priority areas are the 4 areas we need to focus on to achieve our vision.



Vision

Our vision is what we want Australia to be in the future.

Vulnerable

When a child is vulnerable, they might be in danger of:



- being hurt
- getting sick
- someone taking advantage of them.

Workforce

A workforce is a group of people who:



- work in the same type of job
- offer the same services.

Where to send your answers to our questions



NationalFrameworkfeedback@dss.gov.au



Children's Strategy Section
Families Group
Department of Social Services
GPO Box 9820
Canberra ACT 2601



engage.dss.gov.au



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