

DCP Child and Youth Engagement Strategy 2021 – 2023

OUR VISION is to build a better child protection system, one that listens and empowers children and young people to have a voice in decision making.

What is important to us: Our Strategy was built by young people and reflects what they have said is important to them. We recognise the importance of always working to create culturally safe and strong spaces for Aboriginal children and young people to participate and have their voices heard.

IDENTITY <i>"Listen, involve, respect"</i> We recognise children and young people are the experts in their own lives and value their unique identity, culture, beliefs and knowledge. We support children and young people to develop a strong and positive sense of self, which we recognise for Aboriginality, is linked to connection with family, community and culture. We empower children and young people to have a voice based on who they are and what they need.	CHILD CENTRED <i>"Firsthand experience shouldn't be ignored"</i> We work to see ourselves through the eyes of children and young people; their rights and needs are central to how we engage. We value and respect children and young people have their own views and voice in decision making and empower them to participate. All our actions have purpose, we know why we are engaging and how it will influence change.	OPPORTUNITY <i>"Provide a platform for voices to be heard"</i> We create safe space for children and young people to feel comfortable to express themselves freely, to share their views and experiences. We value diversity and the unique contributions of children and young people and ensure opportunities provide for their different needs and abilities. We ensure children and young people are informed and able to access the opportunities and spaces available to share their views and stories.	ACTION <i>'Listen and do something about it'</i> We actively listen, notice and respond to what children and young people tell us. Children and young people are able to provide a voice of influence to decisions which lead to real change. We ensure children and young people receive feedback and know about what happens in response to their concerns.
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We will focus on:	This means we will:	We will do this by:
PARTICIPATION Our goal is for children and young people to be engaged to have a say in how we improve the work we do	Develop opportunities for children and young people to play an active part in improving our system	Creating: - a Young Persons Group (No Capes for Change) that works with DCP to provide feedback and advice on DCP projects and policies. - further representation of children and young people in care by providing opportunities for diverse and inclusive groups to be established, which are representative and inclusive of the voices of Aboriginal, culturally diverse children and young people and those with disability . We will do this acknowledging cultural safety for Aboriginal children is best achieved when they are supported by peers of their same culture - technology that enables children and young people to provide their views on relevant DCP policies, projects and programs, including technology that is culturally appropriate and accessible for Aboriginal children and young people
	Put in place procedures that respect and strengthen cultural safety to support engagement of all children and young people	Implementing: - guidelines, tools and resources for staff to support and guide them in having safe consultations with Young Person's Groups across DCP. - DCP Practice papers that support working with diverse groups of children and young people, including Aboriginal children and young people. - a procedure that values and recognises the contribution of children and young people's participation.
	Engage children and young people of diverse backgrounds to tell us about their experiences	Improving: - feedback tools so that children and young people can share their experiences with DCP on the services they receive, ensuring tools are culturally inclusive and appropriate for Aboriginal children and young people and children and young people with disability. - access to complaints processes. - the DCP internet by co-designing with children and young people a webpage that provides an engaging, one stop shop for key information.
LEARNING Our goal is to learn from children and young people, to reflect and improve our work based on what they tell us	Continue to improve our system to listen, understand and respond, based on what children and young people tell us about their experiences	Coordinating: - how we collect information that represents the views of children and young people from multiple sources. - quality audits to help us understand how children and young people are involved in decisions that impact them. - and implementing an incident management system to enable us to understand themes relating to incidents, complaints and feedback. - these learnings into policy development and service design.
	Increase our understanding of the importance of engaging with children and young people and promote their participation	Creating: - a visual identity (developed by children and young people) to represent the voices of children and young people who experience the child protection system. - an intranet page for DCP staff to access information about child and youth engagement including tools and resources that supports effective engagement. - opportunities for children and young people to co-facilitate and co-present at DCP forums on issues important to them.
PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION Our goal is to work better with our partner agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people	Ensure children and young people know about the range of services available to them and support their access to them	Increasing children and young people's: - awareness and understanding of their rights in care including the rights of Aboriginal children and young people to be connected to family, community, culture and Country. - understanding of and access to services provided by partner agencies and oversight bodies including culturally responsive supports and services available for Aboriginal children and young people. - awareness and access to information when transitioning from care in partnership with post care services and CREATE.
	Strengthen our existing partnerships with partner agencies and oversight bodies to improve services to children and young people	Enhancing: - partnerships with the child protection sector, funded organisations and oversight bodies, including Aboriginal community organisations, to ensure we can receive timely feedback on the views of children and young people who use their services. - DCP's work with contemporary research that represents the diverse voices of children and young people to ensure our work is evidence based, best practice.