



Government of South Australia  
Department for Child Protection

# Every effort for every child

South Australia's strategy for children and young people  
in care 2020-2023



**Safe and well**

Supporting families, protecting children

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Readers are asked to note that references in this report to Aboriginal children, families and communities refer to people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

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## Minister foreword

Every child deserves a stable, caring and happy upbringing that lays the foundation for their journey into adulthood.

Not all children receive this.

Securing the safety, permanency and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people is a significant area of responsibility for our government, the Department for Child Protection and our partners.

As the Minister for Child Protection, I recognise and acknowledge that all children and young people are valued citizens of our state and that our future is linked to their wellbeing. All South Australian children and young people must be given the opportunity to achieve and flourish.

When children can no longer live safely in their homes, we have a responsibility to provide them with support and safety. Sadly, children who enter care have experienced trauma, leading many to present with complex behavioural and developmental needs which are often associated with this trauma.

We know that Aboriginal children and young people are increasingly overrepresented in our system for many complex reasons, and that getting it right for Aboriginal children is an absolute priority. It is significant that we recognise the importance of Aboriginal children being together with family in culture.

We also know that most children do best in family based settings where they are supported by our carers or safely reunified with their own families.

Through this strategy, we continue on a journey to modernise our care system and set ambitious goals for children and young people in care. Critical to this work is developing a stronger therapeutic approach across all parts of the care system, so that children receive support tailored to their individual needs that provides an opportunity to heal from past trauma. These goals are integral to the future of our system of care for children in South Australia and underpin this strategy.

This strategy is one part of the Government of South Australia's broader plan for protecting children and young people from harm, and investing in their future which is outlined in 'Safe and well: Supporting families, protecting children'.

I feel privileged to be leading this ambitious journey.

**Hon Rachel Sanderson MP**  
Minister for Child Protection

## Introduction

Our care system is continuously evolving to respond to new challenges and evidence about the best ways to provide care for children and young people who are unable to live safely with their own parents.

There are now more children in care than ever before. Children are coming into the system with increasingly complex needs and for longer periods of time. Despite efforts to increase the number of carers, we are not keeping up with demand.

Royal Commissions have told us where we need to focus. We have listened and taken deliberate steps to design and change the way we deliver our services. We have already started to build the foundations for a better system for children in care.

Since the Department for Child Protection was established three years ago, we have created new structures, programs and processes to operate effectively as a standalone department.

In 2018, we embedded new child safety legislation into the work that we do. We are aspiring to lead the nation as innovators in child protection.

Extensive consultation with more than 1,500 carers, staff and the non-government sector has informed this strategy. Their generosity of time, thinking and ideas has provided us with a sharper focus on how we should direct our future efforts and resources.

This strategy outlines a positive way forward that, with sustained long-term effort, will contribute to the delivery of better outcomes for children and young people requiring care.

It identifies the high-level principles that will inform the entirety of this work and the five priority areas where the department will focus over the next three years. Across each of these priority areas, this strategy outlines our broad goals and key actions to take us forward.

Under each priority area, we will use the National Standards for Out-of-Home Care where possible, to determine whether we are making a difference. This will help us to be nationally consistent in our reporting and minimise duplication of effort.

Continuing to talk about this as an out-of-home care system would be out of step with our aspiration to provide children with a sense of home and belonging. With the release of this strategy, we are deliberately changing the way we talk about the system of care we provide for children and young people who are unable to live safely with their own parents.

We are focussed on improving our care system to include a range of care settings and to respond to the individual needs of all children and young people.

## Priority areas



### 1. Delivering a needs based system

Children enter care at different stages of life, for different reasons and for different periods of time. All have experienced trauma and many have complex needs. We need to better understand children's unique and diverse needs and commission the right range of services to meet these.



### 2. Growing family based care

The future of the care system in South Australia is reliant on growing family based care. Living with a family provides most children and young people with the best opportunity to recover from trauma and thrive. This priority is about better supporting and growing the number of foster and kinship carers.



### 3. Transforming non-family based care

Non-family based care is available when a family based setting is not suitable for a child or isn't available. Re-orientating immediate response and residential care settings to be consistently therapeutic, culturally supportive and responsive to children and young people's needs will improve their experience in care and their life outcomes.



### 4. Improving transition from care

We are committed to ensuring young people in care have the same opportunities as others. We need to better plan and prepare with our partners and with young people to help achieve their successful transition into adult life or reunification with their families.



### 5. Enhancing quality and safeguarding

We are accountable for designing and administering a sustainable care system that keeps children safe, meets their needs and improves their wellbeing. Safeguarding and quality need to be at the foundation of South Australia's care system.

## Our vision

Children and young people in care grow up safe, happy, healthy and nurtured to reach their full potential.

## Principles

These guiding principles will underpin our efforts:

- Delivering on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Embedding the voice of the child across our system of care.
- Honouring the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.
- Being responsive to the unique needs of children and young people with a focus on those:
  - › from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
  - › from regional and remote areas
  - › living with disability.
- Being trauma-responsive and development-focused.
- Promoting stability and permanency.
- Strengthening collaborative relationships with carers.
- Building confidence in the quality and safety of the services we provide.
- Strengthening partnerships and a connected workforce.
- Using data, evidence and information to inform service development and improvement.

## The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle

The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle is a central part of the strategy. It recognises the responsibility we have to protect the rights of Aboriginal children and young people to maintain and develop connections to family, community, culture, country and language.

We acknowledge that Aboriginal families are currently overrepresented in the child protection system and that past policies in this space have had devastating impacts and caused lasting trauma.

Aboriginal people have the knowledge and experience to make the best decisions regarding the safety and wellbeing of their children. All elements of the Principle must be honoured in actioning this strategy.

We acknowledge the importance of **identification** as a precursor to the implementation of the elements of the Principle:



**Prevention** – protecting each Aboriginal child's right to grow up in family, community and culture



**Partnership** – ensuring the participation of Aboriginal community representatives in service design, delivery and decision-making



**Placement** – prioritising the placement of Aboriginal children in care in accordance with the established placement hierarchy



**Participation** – ensuring Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities participate in decision-making



**Connection** – developing, maintaining and supporting Aboriginal children's connection to family, community, culture and country.

## The system we are building

The child protection system encompasses several different types of care for children and young people aged from birth to 18 who can no longer live safely with their parents.

Most children and young people live in a family setting, with either kinship carers or foster carers. A significant number of children and young people are supported by other types of care, including residential care, supported independent living and immediate response care.

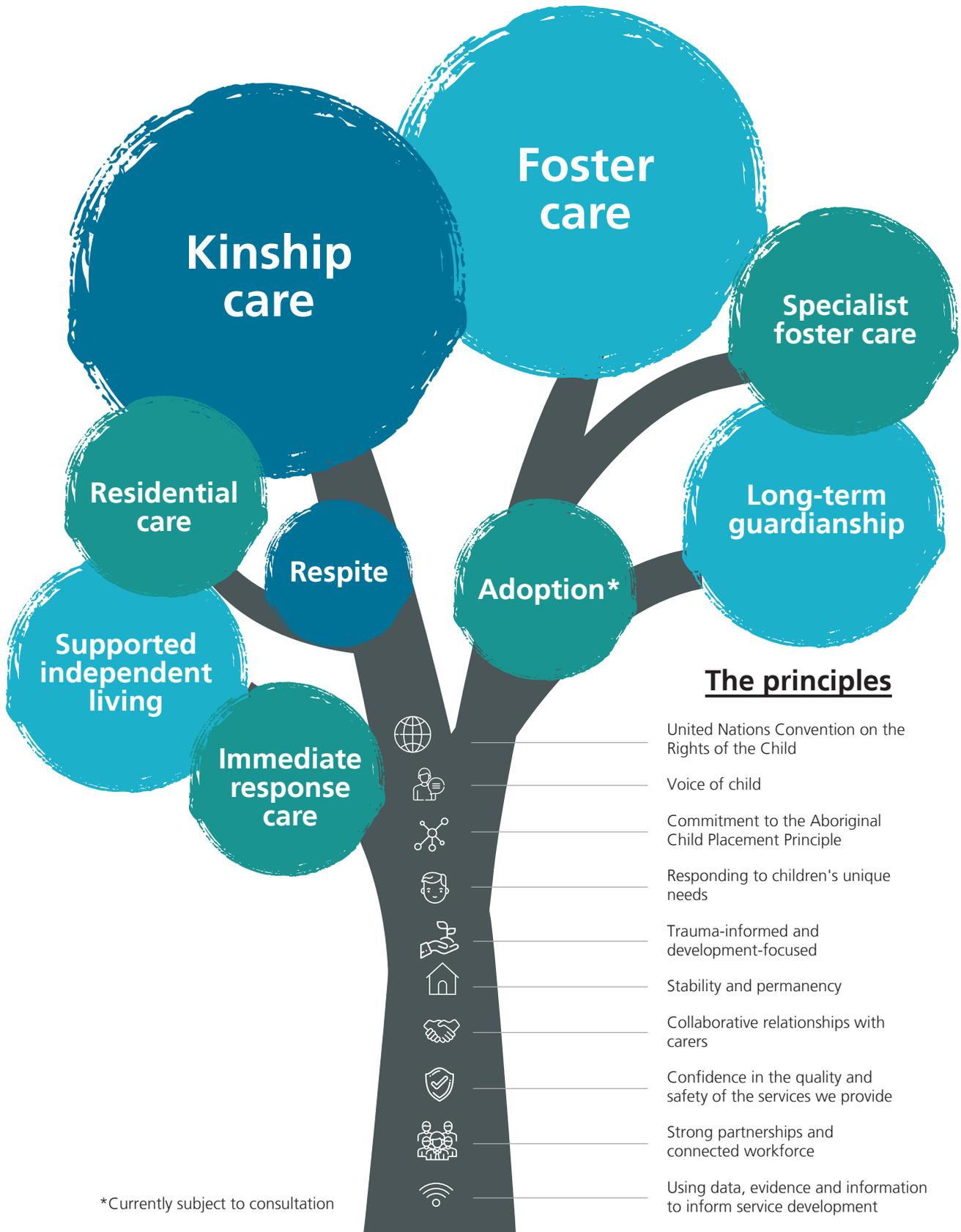
The system we are building will grow and improve the quality of family based care and ensure that all components of the system are delivered through a therapeutic lens, which is informed by the vision and principles above.

### Types of care settings

Care type	Definition
<b>Kinship care</b>	Kinship care is family based care provided by a relative, extended family or kin and can enter into long-term guardianship.
<b>Foster care</b>	Foster care is family based care provided by registered foster carers. They have no previous relationship with the child and can enter into long-term guardianship.
<b>Specialist foster care</b>	Specialist foster care is provided by foster carers with training and experience in supporting children with complex behavioural, disability or other needs with a therapeutic approach.
<b>Long-term guardianship</b>	A Long-Term Guardianship (Specified Person) order transfers the guardianship of a child or young person to their caregivers, who will have almost all the rights and responsibilities of a parent.
<b>Adoption</b>	An adoption order establishes a legally recognised parent-child relationship.
<b>Residential care</b>	Residential care is non-family based care delivered by trained child and youth workers in either the Department for Child Protection or an approved non-government agency.
<b>Immediate response care</b>	Immediate response care is a short-term care arrangement for children and young people when direct entry into family based care, residential care or other forms of care is not available.
<b>Supported independent living</b>	Supported independent living is provided to young people in a home-based setting by an approved non-government service provider. It supports young people aged 15-18 to transition successfully to adult life.
<b>Respite</b>	Respite is a planned option of short break support for foster and kinship carers. Successful respite can provide an enriching experience for children with the chance to engage with multiple support people in their life.

# Our future system for children in care

We are transforming each of these care types to build a system that is underpinned by fundamental principles.



\*Currently subject to consultation



## Who will benefit?

For each of the five priority areas in this strategy, we have described our activity in a way that highlights the potential impacts for different people involved in the system.

### Children and young people

When we talk about children and young people, we must make sure their voices are heard and reflected in decisions about them.

Children and young people are at the centre of everything we do. All actions taken across this strategy must be in their best interest.

### Aboriginal families

Aboriginal people and communities have the knowledge and experience to make the best decisions regarding the placement and care of Aboriginal children and young people.

We will engage with Aboriginal families early, and honour the elements of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle.

### Parents

Where possible, parents and families are involved in the wellbeing and safety of their children.

When we work to maintain positive relationships with parents and families, we set children and young people up for successful reunification in the future.

### Carers

Foster and kinship carers are integral in providing the best possible futures for children and young people in care.

We recognise that to grow and retain our carer base we must continue to be respectful of the needs and expectations of carers, involve them in decision-making and provide them with the information they need to fulfil their role.

### Workforce

Our workforce is the critical driver in promoting safe and stable placements for children and young people.

We value the skills and expertise of our staff. We will support them in their important work.

### Partners

Our partners, both across government, non-government and the private sector are vital to this strategy.

We acknowledge that capacity, cultural responsiveness and clarity in our expectations will be key to our shared success.



## Priority 1: Delivering a needs based system

Every child has different needs, challenges and strengths. Many children in care have complex behavioural and developmental needs. Comprehensive and ongoing assessment of a child's individual needs is crucial to getting placements right from the start. Commissioning services based on children's diverse needs is equally important to ensure services are helping them to develop and thrive.

### The challenges

- Aboriginal children are 10 times more likely to be in care.
- More than half of children in care have moderate to high needs.
- Approximately 25 – 30% of children in care have a disability or significant developmental delay.
- Many children experience multiple placements, making it difficult for them to develop stable long-term relationships.

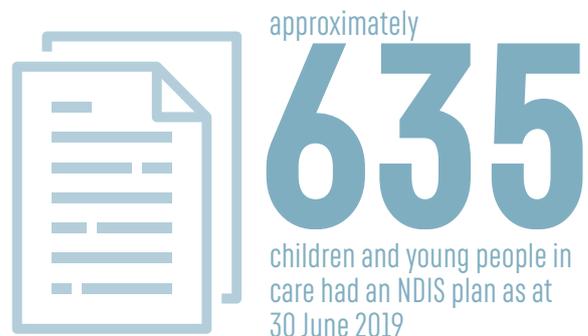
### What we have already done

- ☑ Became signatory to the Family Matters Campaign for Aboriginal children and young people.
- ☑ Piloted the Aboriginal Cultural Identity Support Tool and Winangay Kinship Carer Assessment Tool.
- ☑ Released our transition planning practice guide for children moving between placements.
- ☑ Appointed a Lead Psychiatric Director and established a specialist disability team.
- ☑ Established an Aboriginal Lead Practitioner and non-Aboriginal Lead Practitioner.

### Where to from here

Our goal is to ensure that every child and young person in care receives support that is reflective of their current and future needs and allows them to reach their full potential.

1. We will design children's needs assessments to be more culturally-responsive and trauma-informed.
2. We will develop a comprehensive commissioning strategy that is outcomes driven and informed by the population needs of children in care.
3. We will better equip foster and kinship carers to provide care to children with complex behavioural and developmental needs.
4. We will improve placement matching to prevent placement breakdowns.



## How we will make this happen

### For children and young people we will:

- Assertively manage the transition of children from short-term care settings to family based care or residential care.
- Establish a new family group conferencing pathway to empower family and community members to identify strategies to keep children and young people safe.
- Introduce individualised placement and support packages for children entering care.
- Embed complex case review meetings as part of case practice to support children and young people with specialised needs.
- Improve specialist assessments to better match children with disability to the right placement.

### For parents we will:

- Develop pathways to intensive family support services to help parents provide safe care for their children.
- Invest effort earlier in reunification to support children to safely remain in the care of their family.

### For carers we will:

- Review and continuously improve carer recruitment and support services based on their diverse needs and circumstances.
- Update the current placement management system to modernise the way children are matched with carers.
- Improve and increase the quality of information available to carers, including access to information on financial support and respite.
- Work with family based carers to identify their needs and strategies to support children and young people in their care.

### For Aboriginal families we will:

- Apply the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle to placement decisions for all Aboriginal children and young people.
- Use the Winangay Kinship Carer Assessment Tool as best practice for Aboriginal children and young people.

## We know we have made a difference

- ☑ When children and young people participate in the decisions that have an impact on their lives (OOHC Standard 2).
- ☑ When Aboriginal communities participate in decisions affecting the care of their children (OOHC Standard 3).
- ☑ When children and young people have their needs assessed and attended to in a timely way (OOHC Standard 5).
- ☑ When children and young people are supported to safely and appropriately maintain connection with family (OOHC Standard 9).
- ☑ When children and young people are supported to develop their identity, safely and appropriately and have their life history recorded as they grow up (OOHC Standard 10).



## Priority 2: Growing family based care

Family based settings provide the best opportunities for permanency and belonging for the majority of children and young people who come into our care. Long-term guardians are essential in building lasting relationships that are important to child development and wellbeing and are a valuable asset.

### The challenges

- Almost half of the children living in residential or commercial care would be suited to family based care.
- We are not meeting the demand for family based placements at the rate of children coming into care.
- The attraction and retention of carers, including Aboriginal carers, is below what we need to support children and young people.
- Children and young people have complex emotional and behavioural needs.

### What we have already done

- ☑ Increased family based placements by more than 270 from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.
- ☑ Moved closer to the national average of family based care.
- ☑ Grown the number of specialised foster carers.
- ☑ Established staff positions dedicated to family scoping for Aboriginal children and young people.
- ☑ Reformed how we contract foster care agencies to better support carers.
- ☑ Create a dedicated web platform as a one stop information and resource portal for carers.

### Where to from here

Our goal is to provide family based care to as many children as possible.

1. We will continue to grow family based care in line with national benchmarks.
2. We will recruit, promote and support Aboriginal carers to care for Aboriginal children and young people.
3. We will support foster and kinship carers to meet the needs of children and young people in family based care.
4. We will improve our efforts to retain existing carers and diversify our carer pool.
5. We will increase our dialogue with foster and kinship carers at all parts of their journey.



## How we will make this happen

### For children and young people we will:

- Design a new kinship care service model that is strengths-based and acknowledges the diversity of families who care for children.
- Train carers to support children with complex needs in a specialist family based care setting.
- Increase permanency options for children and young people, including transfer of guardianship and adoption.
- Design new models of family based care with children and young people.

### For carers we will:

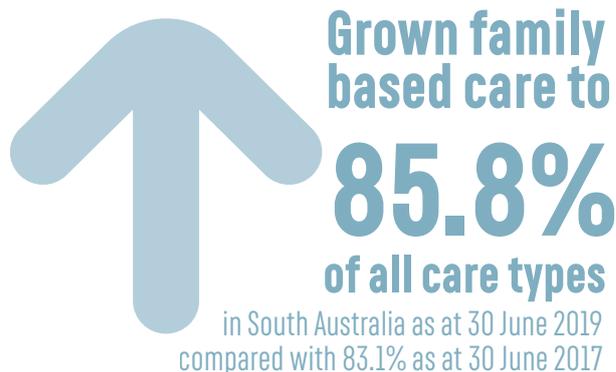
- Streamline the carer recruitment, assessment and approval process.
- Introduce carer clinics to connect carers with therapeutic specialists and provide information on topics that relate to child development.
- Establish a Carer Charter to ensure mutual understanding and respect of roles and responsibilities.
- Use surveys to confidentially capture carers' views about best supporting their needs in a carer role.
- Create a shared calendar to enable easier access to carer training across all service providers.
- Improve access to and flexibility of respite.

### For Aboriginal families we will:

- Work genuinely and actively to identify family and kin to care for children for placements to be safe and to succeed.
- Work with the Aboriginal community controlled sector to provide kinship carer support.
- Support non-Aboriginal carers to be culturally capable and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people.

## We know we have made a difference

- ☑ When we see increased placement safety and stability (OOHC Standard 1).
- ☑ When there is an increase in Aboriginal children and young people placed with extended family, within their community or with other Aboriginal carers (OOHC Standard 3).
- ☑ When children and young people have a current case plan detailing their health, wellbeing, education and other needs (OOHC Standard 4).
- ☑ When we see increased participation in education and early childhood services (OOHC Standard 6).
- ☑ When children and young people participate in social and recreational activities of their choice (OOHC Standard 8).
- ☑ When carers receive training, development and support to provide the best quality care for children and young people (OOHC Standard 12).





## Priority 3: Transforming non-family based care

In some circumstances, non-family based care may be the most suitable option to support children and young people with complex needs. We aim to make residential care more therapeutic and responsive to children's needs.

### The challenges

- Our current models of residential care do not consistently cater for children's diverse and complex needs.
- Attraction and retention of staff is inadequate to enable continuity of care.
- We don't have a consistent therapeutic approach to direct and guide non-family based care.
- We want to better accommodate the needs of large sibling groups.

### What we have already done

- ☑ Increased the number of vehicles in residential care facilities to support participation in education and recreation activities.
- ☑ Undertook an audit of all children in residential and commercial care to better understand and respond to placement needs.
- ☑ Reduced the number of children in large residential care facilities.

### Where to from here

Our goal is to build a therapeutic model of care across all non-family based care settings that understands and heals trauma.

1. We will reduce the proportion of children and young people in residential care.
2. We will reduce our reliance on commercial care.
3. We will broaden the diversity of non-family based care options to cater for children's different needs.
4. We will introduce mechanisms to support continuity and consistency for staff working with children and young people.
5. We will establish consistently high standards of care across government and non-government services.

**89%** of children in care have a documented and approved case plan as at 30 June 2019 compared to **53% in the previous year**

## How we will make this happen

### For children and young people we will:

- Design and implement a therapeutic framework that acknowledges and addresses past trauma and development needs.
- Support children and young people to personalise their spaces and create homely physical environments across all residential facilities.
- Support children and young people to have better connections with significant individuals in their lives to promote their family and cultural identity.
- Identify better locations for residential facilities so that children are supported in their local communities, where possible.

### For staff in residential care we will:

- Implement a new residential care rostering system to provide greater workforce stability.
- Connect residential carers with therapeutic specialists to enhance interactions with children with complex needs.
- Build workforce capability to improve responsiveness to trauma, developmental needs and cultural responsiveness.

### For Aboriginal families we will:

- Grow our Aboriginal workforce to better reflect the cultural needs of Aboriginal children and young people across the care system.
- Increase the number and range of Aboriginal community controlled organisations to deliver needs based services.

## We know we have made a difference

- ☑ When we see an increased number of children and young people feeling safe and secure in their current placement (OOHC Standard 1).
- ☑ When children and young people in care have a current case plan documenting their health, education and other needs (OOHC Standard 4).
- ☑ When we see increased participation in education and early childhood services (OOHC Standard 6).
- ☑ When children and young people participate in social and/or recreational activities of their choice (OOHC Standard 8).



## Priority 4: Improving transition from care

Our role is to prepare children and young people in care for adulthood and break the cycle of intergenerational involvement in the child protection system. This may be through better supporting young people to live independently as young adults or stay longer with their care family. It can also be through promoting reunification. In order to do this, we need flexible and tailored transition models to meet the different needs of young people in our care.

### The challenges

- Young people leaving care generally transition to adulthood earlier than their peers, often without the safety nets that families usually provide.
- They are also less likely to complete high school and more likely to become parents at a younger age, suffer poorer health outcomes and experience homelessness.

### What we have already done

- ☑ Extended payments to carers to support young people staying in family based care until 21 years of age.
- ☑ Established Youth Councils to strengthen the voice of young people in care.
- ☑ Worked with the Courts to establish a Reunification Court Pilot.
- ☑ Trialled an adolescent reunification program to support young people to maintain positive relationships with their parents.
- ☑ Started a regionally based pilot program to provide peer mentoring and practical supports to young people leaving care.

### Where to from here

Our goal is to invest more in reunification, strengthen partnerships to deliver post-care services and create every opportunity for young people to reach their full potential.

1. We will help young people to develop skills and knowledge to successfully transition to adult life.
2. We will create more opportunities for young people to access education, employment, housing and specialist services to meet their needs.
3. We will support young people to develop their identity and maintain relationships that strengthen connection to family, community and culture.
4. We will prioritise safe and timely family reunification.



Less than a third of young people that have been in care will be employed by the age of 21

## How we will make this happen

### For children and young people we will:

- Work with the Department for Education to promote educational participation and achievement.
- Build capacity across government to prioritise access to mainstream supports for young people under guardianship.
- Transform transition from care arrangements for young people reaching adulthood, including recommissioning Supported Independent Living Services.
- Continue to strengthen post-care pathways for children and young people through the NDIS.

### For parents we will:

- Develop models of adolescent reunification that promote positive family connections.

### For carers we will:

- Undertake surveys and exit interviews to capture the feedback and experiences of carers and inform future placements.

### For Aboriginal families we will:

- Review and update the Aboriginal Cultural Identity Support Tool to empower young people to develop a strong and positive identity through supporting safe cultural connections as they reach adulthood.
- Deliver transition to adult living programs that recognise Aboriginal culture as an important strength and protective factor.

## We know we have made a difference

- ☑ When children and young people access education, training and employment opportunities (OOHC Standard 7).
- ☑ When children and young people are supported to develop their identity, safely and appropriately and have their life history recorded as they grow up (OOHC Standard 10).
- ☑ When young people safely and appropriately maintain contact with people who care about their future (OOHC Standard 11).
- ☑ When young people have a transition from care plan that details support to be provided after leaving care (OOHC Standard 13).



## Priority 5: Enhancing quality and safeguarding

Children and young people come into care because they have experienced harm through abuse or neglect. Across the system, it is critical that we work better with our workforce and partners to embed principles and practice that safeguard children from further harm and help in their healing.

### The challenges

- We need to grow and diversify the market to accommodate for changes in the population of children and young people who require care.
- Management of care concerns, complaints and incidents is incident based.
- We have inconsistent measures and criteria to assess performance across the care system.
- Our information systems are difficult to navigate and make it hard to extract the data we need to measure progress and improve outcomes for children and young people.

### What we have already done

- ☑ Implemented new child safety legislation with a focus on sharing information and strengthening safeguards.
- ☑ Established a professional carer advocacy service.
- ☑ Designed a new practice approach.
- ☑ Held an inaugural Industry Day to share information with current service providers and attract future partners.
- ☑ Began an extensive program of contracting and procurement reform.
- ☑ Grew our procurement from Aboriginal community controlled organisations to 5.7%.

### Where to from here

We are committed to supporting our workforce to be leaders in their work, strive for excellence, and engage better with our partners across the whole system of children in care.

1. We will revitalise the way we commission services and our current contracting arrangements to stimulate market diversity.
2. We will better educate and support our staff to use professional judgement and clinical expertise in their practice relating both to children and carers.
3. We will improve recruitment and retention of staff to build positive, continuous and strong relationships with children and young people.
4. We will review the way that we collect and interpret data as an important driver of our learning culture.



**Grown the number of Aboriginal employees to 5% and are closer to our goal of 10%**

**Reduced the average staff vacancy rate to 9.9%**



for social worker and case manager roles in June 2019 compared with 13.3% in June 2018

## How we will make this happen

### With our workforce we will:

- Co-design a youth engagement strategy with young people to ensure we include their views in decisions that affect them.
- Establish a different model for managing our response when concerns are raised about children in care.
- Provide case managers with the right tools and equipment to be mobile in their work and adaptable to changing environments.
- Capture better quality information and be smarter with our use of data to support planning and service design.
- Evaluate new initiatives and programs to ensure we are investing in services that achieve outcomes for children and young people.
- Adopt best practice models in providing trauma-responsive care across all case management and residential care facilities.

### With our partners we will:

- Work with the Guardian for Children and Young People to improve the care experience of children in residential care facilities.
- Work with the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People to improve care for Aboriginal children and young people.
- Introduce a performance framework across the system to establish consistency across all residential care facilities.

- Establish key performance indicators for our non-government partners to benchmark standards and better track progress.
- Support the research and application of best practice, evidence-based approaches to the system for children in care.
- Find new ways to use the views of children and young people to inform service development and improvement across the system.

## We know we have made a difference

- ☑ When children and young people participate in the decisions that have an impact on their lives (OOHC Standard 2).
- ☑ When we see increased participation by our workforce in the I Work for SA 'Your Voice' staff survey indicating job satisfaction and suggestions for improvement.
- ☑ When we see increased recruitment and retention of frontline staff, including through Graduate Programs and Traineeships.



We partner with **25 providers** across the non-government sector to deliver a range of contracted care services across the system

## Monitoring and oversight

There are several key bodies who have a role in our care system and advocate for the needs of children and young people in care.

**Staff, carers and volunteers** - must meet accreditation requirements and safety checks.

**Providers** - provide care services and undertake internal safety and quality assurance.

**Department** - provides care and monitors safety and quality.

**SA Ombudsman, Guardian for Children and Young People, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People** - independent oversight functions.

Together we provide oversight and accountability for quality services that keep children safe.

## Reporting

We will make use of existing reporting requirements to highlight progress in implementing this strategy. This includes:

- the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's reporting on the outcomes under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children
- the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services.

In addition, throughout this strategy we have identified how specific indicators used by the 'National Standards for Out-of-Home Care' relate to our priority areas and will be used to report developments.

## Where to from here

We are committed in our journey with all our stakeholders to make meaningful change. We consulted with our stakeholders and staff in July 2019 and value the feedback that has informed this final strategy. Some of the initiatives listed in this strategy are already underway and others will commence over the next three years.

## Appendix 1: Timeline

The following milestones have influenced and informed the development of this strategy:





## Appendix 2: National Standards for Out-of-Home Care

Standards	Measures	Relevant priority in this strategy
<p><b>Standard 1</b> Children and young people will be provided with stability and security during their time in care.</p>	<p>1.1 The proportion of children and young people exiting out-of-home care during the year who had 1 or 2 placements, by length of time in continuous care preceding exit.</p> <p>1.2 The rate and number of children in out-of-home care who were the subject of a child protection substantiation and the person believed responsible was living in the household providing out-of-home care.</p> <p>1.3 The proportion of children and young people in out-of-home care who report feeling safe and secure in their current placement.</p>	<p>Priority 2: Growing family based care</p> <p>Priority 3: Transforming non-family based care</p>
<p><b>Standard 2</b> Children and young people participate in decisions that have an impact on their lives.</p>	<p>2.1 The proportion of children and young people who report that they have opportunities to have a say in relation to decisions that have an impact on their lives and that they feel listened to.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Delivering a needs based system</p> <p>Priority 5: Enhancing quality and safeguarding</p>
<p><b>Standard 3</b> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities participate in decisions concerning the care and placement of their children and young people.</p>	<p>3.1 The proportion of Indigenous children and young people in out-of-home care placed with the child's extended family, with the child's Indigenous community, or with other Indigenous people, by carer type.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Delivering a needs based system</p>
<p><b>Standard 4</b> Each child and young person has an individualised plan that details their health, education and other needs.</p>	<p>4.1 The proportion of children and young people who have a current documented case plan.</p>	<p>Priority 2: Growing family based care</p> <p>Priority 3: Transforming non-family based care</p>
<p><b>Standard 5</b> Children and young people have their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs assessed and attended to in a timely way.</p>	<p>5.1 The number and proportion of children and young people who have an initial health check of their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs within a specified period of entering out-of-home care.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Delivering a needs based system</p>
<p><b>Standard 6</b> Children and young people in care access and participate in education and early childhood services to maximise their educational outcomes.</p>	<p>6.1 The proportion of children and young people achieving national reading and numeracy benchmarks.</p> <p>6.2 The number and proportion of 3 and 4-year-old children who participate in quality early childhood education and child care services.</p>	<p>Priority 2: Growing family based care</p> <p>Priority 3: Transforming non-family based care</p>
<p><b>Standard 7</b> Children and young people up to at least 18 years are supported to be engaged in appropriate education, training and/or employment.</p>	<p>7.1 The proportion of young people who complete year 10 and the proportion who complete year 12 or equivalent Vocational Education &amp; Training.</p>	<p>Priority 4: Improving transition to adult life</p>

<p><b>Standard 8</b> Children and young people in care are supported to participate in social and/or recreational activities of their choice, such as sporting, cultural or community activity.</p>	<p>8.1 The proportion of children and young people who report they may choose to do the same sorts of things (sporting, cultural or community activities) that children and young people their age who aren't in care do.</p>	<p>Priority 2: Growing family based care  Priority 3: Transforming non-family based care</p>
<p><b>Standard 9</b> Children and young people are supported to safely and appropriately maintain connection with family, be they birth parents, siblings or other family members.</p>	<p>9.1 The proportion of children and young people in out-of-home care who are placed with relatives and kin. 9.2 The proportion of children and young people who report they have an existing connection with at least one family member which they expect to maintain. 9.3 The proportion of children (as age-appropriate) and young people who report having contact with family members, by the reported frequency of contact, by their reported satisfaction with contact arrangements.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Delivering a needs based system</p>
<p><b>Standard 10</b> Children and young people in care are supported to develop their identity, safely and appropriately, through contact with their families, friends, culture, spiritual sources and communities and have their life history recorded as they grow up.</p>	<p>10.1 The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people who have a current cultural support plan.  10.2 The proportion of children (as age-appropriate) and young people who demonstrate having a sense of connection with the community in which they live.</p>	<p>Priority 1: Delivering a needs based system</p>
<p><b>Standard 11</b> Children and young people in care are supported to safely and appropriately identify and stay in touch, with at least one other person who cares about their future, who they can turn to for support and advice.</p>	<p>11.1 The proportion of children and young people who are able to nominate at least one significant adult who cares about them and who they believe they will be able to depend upon throughout their childhood or young adulthood.</p>	<p>Priority 4: Improving transition to adult life</p>
<p><b>Standard 12</b> Carers are assessed and receive relevant ongoing training, development and support, in order to provide quality care.</p>	<p>12.1 The number of foster carer households with a placement at 30 June, by number of foster children placed, and number of foster carer households with a placement during the year. 12.2 The number of foster carers at 30 June, and the number of new approvals of persons as foster carers and the number of persons who cease to be approved foster carers during the twelve months to 30 June. 12.3 The proportion of foster carers and kinship carers (who had at least one placement during the year) who report feeling supported in their role and who feel their developmental needs relevant to their role are catered for.</p>	<p>Priority 2: Growing family based care</p>
<p><b>Standard 13</b> Children and young people have a transition from care plan commencing at 15 years old which details support to be provided after leaving care.</p>	<p>13.1 The proportion of young people aged 15 years and over who have a current leaving care plan. 13.2 The proportion of young people who, at the time of exit from out-of-home care, report they are receiving adequate assistance to prepare for adult life.</p>	<p>Priority 4: Improving transition to adult life</p>

