

Communique – Queensland First Children and Families Board Meeting

5 – 6 March 2019

The Queensland First Children and Families Board met for the second time on 5-6 March 2019 in Brisbane.

As part of its oversight role of the [Our Way](#) strategy and associated action plans, the Board is working to create a shared responsibility and accountability between government, non-government and community.

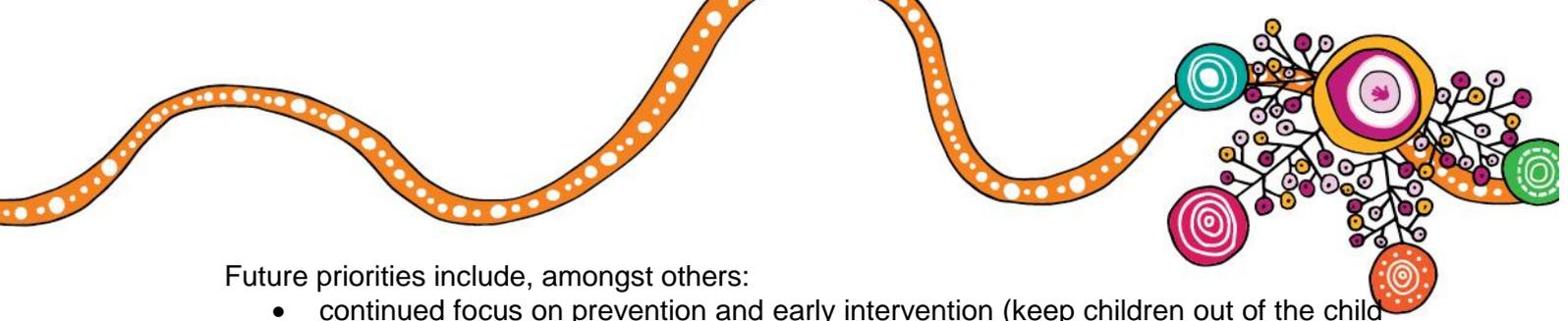
On Day 1, Board members were joined by Senior Executives from partner Queensland Government agencies who presented on [Changing Tracks](#) Actions and other key initiatives that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, with the intent of building the Whole of Government commitment and accountability for *Our Way*. Presenting agencies included the Departments of Premier and Cabinet; Child Safety Youth and Women; Justice and Attorney General; Queensland Health; Housing and Public Works; Education; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

Topics discussed included the Criminal Justice Reform Framework, [Family Matters Annual Report](#), National Redress Scheme for people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse, Sexual Violence Prevention Framework, [Blue Card Review](#) and the Families are First project.

The Board commended government agencies on the broad range of strategies and initiatives currently underway to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The Board highlighted the importance of understanding the synergies and alignment of this work with the *Our Way* strategy, as well as, the need for targeted and integrated whole of government responses to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in or at risk of entering the child protection and youth justice systems. The Board will work with the *Our Way* team in the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women to consolidate and map linkages and leverage opportunities across government strategies and initiatives to support the *Our Way* vision, and reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection and youth justice systems

On Day 2, Board members met with the Honourable Di Farmer, Minister for Child Safety Youth and Women. Minister Farmer again, echoed her commitment and support for the Board and the opportunity for the Board to provide advice and guidance on how the Board can work in partnership with the Department and government to improve the child protection system to better protect and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in Queensland.

The Board's key focus for Day 2 was the identification of key priorities moving forward, which will inform the development of the second Changing Tracks Action Plan 2020-2022.



Future priorities include, amongst others:

- continued focus on prevention and early intervention (keep children out of the child protection and youth justice systems);
- support for children currently in the child protection system, with a focus on, stable placements quality care, kinship care and reunification with family;
- increased support for children transitioning out of the child protection system;
- continued commitment to funding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations, and businesses, recognising that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and businesses are best placed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders;
- maximising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family led decision making across all key decision points across the child protection continuum;
- continue the focus on the [First 1000 Days Australia](#) to give all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children a great start in life;
- develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing strategy and action plan to enhance the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in or at risk of entering the child protection or youth justice systems to address intergenerational trauma and grief and loss;
- government and non-government organisations are held accountable for the delivery of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and community.

Outcomes of the Board's meeting included, amongst others:

- the Minister convening a forum specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men to discuss issues, needs and solutions in relation to domestic and family violence;
- endorsement of the *Our Way* Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Changing Tracks Evaluation Plan and its first Progress Report (Changing Tracks 2017-2018);
- agreement that Board members are engaged in the following government initiatives:
 - Criminal Justice System Reform Framework;
 - Review the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women structured decision making tools together with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak;
 - Queensland Family and Child Commissions Families are First project; and
 - Empowering Families Innovation Grant focus areas for Round 3.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 4-5 June 2019.

For more information in relation to the Board including communiques please visit the Board's webpage <https://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/campaign/supporting-families/background/queensland-first-children-families-board>.

Any other queries can be emailed to the Board Secretariat through the following email address qcfbsec@csyw.qld.gov.au.

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