

Child Protection and Family Services Outcomes Framework



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This presentation

- Policy Drivers
- The journey so far
- Vision and purpose
- Links to Quality System
- Types of outcomes
- Sources of data
- Key Messages
- Next steps

Re-visiting Victorian Government Policy drivers

A Fairer Victoria 2009 : confirms key priorities

- **Priority area 1 – Getting the Best Start**
Early years support for children and families at risk
- **Priority area 2 – Improving education and helping people into work**
Reducing educational inequalities, supporting young people at risk and reducing barriers and promoting wellbeing
- **Priority area 3 – Improving Health and Wellbeing**
Reducing health inequalities and promoting wellbeing
- **Priority area 4 – Developing liveable communities**
Strengthening neighbourhoods and local communities

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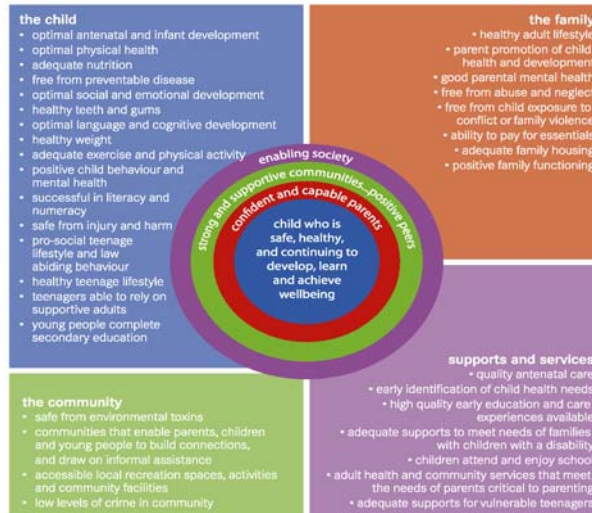
The State of Victoria's Children

A series of 4 reports developed in order to:

- continually update our knowledge of how children and young people are faring in Victoria;
- identify where additional action may be required;
- understand whether existing programs are helping and how they are helping; and
- effectively communicate this to the Victorian community.

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Victorian Outcomes Framework (VOFC)



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Priority Groups

Concentration on 4 priority groups:

- Indigenous children;
- Children with a disability;
- Children from CALD backgrounds; and
- Children affected by chronic disadvantage (including children who are in the Child Protection and Family Services service system including those in Out of Home Care).

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Commonwealth Drivers

- National Approach to Protecting Australia's Children released April 2009
- Developed by all Australian Governments and the Coalition of Organisations Committed to the Safety and Wellbeing of Australia's Children (64 CSOs)
- Aims to achieve '*a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect*'

National Framework

- Six supporting outcomes:
 - Children live in safe and supportive families and communities
 - Children and families access adequate support to promote safety and intervene early
 - Risk factors for child abuse and neglect are addressed
 - Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing
 - Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities
 - Child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support.
- Initial three year action plan with range of strategies and set of key indicators of change associated with each strategy

Other means of measuring outcomes for vulnerable children

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
 - Annual *Child Protection Australia report*
 - Main focus on activity measures (reports, investigations, substantiations, orders, children in care, children on orders)
 - Provides useful cross-jurisdictional data and long terms trend data
 - A range of other AIHW reports focus on broader child wellbeing indicators e.g A picture of Australia's Children 2009
- Annual Report of Government Services (Productivity Commission) includes section on delivery of child protection services
 - Main focus is on efficiency of child protection systems
 - Recent focus on outcomes delivered by child protection systems e.g educational outcomes (achievement of national literacy and numeracy benchmarks by children in out of home care)
 - Reporting arrangements currently under review
- All useful data – but none able to provide a comprehensive view of outcomes for children and families in the child protection system – and hence the decision to develop a Victorian Child Protection and Outcomes Framework

The Journey so far...

Draft Framework developed within the context of significant legislative and policy reform of child protection and family services in Victoria

- Through an extensive collaborative process with DHS regions and CSOs
- Involved wide ranging consultation and subsequent refinement of the measures and indicators by Australian Institute of Family Services
- Produced agreement about key aspects:
 - The vision;
 - The purpose of the framework;
 - The types of outcomes - evidence based, defined by the *Every Child Every Chance* Best Interests Framework, strongly linked to the VOFC;
 - The sources of data to measure outcomes-using agreed indicators from available data; and
 - The need for a survey of service recipients (CAFSOS) to test indicators and measures.

A Framework for Vulnerable Children

The Vision

Children who are:

- Safe;
- Healthy;
- Continuing to develop; and who
- Learn and achieve wellbeing.

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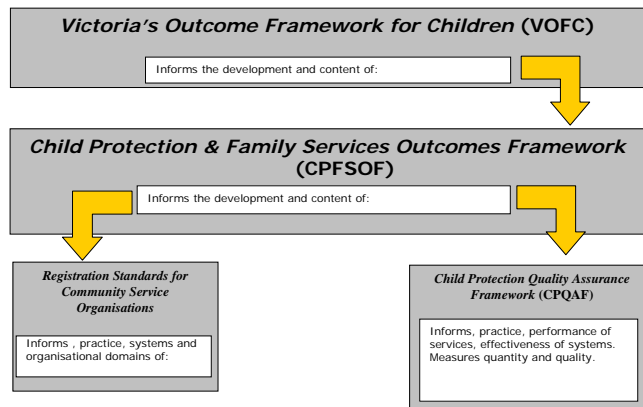
A Framework for Vulnerable Children

The Purpose

- To provide baseline information for “4th priority group” i.e. children affected by chronic disadvantage;
- To inform ‘target setting’;
- To support the identification of priority outcomes;
- To inform policy; and
- As a spur to performance –providing feedback to quality assurance processes.

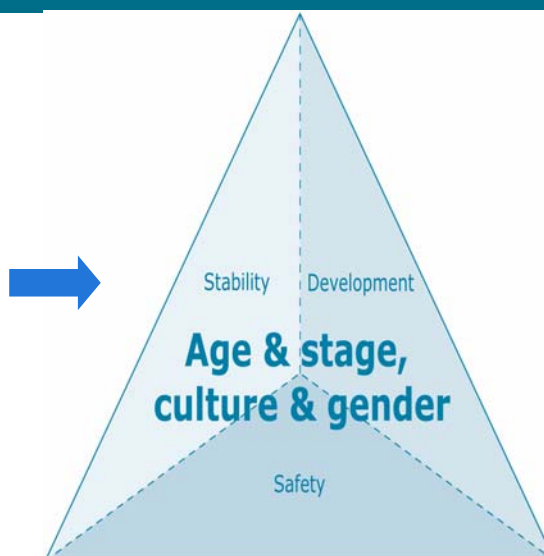
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Envisaged Child Protection Quality System



Work with children and families supported by a new Best Interests Case Practice model

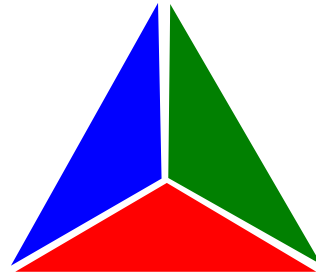
- Established in new legislation – Children, Youth and Families Act, 2005
- Known as the *Every Child Every Chance* reforms, the legislation has a core focus on the child's experience, specifically:
 - Their safety
 - Their stability
 - Their development
 - Moderated through the lens of the child's age, stage of life, culture and gender



The Best Interests Framework link to Outcomes Framework for Vulnerable Children

- Outcomes grouped under:

- Safety;
- Stability;
- Development.



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10 Outcomes

Children and young people:

- ✓ are safe from injury and harm;
- ✓ are connected to family and carers;
- ✓ are connected to school and community;
- ✓ are connected to their culture;
- ✓ enjoy optimal health;
- ✓ achieve optimal education and learning;
- ✓ have a positive sense of self;
- ✓ achieve optimal social and emotional development;
- ✓ display positive behaviour and good mental health; and
- ✓ display pro-social teenage lifestyle.

10 Outcomes

- Each outcome indicator has a range of quantitative and qualitative measures
- Will be supported by a range of environmental and contextual data sets
- Will enable detailed view of:
 - Overall statewide picture
 - Regional profiles
 - Child FIRST catchment profiles
 - Specific cohort analyses (eg Aboriginal children, age and gender cohorts)

Outcomes & Indicators under the domain of Safety

Outcome:

Children are safe from injury and harm

Indicators:

- Injuries/assaults requiring hospital treatment – comparison of injuries to children in out of home care, compared to injuries to all children.
- Children/young people protected from harmful situations or people who might do them harm - including children known to child protection or OOHC.
- Non-accidental deaths attributed to child abuse or neglect - including those which meet the VCDC criteria.

Outcomes & Indicators under the domain of Stability

Outcome :

Children are connected to family and carers

Indicators:

- Number of primary carers in the child's lifetime.
- Frequency of contact with family (including extended family) - including the level of contact with parents and siblings.
- % of children who have a positive relationship with at least one birth family member.

Outcomes & Indicators under the domain of Stability

Outcome:

Children are connected to their culture

Indicators:

- The proportion of Aboriginal and children from CALD backgrounds who are actively engaged in culturally appropriate activities.
- The proportion of Aboriginal and children from CALD backgrounds who experience acceptance of their culture from others.
- The proportion of Aboriginal and children from CALD backgrounds who are connected to at least one adult from their culture.

Outcomes & Indicators under the domain of Development

Outcome:

Children achieve optimal social and emotional development

Indicators:

- The proportion of children who experience a positive relationship with their primary carer.
- The proportion of children who experience positive warmth and affection in their relationships with parents/carers.
- The proportion of children with good social skills.
- The proportion of children with positive peer friendships.
- The proportion of children who have adult support available to them.

Outcomes & Indicators under the domain of Development

Outcome:

Those who experience a healthy teenage lifestyle

Indicators:

- Involvement in appropriate social activities outside of home.
- Use of illicit substances.
- Use of alcohol.
- Use of tobacco.
- Engagement in sexual activity.
- Teenage pregnancy/parenthood.

Where will the data come from?

- As much as possible from available data:
 - ✓ Victorian Children and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS)
 - ✓ CRIS/IRIS – databases
 - ✓ Quality of Care databases
 - ✓ Child Safety Commissioner (VCDRC)
 - ✓ Child and Family Services Outcomes Survey

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Child and Family Services Outcomes Survey

Purpose

- To gather data that is not measurable from/does not exist in from currently available data sets;
- Refined by the Australian Institute for Family Services
- To test reliability of existing data on outcome measures; and
- To provide information to inform the Evaluation of Child and Family Service System Reforms.

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Child and Family Services Outcomes Survey

Scope

- 300 principal adult carers will be telephone surveyed from each sector:
 - Family Services
 - Out of Home Care
 - Child Protection
- From this sample, a minimum of 200 children and young people will be separately surveyed face to face.
- Will be piloted Oct/Nov 2009
- Will be conducted twice in two years.

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CAFSOS Next steps

- Completion of CAFSOS survey instruments - July 2009.
- Briefing DHS Child Protection and Family Services and Out of Home Care agencies - July/August 2009. Conduct final consultations with key stakeholders
- Appointment of a Contractor to undertake adult survey - September 2009.
- Approval by DHS Ethics Committee/privacy information sharing protocols.- September 2009.
- Piloting of the Survey Instrument - October 2009.
- Adjustment and revision of CAFSOS with implementation of the survey in November 2009.

Key Messages

- Critical importance of whole of sector buy-in.
- Keep the focus on child outcomes/ not service performance –in order to maximise relevance to the whole service system.
- Effective implementation of a system of continuous performance evaluation dependant on service capacity.
- Maximise use of data from existing sources- e.g. LAC, CRIS

Where to from here?

- A collaborative approach between DHS, DEECD and Community Organisations
- The creation of an on-going process to:
 - Analyse the results, in order to inform future plans
 - Integrate with and support/inform the implementation of the National Framework

Further Information

Victorian *Every Child Every Chance* website:

<http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/every-child-every-chance/home>

- Stall at this week's symposium with Departmental staff able to provide further information