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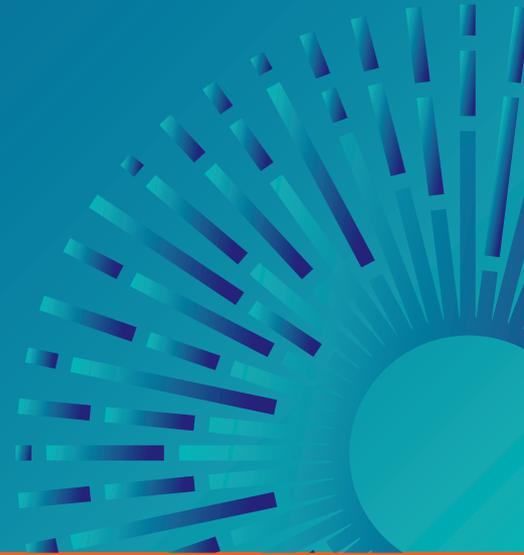
Developments to strengthen systems for child protection across Australia

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Child Family Community Australia | information exchange



Families Framework research domain: **Challenges for families**



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Summary

Child protection systems are multidimensional, complex, continually adapting entities that seek to prevent and respond to protection-related risks. Systems for child protection in Australia today are facing significant challenges. This has created the imperative to go beyond incremental adjustments and aim for transformational change. This paper outlines the latest iteration of changes within Australian child protection systems. It draws on a survey completed by child protection departments across Australia on change and reform planned or underway since July 2010. Change is documented and compared in terms of child protection system principles, goals and components. Considerable changes to systems for protecting children are planned or underway right across Australia. These are being designed and implemented mainly in response to shortcomings identified in independent reviews. They aim to reduce the number of children involved in statutory child protection and out-of-home care (OOHC) and achieve greater permanence and improved outcomes for children who enter OOHC. Addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal children and families in all areas of the statutory child protection system, particularly the high number of Aboriginal children entering OOHC, is an area of particular focus for reform.

KEY MESSAGES

- Systems for child protection in Australia today are facing significant challenges including insufficient capacity to meet the quantity and complexity of cases into statutory child protection and out-of-home care (OOHC), failure to improve outcomes for children in OOHC and the over-representation of Aboriginal children in statutory child protection and OOHC.
- There has been a remarkable degree of reform and change in child protection systems across Australia in recent times.
- While strategies have been adopted in response to specific concerns and the unique context of service delivery in each jurisdiction, there are many parallels between jurisdictions.
- Several jurisdictions are establishing new approaches to build a more robust and coordinated community service system, reconfiguring their OOHC and leaving care systems and investing in Aboriginal service organisations, Aboriginal service practices and Aboriginal workforce capacity.
- To see real and lasting change, the principle of collective responsibility for protecting children must extend to system stewardship. When diverse stakeholders learn and solve problems collaboratively they can foster more effective actions and better outcomes for children and families than they could otherwise accomplish.

Background

Australian state and territory child protection systems are facing significant challenges including:

- insufficient capacity to meet the quantity and complexity of cases into statutory child protection and out-of-home care (OOHC);
- practice concerns in statutory child protection;
- presentation of families with more chronic and complex risks and needs requiring a response that crosses the boundaries of government agencies that isn't always available;
- the intergenerational cycle of abuse and neglect;
- failure to improve outcomes for children in OOHC;
- unstable OOHC placements, poor outcomes for care leavers; and
- over-representation of Aboriginal children in statutory child protection and OOHC (see reports of public inquiries and reviews referenced in Appendix A and Katz, Cortis, Shlonsky, & Mildon, 2016).

This has created an imperative to go beyond incremental adjustments and aim for transformational change. There is no single optimal system to protect children from abuse and neglect (Katz, 2015) and as Munro stated, there “was no golden age” of child protection (2010, p. 9). Each country must work within its own particular cultural, community, resource and societal context to tackle the task of protecting children. However, jurisdictions can learn from each other and, in particular, from other sectors who take a similar approach to building child protection systems (Connolly, 2014).

The aim of this paper is to chart the changes in Australia in recent years, so jurisdictions can learn from reform happening elsewhere. The paper includes some broad observations on how our systems are evolving and how they can be steered towards their objectives for children and families in the future.



Box 1: Describing and comparing child protection systems

There is a growing body of research that describes and analyses how different countries and jurisdictions manage and implement systems for protecting children. This research helps facilitate discussion about the objectives of such systems and their impact on children, and brings into focus the way systems are developing within a particular country or jurisdiction.

Bromfield and Higgins (2005) provided detailed descriptions of the process of providing statutory child protection services in Australia. Bromfield and Holzer (2008) collected additional information about strategies to integrate statutory child protection with other sectors (health, education and justice) and early intervention approaches to prevent child protection involvement. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (AIHW) *Child Protection Australia* series also includes accompanying information about jurisdictions' mandatory reporting requirements, child welfare legislation, grounds that indicate a child is in need of protection as well as policy and practice differences that affect the reporting and aggregation of child protection statistics (see AIHW, 2017). Recent changes to jurisdictions' policies and data systems are also included as an appendix to the annual *Child Protection Australia* report. The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 annual report to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) 2012–13 includes information about major and planned state and territory child protection reforms across Australia since 2000 (see Department of Social Services [DSS], 2014).

There is also a body of international research that analyses and compares various aspects of child protection systems. For example, the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) recently compared aspects of the protection and care system in New Zealand with several other jurisdictions around the world, including the Australian state of New South Wales (see Katz, Cortis, Shlonsky, & Mildon, 2016). The HESTIA research project is currently comparing three quite different welfare states (England, Germany and the Netherlands) in order to discover the nature and impact of variations in child protection systems (see <welfarestatefutures.org/research-network/hestia-policies-and-responses-with-regard-to-child-abuse-and-neglect-in-england-germany-and-the-netherlands-a-comparative-multi-site-study/>).

Typologies cluster different child protection systems according to shared characteristics and enable the analyst to focus on similar patterns that recur across jurisdictions (UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children & World Vision, 2013b). The typology approach helps us to better understand the nature of different systems and the implications of different approaches to protecting children. This approach builds on the work of Gilbert (1997), who divided child protection systems into “child protection” and “family support” orientated systems by their position on four dimensions: problem frame (individualistic/social), preliminary intervention (legalistic/therapeutic), state/parent relationship (adversarial/partnership) and OOHC placements (voluntary/involuntary). Child focus/child development and community care orientations have since been added to Gilbert's dichotomy (Gilbert, Parton, & Skivenes, 2011).

The validity and usefulness of protection typologies in describing modern child protection systems, which are more dynamic, complex and multidimensional, has since been challenged. Emerging child protection systems in low and middle income countries have also challenged the fit, nature and scope of typologies built upon the experience of high-income countries.

Experts agree that there are a number of dimensions that can describe child protection systems, such as

- the level of service integration and shared responsibility for children (single or multi-agency responsibility for children);
- the emphasis on early intervention and prevention (preventative vs responsive child protection/response measures);
- the focus of protection efforts (families, institutions, community);
- the degree to which interventions are established or sanctioned by the government (degree of formality/informality);
- overall approach of the system to the child in his/her family and community (e.g., from punitive to a rights-based system);
- the context within which the child protection system operates (fragility/complexity of systems); and
- the performance of the system (see Katz, 2015; UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children & World Vision, 2013b).

Project methodology

During November 2016, key contacts in agencies with responsibility for statutory child protection in all Australian states/territories and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (see Table 1) were invited by Child Family Community Australia (CFCA) to complete a data collection survey. The survey included questions related to actual or planned changes to aspects of the child protection system included in Figure 1 *since July 2010*.

Key contacts were advised that completion of the survey may require input from other government departments that have a role in preventing entry or re-entry of children into the statutory child protection system. Information contained in completed surveys was transposed into a summary table (see Appendix A). Key contacts were asked to include links to websites wherever possible. These have been included in Appendix A so readers can access further information. Early in 2017 a draft version of Appendix A was circulated to key contacts for verification. Some information was subsequently updated.

Surveys were completed for all states/territories (with the exception of South Australia) and the Commonwealth. At the time of data collection, the Government of South Australia was preparing its response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission report, *The Life They Deserve* (Government of South Australia, 2016a). The response, *Child Protection: A Fresh Start* (Government of South Australia, 2016b) signals an intent to significantly reform the statutory child protection system and reorient the broader system for protecting children towards a child development system that devotes resources and efforts to preventing child maltreatment. So, while it was not possible to include South Australia in this comparison and discussion, the South Australian system is undergoing significant transformation.

Table 1: State/territory department responsible for statutory child protection

State/Territory	Name of Department	Acronym
New South Wales	Department of Family and Community Services	FACS
Western Australia	Department of Child Protection and Family Support	DCPFS
Australian Capital Territory	Child and Youth Protection Services	CYPS
Queensland	Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services	DCCSDS
Northern Territory	Territory Families ¹	DCF
Tasmania	Department of Health and Human Services	DHHS
Victoria	Department of Health and Human Services	DHHS

Examining system components, goals and principles

The survey collected information about changes within eight system components or “building blocks” (structures, functions and capacities) that have either been included in earlier child protection system models (e.g., Forbes, Luu, Oswald, & Tutnjevic, 2011; Wulczyn et al., 2010) or described in relevant work on child protection systems change (Allen Consulting Group, 2009; Delaney & Quigley, 2014; Fox et al., 2015; Munro, 2010; NZ Productivity Commission, 2015; Shergold, 2013). The system components examined were system rules, decision-making, feedback, knowledge and evidence, service components, service connections, workforce and service providers.

The survey also collected information about system principles and system goals. System components interact with each another to affect system outcomes, or goals for children and families (UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children, & World Vision, 2013a). Principles define and underpin the overall orientation to protecting children.

Further, the survey took a broad view of the people, agencies and sectors that were inside the child protection system. Child protection was conceptualised as both a sector and inter-sectoral, incorporating prevention as a key characteristic and requiring integration with a range of different sectors and coordination between many actors in the system (e.g., civil society, NGOs, state services).

A child protection system model representing system components, system actors, principles and goals was developed specifically for the survey (Figure 1, page 5).

¹ Territory Families was established by the Northern Territory Government on 12 September 2016. Prior to this the Department of Children and Families was responsible for child protection functions.

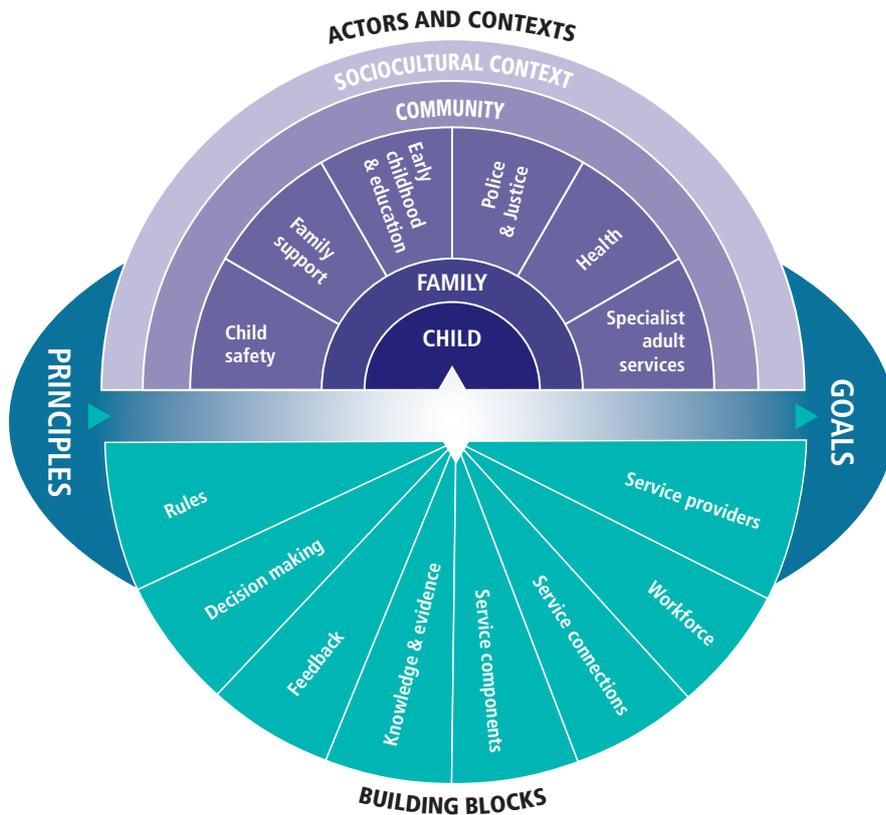


Figure 1: Child protection system framework.

It is also important to recognise that this paper intentionally compares jurisdictions in terms of change and reform that has occurred between July 2010 and November 2016 and does not provide a detailed description of system components, goals and principles at a particular point in time. For example, this time frame may not capture several changes introduced in NSW in 2009–10 following the *Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in New South Wales* in 2008 (“Wood Royal Commission Report”; State of New South Wales, 2008) nor will it reflect their position of development on several system aspects.

Efforts to improve systems for protecting children

There has been a remarkable degree of reform and change in child protection systems across Australia in recent times. All jurisdictions with the exception of the Northern Territory currently have a major plan or strategy for reforming their system (or a subsystem such as the OOH system) for protecting children. The Northern Territory has a number of major activities and initiatives underway. Plans for system reform include:

- Safe Home for Life (New South Wales);
- Their Futures Matter: A New Approach (New South Wales);
- Building a Better Future (Western Australia);
- Building Safe and Strong Families (Western Australia);
- A Step-Up for Our Kids (Australian Capital Territory);
- Supporting Families, Changing Futures (Queensland);
- Strong Families–Safe Kids (Tasmania); and
- Roadmap for Reform (Victoria).

Specific reform efforts are described next.

Principles

Permanency for children is a principle that appears in new legislation in New South Wales, the Northern Territory and Victoria. The Tasmanian *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* is strongly based on the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) and New South Wales has strengthened children's participation rights in respect of whether a Guardianship application proceeds. New South Wales legislation requires a child or young person's consent before a Guardianship Order can be approved. Introducing an expanded paramount principle of "the safety, wellbeing and best interests of a child now and throughout their lives" is one of the options being considered in a current review of child protection legislation in Queensland. Jurisdictions have also articulated a number of principles that underpin and guide reform directions that reflect current attitudes and values about the operation of systems for protecting children. Aboriginal consultation, dialogue and, in some cases, control are key principles of reform, as are principles such as working together and intervening early.

Goals and priorities for reform

While the Commonwealth Government has articulated six high-level outcomes or goals for protecting Australia's children, with the exception of the Northern Territory,² which specified five strategic outcomes for the Department of Children and Families, jurisdictions have not articulated an overall purpose for their systems for protecting children. However, jurisdictions have developed outcomes frameworks for human services more broadly (e.g., the New South Wales Human Services Outcomes Framework and the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services Outcomes Framework).³

Jurisdictions have specified remarkably similar strategic goals for reforming systems for protecting children. They include:

- diverting children from statutory child protection;
- reducing re-reporting to statutory child protection;
- increasing exits from OOHC;
- reducing the number of children in OOHC;
- improving outcomes for children in OOHC and post-care; and
- reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal children in the statutory child protection system.

Jurisdictions have also specified how they plan to achieve these goals, such as:

- better use of evidence and building the evidence of effective programs and interventions;
- enhanced analytics capacity;
- use of big data and actuarial calculations to derive evidence and insights about where to target interventions;
- sharing responsibility across organisations and government departments;
- greater use of client-directed and other devolved approaches;
- strengthened processes for continuous improvement;
- improving workforce capability and cultural competence; and
- enhancing prevention and early intervention efforts.

Rules

There have been changes to principle Acts of Parliament relevant to child protection in a number of jurisdictions. Legislation has also been introduced to establish oversight agencies (e.g., Advocate for Children and Young People in New South Wales, Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) and Office of the Public Guardian, and the National Commissioner) or to define and strengthen responsibilities of existing oversight agencies (e.g., Commissioner for Children and Young People, Tasmania). A number of jurisdictions have also made consequential amendments to key child protection legislation to support reform directions. It is particularly noteworthy that within the time frame for this comparison, several jurisdictions have established time limits

² New South Wales has proposed a single outcomes framework for vulnerable children and families in *Their Futures Matter: A New Approach*.

³ Outcomes frameworks have also been specified for OOHC (see Appendix A).

for reunification and/or introduced new court orders to give children in OOHC a more permanent family life (Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, New South Wales and Victoria).

New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory have also strengthened Working with Children legislation, while the Australian Capital Territory has amended legislation to better facilitate information sharing. New legislation in New South Wales and Victoria advances self-determination, or the opportunity to participate and exercise meaningful control in the protection and care of children for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Operational protocols, standards and regulations

There are a number of developments designed to strengthen control of how systems for protecting children operate and to ensure that organisations and services adhere to high quality standards. Child-safe standards and guidelines for organisations providing direct care and support to children and for individuals working with children (including carers) are apparent in several states. The Commonwealth Government has also developed national OOHC standards, which the Australian Capital Territory has adopted. New South Wales has developed its own quality assurance framework for OOHC and Tasmania has a quality and regulatory framework for OOHC in development. Similarly, the Northern Territory has introduced a charter of rights for children in OOHC and Victoria is introducing spot audits for residential care units. Several jurisdictions have also established new oversight committees, departmental branches or extended the role of external oversight bodies in relation to system monitoring, as well as new or improved systems for managing adverse incidents and complaints (e.g., New South Wales, the Northern Territory and Victoria).

Decision-making

Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and New South Wales provided information about the establishment of new committees and governance bodies for integrated and/or localised governance and to strengthen relationships between government departments and funded NGOs. Several jurisdictions are also making better use of client feedback and insights, especially in relation to the involvement of children and young people in OOHC or who have had an OOHC experience. This is through the establishment of advisory groups and other innovative methods of engagement. Other stakeholders, particularly funded non-government organisations, are also being engaged in policy design and implementation processes through Ministerial Advisory Groups and other consultative arrangements (e.g., stakeholders were engaged in the design of the Hope and Healing trauma-informed therapeutic framework for the residential care of children and young people in Queensland and ChildStory in New South Wales).

Information was also provided on new frameworks for commissioning services and driving improved outcomes, such as utilising social investment approaches and initiatives under the broad framework of payment or contracting for outcomes (e.g., New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland) and flexible models for commissioning services, particularly in relation to complex families and OOHC clients (e.g., Victoria and New South Wales). States/territories also indicated more robust performance monitoring approaches as well as targets designed to change operations (e.g., targets for provision of services to Aboriginal children and families and contracts requiring partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in Western Australia). The Australian Capital Territory has established a flat fee for OOHC to encourage efforts to keep children in home-based care instead of residential care.

Feedback on system performance

While current reform agendas have been driven by an external inquiry, internal feedback mechanisms are emerging, particularly in relation to capturing client outcomes and service experience data in OOHC so problems can be detected and acted on in a timely manner. There have also been developments in New South Wales and the Northern Territory to improve system analytic capability. This is in addition to performance monitoring approaches (understanding the processing of cases through targets) outlined under “Decision-making” above.

Knowledge and evidence

There is considerable effort underway to bring practice more in line with research and thereby improve quality of care. This is occurring through building understanding of interventions and service components that are effective, and rigorously evaluating innovative service models. In Queensland, the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) has legislative responsibility (under s 9(1)(e) of the *Family and Child Commission Act 2014*) to assist relevant agencies to evaluate the efficacy of their programs, identify the most effective program models and to analyse and evaluate whole system policies and practices. There is also significant investment in testing new initiatives, such as the practice first model in New South Wales, Family Support Networks in Western Australia and the Step-Up for Our Kids reform in the Australian Capital Territory. Some state departments have also formed partnerships to develop new, science-based interventions that can better protect children, such as the Northern Territory partnership with the Menzies School of Health Research to develop a logic model for remote family services.

Jurisdictions are also investing in strategic research to understand how policies are currently working, and to plan for the future. For example, New South Wales has the Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study (underway since 2010) and Western Australia is planning their own longitudinal study of OOHC. Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and the Northern Territory are collaborating with the university sector to develop the evidence base for child and family services (e.g., the establishment of the Institute of Open Adoption Studies in New South Wales). Victoria is undertaking an evidence gap map to inform the development of a child and family research agenda.

At a national level, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) continue to explore options for improved national data analysis and reporting, including longitudinal studies of children in OOHC.

Service components

Several jurisdictions have funded new programs and services that extend the range of services and/or substitute or adapt existing services for protecting children. The details are outlined below.

Early intervention

There has been increased focus nationally on developing early intervention services and approaches in order to divert families from statutory child protection. Most jurisdictions have invested in new and enhanced models of intensive family support (such as the introduction of the SafeCare program in New South Wales and adaptations to the Best Beginnings home-visiting program in Western Australia). The Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland and the Northern Territory have also invested in new intensive family preservation/support programs and introduced new ways of working with families with complex needs and risks who are involved in multiple services. Aligning the work of family and domestic violence services with family support and child protection is a common theme across these developments.

Queensland has enhanced universal prevention by making the Triple P parenting program free of charge to all Queensland parents and carers of children 16 years of age and younger. Queensland has also taken steps to enhance the natural support networks of parents through the Talking Families social marketing campaign and has integrated the functions of several family support programs into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing services to provide holistic prevention and early intervention services.

Statutory child protection

Jurisdictions have made several changes across the reporting, intake, investigation/assessment, case planning and case management phases of child protection services. In terms of mandatory reporting requirements, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and Victoria have all broadened the occupational groups designated as mandatory reporters (relating to sexual abuse in Western Australia). The Australian Capital Territory has introduced a reportable conduct scheme to ensure that allegations of child abuse and certain criminal convictions are identified, reported and acted on. In Western Australia, psychological abuse has been removed as a separate ground for protection. Instead, a definition is provided of emotional abuse that includes psychological abuse and exposure to domestic violence. New South Wales and Queensland have improved and clarified their mandatory reporting guidelines and the Australian Capital Territory is working with the police to improve the quality of reports (notifications). FACS (NSW) is also reviewing its prenatal policy to improve its response to expectant parents and their unborn child who is the subject of a prenatal report.

In relation to the intake phase of child protection, there have been changes to the way government reporting agencies are structured and operate. Western Australia (metropolitan district offices) and the Northern Territory have moved to a central child protection intake model, with the Northern Territory providing a 24-hours a day, seven-days a week response. In Victoria, eight business-hour regional intake services have been replaced by four business-hour divisional services.

Regarding the investigation and assessment phase of child protection, following the example of New South Wales with its introduction of the Joint Investigative Response Taskforce (JIRT) model in 1997, several jurisdictions are moving to a more multidisciplinary approach to the statutory child protection investigation process. This includes the introduction of Multi-agency Investigation and Support Teams (MIST) in Western Australia, a MOU for joint investigations with police in the Northern Territory and multidisciplinary units consisting of police, centres against sexual assault and statutory child protection in Victoria. In March 2014, New South Wales JIRT Agencies implemented a statewide protocol (JIRT Local Contact Point Protocol (LCP)) to assist with the provision of information and support to parents and concerned community members where there are allegations of child sexual abuse involving an institution. This JIRT LCP Protocol has been supported by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools have been introduced in the Northern Territory to facilitate decision-making at critical points in the child protection investigation process.

In terms of case planning and ongoing child protection intervention, models of family group conferences/meetings have also been introduced or are being strengthened at various points in the child protection process (e.g., prior to court proceedings and/or during case planning) to empower families, enhance partnerships with parents involved with statutory child protection and avoid contested court hearings. Family-inclusive decision-making processes include Family Group Conferencing in New South Wales, Signs of Safety Pre-Hearing Conferences in Western Australia and Children's Court Conciliation Conferences in Victoria. Queensland also has plans to strengthen its family group meeting model.

Measures have also been introduced to help navigate and support families through their involvement with statutory child protection. The Australian Capital Territory has introduced independent advocacy support to birth families of children and young people at risk of, or who have entered, the care system when they are dealing with statutory child protection.

Court processes and child protection orders

There have been several changes to the way in which child protection matters are resolved including changes to court processes, new court networks that allow for greater collaboration with other courts, and changes to care and protection orders. For example, Western Australia is trialling child protection matters in the Family Court to achieve greater collaboration between the family law and child protection systems. A Koori Court has also been established within the family division of the Children's Court of Victoria. In Queensland, new legislation has enabled the establishment of a new court work model for the statutory child protection system.

As highlighted under legislation in Appendix A, New South Wales, the Northern Territory and Victoria have introduced a new placement hierarchy or set of child protection orders that aim to achieve greater permanency for children in or entering OOHC, while Western Australia has expanded responsible parenting agreements (formal written agreement between a parent and an authorised officer in one of the departments of education, child protection or corrective services).

Out-of-home care

Across Australia, there has been the widespread introduction and/or development of therapeutic care frameworks and care models, including:

- a new evidence-based therapeutic residential care system in New South Wales;
- the introduction of therapeutic assessments and plans in the Australian Capital Territory; and
- the introduction of the Hope and Healing therapeutic framework for residential care in Queensland.

Models of therapeutic residential care are in development in the Northern Territory (in partnership with the Australian Childhood Foundation) and Victoria. In Western Australia, the Department of Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS) has been certified as a Sanctuary organisation⁴ and has established enhanced contact centres using the Circle of Security (see <www.circleofsecurityinternational.com>) model. Western Australia has

⁴ See <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Resources/Documents/Residential_Care_Sanctuary_Framework.pdf>.

also introduced the Circle of Security model for day-to-day therapeutic practice with children in residential care facilities and is proposing further changes to focus on healing from trauma. A range of other initiatives to reform the OOHC model are being trialled in Victoria, including a trial of the program Treatment Foster Care Oregon (see <www.tfcoregon.com>). Queensland is currently reviewing its investment in placement services and the Australian Capital Territory is establishing new and differentiated models of OOHC.

Carer and birth parent supports

New South Wales has expanded its intensive family preservation program to support authorised carers and birth parents. Western Australia has introduced a one-off establishment payment to informal relative carers. Victoria has made additional funding available in connection with new permanency legislation for flexible packages to work with birth families intensively to support reunification and family preservation. Queensland has committed to have all kinship carers supported by a Foster Care Support Agency. Both New South Wales and Victoria have introduced tailored support packages/targeted care packages to provide children and families with services based on need.

Leaving care and aftercare

Ensuring that care leavers have sufficient opportunities to progress toward a satisfactory standard of wellbeing in adulthood has been a focus of reform across several jurisdictions and the Commonwealth. The Australian Capital Territory has extended financial support to young people leaving care until the age of 21 and extended voluntary support to the age of 25. Queensland has introduced new post-care support through the Next Steps After Care service. New South Wales is further developing a leaving care strategy. Under the Care for my Future reform strategy, New South Wales is implementing a number of changes including a reconfiguration of the specialist aftercare services program to provide better access to care leavers from high-risk cohorts. Victoria is trialling the Better Futures leaving care model as part of a system redesign initiative. The Commonwealth funded a trial of Towards Independent Adulthood, an intensive, wraparound case management service in Western Australia. Queensland has also developed the *Kicbox* mobile phone app to support care leavers, while the Northern Territory has expanded on pre-existing preparation and planning requirements for young people transitioning from care.



Service connections

Several jurisdictions have introduced, or are planning to introduce, common assessment frameworks to build shared knowledge and capacity across the whole system for protecting children. New South Wales is planning the introduction of a common risk and needs identification tool. In Western Australia, a common client self-assessment tool is used across Family Support Networks. Tasmania has committed to promoting the use of the Common Approach more broadly across services, while the Commonwealth has trialled an adapted version of the Common Approach in 13 mental health support services across Australia. The Queensland Strengthening Families Protecting Children Framework for Practice includes a collaborative assessment and planning framework.

Several jurisdictions have introduced, or are trialling, common, visible entry points into community-based services as a way of better connecting families with a network of local services without unnecessary contact with the statutory child protection system. Western Australia is establishing Family Support Networks, the Australian Capital Territory has established the OneLink service and is planning the establishment of Family Safety Hubs, Queensland has established a Family and Child Connect service, Victoria is planning the introduction of Support and Safety Hubs with a focus on the safety of women and children, and New South Wales is trialling local child protection intake and referral services. New roles (lead workers and system navigators) have been introduced to further enhance integrated system and person-centred change.

New multi-disciplinary service models introduced include:

- multi-disciplinary family violence response teams in Western Australia;
- joint childFIRST and Western Australia Police Child Assessment and Interview Teams;
- Child Safety Coordination meetings in remote areas of the Northern Territory;
- Lookout Education Support Centres in Victoria to improve educational outcomes of children in OOHC; and
- the Child and Youth Protection Service (CYPS), providing integrated care and protection and youth justice management in the Australian Capital Territory.

New information-sharing protocols have also been introduced to improve service journeys, service collaboration and client outcomes. They provide detailed guidance and procedures to inform the way professionals in social care, health, education, domestic violence and police services work together to safeguard children and young people. New legislation has been introduced or is planned/under consideration to facilitate information sharing between prescribed or authorised agencies in Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and Victoria. The Northern Territory has introduced information-sharing guidelines to assist authorised people and organisations to share information about a child or family in order to facilitate working together for the safety and wellbeing of a child.

Building on earlier legislative reform to allow information exchange between human service and justice organisations, New South Wales will soon fully commission the ChildStory client information system, which allows real-time information sharing between FACS, NGOs, education, health, police and justice, and *Patchwork*, an app that supports team collaboration. In the Australian Capital Territory, Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) has access to the police referral gateway SupportLink.

The Commonwealth is also currently developing a best practice model for information exchange, drawing on jurisdictional approaches.

Workforce

There are a number of new measures to better resource and support the child protection workforce. New South Wales and Queensland have introduced practice frameworks that guide statutory child protection: Practice First (New South Wales) and the Strengthening Families Protecting Children Framework (Queensland). Western Australia has implemented the Signs of Safety Reloaded Project to strengthen practice.

Other initiatives to support the child protection workforce include the development of a child protection academy and group supervision sessions in New South Wales, a supervision case practice policy and a learning and development centre in Western Australia and the establishment of case analysis teams and a refreshed supervision framework for child and youth protection services in the Australian Capital Territory. The Northern Territory has also enhanced supervision training for team leaders and managers and established a practice reflection forum and learning hub.

Efforts have also been made to increase workforce capacity in statutory child protection services. Queensland created 47 new frontline and frontline support positions in September 2016 and a further 86 frontline positions in October 2016. The Northern Territory is dealing with critical workforce shortages in child protection through a partnership with Charles Darwin University.

Foster carers and residential care workers

New measures have been introduced in several jurisdictions to better support foster carers and enhance quality of care. These include improved preparation training in Western Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory as well as new trauma training for carers in the Australian Capital Territory, new training for kinship carers in Queensland and ongoing training opportunities for carers in the Northern Territory, Victoria and Western Australia (via a mobile app). Victoria has also invested \$8 million in the immediate upskilling of residential care workers and will introduce mandatory qualifications for residential care workers from 2017 (Certificate IV Child, Youth and Family Intervention (Residential and OOHC)).

Service providers

New South Wales indicated a progressive transition of the provision of OOHC to the NGO sector, while this is planned in the Northern Territory. Queensland is currently reviewing its existing investment into OOHC, which may result in a change to the supplier profile or market.

Discussion and conclusion

Considerable changes to systems for protecting children are planned or underway right across Australia. These are being designed and implemented mainly in response to system shortcomings identified in independent reviews. They aim to reduce the number of children involved in statutory child protection and OOHC and achieve greater permanence and improved outcomes for children who enter OOHC. Addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal children and families in all areas of the statutory child protection system, particularly the high number of Aboriginal children entering OOHC, is an area of particular focus for reform.

While strategies have been adopted in response to specific concerns and the unique context of service delivery in each jurisdiction, there are many parallels. New system architecture is being introduced in several Australian states and territories to build a more robust and coordinated community service system to refer families to. This attempts to divert families from statutory child protection and assist families in a more holistic way, and includes new entry points into the child and family system, changes to confidentiality and information-sharing provisions and new multi-agency teams and services,⁵ new professional roles to act as service integrators (lead workers, system navigators) and enhanced capacity in prevention, early intervention and intensive family support, including the introduction of innovative services as well as programs and practices that are empirically based.

Several jurisdictions are also progressively changing their OOHC systems through more decisive decision-making when children enter OOHC and new investment to increase capacity in, and diversify the type of, care arrangements. This includes replacing existing OOHC models with new therapeutic and treatment care models and introducing new specialist models of care to accommodate siblings and other client groups. These approaches are often complemented by, or incorporate, more explicit work with birth families to facilitate the earliest possible exit from care. Extensions of financial support and new aftercare services have also been introduced to assist care leavers.

States and territories are also making extensive changes to better support the goal of Aboriginal children living with their families and within their communities. This includes efforts to expand Indigenous employment and service delivery by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) (including case management of Aboriginal children on a child protection order) by consolidating Aboriginal services and strategies and through capacity building and practice, policy and workforce development. Other measures include Aboriginal cultural training for the mainstream child and family workforce, strengthening family involvement in child protection decision-making and planning, earlier identification of Aboriginality and a strengthened approach to developing cultural plans to support the needs of Aboriginal children who reside with non-Aboriginal carers.

⁵ Often for the purpose of increasing safety for people experiencing domestic violence.

Other system alterations include strengthening the workforce (including foster and kinship carers) through better training supervision/coaching, enhanced practice frameworks and measures to deal with understaffing in child protection, strengthening external oversight and increasing compliance with standards (especially in relation to child-safe organisations and the screening and regulation of authorised carers), new policy-making approaches (such as social investment and co-design) and new commissioning frameworks and funding models that allow greater flexibility to work around the needs of clients and develop innovative program approaches.

While the current iteration of child protection changes are well-intentioned and, on the surface, appear substantial, the question remains as to whether they will address systemic challenges and lead to the better protection of children. Making decisions for the future has never been easy and previous reforms have not led to the expected level of improvements. Whether the changes actually get to the complex and multi-level root causes of systemic failures and challenges, whether the strategies target high impact change levers, the extent to which measures are well-designed and well-implemented, and the synergistic effect of a suite of reforms occurring in a complex environment fraught with uncertainties will all have a bearing on whether these actions today see results.

There are several things we don't know about the success or otherwise of current reforms; however, we do know that system strengthening is not a singular "event". The complex problem of child maltreatment and child removal will need to be managed through a continuous process of adaptation. System stewardship as an improvement model is a promising way forward. This requires leaders and decision-makers who understand how systems behave, who can foster shared learning and shift the collective focus from reactive problem-solving to co-creating future action (Senge, Hamilton, & Kania, 2015). The rudiments of a system learning approach are evident in developments in policy-making that connect feedback loops, strategic research, evaluation and data to decision-making and which engage policy people with diverse stakeholders through collaborative forms of governance and co-design. To produce real and lasting change for children and families, the principle of collective responsibility for protecting children must extend to system stewardship.

List of abbreviations

ACCOs	Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
CP	Child protection
DSS	Department of Social Services
OOHC	Out-of-home care
SDM	Structured Decision Making
UNCROC	United National Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Appendix A: Developments to strengthen systems for protecting children across Australia: Summary table

New South Wales	Western Australia	Australian Capital Territory	Queensland	Northern Territory	Victoria	Tasmania	Australia
PRINCIPLES							
<p>Permanent placement principles for casework decision-making and the Children’s Court underlying CP Legislation Amendment Act 2014.</p> <p>Children allowed to determine whether a guardianship application proceeds. Aspect of 2014 legislation that empowers children to have a say in decisions that affect their long-term care. All Guardianship applications require the consent of the child or young person subject to the order.</p>	<p>New Guiding principle in Children and Community Services Legislation Amendment and Repeal Act 2015. Emphasises the need for timely consideration as to whether a child can be reunified with their birth family or whether long-term OOHC options need to be considered.</p>		<p>A central tenet from the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (2012) is that protecting children is “everyone’s responsibility” and a concerted effort is required to ensure Queensland children and young people are cared for, protected, safe and able to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Some of the options being explored by DCCSDS as part of the review of the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (Qld) relate to existing principles in the Act. One option being considered is to introduce an expanded paramount principle of “the safety, wellbeing and best interests of a child now and throughout their lives”.</p>		<p>“Permanency” replaced “stability” in the best interest principle in the Children, Youth and Families Act (amended 2014).</p> <p>The desirability of making decisions as expeditiously as possible and the possible harmful effect of delay in making a decision or action included in Children, Youth and Families Act (amended 2014).</p>	<p>Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 strongly based on principles included in UNCROC. Principle that efforts should balance safety and risk with strengthening individual, family and community systems. Also identifies a wide range of people responsible for protecting children and young people. Principles to be observed in dealing with children (Part 1A) include responsibility of government, role of the child’s family, treating the child with respect, best interests of the child, child participation and Aboriginal children.</p> <p>Commissioner for Children and young people Act 2016. Specifies principles in performing function or exercising power such as best interests of child are paramount. See below.</p>	<p>National collaboration to drive improvements in permanency outcomes. Commonwealth, state and territory governments working collaboratively to develop a set of guiding principles to drive improvement in the achievement of permanency outcomes for children in OOHC. This collaborative work will focus on: (i) permanency and stability; (ii) timeliness of permanent care decisions; (iii) post placement support and payments by all jurisdictions, including for children in care or adopted through to adulthood; and (iv) building the evidence base and improved data collection, including uniform measures of stability and measures of success in relation to reunification and permanency.</p> <p>The Commonwealth and jurisdictions will direct further reform efforts towards enhancing consistency in permanent care arrangements across jurisdictions and investigating possible schemes for the mutual recognition of the</p>

New South Wales	Western Australia	Australian Capital Territory	Queensland	Northern Territory	Victoria	Tasmania	Australia
							suitability assessments of carers. Priority will also be given to continuing to work on prevention and early intervention, with a view to improving levels of family preservation and reunification and reducing the number of children entering OOHC, with a particular focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

GOALS

<p>Premier’s priorities <www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/premiers-priorities/>. “Protecting our kids” one of 12 priorities. Objectives here are to decrease children re-reported at risk of significant harm by 15% by 20 June 2018.</p> <p>A vision and strategic direction for OOHC “Their Futures Matter” (2016) <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/their-futures-matter-a-new-approach>. Goals are reduce entries into OOHC, increase exits from OOHC, reduce Aboriginal children and young people in OOHC, improve outcomes, shift to a system of needs-based wrap around support packages designed to meet the needs of cohorts of vulnerable children and their families, apply an investment and commissioning approach to service delivery and build</p>	<p>Preventing children from entering OOHC and reunifying children with parents priorities of Building a Better Future—OOHC Reform (2016). See below.</p> <p>Further reforms relate to developing a system that is driven by the needs of children and young people.</p> <p>Building safe and strong families (2016). Focuses on delivering shared outcomes through collective effort, a culturally competent service system, diverting families from the CP system and preventing children entering OOHC.</p>	<p>Nine strategic objectives and related indicators identified for the Community Services Directorate. <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1007787/CSD-Annual-Report-2015–16_revised-links.pdf>.</p> <p>Strategic objective no. 2 is to improve outcomes for children and families through the provision of coordinated locally based services. Strategic objective no. 3 is the provision of services and interventions that reduce the risk of re-substantiated reports of abuse. Strategic objective no. 7 is to improve stability of children in care through case management and appropriate services and programs.</p>	<p>Seven strategic directions to achieve long-term outcomes for CP Reform Program <www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/supporting-families/background/advancing-reforms-2016–2017>.</p> <p>These are sharing responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of children, supporting families earlier, working better with families in contact with the CP system, improving OOHC and post-care, meeting the needs of ATSI children, families and communities, delivering quality services through capable, motivated workforce and client-focused organisation and building an accountable, transparent and cost-effective system.</p>	<p>Five strategic outcome areas for the Department of Children and Families <www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/379594/Department-of-Children-and-Families-annual-report-2015–16.pdf>.</p> <p>These are protect children from harm, optimise outcomes for children in care, partner with families, communities and agencies, continuous improvement to enable contemporary practice and a workplace that values and invests in people.</p>	<p>DHHS Outcomes Framework <www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/annual-report-2015–16>.</p> <p>Specifies four outcomes for people—healthy and well, safe and secure, capabilities to participate and connected to culture and community—and one system outcome—health and human services are person-centered and sustainable.</p> <p>Roadmap for Reform focused on four goals. These are strengthening communities to better prevent abuse and neglect, delivering early support to children and families at risk, keeping more families together through crisis and securing a better future for children who cannot live at home.</p>		<p>Indicators for measuring progress of National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children. Six high-level 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 abuse and neglect are addressed, children who have been abused and neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing, Indigenous children are safe and supported in their families and communities, child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support <www.aihw.gov.au/nfpac/data/>.</p>
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New South Wales	Western Australia	Australian Capital Territory	Queensland	Northern Territory	Victoria	Tasmania	Australia
<p>the evidence of effective interventions.</p> <p>A three-year strategic plan (2016–19) for children and young people aged 0–24 years <www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/plan>. The goal of the plan is: “Children and young people in NSW are safe, connected, respected, healthy and well, with opportunities to thrive and have their voice heard in their communities.” It contains six themes with corresponding objectives and data indicators: safe, connect, respect, opportunity, wellbeing and voice.</p> <p>NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/nsw-human-services-outcomes-framework>. Seven high level wellbeing outcomes for clients and service users: home, safety, education and skills, economic, health, social and community and empowerment.</p> <p>FACS Strategic Statement (2014) <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/file/0008/298700/FACS_Strategic_Statement.pdf>. Six objectives: children and young people are protected from abuse and neglect, people with disability are supported to realise their potential, social housing assistance is used to break disadvantage, people are assisted to participate</p>							

New South Wales	Western Australia	Australian Capital Territory	Queensland	Northern Territory	Victoria	Tasmania	Australia
<p>in social and economic life, people at risk of, and experiencing, domestic and family violence are safer, and Aboriginal people, families and communities have better outcomes.</p> <p>A Single Outcomes Framework for Vulnerable Children and Families Proposed in their Futures Matter Reforms (2016).</p> <p>Six Objectives of Their Futures Matter Reforms (2016). These are increase investment in evidence-based services to reduce entries to OOHC and improve placement stability for children in care, align policy and practice settings to increase exits from OOHC, improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and families, and reduce the number of Aboriginal children and young people in care, increase investment to better support children and young people in care and leaving care to improve life outcomes, enhance government data analytics capability, implement and evaluate new programs.</p>							

New South Wales	Western Australia	Australian Capital Territory	Queensland	Northern Territory	Victoria	Tasmania	Australia
RULES AND REGULATION							
<i>Legislation and policy changes</i>							
<p>CP (Working With Children) And Other CP Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 <www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/~view/act/2016/56/sch1>.</p> <p>CP (Working With Children) Act 2012 <www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/acts/2012-51.pdf>.</p> <p>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment Protection from Serious Offenders Bill 2016 <www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/bills/Pages/bill-details.aspx?pk=3287>.</p> <p>CP Legislation Amendment Act 2014. Miscellaneous amendments to support the Safe Home for Life program of reform. The aim of the Amendment is to provide permanency and stability in their care arrangements.</p> <p>Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014 <www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/afcapa2014341/>. Establishes the Office for the Advocate for Children and Young People.</p>	<p>Children and Community Services Legislation amendment and Repeal Act 2015 <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Documents/Key%20Features.pdf>. Amends the <i>Children and Community Services Act 2004</i>, repeals the <i>Parental Support and Responsibility Act 2008</i> and make consequential amendments to other Acts.</p> <p>Building a Better Future – OOHC Reform in Western Australia (2016). Response to significant changes in WA community and the OOHC system, including growing numbers of OOHC children with complex needs and the majority of OOHC children Aboriginal.</p> <p>Building Safe and Strong Families – Earlier Intervention and family Support Strategy (2016) <https://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/ChildrenInCare/Documents/Building%20Safe%20and%20Strong%20Families%20-%20Earlier%20Intervention%20and%20Family%20Support%20Strategy.pdf>.</p>	<p>Children and Young People Amendment Act 2015 (No. 3) and the Children and Young People Legislation Amendment Act 2016 (progressed in 2015–16).</p> <p>Amendments to Children and Young People Act 2008. Reduces time from 2 years to 12 months before children aged < 2 years are able to move into permanent care arrangement such as Adoption and Enduring Parental Responsibility.</p> <p>The Reportable Conduct and Information Sharing Legislation Amendment Act 2016 <www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2016-39/default.asp>. Defines the roles and responsibilities of the ACT Ombudsman, organisations providing services for children, and the heads of those organisations, under the reportable conduct scheme.</p> <p>The Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011. Aims to reduce the risk of harm or neglect to people with vulnerabilities.</p>	<p>New legislation passed to form foundation for new CP system. Family and Child Commission Act 2014 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2014/14AC027.pdf>. Established the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) to provide oversight of Queensland's child protection system.</p> <p>Public Guardian Act 2014 <www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/P/PublicGuardianA14.pdf>. Established the Office of the Public Guardian (Child Guardian) to support and protect the rights of children and young people in out-of-home care.</p> <p>Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2014, which amends the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> to allow for community-based intake and referral (now Family and Child Connect) and consolidates all reporting obligations into the CPA. <i>Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2016</i> and <i>Director of Child Protection Litigation Act 2016</i> together formed the second stage of legislative child protection reforms resulting from the Commission of Inquiry and</p>	<p>Permanent Care Orders Introduced through Amendments to the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 <www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nt/bill/capocab2014359/>. Commenced July 2015.</p> <p>Amendments to strengthen the screening and regulation of authorised carers <legislation.nsw.gov.au/regulations/2015-284.pdf>.</p> <p>Children's Commissioner Act 2013 <www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nt/num_act/cca201333o2013290/>.</p> <p>Introduction of policies and procedures regarding reunification, including time frames for making decisions about reunification. The focus is on timely and active reunification.</p>	<p>Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Permanent care and other matters) Act 2014 made significant changes to the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005. The key amendments embed a permanence planning approach in CP practice and create a new range of Children's Court Orders aligned with permanency objectives (see below).</p> <p>Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015. Enables implementation of Child Safe Standards.</p> <p>New legislation introducing a Reportable Conduct Scheme (2017). Commission for Children and Young People will oversee how organisations respond to allegations of child abuse.</p> <p>Roadmap for Reform (2016) <http://strongfamiliesafechildren.vic.gov.au/>. Aims to create services that are coordinated and work together to meet the needs of children and families with vulnerabilities. Forms an important step in the government's long-term response to the Royal Commission into family violence.</p>	<p>Commissioner For Children And Young People Act 2015 <www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/content.w3p;cond=;doc_id=2%2B%2B2016%2BAT@EN%2BSESSIONAL;histon=;inforequest=;pdfauthverid=;prompt=;rec=0;rtfauthverid=;term=;webauthverid=>. New stand-alone legislation providing for the Commissioner for Children and Young People to have a greater oversight role. Commenced 1 July 2016.</p> <p>Children, Young People And Their Families Act (2013) <">www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=all;doc_id=64%2B%2B2013%2BAT%40EN%2BSESSIONAL;histon=;pdfauthverid=;prompt=;rec=;rtfauthverid=;term=;webauthverid=>>.</p> <p>Commitment From Tasmanian Government To Take A Public Health Approach To Sharing Responsibility For Children (2012) <www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/122377/Government_Response_Public_Final_v31.pdf>.</p>	<p>Australian Human Rights Commission Amendment (National Children's Commissioner) Act 2012</p> <p>Third action plan of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2015–2018. Focuses on prevention and early intervention to reduce the need for acute CP action. Includes focus on the first 1,000 days of a child's life (conception–2 years of age), and a focus on supporting young people transitioning from OOHC <www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/12_2015/pdf_third_action_plan_for_protecting_australias_children.pdf>.</p> <p>Australian Priority Investment Fund to focus on early intervention. Aims to reduce the welfare dependency of young parents <www.dss.gov.au/review-of-australias-welfare-system/australian-priority-investment-approach-to-welfare></p>

New South Wales	Western Australia	Australian Capital Territory	Queensland	Northern Territory	Victoria	Tasmania	Australia
<p>Safe Home for Life reform <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0014/302432/SafeHomeforLife_Presentation_Oct-2014.pdf>, a program of legislative and practice reforms over 4 years.</p> <p>Their Futures Matter: A New Approach reforms (2016) <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0005/387293/FACS_OOHC_Review_161116.pdf>. Reform directions from the Independent Review of OOHC.</p> <p>Customer service improvement plan 2016–19. A number of initiatives under this plan, including FACS service charter and communication framework, customer service experience and measurement framework and tools, integrated complaints and feedback management system and a digital consolidation project, staff communication and engagement initiatives to drive behaviour and cultural change.</p> <p>Care for my Future reform strategy. A number of changes that impact leaving and aftercare including a reconfiguration of the specialist aftercare services program to provide better access to care leavers from high risk cohorts. The strategy will include a focus</p>	<p>Regional Services Reform 2015 <http://regionalservicesreform.wa.gov.au/>. Aims to improve the lives of Aboriginal people in regional and remote Western Australia, ensuring children are safe, nurtured and receive an education that equips them for the future.</p> <p>Significant policy changes across statutory CP and OOHC. Relates to permanency planning (2010, 2012, 2014), CP practice framework (2011), neglect (2012), physical abuse (2015), emotional abuse—family and domestic violence, assessment and investigation process (2014), foster care partnerships (2012), care planning (2016), leaving care (2015), and children entering secure care (2015).</p> <p>Rapid Response <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Organisation/Documents/Rapid%20Response.pdf>. Cabinet-endorsed across-government framework to address complex needs of children and young people in care of CEO and care leavers < 25 years.</p> <p>Freedom from Fear Action Plan (2015). 20 actions and five priority areas to increase safety of women and children who are</p>	<p>A Step Up for Our Kids—One Step Can Make a Lifetime of Difference, Out of Home Care Strategy 2015–20 <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/682623/CSD_OHCS_Strategy_web_FINAL.pdf>.</p>	<p>enabled the establishment of a new court work model for the child protection system, which commenced on 1 July 2016.</p> <p>The Department of Justice and Attorney-General also revised the Children’s Court Rules 2016, which commenced on 1 July 2016. <www.legislation.qld.gov.au>.</p> <p>Legislative framework for CP under review. Options paper released on review of CP Act 1999 (2016) <www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/childsafety/about-us/legislation/review-child-protection-act-options-paper.pdf>.</p> <p>Supporting Families Changing Futures 10-year program of reform (2016) <www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/gateway/campaigns/supporting-families/supporting-families-changing-futures.pdf>.</p> <p>Taking responsibility, a roadmap for queensland CP (2013) <www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/reform-renewal/qg-response-child-protection-inquiry.pdf>.</p>			<p>Out-Of-Home Care Reform <www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/out_of_home_care_reform_in_tasmania/introduction_to_out_of_home_care_in_tasmania>.</p> <p>Strong Families Safe Kids (2015) <www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/214356/Redesign_of_Child_Protection_Services.pdf>. Comprehensive redesign of statutory CP services.</p> <p>Safe Homes Safe Families (2015) <www.dpac.tas.gov.au/safehomesafefamilies>. New, coordinated, whole-of-government action plan to respond to family violence.</p>	

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<p>on educational, vocational and independence pathways and outcomes.</p>	<p>at risk of, or who are experiencing, family and domestic violence.</p> <p>At Risk Youth Strategy 2015–18 <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Resources/Documents/Policies%20and%20Frameworks/At%20Risk%20Youth%20Strategy%202015-2018.pdf>. Includes 14 actions for planning and delivering services to young people.</p> <p>Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy (to 2022). Shared response to family and domestic violence and early intervention.</p> <p>Five-year whole government plan for improving responses to Aboriginal family violence in the Kimberley (2015). Includes cultural responses to family and domestic violence and funding for Family Safety Teams.</p>						

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<i>Operational protocols, standards and regulations</i>							
<p>NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care (2015) <www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/statutory-out-of-home-care-and-adoption/nsw-standards-for-permanent-care>. Establishes the minimum requirements for the accreditation of OOHC and adoption service providers.</p> <p>Legislative requirements for carer probity and suitability checks (2015) <www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/541/CR_FS1_ChecksForCarersandHM.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y>.</p> <p>Trial of a quality assurance framework for OOHC <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/nsw-human-services-outcomes-framework>.</p>	<p>Implementation of Child Safe Organisations WA Guidelines (2014) <www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/our-work/resources/child-safe-organisations/>. Undertaken with the Commissioner for Children and Young People.</p> <p>Better Care Better Services standards for children and young people in protection and care under review <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Resources/Documents/Standards%20Monitoring%20Unit/Better%20Care%20Better%20Services%20-%20booklet.pdf>. Part of OOHC reform. Aim is to align standards with national OOHC standards.</p> <p>New standards for funded service providers. These include standards for the delivery of Sexual Abuse Therapeutic Services (2014) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/servicescommunity/information/Documents/Service%20Excellence/Service%20Standards%20Child%20Sexual%20Abuse%20Therapeutic%20Services.pdf>, the Western Australian Family and Domestic Violence Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework (CRARMF, 2015) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/</p>	<p>Adoption of National OOHC Service Standards.</p> <p>Role of Human Services Registrar extended to system that protects children with vulnerabilities and their families. Engages service providers around quality of service delivery against standards and legislation <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/home/regulation-oversight-and-quality-services>.</p> <p>Monitoring of an individual's suitability to work with vulnerable people under the Working with Vulnerable people scheme <www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/ci/fattach/get/98452/1471493150/redirect/1/filename/Changes-to-information-sharing-under-the-WWVP-scheme.pdf>. Includes new information sharing provisions.</p> <p>Establishment of Community Services Directorate Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee. Ensures independent quality assurance and compliance of the CP system.</p>	<p>Child Safety Licensing for organisations providing supported placements to children and young people subject to statutory interventions. NGOs accredited under HSQS can apply for an Organisational Level License to deliver OOHC services <www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/partners/child-safety-licensing>.</p> <p>Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) (2013) <www.communities.qld.gov.au/hsqf>. A quality assurance system and service standards for NGOs. Based on principles of respecting human rights, social inclusion, participation and choice.</p> <p>Requirement that NGOs achieve and maintain certification under the Human Services Quality Standards (HSQS).</p> <p>Establishment of the Family and Child Commission (QFCC) (2014) <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/>. To provide oversight of the whole child and family support system (including prevention and family support services), focusing on the interests of ATSI</p>	<p>Introduction of Charter of Rights for children in care in the Northern Territory (2014) <https://territoryfamilies.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/263101/charter-of-rights-booklet.pdf>. Provides clear statements about quality of services children and young people must receive.</p> <p>Working with children clearances introduced.</p> <p>Establishment of practice integrity and performance branch within the department of children and families and introduction of reportable incidents and complaints management procedures.</p>	<p>Child Safe Standards (2016) <www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/standards/index.htm>. Seven standards that aim to promote the safety of children, prevent abuse and ensure allegations of abuse are properly responded to. Standards apply to organisations that provide services that are government funded/regulated. CCYP to provide oversight and enforcement of the Child Safe Standards.</p> <p>Spot audits by DHHS within residential units being introduced.</p> <p>New incident reporting system under development.</p>	<p>New quality and regulatory framework for OOHC in development.</p>	<p>National standards for OOHC (2010) released under National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 <www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/pac_national_standard.pdf>. Third Action Plan to progress implementation in the light of the Senate Inquiry into OOHC (see above).</p> <p>National Children's Commissioner (2013). Legislation commenced in 2012.</p>

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	<p>FDV/Documents/2015/CRARMFFinalPDFAug2015.pdf>, the DCPFS and Non-Government Placement Agencies Protocol for Standard of Care and Safety and Wellbeing Concerns for Children in the Care of the CEO (the Protocols) (2013) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/servicescommunity/information/Documents/Service%20Excellence/Protocols_Children%20in%20the%20Care%20of%20the%20CEO.pdf>, InformationSharing for Government and Non-Government Agencies (2016) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Organisation/Documents/Information%20sharing%20booklet_online.pdf>.</p> <p>Aboriginal Services Practice Framework (2016–18) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Resources/Documents/ABORIGINAL%20SERVICES%20AND%20PRACTICE%20FRAMEWORK.pdf>. Sets out how practice, structures, funding, policies and workforce will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of Aboriginal children, families and communities.</p> <p>Ombudsman WA to monitor proposed safety standard within Better Care Services Standards.</p>		<p>children and families.</p> <p>Establishment of the Office of the Public Guardian (2014) <www.publicguardian.gld.ov.au/>. To promote and protect the rights and interests of children and young people in care, including foster care, kinship care, residential care, youth detention, correctional facilities and mental health facilities.</p> <p>Queensland CP external oversight agencies group established. Brings together groups responsible for external oversight of CP system.</p>				

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DECISION-MAKING—SYSTEM POWER AND CONTROL DYNAMICS							
<i>Governance arrangements</i>							
<p>Internal Governance Structure For Safe Home For Life Reforms. This includes separation of operations from decision-making, accountability for program outcomes to FACS board level, monthly reporting, internal audits of Safe Home for Life projects and independent evaluation of initiatives.</p>	<p>Child Safety Director’s Group. Chaired by Director General and comprising senior officers from state agencies. Purpose is to provide a coordinated response across services for children and families with vulnerabilities, including children in care.</p> <p>Community Sector Roundtable. Partnership between DCPFS and NGOs. Purpose is to strengthen relationships in relation to the provision of services.</p>	<p>Joint Governance Approach To Controlling And Developing The Oohc System Being Established. This includes the heads of funded organisations.</p>	<p>Establishment Of Nine Regional Child And Family Committees To Support Local Implementation Of Supporting Families Changing Futures Reform <www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/supporting-families/partners-reform/regional-child-family-committees>.</p> <p>New Governance Bodies To Build An Integrated Child And Family Support System. This includes Local Level Alliances, Regional Child and Family Committees, CP Reform Leaders Group, Interdepartmental CEO Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG).</p>				
<i>Commissioning government services</i>							
<p>New commissioning framework in development. Intention is to provide a consistent model for policy, planning, service design, procurement and monitoring and clearer articulation of end-to-end business processes, their linkages and accountabilities. Outcomes monitoring will be central to the approach.</p>	<p>Annual review of DCPFS commissioning model with Treasury (2012–onwards). Model connected to output based management structure.</p> <p>Review of community services sector expenditure (2016) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/ChildrenInCare/Documents/Community%20Services%20Sector%20Expenditure%20Consultation%20Report.pdf>.</p>	<p>Establishing performance-based contracts with OOHC providers <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/682623/CSD_OHCS_Strategy_web_FINAL.pdf>.</p> <p>Establishment of a flat fee for OOHC. Aims to encourage efforts to keep children in home-based care instead of residential care <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/682623/>.</p>	<p>Social Benefits Bonds Pilot Program <www.treasury.qld.gov.au/projects-infrastructure/initiatives/sbb/index.php>. Queensland Treasury will pilot three SBBs in the areas of re-offending, homelessness and issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. New funding.</p>		<p>Flexible model for commissioning services (2015) <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/targeted-care-packages>. \$43 million over four years for Targeted Care Packages. Purpose is to enable the transition of young people from residential care to more appropriate care arrangements. Children < 12 years and ATSI children</p>		<p>New contracts with OOHC providers requiring much higher quality of care as well as requirements to work towards Child Safe accreditation (2015).</p> <p>Outcome based commissioning of OOHC services in Phase 1 of OOHC reform.</p>

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<p>NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework. Designed to inform the commissioning of government services.</p> <p>Application of an investment approach to OOHC service delivery <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/their-futures-matter-a-new-approach>. This includes plans to establish a single commissioning entity within FACS that will work with agencies to commission tailored service solutions that drive outcomes across agency and program boundaries.</p> <p>Introduction of the Community Services Centre Reporting Framework in 2014/15. Framework to improve casework quality and operational performance. Six KPI domains: children who receive a face-to-face assessment, children in OOHC with a case plan, children who are reported while in OOHC, children exiting OOHC due to restoration, guardianship and adoption, children who have fewer than three placements in three months and fewer children re-reported at risk of significant harm.</p>	<p>Requirement to outline attachment and trauma-informed therapeutic models for OOHC included in service agreements (2015).</p> <p>Provision of contracts in OOHC to partnerships involving Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) being explored. Action under Building Safe and Strong Families.</p> <p>Implementation of targets for provision of OOHC and other services to Aboriginal children and families to be explored. Action under Building Safe and Strong Families strategy.</p>	<p>CSD_OHCS_Strategy_web_FINAL.pdf>.</p>	<p>New DCCSDS Commissioning Framework in Development. Informed by an outcomes-oriented investment approach and lessons learned from complex interventions.</p> <p>Significant change in current investment specifications under which existing services are contracted or recommissioning of investment flagged in OOHCRI.</p> <p>Simulation and financial model to support monitoring and investment in the Supporting Families changing futures reforms. Analytics to include operational performance, critical incidents, workload management and case management.</p>		<p>priority groups. Additional \$19 million to expand scope of packages to prevent children and young people entering residential care. Focus on children and young people with a disability.</p> <p>Updated funded organisation performance monitoring framework (2015).</p>		

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<i>Stakeholder engagement and the policy practice</i>							
<p>NSW FACS “You” Campaign established in October 2016, consisting of initiatives to create direct lines of communication to young people in OOHC: (i) YOU Website <www.you.childstory.nsw.gov.au>, (ii) UCChange youth ambassadors group (Youth Consult for Change) a youth consultation group consisting of youth ambassadors aged 15–24 years currently or previously in OOHC across NSW, and (iii) FACS Youth Expo to assist youth/care leavers with face-to-face support about questions related to their care experience.</p> <p>Office of the NSW Advocate For Children and Young People Programs. These provide ways for children and young people to be engaged in decisions that affect them and include: “Our Story” (young journalists/bloggers), NSW Youth Advisory Council Speak for Yourself event, citizen juries, Count Me In (call to action initiative), young creatives, peer representatives (coordinate consultations and discussion groups, peer-to-peer consultations), advocacy training for children and young people, panels, forums and events, student consultation pools and consultation program</p>	<p>Ministerial Advisory Council on CP reformed (2014) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Organisation/Pages/MACCP.aspx>. Advisory body on CP. CREATE Foundation State Coordinator and a young consultant members.</p> <p>Western Australian Council on Homelessness. Established by Minister for CP and Family Support as an external advisory body.</p> <p>Weekly consultations between CREATE Foundation and Policy (CP and Children in Care) to discuss policy areas.</p>	<p>ACT Children and Youth Services Council. Ministerial Advisory Council established to provide advice to the minister on the implementation of the A Step Up for Our Kids program of reform.</p> <p>Use of CREATE Foundation to engage young people.</p>	<p>Stakeholder engagement strategy for implementing the child and family reform program in development <www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/gateway/campaigns/supporting-families/draft-engagement-strategy-consultation-report.pdf>. New engagement and communication mechanisms proposed.</p> <p>Youth consulted on development of new Youth Strategy <www.communities.qld.gov.au/communityservices/youth/queensland-youth-strategy>.</p> <p>Children and Young People’s Participation Strategy <www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/childsafety/foster-care/youth/cyp-participation-strategy.pdf>.</p>	<p>Use of CREATE Foundation Northern Territory Branch to inform decision-making at system level.</p>	<p>Establishment of Reform Implementation Ministerial Advisory Group (RIMAG) and three Ministerial working groups to drive the implementation of the Roadmap for Reform <http://strongfamiliesafechildren.vic.gov.au/news-feed/news_feed/roadmap-for-reform-working-group-members-announced>. Comprise representatives from community sector, academia, unions and government.</p> <p>Use of CREATE Foundation to develop youth participation model as part of Roadmap for Reform. In development.</p>	<p>Commissioner for Children and young people Recommendations (2017) on the participation of children and young people in OOHC accepted by the Tasmanian Government.</p> <p>Redesign Reference Group established. This is to provide expert advice on the proposed redesign of CP services and on the direction of a long-term reform agenda for the broader system for protecting children.</p>	

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<p><www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/engage> and the ACYP Voices app <www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/app>.</p> <p>NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People 2016–19 <http://www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/plan>. In July 2016 the NSW government launched the first-ever legislated whole-of-government Strategic Plan for Children and Young People, which will help to ensure children and young people in NSW have opportunities to thrive, get the services they need and have their voice heard. Involved consultation with over 4,000 children and young people <www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/plan-consultations>.</p> <p>Co-designing Service Delivery <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/safe-home-for-life/designing-the-system-with-our-partners>. A new approach to public service reform that aims to include all stakeholders in the change process</p>							

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<p>Co-Design Approach to Development of ChildStory IT System <https://childstory.net.au/about/the-co-design-process/>. Design of ChildStory has used a co-design approach to ensure all types of end users have input into the functional design and the implementation of the approach.</p>							
FEEDBACK							
<i>Outcomes measurement</i>							
<p>FACS Outcomes framework. The FACS Outcomes Framework enables the systematic tracking of client outcomes across services, sectors and districts. Indicators reflect investment across multiple factors including other government and not for profit services, and private enterprise. The Outcomes Framework is designed to support a Return on Investment (ROI) approach to measuring the impact of programs, services and initiatives on client outcomes.</p> <p>Development/Trial of FACS Quality Assurance Framework <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/quality-assurance-framework>. The Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) trial commenced September 2016 and will provide OOHC caseworkers with access information about</p>	<p>Outcomes Framework for Children in OOHC (2016) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/ChildrenInCare/Documents/Outcomes%20Framework%20for%20Children%20in%20OOHC%20in%20WA%202015-16%20Baseline%20Indicator.pdf>. Developed as part of the OOHC reform plan. Nineteen outcomes across six domains: safe and stable, healthy, achieve, belong, included, future life outcomes.</p>	<p>OOHC framework in development. Seeks to align to the National OOHC standards and the A Step Up for Our Kids strategy.</p>	<p>QFCC monitoring and reporting of CP system <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/Annual%20Report/Performance%20of%20the%20QLD%20CPS.pdf>. QFCC monitors and reports annually on Queensland's progress in reducing the number of, and improving outcomes for, ATSI children and young people in the CP system and the performance of the Queensland CP system.</p>		<p>OOHC Outcomes Tracking Survey. Completed annually for each child in OOHC in Victoria who are on custody to third party, long term care, care by Secretary and family reunification orders.</p> <p>New OOHC Outcomes framework in development.</p>		<p>National Framework indicators and report card <www.aihw.gov.au/nfpac>.</p> <p>National Standards for OOHC data <www.aihw.gov.au/nfpac/out-of-home-care/data/>.</p> <p>AIHW continuing to explore options for improved national data analysis and reporting. Includes longitudinal studies of children in OOHC.</p>

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the safety, permanency and the wellbeing of children in statutory OOHC, collected from various sources including: FACS, NGOs, Health, Education, carers and young people.							
<i>Independent inquiries and reviews</i>							
<p>Parliament Of NSW CP Inquiry (Est. 2016) <www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2396></p> <p>Independent Review Of OOHC—Tune Review <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/their-futures-matter-a-new-approach/independent-review-of-out-of-home-care-in-nsw>.</p> <p>Parliament of NSW Students With a Disability or Special Needs in New South Wales Schools Inquiry (Est. 24 August 2016) <www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2416>.</p>	<p>Children And Community Services ACT 2004 To Be Reviewed In 2017 <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/ccsactreview/Pages/default.aspx>.</p> <p>Everybody's Business (2016) <www.parliament.wa.gov.au>. An examination into how the Commissioner for Children and Young People can enhance WA's response to child abuse.</p> <p>Listen To This (2015) <www.parliament.wa.gov.au>. A review of Listen to Us by the Commissioner for Children and Young People.</p> <p>Commissioner for Children and Young People Report on the Sexualisation of Children (2014) <www.parliament.wa.gov.au>.</p> <p>Review Of DCPFS Guidance in Relation to Family Violence (2011).</p>	<p>Human Rights Commission Inquiry Into Bimberi (2011) <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/bimberi/publications>.</p> <p>Public Advocate Review of the Emergency Response Strategy For Children In Crisis in the ACT (2012) <www.atoda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Who-is-looking-out-for-the-Territorys-children-.pdf>.</p> <p>Auditor General's Performance Review of the Care And Protection System (2013) <www.audit.act.gov.au/auditreports/reports2013/Report%201%202013%20Care%20and%20Protection%20System.pdf>.</p>	<p>Queensland CP Commission Of Inquiry (Est. 2012) <www.childprotectioninquiry.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/202625/QCPCI-FINAL-REPORT-web-version.pdf>. 121 recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry that comprise the Supporting Families Changing Futures reform program.</p> <p>Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence (Est. 2014) <www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/end-domestic-family-violence/about/not-now-not-ever-report>.</p>	<p>Inquiry into the CP system in the Northern Territory (est. 2010) <https://childprotectioninquiry.nt.gov.au/report_of_the_board_of_inquiry>.</p>	<p>Commission For Children And Young People Permanency Amendments Inquiry <www.ccp.vic.gov.au/aboutus/news/inquiry-permanency-amendments.htm>. Will examine whether the amendments are improving permanency for children and young people and whether they have led to unintended consequences after 6 months of operation. Report expected March 2017.</p> <p>Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children ("Cummins") Inquiry (2012) <www.childprotectioninquiry.vic.gov.au/report-pvvc-inquiry.html>.</p>	<p>Commissioner for Children and young people Report into children and young people in OOHC (2017) <www.childcomm.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Children-and-Young-People-in-Out-of-Home-Care-in-Tasmania-Report-WEB.pdf>.</p>	<p>OOHC Senate Committee Inquiry Commonwealth of Australia 2015 (est. 17 July 2014) <www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Out_of_home_care/Report>. The Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee tabled its final report on 19 August 2015. Commonwealth government currently coordinating a response.</p> <p>Royal Commission into the protection and detention of children in the Northern Territory 2016 <www.ag.gov.au/About/RoyalCommissions/Pages/Royal-Commission-into-the-Detention-of-Children-in-the-Northern-Territory.aspx>.</p> <p>Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2013–2017).</p>

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<p>Parliament Of NSW Inquiry into the Sexualisation of Children and Young People (Est. 20 October 2015) <www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2264>.</p>	<p>Inquiry Into The Conduct And Response Of Public Officials And Government Agencies In Relation To Allegations Of Sexual Abuse At St Andrews Hostel In Katanning <https://publicsector.wa.gov.au/public-administration/sector-performance-and-oversight/reviews-investigations-and-special-inquiries/special-inquiries/st-andrews-hostel-inquiry>.</p> <p>Ombudsman's Own Motion Investigation Into The Administration Of Care Planning Provisions Of The Children And Community Services Act 2004 (2011) <www.parliament.wa.gov.au/publications/tailedpapers.nsf/displaypaper/3814262aa03f5b62ca7befcb482579570026cf96/\$file/4262.pdf>.</p> <p>Speaking Out About Raising Concerns In Care (2016) <www.cryp.wa.gov.au/media/2327/speaking-out-about-raising-concerns-in-care-website-version.pdf>. Report of the views of children and young people with experience of OOHC. Report by the Commissioner for Children and Young People with DCPFS and CREATE Foundation. Feedback will inform OOHC Reform</p>	<p>Expert Panel Review Of Policy And Practice In Regard To Students With Complex Needs And Challenging Behaviour <www.det.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/795186/62074-Expert-Panel-Report-Web.pdf></p> <p>Review into the System Level Responses to Family Violence in the ACT (2016) (Glanfield Inquiry) <www.cmd.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/864712/Glanfield-Inquiry-report.pdf>.</p>	<p>When A Child Is Missing: Remembering Tiahleigh. A Report Into Queensland's Children Missing From OOHC And Recommendation 28 Supplementary Review <http://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/when-a-child-is-missing/>.</p> <p>Several Other Reviews Underway Or Completed. These include a review of the Blue card system and review of the foster care system <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/examination-foster-care-and-blue-card-services>.</p>		<p>Two System Inquiries By The Commissioner For Aboriginal Children And Young People (Completed 2016) <www.cryp.vic.gov.au/downloads/always-was-always-will-be-koori-children-inquiry-report-oct16.pdf> and <www.cryp.vic.gov.au/downloads/in-the-childs-best-interests-inquiry-report.pdf>.</p> <p>Inquiry Into The Adequacy Of The Provision Of Residential Care Services To Victorian Children Who Have Been Subject To Sexual Abuse Or Sexual Exploitation Whilst Residing In Residential Care (2015) <http://ccyp.vic.gov.au/downloads/inquiry/final-report-as-a-good-parent-would.pdf>.</p> <p>VAGO Early Intervention Services Audit (2015) <www.audit.vic.gov.au/reports_and_publications/latest_reports/2014-15/20150527-early-intervention.aspx>. Purpose was to determine the effectiveness of community-based family services for children and families with vulnerabilities.</p> <p>VAGO Follow-Up Of Residential Care Services For Children Audit (2016) <http://www.audit.vic.gov.au/reports_and_publications/latest_reports/2014-15/20150527-early-intervention.aspx>.</p>		<p>Senate Committee Inquiry into Grandparents who take primary responsibility for raising their grandchildren 2014 <www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Grandparent_Carers/Report></p>

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					<p>Betrayal Of Trust (2013) < http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/fcdc/inquiries/57th/Child_Abuse_Inquiry/Report/Inquiry_into_Handling_of_Abuse_Volume_1_FINAL_web.pdf>. Parliamentary Inquiry into the handling of abuse by religious and other organisations.</p> <p>Royal Commission into Family Violence (Est. 2015) <www.rcfv.com.au/>.</p>		
<i>Client voice</i>							
<p>Several innovative approaches to obtain feedback from children and young people. These include the development of the Children and Young People Inspectors (CYPI) program that would train children and young people to review services and provide feedback to service providers and the NSW government.</p> <p>Establishment of UC Change youth ambassadors group. See above.</p> <p>Customer service improvement plan 2016–19. Includes customer service experience and measurement framework and tools and integrated complaints and feedback management system.</p>	<p>Use of Viewpoint Interaction Program (2011). Enables participation of children in development of their personal care plans and services to meet the needs of all children in care.</p>	<p>Use of Viewpoint Interaction Program on annual basis. Used to obtain the views, opinions, wishes and feelings of young people in OOHC.</p> <p>Extension of Official Visitor Scheme to residential care services. Provides independent advice to the minister.</p>	<p>QFCC advocacy team <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/children-and-young-peoples-stories>. Have a responsibility to listen to the voices of children and young people.</p> <p>OPG community visitors and child advocate-legal officers. These system actors support children and young people by ensuring their views and wishes are being heard and that their needs are being met.</p>		<p>Independent Visitor Program for Youth Justice Centers (2012) <www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/independentvisitors.htm>. Implemented by the Commission for Children and Young People.</p>		

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<i>System analytics capability and ICT systems</i>							
<p>Development of ChildStory <http://childstory.net.au/>. Frontline systems replacement project of the Safe Home for Life reform. Replaces number of existing IT platforms with a single integrated system. NSW government will invest \$49 million in ChildStory in 2016–17.</p> <p>Objective of Their Futures Matter reforms to enhance government data analytics capability (2016).</p>	<p>Implementation of Assist electronic client information recording system (2010). Comprehensive, integrated means of storing and accessing details of the department’s involvement with individuals and client groups.</p> <p>Online capacity for working with children check approvals (2016).</p>	<p>Investment of \$5.5m in the development of a new client management system. To be implemented in December 2017.</p> <p>Significant funding from ACT Together in the development of MyStory. ACT Together is a consortium of five NGOs.</p>	<p>Advice, referral and Case Management (ARC) system for NGOs funded under FaCC and IFS programs being rolled out. Enables greater flexibility for service providers together with greater efficiencies for managing intakes and referrals, case management and reporting <http://srs-support.infoxchangeapps.net.au/>.</p> <p>The Integrated Client Management System (ICMS) Architectural Improvements Project. Replacing inflexible and inefficient legacy technologies used within ICMS to deliver forms with contemporary technologies. This is modernising the system and implementing enabling technology for frontline staff to access form data in a mobile capacity, such as iPads.</p> <p>A strategic assessment has commenced into the replacement of ICMS to explore facilitating sharing information with other agencies or non-government organisations.</p>	<p>Development of the Community Care Information System (CCIS). Enables Territory Families to access, record, code, store and extract information about service delivery to clients.</p> <p>Reporting built into the Community Care Information System (CCIS).</p>			

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RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE							
<p>\$2.85 million over three years to establish Institute of Open Adoption Studies (2016). Led by the University of NSW with assistance of Barnardos Australia.</p> <p>Pathways of Care longitudinal study (POCLS) <www.community.nsw.gov.au/research-centre/pathways-of-care-longitudinal-study>.</p> <p>Evaluation of practice first model. To be undertaken before its implementation in all FACS Community Service Centres.</p> <p>Establishment of FACS Behavioural Insights Unit <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/behavioural-insights>.</p>	<p>Independent evaluation of Family Support Networks <www.wafsn.org.au/images/KPMG%20Final%20AFSN%2012%20Month%20Evaluation%20Report.pdf>.</p> <p>Research into the Multiagency Investigation and Support Team pilot. Undertaken by the Australian Centre for Child Protection.</p> <p>Program of research on Signs of Safety Framework (2013–15). <www.unisa.edu.au/Research/Australian-Centre-for-Child-Protection/10-out-of-10/Signs-of-Safety/>.</p> <p>Longitudinal study of children in OOHC planned. Partnership with Curtin University, Telethon Kids Institute and the Ministerial Advisory Council on CP.</p> <p>Study of antenatal exposure to amphetamines by Women and Newborn Drug and Alcohol Service (WANDAS) at King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) (2016–18).</p> <p>Improving the management of youth with fads in the justice system (2015–17) <www.alcoholpregnancy.telethonkids.org.au/our-research/research-projects/current-research-projects></p>	<p>Review of evidence for OOHC interventions <www.parentingrc.org.au/resources/evidence-review-analysis-of-the-evidence-for-out-of-home-care>.</p> <p>Evaluation framework for A Step UP for Our Kids reform under development. Consultant engaged.</p>	<p>Strategic research program and governance arrangements being revised. Aim is to promote a culture of evidence-informed policy, practice and program development.</p> <p>Three-year rolling research agenda in development by QFCC as part of child and family reforms (2017). Includes implementation, impact/outcome evaluation of Family Support Services, Family and Child Connect Services, ATSI Family Wellbeing Services, Indigenous Services Reform Project – Differential Response Co-Design, Next Steps After Care services and ATSI Family-Led Decision-Making and Shared Practice Model.</p> <p>Strategic research program and governance arrangements being revised. See above.</p> <p>DCCSDS entered into Partnerships with research institutes to support the implementation of recommendations from the commission of inquiry, including the need for more robust research, evaluation and to develop a strong evidence base to support policy and practice in the field of family support and CP.</p>	<p>Partnership with Menzies School of Health Research to undertake CP research to develop a logic model for remote family services in Territory Families.</p>	<p>Child and family evidence gap map and research strategy in development. Initiative under Roadmap for Reform.</p>		<p>National Research Agenda for Protecting Children 2011–14 (National Research agenda) <www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/publications-articles/national-research-agenda-for-protecting-children-2011>. Developed to identify research opportunities and priorities and expand the evidence base around issues in Australia relevant to the protection of children.</p> <p>Research Advisory Committee (RAC) under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 restored under third action plan. Purpose is to develop a new research agenda and develop targets and progress markers for the Third Action Plan. RAC consists of representatives from state and territories, the Commonwealth, AIFS, AIHW, the Centre for Children and Young People at SCU and the Institute of CP Studies at the ACU.</p> <p>AIHW continuing to explore options for improved national data analysis and reporting. Including longitudinal studies of children in OOHC.</p>

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	<p>/improving-the-management-of-youth-with-fasd-in-the-justice-system/>. Initiative of Telethon Kids Institute with DPCP and DCS involvement in steering committee.</p>		<p>Collaborative agreement between DCCSDS and ARC Centre for Excellence for Children and Family Over the Life Course (2014) <www.lifecoursecentre.org.au/about>.</p> <p>Survey of the CP and family support workforce <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/news/%E2%80%8Bprofiling-child-and-family-services-workforce>. To guide and inform future workforce planning and development priorities for the child and family support sector in Queensland.</p> <p>QFCC has legislative responsibility (under s 9(1) (e) of the Family and Child Commission Act 2014) to assist relevant agencies to evaluate the efficacy of their programs, identify the most effective program models and analyse and evaluate whole system policies and practices. QFCC has developed a research strategy 2016–19 around seven strategic directions/goals for the child and family system . and entered into partnerships with Griffith University, AIFS, CREATE Foundation, Bravehearts and Foster Care Queensland to progress the research agenda <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/Research%20Hub/Research%20Agenda</p>				

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			<p>%202016–19.pdf>. QFCC also holds bi-annual “Research in the Round” events for policy-makers, practitioners and researchers to hear the latest research relevant to protecting children and families with vulnerabilities</p>				
SERVICE COMPONENTS							
<i>Prevention and early intervention</i>							
<p>Targeted earlier intervention program reform <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/targeted-earlier-intervention-reform>. This is to develop a system that is flexible, locally responsive, evidence-based, adaptive and client centred. Nine programs are being considered as part of the reform.</p> <p>Introduction of SafeCare program within Brighter Futures program sites <safecare.publichealth.gsu.edu/>. SafeCare targets families with children aged 0–5 years who are at risk of abuse/neglect.</p>	<p>Introduction of Direct Leadership Groups (Regional Manager Forums), Family Support Networks and Intensive Family Support Teams. Aim is to divert families from CP system.</p> <p>Strong Families Program to cease from 2017. Aim is to realign resources to focus on improving life outcomes of Aboriginal children and families and prevent children entering OOHC.</p> <p>Adaptations to Best Beginnings Service planned to align more closely with CP earlier intervention strategy.</p>	<p>New Uniting Children and Family ACT intensive prevention and restoration program (2016).</p> <p>Strengthening Families Approach <www.beterservices.act.gov.au/strengthening-families>. A new way of working with families who have complex needs and who are involved with many different services. The key to the approach is that families have a Lead Worker who works alongside them.</p>	<p>New investment in Intensive Family Support Services. Will replace existing Referral for Active Intervention (RAI) service. Intervention duration increased from 9 to 12 months. Requirement to employ specialist domestic and family violence workers. Statewide service.</p> <p>Triple P Parenting Program made available free of charge to all Queensland parents and carers of children ≤ 16 years (2015).</p> <p>QFCC Talking Families campaign <www.talkingfamilies.qld.gov.au/>. To encourage help-seeking, help-accepting and help-offering behaviours.</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Service (2016). Integration of several family support services to provide holistic prevention and early intervention services.</p>	<p>New intensive family preservation services (2016) <www.territorystories.nt.gov.au/bitstream/10070/261549/1/Elferink-010416%20Intensive_family_preservation_services_to_commence_across_the_nt.pdf>. Part of the DCF Family Intervention Framework <territoryfamilies.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/238660/Family-intervention-framework.pdf>. Contract NGOs to deliver intensive family support services in the large regional location of the Northern Territory to prevent entry into OOHC. Territory Families retains case management.</p>			<p>Building Capacity in Australian Parents (BCAP) trial funded under Third Action Plan <www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2016/160503_-_third_action_plan.pdf>. BCAP aims to support local services to adopt a strengths-based approach to parenting in a child’s first 1,000 days— from conception to 2 years of age.</p> <p>Child Aware Approaches Grants (2012). Under National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children Second Action Plan. Designed to help build and promote the evidence base about the intersection between risk factors for child abuse and neglect and to help practitioners adapt or enhance practice approaches.</p>

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				<p>Revision of the remote family services program funded through the Australian government (2016). Operate in six remote communities delivering case management services to support families to keep their children safe. Majority of referrals received from Territory Families.</p> <p>National Partnership on Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment (2016). Established until 2020 to fund activities and services to improve outcomes in schooling, housing, health, community safety, health and job opportunities <www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/community_services/national-partnership/NT_remote_aboriginal_investment_NP.pdf>.</p>			

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<i>Reporting child maltreatment</i>							
<p>Updated Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG). 2016 Review of the NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) and go live of the online MRG within the ChildStory Reporter Website in October 2016 <reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>.</p> <p>JIRT local contact protocol (LCP). Statewide protocol to assist with the provision of information and support to parents and concerned community members where there are allegations of child sexual abuse involving an institution. This protocol has been supported by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.</p>	<p>New category of persons mandated to report sexual abuse. Included in the <i>Children and Community Services Legislation Amendment and Repeal Act 2015</i>.</p> <p>Amendments to grounds for a child being found in need of protection. Removes harm caused by psychological abuse as a separate ground and instead provides a definition of emotional abuse, which includes psychological abuse and exposing a child to an act of family and domestic violence. Included in the <i>Children and Community Services Legislation Amendment and Repeal Act 2015</i>.</p> <p>Definition of maltreatment extended to including exposing a child to an act of family or domestic violence and tattooing/branding a child under the age of 16 years. Included in the <i>Children and Community Services Legislation Amendment and Repeal Act 2015</i>.</p>	<p>Psychologists added as mandatory reporters.</p> <p>Introduction of a reportable conduct scheme (2017) <www.cmd.act.gov.au/policystrategic/reportable-conduct-scheme>.</p> <p>Employment-based CP measure designed to ensure that allegations of abuse and certain criminal convictions are identified, reported and acted on appropriately. See above.</p> <p>Efforts to improve quality of child concern reports made by Police. This includes CYPs access to SupportLink, which is a national referral and diversion gateway for police and other emergency services <www.supportlink.com.au/overview.aspx>.</p>	<p>Key amendments to CP Act 1999 introduced in CP Reform Amendment Act 2014. These clarified the definition of “a child in need of protection”, consolidated mandatory reporting requirements (section 13E), required mandatory reporters to report to Child Safety reasonable suspicion of physical and/or sexual abuse, provided guidance on what to consider in identifying significant harm and when a child may be “in need of protection”, allowed certain professionals to refer families to Family and Child Connect or support services without their consent (where appropriate).</p> <p>CP – Mandatory Reporting Amendment Bill 2016 expands existing CP mandatory reporting requirements. This is to include professionals in early education and care sector.</p> <p>Child protection mandatory reporting training for early childhood professionals <napcan.ismartsoftware.net/iRegister/Courses/ViewCourse?courseId=32>.</p>	<p>Planned introduction of mandatory reporter guide to assist professional notifiers <territoryfamilies.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/234053/strategie-plan-2015-17.pdf>.</p>			

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<i>Child protection intake</i>							
	Plans to introduce a central CP intake for metropolitan District offices (2017).		<p>Thresholds for Child Safety to take action clarified in CP Reform Amendment Act 2014.</p> <p>New pathways for reporting or referring concerns <www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/protecting-children/about-child-protection/reporting-referring-concerns>.</p> <p>Rollout of Regional Intake Services (RIS) across seven Child Safety Regions <www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/about-us/contact-us/child-safety-service-centres/regional-intake-services>. This is to improve quality and consistency of intake decision-making across each region, create workload efficiencies and improve management of demand pressures through separation of intake from the investigation and assessment process.</p>	<p>Centralised intake model, providing 24-hr a day, 7-day a week response to reports 2011. Rostered regional worker within regional teams (where they exist) contacted by central intake worker outside business hours. Other professionals (e.g., police) contacted where an immediate CP response is not possible.</p> <p>CP screening and response priority assessment updated 2013. Four new response priorities are 24 hours, within 3 days (for children < 2 years of age), within 5 days and within 10 days.</p>	<p>Eight business-hours regional CP intake services have been replaced by four business-hours divisional intake services.</p>		

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<i>Child protection investigation and assessment</i>							
<p>FACS revision of the Safety and Risk Assessment (SARA) Tool (2017). In line with the FACS <i>Review of Safety Planning in NSW</i> to improve and standardise safety planning practice.</p> <p>FACS Prenatal Policy Review (2017). To improve responses to expectant parents and their child who are the subject of a prenatal report based on co-design/delivery of local services and best practice approaches.</p> <p>FACS class of children/young people Review (2017). To develop policy/procedure/tools to support investigation of Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) reports in relation to groups or “classes” of children and young people.</p>	<p>Multi-agency Investigation and Support Team (MIST) pilot in progress, the South East metropolitan corridor <parkerville.org.au/i-need-help/parents/multi-agency-investigation-and-support-team/>.</p> <p>Remote Services Framework (2014) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Organisation/Documents/Remote_services_framework.pdf>.</p>		<p>New response model planned as part of Tertiary System Redesign (2017) <www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/reform-renewal/child-family/working-better-families-contact-child-protection-system#s-2-tertiary-system-redesign>. Aim is to strengthen responses to families who come to the attention of Child Safety. The initiative will consider access to early support to keep children safety at home and a specialist investigation function for more serious matters.</p> <p>Work to transition the current family group meeting model to a more inclusive process for planning and decision making with families (2016).</p>	<p>MOU for joint child at risk investigations with Police (2010).</p> <p>Introduction of SDM tools (2011). Aim is to facilitate decision-making at critical points in the CP investigation process.</p>	<p>Multidisciplinary units consisting of Police, centres against sexual assault and CP established. These are to investigate reports of child sex abuse.</p> <p>Introduction of Signs of Safety as a tool for assessment <www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/214356/Redesign_of_Child_Protection_Services.pdf>.</p>		
<i>Court proceedings and legal orders</i>							
<p>Placement hierarchy that aims to achieve greater permanency for children and young people who enter OOHC <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/safe-home-for-life/permanent-placement-principles>.</p>	<p>Expanded form of responsible parenting agreements.</p> <p>Pilot of CP matters being heard in the Family Court of WA (2016). Integrated approach to managing family law cases involving CP concerns. Pilot managed by principal registrar of the Family Court.</p>		<p>New Acts enable establishment of new court work model for CP system (2016). Consists of Office of the Official Child and Family Solicitor within DCCSDS to provide Child Safety staff with early, independent legal advice</p>	<p>Commencement of Permanent Care Orders policies and procedures (2015).</p> <p>Local Court introduced Practice Direction (2015). <www.nt.gov.au/justice/nmc/lawyers/documents/CareandProtectionof</p>		<p>The Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Permanent Care and Other Matters) Act 2014 created a new range of Children’s Court protection orders. These are aligned with permanency objectives and include family preservation, family reunification, adoption, permanent care and long-term OOHC.</p>	

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<p>Children allowed to determine whether guardianship application proceeds. Aspect of 2014 legislation that empowers children to have a say in decisions that affect their long-term care.</p> <p>ATSI Cultural Plans and Multicultural Plans compulsory for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds when submitting a Care Plan to Children's Court (2017) <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about_us/news/redesigned-care-plan-to-reinforce-importance-of-cultural-identity-and-connection-to-family>.</p>			<p>and assistance with the preparation of referrals and briefs of evidence for the Office of the Director of CP Litigation (new statutory agency within Justice portfolio). Office of the Director of CP Litigation decides whether an application for a CP order should be filed, applies for a CP order and conducts proceedings in the Children's Court. <www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/protecting-children/ongoing-intervention/court-processes>.</p> <p>Children's Court Rules 2016 and Director of CP Litigation Act 2016. Introduce a duty of disclosure in CP proceedings.</p>	<p>ChildrenAct-Chief MagistrateLowndes 2015.pdf>. Object is to provide for clear practice and procedure relating to applications in the Family Matters jurisdiction of the local court.</p>	<p>The Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Permanent Care and Other Matters) Act 2014 requires the court to have regard to certain matters in determining whether to make a protection order and in determining whether to make a protection order that has the effect of conferring responsibility for a child on the Secretary (s 276A).</p> <p>Koori Court established in one metropolitan area within the Family Division of the Children's Court. This is an addition to a Koori Court in the Criminal Division of the Children's Court.</p>		
<i>Child protection planning and intervention with child and family</i>							
<p>Family group conferencing being introduced as an alternative dispute resolution process (2014) <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/safe-home-for-INlife/resolving-contact-disputes-using-alternative-dispute-resolution>. Allows children opportunity to participate in case plan decision-making.</p>	<p>Introduction of Signs of Safety Pre-Hearing Conferences (2010). An attempt to find agreement about the child safety concerns and options about future safety of children.</p>	<p>Independent advocacy support to birth families of children and young people at risk of, or who have entered, the care system when they are dealing with CP services (2017). Operated by Red Cross and Gungahlin Child and Family Centre.</p>	<p>Changes planned under Tertiary System Redesign. See above.</p>		<p>Children's Court conciliation conferences introduced (2013) <www.childrenscourt.vic.gov.au/jurisdictions/child-protection/conciliation-conferences>. The aim is to provide an opportunity for the parties to agree on what should happen without resorting to a contested court hearing. Parents and children are able to speak for themselves.</p>		<p>Child Protection Income Management (CPIM) introduced. CPIM was first introduced to parts of Western Australia in 2008.</p> <p>Since then, it has expanded around Australia. Notable expansions include in 2010 to the Northern Territory, in 2012 to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands (South Australia) and in 2015 to the Greater Adelaide region.</p>

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					Additional funding for flexible packages to support family preservation and family reunification. Connected to permanency amendments.		The Australian Government announced a two year extension of all Income Management measures, including CPIM, in the 2017-18 Budget.
OUT-OF-HOME CARE							
<p>Redesigned Care Plan <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about_us/news/redesigned-care-plan-to-reinforce-importance-of-cultural-identity-and-connection-to-family>.</p> <p>Transition of service provision to tailored support packages.</p> <p>A new evidenced-based therapeutic residential care system <www.community.nsw.gov.au/research-centre/verso-report>.</p> <p>A new therapeutic OOHC framework <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/therapeuticcare>. Developed in October 2016 and open for comment at the time of writing.</p> <p>Introduction of Common Contact Framework.</p> <p>Implementation of the Structured Decision Making (SDM) restoration assessment tool</p>	<p>DCPFS certified as a Sanctuary organisation by the Sanctuary Institute (2014). Overarching therapeutic care framework for operation of residential care facilities and model of organisational change. Implemented in all residential facilities and the secure care unit.</p> <p>Circle of Security model used in for day-to-day therapeutic practice with children and young people in residential care facilities.</p> <p>Requirement to outline attachment and trauma-informed therapeutic models for OOHC included in service agreements (2015). See above.</p> <p>Suite of reforms proposed that will focus on healing from trauma and increasing life opportunities. From OOHC Strategic Directions 2015–2020.</p>	<p>Establishment of new and differentiated models of OOHC <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/682623/CSD_OHCS_Strategy_web_FINAL.pdf>.</p> <p>Therapeutic assessments and plans to be developed for every child in OOHC.</p>	<p>OOHC Reform Initiative (OOHCRI) review of investment in placement services, determining the effectiveness of existing investments and providing options for future commissioning of placement services <www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/reform-renewal/child-family/improving-out-home-care-post-care-children-young-people>. OOHCRI may make recommendations for investments in alternative models of family and non-family based OOHC such as paid foster care and boarding schools.</p> <p>Hope and Healing Framework for residential care to be rolled out across the State (by December 2018) <www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/gateway/campaigns/supporting-families/></p>	<p>Development and refinement of the OOHC continuum 2014. This describes a mix of accommodation required to meet the needs of OOHC children in the Northern Territory. Defines existing care options and new specialist care services such as the In-Care Support Team.</p> <p>Concerns for the Safety of Children in Care policy (2014).</p> <p>Partnership with Australian Childhood Foundation to develop a model of therapeutic residential care.</p>	<p>Treatment Foster Care Oregon Pilot. Initiative of Roadmap for Reform.</p> <p>Transformation of residential care to a trauma-informed model for children and young people with complex needs. Initiative of Roadmap for Reform.</p> <p>Mentoring and learning program for children in OOHC with flexible support for young people aged 16–17 years to develop life skills. Initiative of Roadmap for Reform.</p> <p>Targeted Care Packages. See above.</p> <p>Range of initiatives to reform OOHC funded model in development and/or implementation to be trialled in the southern division <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-></p>		Measures to improve the range of OOHC options, including specialised care services.

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<p><www.community.nsw.gov.au/for-agencies-that-work-with-us/child-protection-services/structured-decision-making-system>. Tool used to structure and consider factors in a decision to restore a child or young person to their family.</p> <p>Extension of Intensive Family Preservation Program (IFP) to support authorised carers and birth families if a child is living in OOHC. Applies if there are significant concerns for placement stability or restoration assessment indicates intensive support is required.</p> <p>Establishment of UC Change Ambassadors Group. Will promote the range of support and services available to young people who are, who have been, in OOHC. See above.</p>	<p>Introduction of one-off establishment payment for informal relative carers (2011).</p> <p>Establishment of Enhanced Contact Centres across Perth metropolitan area (2014–15). Family friendly environment for parents of children in care, especially parents working towards reunification. Provides a program of group contact between parents and their children (aged 0–5 years) using the Circle of Security model.</p>		<p>hope-and-healing-framework-for-residential-care-final-report.pdf>.</p> <p>New trauma-informed, therapeutic framework developed by PeakCare Queensland in 2015.</p> <p>Commitment to have all kinship carers supported by a foster care support agency.</p> <p>Kicbox app co-designed with young people in young people in OOHC. Mobile and web application for accessing key information for supporting their transition to independence. Stage 1 complete (2016). Stage 2 involves integration of information from an Integrated Case Management System (ICMS), and an interface for carer interaction.</p> <p>Sort out your life free (SORTLI) mobile app. For young people 15–18 years in OOHC (or with OOHC experience) to help them with their transition to independence. Focuses on seven domains identified in the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009–2020: identity, relationships, housing, education and employment, health, living skills and finances.</p>		<p>projects/projects-and-initiatives/roadmap-for-reform-strong-families,-safe-children>. Initiative of Roadmap for Reform.</p> <p>New cultural support program for Aboriginal children in OOHC developed.</p> <p>Roll-out of LOOKOUT Education Support Centres. See below.</p>		

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<i>Leaving care and aftercare services</i>								
<p>CareLeaver Line. A 1800 number and a mailbox will be introduced to provide information and assistance to care leavers.</p> <p>Resolve App. An app for mobile devices developed to provide information and link users to more information and services.</p> <p>OOHC Tertiary Education Scholarships. For TAFE and Western Sydney University.</p> <p>Youth Rental Subsidy <www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/additional-information/fact-sheets/youth-private-rental-subsidy>. Housing products that support youth leaving care include the Youth Rental Subsidy.</p>		<p>Extension of financial support to young people transitioning from OOHC until 21 years of age.</p> <p>Extension of voluntary support to young people transitioning from OOHC until 25 years of age.</p>	<p>New post-care support through Next Steps After Care (commenced 2015) <uccommunity.org.au/sites/default/files/next_step.pdf>. Target group is young people who transition from care after their 15th birthday up until age 21.</p> <p>Kicbox and SORTLI apps to support care leavers (see below).</p>	<p>Introduction of leaving care and aftercare support guidelines 2012. Expands on pre-existing preparation and planning requirements for young people transitioning from the care of the CEO of Territory Families.</p> <p>MOU with Australian Government Department of Social Services concerning Administrative Arrangements for the Transition to Independent Living Allowance.</p>				<p>Towards Independent Adulthood (TIA) trial funded in 2016–17 Commonwealth budget <www.dss.gov.au/grants/grants/towards-independent-adulthood-tia-trial>. The TIA intervention is a way of supporting young people through better use of available data and delivering an intensive, wrap-around case management service linked to education, health and housing. One NGO in WA will be funded to engage Personal Advisers to provide intensive, holistic supports and mentoring for young people for up to three years as they transition from formal care into adulthood.</p> <p>Transition to Independent Living Allowance (2014) <www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children>.</p>

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SERVICE CONNECTIONS							
<i>Building shared knowledge and capacity across the system</i>							
<p>Introduction of common risk and need identification planned <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/file/0005/387293/FACS_OOHC_Review_161116.pdf>. Under Their Futures Matter reform.</p>	<p>Common Client Self-Assessment Tool used across Family Support Networks.</p>		<p>Strengthening Families Protecting Children practice Framework <www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/child-safety-practice-manual/framework-practice-maps>. Platform for practice alignment and shared understanding and language across the secondary and tertiary child and family support systems. Includes supporting practice tools and processes, such as the Collaborative Assessment and Planning framework tool.</p> <p>Strengthening our Sector workforce strategy includes a focus on building shared knowledge and capacity <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/For%20professionals/strengthening%20our%20sector/qfcc_strengthening_oursector_actionplan_201_17_printversion.pdf>.</p>			<p>Commitment to embed the Common Approach framework across the service system. This is to increase the capacity of practitioners in first contact with children and families to identify both their strengths and needs.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Common Approach to Assessment, Referral and Support (CAARS). CAARS was adapted in 2012 and trialled in 13 mental health support services across Australia <www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/10_2014/nfpac_annualrpt201213.pdf>.</p>

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<i>Processes for accessing and coordinating services</i>							
<p>Trials of localised CP intake and referral services. The Central Coast Multi Agency Response Centre (CC MARC) <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/safe-home-for-life/designing-the-system-with-our-partners/central-coast-co-design> and the Macarthur Intake and Referral Service (MIRS) <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about_us/news/2014/macarthur-intake-and-referral-service> aim to improve intake, assessment and referral processes and link local services to children and families and help build a local service network.</p>	<p>Establishment of Family Support Networks (2014). An alliance of community organisations and DCPFS. They provide a common entry point into services and deliver earlier and more targeted support to families. Active across four of 17 CP districts <www.wafsn.org.au/>.</p> <p>Introduction of Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams (FDVRT) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/CrisisAndEmergency/FDVI/Documents/FDVRT%20Operating%20Procedures.pdf>. Partnership between the DCPFS, Western Australia Police and specialist family and domestic violence service providers. Aims to improve the safety of child and adult victims of family and domestic violence through a collaborative approach that focuses on timely and early intervention following a police call out to a domestic violence incident. FVDRTs assess WA Police domestic violence incident reports and provide support and services to adult victims if required. Part of Freedom from Fear Action Plan 2015 (see</p>	<p>Integration of CP and Youth Justice into one single service (2014). The service is now known as the Child and Youth Protection Service <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/337590/Blueprint_for_Youth_Justice_in_the_ACT_2012-22.pdf>.</p> <p>Establishment of the OneLink services (2016) <www.cmd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/yvette-berry-mla-media-releases/2016/onelink-connecting-canberrans-to-better-and-simpler-human-services>. Offers coordination and service linkages for all families.</p> <p>Human Services Blueprint. A plan developed by community and government to guide how services and supports are provided <www.betterservices.act.gov.au/human-services-blueprint>.</p> <p>Strengthening Families Approach. See above.</p> <p>CYPS access to police referral service SupportLink. See above.</p>	<p>New Family and Child Connect Service for families who might have otherwise been involved in CP system (final rollout est. 2016) <www.familychildconnect.org.au/index.asp>. Alternative to contacting Child Safety/making a Child Concern Report. Provides assessment, response and referral services.</p> <p>Several initiatives to support information sharing. This includes a one place Community Service Directory (one place <www.oneplace.org.au>, changes to the CP Act (1999) under the CP Reform Amendment Act 2014 to allow other prescribed entities to share relevant information about children and families with relevant providers such as Family and Child connect to prevent problems from escalating to a point requiring Child Safety intervention and further work around policies and procedures surrounding information sharing planned.</p>	<p>Implementation of information sharing guidelines <territoryfamilies.nt.gov.au/about/publications-and-policies/guidelines-for-information-sharing>. Assists authorised people and organisations to share information about a child or family to help them work together for the safety and wellbeing of a child.</p> <p>Child Safety Coordination group meetings facilitated by remote family support services. Chaired by remote family support team leaders. Multi-agency forums that give local service providers a regular opportunity to discuss individual children of concern and agree on action.</p>	<p>Planned introduction of Support and Safety Hubs (2017). Access to integrated services. The hubs were a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Family Violence and will prioritise the safety of women and children.</p> <p>Roll-out of LOOKOUT Education Support Centres <www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/lookout.aspx>. Designed to boost the capacity of schools, CP and OOH services to improve educational outcomes among children in OOH. The Centres work as part of a multidisciplinary service response with expertise in Koorie cultural education, data analysis, psychology and social work. Underpinned by the sharing of information between the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Health and Human Services.</p> <p>Changes to legislative arrangements for sharing information in Victoria under consideration. Consistent with recommendation of the Family Violence Royal Commission.</p>	<p>Funds committed to develop a new KIDS data warehouse. This is to link datasets across agencies to inform child safety decision-making.</p>	<p>Best practice model of information exchange in development. Under Third Action Plan. Involves examination of jurisdictional approaches.</p> <p>Information sharing protocol between State and Territory CP agencies and the Commonwealth Department of Human Services (encompassing Medicare, the Child Support Agency and Centrelink).</p> <p>Towards Independent Adulthood trial. See above.</p> <p>Child Aware Approaches Grants (2012). See above.</p>

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	<p>above). Currently 17 FDVRT co-located across the state. Co-location model.</p> <p>Joint childFIRST and WA Police Child Assessment and Interview Team where criminal offences involving children may have occurred. Moved to more child-friendly premises in 2012–13.</p> <p>Expansion entry point assessment and referral service assisting people who are homeless/at risk of homelessness (2015).</p> <p>Pilot of intensive family support housing program (2015). Supports families at risk of eviction.</p> <p>Legislation to enable sharing of information between prescribed public authorities and the non-government sector. Included in the Children and Community Services Legislation Amendment and Repeal Act 2015. From 01 January 2016 DCPFS able to require CEO of Department of Corrective Services to provide reports relevant to wellbeing of a child or class or group of children.</p> <p>New and updated MOUs between government and NGOs on information sharing and other joint agency processes.</p> <p>Portal that allows sharing of WA Police Domestic Violence Incident Reports with DCPFS for the purpose of triage (2013).</p>	<p>Planned changes to legislation to improve information sharing about at-risk and vulnerable children and young people to better address family violence <www.justice.act.gov.au/news/view/1720/title/information-sharing-to-improve-the>.</p> <p>Planned establishment of a Family Safety Hub <www.cmd.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/883484/ACT-Government-Response_family_violence.pdf>. A focal point for family violence responses in the service system.</p>	<p>DCCSDS exploring options to improve information sharing provisions in the CP Act <www/qld.gov.au/childprotectionactreview>.</p>		<p>Roadmap for Reform envisages significant changes to how primary and secondary services are delivered.</p> <p>Risk Assessment and Management Panel (RAMP) project <www.thelookout.org.au/resources/family-violence-other-professionals/risk-assessment-and-management-panels-ramps>. A formally convened meeting of nine key agencies and organisations that contribute to the safety of women and children experiencing serious and imminent threat of family violence.</p>		

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WORKFORCE							
<i>Capability</i>							
<p>Introduction of Practice First as a model for CP service delivery (2012). <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/practice-first>. Includes 10 practice first principles and Care and Protection Practice Standards.</p> <p>Group supervision sessions at the heart of Practice First for CP workforce. <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/children,-young-people-and-families/practice-first>.</p> <p>CP Academy in Development. Will deliver learning and development needs in the future.</p> <p>Seen and (NOT) Heard video <www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/seen-and-heard>. Developed by ACYP to drive cultural change so the participation of children and young people becomes part of everyday practice.</p>	<p>Signs of Safety Reloaded Project. Aim is to further embed the framework and strengthen practice.</p> <p>Plans to implement strategies to support better quality foster care. This includes consistent preparation training, measures to improve carer cultural competency, aligning carer competencies and implementing a cross-sector Foster Care Panel. Part of OOHC Reform Plan.</p> <p>Supervision in Case Practice Policy. Specifies minimum monthly supervision with supervisors.</p> <p>Learning and Development Network (2011). Provides local learning and e-learning opportunities.</p> <p>DCPFS Learning and Development Centre. Provides learning pathways for departmental carers and residential employees and the carers/employees of NGO providers. Mobile app allows remote access to learning pathways.</p>	<p>Establishment of the Case Analysis Team (2016). The team will provide independent advice on decision-making to CP caseworkers and team leaders.</p> <p>Intensive training from Australian Childhood Foundation for carers, NGO staff and CP staff. Increasing capability to provide trauma-informed care.</p> <p>Refreshed supervision framework for child and youth protection services.</p>	<p>Strengthening Families Protecting Children practice Framework <www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/child-safety-practice-manual/framework-practice-maps>. See below.</p> <p>DCCSDS developing a training program for kinship carers.</p> <p>DCCSDS training of CP and sector partners to support implementation of the Strengthening Families Supporting Children Framework for Practice <www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/child-safety-practice-manual/framework-practice-maps>. Includes e-learning as well as a coaching strategy to key Child Safety, FaCC and IFS staff combining face-to-face and online connections to facilitate reflective learning and skill development.</p>	<p>Revision of CP Practice Manual (2013).</p> <p>Introduction of Children and Families' Standards of Professional Practice (2013) <territoryfamilies.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/234046/standards-of-professional-practice.pdf>. Six practice standards.</p> <p>Practice reflection forum and learning hub established, coordinated by Territory Families.</p> <p>Enhancement of supervision training for Territory Families team leaders and managers.</p> <p>New carer training and resources. This includes the Carer Handbook and Who Pays Guide and the establishment of the carer community website (in 2013) <www.carercommunity.nt.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx> and ongoing training opportunities.</p>	<p>New foster and kinship carer learning and development strategy. To support carers to enable them to provide the best possible care to children and young people with vulnerabilities. Includes a structured learning approach, centralised training calendar, face-to-face and online learning modules, support for accredited training and sponsorship for carers to attend conferences.</p> <p>\$8 million in funding to support the immediate upskilling of residential care workers (2016).</p> <p>Implementation of minimum mandatory qualifications by end of 2017 for residential care workers. This is Certificate IV Child, Youth and Family Intervention (Residential and OOHC).</p> <p>Redevelopment of Step-by-Step Victoria. Mandatory competency-based assessment package for foster carers.</p>	<p>Child- and family-sensitive training in 12 Communities for Children Sites across Australia. Part of Building Capacity Building Bridges Project. More than 1,000 practitioners from 250 organisations have attended workshops. Evaluation report released in 2013.</p>	

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<p>NGO Learning Centre and the NGO Training Program. FACS operates the NGO Learning Centre <ngolearning.com.au>, a free public website for NGO staff working with children, young people, families and communities in NSW. The centre provides information, accessible training and resources on a range of key areas including child protection, mandatory reporting and case management.</p>	<p>Changes to workforce anticipated as part of OOHC Reform. These will focus of the assessment, review, training and support of family carers provided by CP workers.</p> <p>Aboriginal Learning and Development Strategy (2013–15). Includes learning and development strategies for Aboriginal staff and Aboriginal cultural learning for all staff.</p> <p>CALD Services Framework. <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Resources/Documents/Policies%20and%20Frameworks/CaLD%20Services%20Framework%202013.pdf>.</p> <p>Remote Services Framework (2014) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Organisation/Documents/Remote_services_framework.pdf>.</p> <p>Relaunch of Aboriginal Services and Practice Framework (2016–18) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Resources/Documents/ABORIGINAL%20SERVICES%20AND%20PRACTICE%20FRAMEWORK.pdf>. Framework for improving outcomes for Aboriginal children, families and communities that come into contact with the CP system. Priority areas are capacity building, community engagement, practice development and people development.</p>			<p>Revision of carer induction training 2014. Delivered face-to-face in regional locations such as Darwin, Alice Springs and Katherine.</p> <p>Review of carer assessment and support policies and procedures.</p> <p>Launch of the Carer Community Website (2013).</p> <p>Capability and leadership framework <ocpe.nt.gov.au/nt-public-sector-employment/leadership-and-capability/capability-leadership-framework>. For public sector employees.</p>			

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<i>Workforce strategy</i>							
<p>FACS People Matter Survey <www.psc.nsw.gov.au/reports---data/state-of-the-sector/people-matter-employee-survey/people-matter-employee-survey-2016/family-and-community-services/family-and-community-services-reports>. Most recently conducted in May 2016 when 7,331 FACS staff participated. A biennial opportunity for NSW government employees to voice opinions about their workplace experience. Results used to determine levels of employee engagement, measure how well FACS is embedding core values and ensure the workplace supports diversity and ethical behaviour.</p>	<p>People Development Framework (2015–17) <www.dcp.wa.gov.au>.</p>	<p>Workforce development strategy for human services in the ACT in development <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/hcs/community-sector-reform/industry-strategy-2016–2026>.</p>	<p>Strengthening the Sector workforce strategy (2016) <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/Strengthening%20the%20Sector%20draft%20strategy.pdf>. Sector-wide workforce strategy aimed at building sector capacity, capability and culture. First action plan 2016–17 available <www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/For%20professionals/Strengthening%20our%20sector/qfcc_strengthening_oursector_actionplan_201_17_printversion.pdf>.</p> <p>Child and Family Operational Workforce Plan 2016–2019 approved. Implementation plan in development.</p>	<p>Human Capital Plan 2015 <ocpe.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/248546/Human_Capital_Plan.pdf>.</p>	<p>Roadmap for Reform workforce strategy in development.</p>		
<i>Capacity</i>							
<p>FACS HR Workforce Dashboards. Measures capacity and assists in strategic planning. Dashboards include FACS Workforce Profile and Workforce Diversity.</p> <p>The FACS Cultural Diversity Framework <www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0020/303914/FACS_Cultural_Diversity_Framework.pdf>. Outlines FACS’ commitment to providing appropriate services to our clients from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.</p>	<p>Workforce Diversity Plan (2013–17). Activities to attract and retain employees from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>Disability Access Inclusion Paper (2013–17). Promotes employment of people with a disability.</p> <p>Foster Care Recruitment Campaign (2012). Purpose to advertise need for carers.</p>		<p>Additional 47 (count) Frontline and frontline support positions created in September 2016 and an additional 82 (EFT) frontline positions created in October 2016.</p>	<p>Indigenous Employment And Career Development Strategy 2015–20 <ocpe.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/247655/IECD_2015_-_2020.pdf>.</p> <p>Professional DCF staff living and working in remote communities.</p> <p>Partnerships with Charles Darwin University to assist with critical workforce shortages in CP. Aim is to establish a sustainable workforce for the future. Focuses on</p>			

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				graduate employment, workplace integrated learning scholarships, student field placements and collaboration such as membership of course advisory committees, guest lecturing and curriculum development.			
SERVICE PROVIDERS							
Progressive transition of the provision of OOHC services to the NGO sector < www.community.nsw.gov.au/about-us/key-reforms/oohc-program-reform >.	Increase provision of family support and OOHC by ACCOs. See above. DCPFS became a White Ribbon organisation (2016).		OOHCRI may make recommendations for recommissioning of existing investment, which may result in a change to the existing supplier profile.	Transition of the provision of OOHC services to the NGO sector planned.			