

# CHILD AND FAMILY INTEGRATED SERVICES BIANNUAL REPORT

July 2018 to December 2018



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## Background

In 2014, construction of five child and family centres (CFCs) funded by the Commonwealth Government was completed at Yuendumu, Maningrida, Ngukurr, Gunbalanya and Palmerston. In 2016, the Northern Territory Government completed construction of a sixth CFC at Larapinta Primary School and is currently establishing another at Tennant Creek with plans for a further 10 across the Territory over the next 3 years.

Child and Family Integrated Services use a place based planning approach is to ensure that children and their families (from pre-birth to five years of age) have access to quality integrated and culturally responsive programs and services in their local community to strengthen their health, wellbeing, education and care. The underpinning methodology for this work is Collective Impact.

CFC's also offer a soft entry point for vulnerable and disadvantaged children into preschool and school by engaging children and their families in quality, integrated early childhood education and care programs and services including Families as First Teachers. Each CFC is associated with a school and funded through the global school budget.

School principals manage the overall operation of CFC's in collaboration with the community. At each CFC site an Early Childhood Integrated Service Leader and an Aboriginal Coordinator work as a team to facilitate an integrated service delivery model by facilitating partnership and collaboration between government and non-government service providers and the community.

### Child and Family Integrated Services Vision:

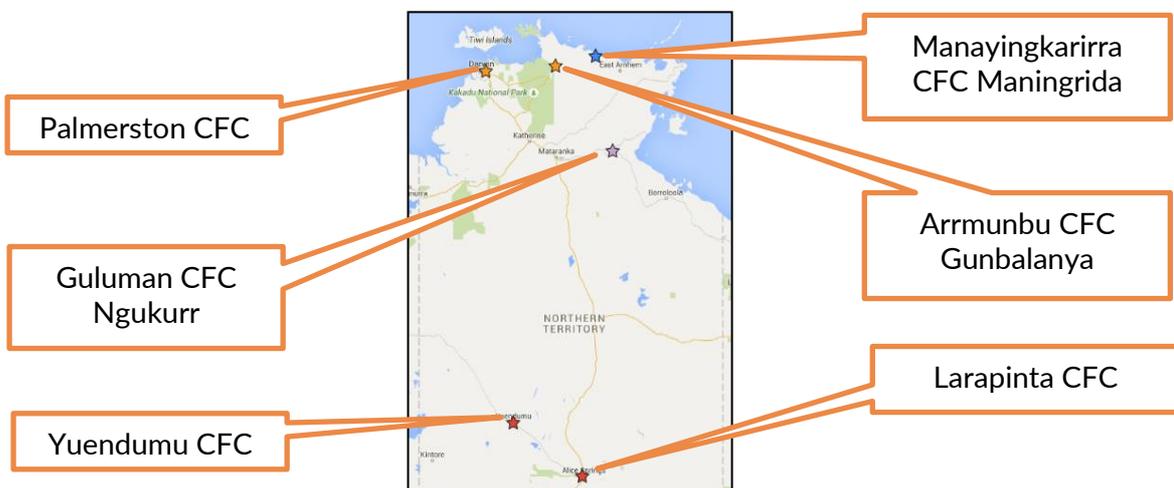
Families and communities support their children, pre-birth to five years of age, to have the best possible start in life and grow to be strong, healthy, safe, confident and capable learners.

### Child and Family Integrated Services Mission:

To establish a community led, integrated service system focussed on children pre-birth to five years of age and their families

### Child and Family Integrated Services Principles:

- Services are centred on the child and family and integrated
- Services and programs understand and privilege the local cultural context
- Services are committed to a long term, evidence informed approach
- Services are committed to prevention and early intervention



## Definitions

### Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a nationwide data collection of early childhood development at the time children commence their first year of full-time school. The AEDC highlights what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to support children and their families by providing evidence to support health, education and community policy and planning.

### ASQ TRAK

The ASQ-TRAK is a developmental screening tool for observing and monitoring the developmental progress of Australian Aboriginal children at 2 months, 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 24 months, 36 months and 48 months of age.

### Child and Family Centre (CFC)

**Child and Family Centres** are a focal point for the integration of services focussing on children from before birth to 5 and their families within a community. They provide some services for young children and their families e.g. Families as First Teachers; child care; maternal and child health; etc. and connect families and children to other services in a community. CFCs foster:

- Shared understandings - Common principles in all program, policy and practice documents that are embedded in a common philosophy.
- Shared practices - Common evidence and outcomes-based practices across all services, with service providers and families reaching agreements about aims and outcomes characterised by a transdisciplinary teamwork model, universal core services to all families and children, and an inclusive and non-stigmatising approach to programming and planning.
- Leadership - Leaders that are well-trained and supported, effective in their roles, inspiring and supportive of all staff, and able to work across traditional divides.
- Co-design - Families and communities are partners in planning and governance. It is essential that any integrated centre is sensitive and responsive to diversity and to families' and communities' needs and priorities.

### Child and Family Integrated Service

The CFC Integrated Service is model of authentic community co-design, joined up service provision, sustainable local employment pathways and most of all better education, health and social outcomes for young children. The CFC Integrated Service Model operates on the following principles:

- Services are centred on the child and family and integrated
- Services and programs understand and privilege the local cultural context
- Services are committed to prevention and early intervention
- Services are committed to a long term, evidence informed approach

### Chronic Health Issues

The terms chronic disease, preventable chronic diseases, chronic conditions, long term disease/conditions are commonly used interchangeably. In this report the term 'chronic health issues' is used to refer to conditions that are influenced by the underlying social determinants of health that are largely preventable, and if addressed can minimise the onset of chronic conditions – please refer to the NTG [Chronic Conditions Prevention and Management Strategy 2010-2020](#)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://digitallibrary.health.nt.gov.au/prodjsui/handle/10137/535>

## Collective Impact

CFCs have adopted a modern Collective Impact approach with the CFC being the 'Back bone & Container for Change' through which 'Continuous Communication & Community Engagement' supports the identification and articulation of a 'Common Agenda & Community Aspiration' and encourages 'Mutually reinforcing & High Leverage Activities' and 'Shared Measurement & Strategic Learning'<sup>2</sup> across all service providers.

- **Common Agenda & Community Aspiration**
  - A community led vision of a better future for children
- **Back Bone & Container for Change**
  - A team or individuals that mobilise stakeholders, demonstrate leadership, cultivate trust and empathy, facilitate change and sustain the process.
- **Shared Measurement & Strategic Learning**
  - A learning and evaluation process that provides real time feedback and robust processes for sense making and decision making
- **Continuous Communication & Community Engagement**
  - authentic and inclusive involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders, particularly those most affected.
- **Mutually Reinforcing & High Leverage Activities**
  - Both mutual and independent activities that are adaptable, enable innovation and provide opportunities for change.

## Cultural Identity

Cultural identity refers to a feeling of belonging to a group. It is part of a person's self-conception and self-perception and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. In this way, cultural identity is both characteristic of the individual but also of the group sharing the same cultural identity.

## FaFT

Families as First Teachers program.

## Formal Qualification

A qualification recognised under the Australian Qualification Framework for Education and Training.

## Learning and development activities

Formal and informal activities that support the learning and development of children

## Quality Formal Early Learning Programs

Quality Formal Early Learning Programs are planned and regular program delivered by qualified staff utilising recognized curriculum and evidence based practices.

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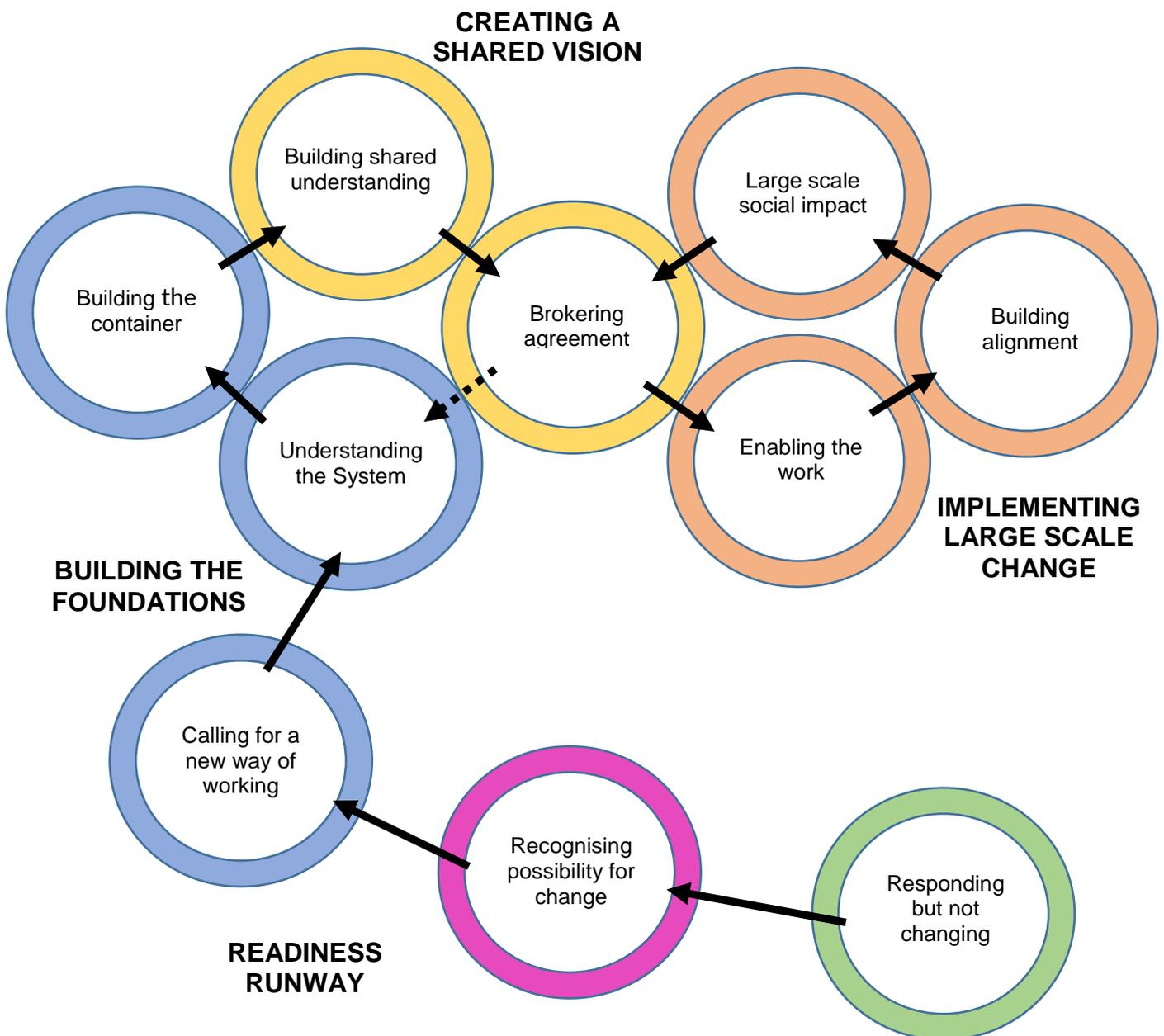
<sup>2</sup> Tamarack Institute [https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/316071/Events/Multi-Day%20Events/Community%20Change%20Institute%20-%20CCI/2016%20CCI%20Toronto/CCI\\_Publications/Collective\\_Impact\\_3.0\\_FINAL\\_PDF.pdf](https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/316071/Events/Multi-Day%20Events/Community%20Change%20Institute%20-%20CCI/2016%20CCI%20Toronto/CCI_Publications/Collective_Impact_3.0_FINAL_PDF.pdf)

## Collaborative Change Cycle

CFC Integrated Services are using the [Collaborative Change Cycle](#) developed by Collaboration for Impact<sup>3</sup> to monitor and inform progress toward service integration.

The Collaborative Change Cycle articulates the phases and stages of an effective collaborative change process. The Cycle is both a descriptive guide and a planning tool that identifies the clear milestones for working collaboratively with complexity. Importantly, the Cycle integrates the core disciplines and skills required to make progress at each phase and stage, being:

- Leadership practice
- Collaborative design
- Community engagement
- Data and measurement



<sup>2</sup> Collaboration for Impact (CFI) is Australia's leading organisation for learning *how* to respond to complexity through effective collaboration. <http://www.collaborationforimpact.com>

## NT Child and Family Outcomes Framework

The Northern Territory Child and Family Outcomes Framework identifies six outcomes to measure and understand the progress, and impacts of integrated service delivery across the Northern Territory. An outcomes based approach enables integrated services to understand their impact on children, families and communities, and the real value families receive from services and programs provided, including developing a better understanding of the vulnerabilities and strengths for children and their families in community.

The NT Child and Family Outcomes Framework identifies objectives, strategies and actions under each outcome. It also describes the performance indicators which will enable communities and the system to determine whether the strategies and actions are improving outcomes for children and families in each of the key areas.

Each site has developed a *place based outcomes framework* that aligns with the overarching NT Child and Family Outcomes Framework. These Place Based Outcomes Frameworks acknowledge that every community is unique and may have different needs. They can also be used to address fragmentation and duplication of services, in order to foster more efficient use of resources and build better connections in improving access to services for families.

The Place Based Outcomes Framework will assist integrated services to fulfil the vision, objectives and strategies that underpin integrated service delivery and will use both formal and informal measuring tools to collate both qualitative and quantitative data.

The outcomes data will be used to measure the impact of change, determine which services are most needed, identify what services and programs are directly making an impact and ensure, where possible, resources and funding are not being duplicated.

The individual child and family centre reports below use the following symbols to demonstrate the progress against the outcomes in each community/ integrated service.



Positive change



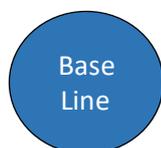
No significant change



Negative change



No data or only partial data available



First collection of data

# LARAPINTA

## CHILD AND FAMILY INTEGRATED SERVICE

# ALICE SPRINGS

### **Alice Springs Background**

Larapinta Child and Family Centre (CFC) is situated in the suburb of Larapinta, within the diverse community of Alice Springs. This report will capture data, case stories and narrative at three levels of 'community'.

The first level is the Larapinta Early Learning Community within the Larapinta suburb. Larapinta CFC is part of an early learning community including Larapinta Primary School, Larapinta Preschool and Larapinta Early Learning Centre. This level will provide a snapshot of participation, engagement, integrated service delivery and outcomes for families and children with direct contact with Larapinta CFC. At this level, we are able to share some individual family and small stories of integrated services working 'on the ground'. These small, but important, examples provide impetus for the work at a wider, whole of community level. However, it is important to note that not all families who have contact with Larapinta CFC live in Larapinta, so some data sources tell a story of the suburb not specifically Larapinta CFC.

The second level is intended to provide a snapshot into a group of suburbs in Alice Springs, identified as 'vulnerable' according to AEDC data. This group includes Larapinta, Gillen, Sadadeen and Bradshaw. Other than AEDC data, this current report contains little data and narrative at this level. Connected Beginnings (Alice Springs) operate at this 'level' with Yipirinya, Braitling, Sadadeen and Gillen Primary Schools. Some Connected Beginnings data and narrative are provided at this level.

The third level is the whole community of Alice Springs. This is population level data based on Local Government Area data (ABS and AEDC) and forms the baseline for the broadest vision for young children and their families in Alice Springs. Larapinta CFC is part of something bigger. Child Friendly Alice is a community collaboration. A diverse range of organisations are involved including Communities for Children, Anglicare NT, Strong Kids Strong Centre, Red Cross, Connected Beginnings and Larapinta CFC. Like-minded organisations are committed to maximizing their impact by working better together to achieve a Child Friendly Alice. It is long-term, sustained improvement in outcomes for children and families at this level that is the indicators of success we strive for.

### **Alice Springs Community Vision**

Larapinta Child and Family Centre is a supportive community learning and working with families to grow up strong, healthy, safe, confident and capable kids, to ensure every child has the best possible start to life. As a partner to Child Friendly Alice, Larapinta CFC is committed to contributing to the enhanced wellbeing of 2185 0-5 children in Alice Springs by 2030. The vision described is locally accepted within the Larapinta Early Learning Community.

Extending beyond the local Larapinta CFC vision, Connected Beginnings (Alice Springs), early learning, child health and family support services work together to promote school readiness. Connected Beginnings is also a partner of Child Friendly Alice and subscribes to the broader vision for Alice Springs.

Child Friendly Alice is a community collaboration committed to enhancing the wellbeing of children in Alice Springs. We aim to ensure every child has the best possible start in life and to grow up healthy and strong. The Child Friendly Alice vision described here, whilst aspirational and subscribed to by a number of partners, is not yet fully shared and owned by the Alice Springs community. Progressing to a fully shared, community vision is part of the ongoing work of Child Friendly Alice in 2019 and beyond.

## Alice Springs Community Population

The population of Alice Springs is 24,753 according to the 2016 ABS general census.

### Number of children

There are 2185 children aged 0-5 years in Alice Springs (ABS, 2016)<sup>4</sup>. 492 of the 2185 children are Indigenous (ABS, 2016).

However, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC)<sup>5</sup> reports there are 885 Indigenous children aged 0-5 year in Alice Springs. The accuracy of data sources is likely to be impacted primarily by the high mobility of families, making it difficult to set agreed baselines for population level change.

|                                     | 0 - 1 (0) | 1 - 2 (1) | 2 - 3 (2) | 3 - 4 (3) | 4 - 5 (4) | 5-6 (5) | Total <sup>6</sup> |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| <b>All</b>                          | 374       | 365       | 341       | 364       | 366       | 377     | 2185               |
| <b>Male</b>                         | 191       | 200       | 182       | 177       | 175       | 181     | 1110               |
| <b>Female</b>                       | 181       | 166       | 151       | 184       | 195       | 190     | 1066               |
| <b>Indigenous</b>                   | 82        | 86        | 75        | 80        | 76        | 91      | 492                |
| <b>Non Indigenous</b>               | 244       | 251       | 229       | 244       | 255       | 253     | 1472               |
| <b>Indigenous status not stated</b> | 49        | 31        | 30        | 43        | 34        | 36      | 222                |

## Alice Springs Collective Impact

The description below describes the Alice Springs (Child Friendly Alice) adoption of the Collective Impact approach and Larapinta CFC's involvement within this.

### Back Bone & Container for Change

The development of a Child Friendly Alice

In July 2018, Larapinta CFC developed a 'statement of result' committing to contributing to the enhanced well-being of all Alice Springs 0-5 children. Larapinta CFC staff collectively support a whole of population level, collaborative and sustained change for young children and families in Alice Springs. This was presented to the Larapinta Family and Community Advisory Committee and it was wholeheartedly endorsed. This was the beginning of being a part of the Alice Springs wide initiative Child Friendly Alice and the Larapinta CFC Integrated Leader joined what is now the 'backbone' for a Child Friendly Alice along with a representative from Communities for Children (Anglicare), Connected Beginnings (DoE) and Strong Kids Strong Centre (another local CI initiative). This group of 4 has been driving change at the local service provision level, local government, and Territory Government level.

At this time, there were 3 significant committees meeting regularly; Connected Beginnings, Strong Kids Strong Centre and Communities for Children. Each of these had overlapping membership and visions. Late in 2018 it was decided that because Connected Beginnings have a significant cross section of the

<sup>4</sup> ABS, 2016: General Community Profile, Alice Springs (T) (LGA 70200)

<sup>5</sup> Data provided to Connected Beginnings in June 2018 by Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC)

<sup>6</sup> The data provided is from the ABS. The following note accompanied the data: Please note that there are small random adjustments made to all cell values to protect the confidentiality of data. These adjustments may cause the sum of rows or columns to differ by small amounts from table totals.

service community attending (at least 15 key services and agencies are represented, including at least 3 Aboriginal controlled organisations), that this would become the lead service advisory group for a Child Friendly Alice. The commitment from the broader service sector is increasing. In December 2018, the backbone group identified the need to clarify the role and function of the backbone, develop guiding principles for the backbone and to develop the governance structure for a Child Friendly Alice.

### **Common Agenda & Community Aspiration**

The 'merging' of multiple advisory bodies described above occurred relatively seamlessly after many months of bringing services together to review key data, share strategies and challenges and develop working parties and other opportunities for people from different services to work together. This process was very much driven by Connected Beginnings and provided the momentum needed to reach a point of realisation that we broadly shared a common agenda.

Simultaneously, Child Friendly Alice launched a community consultation process, including a survey to seek the community aspirations needed to strengthen the direction of the service community. The collation of the survey and other community consultation is still in process with a community profile to be developed both as a further engagement tool and a basis for future shared action plans that are based on community aspirations.

### **Shared Measurement & Strategic Learning**

Data sharing and measuring progress with better evidence has been a central focus of interagency collaboration in the latter part of 2018. A number of service representatives undertook Results Based Accountability training to develop shared understandings of using data in a more strategic way and develop common language around evaluation. In December, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC) provided a significant presentation of health data to the Connected Beginnings Advisory Board. This will form the foundations to identify shared outcomes (and measurement of these outcomes) in the health area. Whilst there is much to celebrate in the work done, there is still a lot of confusion around what is useful data, and what we could, and should, measure together.

The six wellbeing domains of The Nest<sup>7</sup> developed by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) have been incorporated, to some extent, into outcomes focussed planning by Larapinta CFC, Connected Beginnings, and a Child Friendly Alice. The six wellbeing domains of The Nest are Loved and Safe, Material Basics, Healthy, Learning, Participating and Positive Sense of Culture & Identity. Specifically, The Nest formed the basis for community consultation undertaken by a Child Friendly Alice and will be used in the Child Friendly Alice community profile (currently under development).

Whilst The Nest has provided some opportunity for conversation about common outcomes and goals, there is not yet a common outcomes framework across Alice Springs. This is partially due to the different initiating timeframes of Larapinta CFC, Connected Beginnings and Child Friendly Alice, which meant that each began their own work in identifying outcomes and priorities before attempting to become more aligned in their work. Unlike remote community locations where other CFCs are located, Larapinta CFC is not the central child and family agency leading this work, and is instead one of a number of key partners. For this reason, the progress towards a whole of Alice Springs shared measurement will take time.

### **Continuous Communication & Community Engagement**

Larapinta CFC has a significant priority to seek ongoing family & community voice and has a range of formal and informal structures in place for this. The Larapinta Family and Community Advisory Committee meet four times a year to gain feedback, advice and plans for future developments, as well as sharing and engaging them in the bigger Child Friendly Alice work.

Broadly there is limited authentic involvement of people with 'lived experience' at all levels of the work in Alice Springs. Currently, the systems change effort is being led by the service community (people

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<sup>7</sup> The Nest Action Agenda is an evidence based framework for national child and youth wellbeing (0-24 years), focussed across six wellbeing domains. [www.aracy.org.au](http://www.aracy.org.au)

employed in the system). A core priority (identified in December 2018) for the Child Friendly Alice backbone is to explore the issue of authentic community engagement, with a priority focus on engaging with people with 'lived experience'.

### **Mutually Reinforcing Activities & High Leverage Activities**

Approximately 95 separate programs and services have been identified as having a direct role in supporting children and their families 0-5 years in Alice Springs. There are over 100 further services that have some, or indirect roles in supporting families and young children. There is a high number of activities that are separate and 'competitive', fragmented, with short funding cycles, linked to government terms of office.

The Connected Beginnings Advisory Group initiated the formation of interagency working groups (one for preschool attendance and another on engagement in early learning prior to preschool). Progress is slow as service providers negotiate a new way of working.

Connected Beginnings has negotiated with its main service level stakeholder Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC), that as an agency it will be responsible for coordination and identification of key worker roles if required, for children identified as at risk of developmental vulnerability in the 0-3 years old range. Referral pathways for children 'at risk' have been developed and shared between CAAC and Connected Beginnings and other major services involved. For children over 3 years, Connected Beginnings assist to connect families to services and identify key workers within education, family support or other involved services. The Young Parent programs in Alice Springs (co-ordinated from Larapinta CFC) are still in the establishment phase, however are an example of co-designed integrated programs and involve services coming together in a more collaborative way. The process is slow as service providers are challenged with a very different model of working.

There is more collaborative learning, research and planning required in order for us to shift from 'cooperating to do more of the same' to 'working in a new way with high leverage activities'.

## **Alice Springs Collaborative Change Cycle Progress**

The description below describes the collective views of Larapinta CFC staff and the Child Friendly Alice 'backbone team' in describing the progress of Child Friendly Alice toward effective collaborative change and service integration. The broad community have not contributed to this 'assessment' of progress. In future, a wider consultation will be sought.

### **Leadership:**

- There is growing acceptance at many levels of leadership in Alice Springs that 'business as usual' is insufficient and we need to work differently.
- There is agreement in theory amongst leaders that community need to be authentically involved in the change process, however, there are many gaps in our understanding and approach to ensure those effected most by the challenging issues we are working to resolve are involved at all levels of the reform.
- The Child Friendly Alice backbone have recognised the need for a stronger authorising, higher leadership commitment, and more diversity and ownership by those 'at the table'. Plans for 2019 are to 'build a stronger container'.

### **Community:**

- Some representative or sample conversations and engagement has taken place
- Child Friendly Alice has attempted some community consultation in the process of preparing for the community profile development. The community survey collected over 1000 voices from across the community.

- Alice Springs community is very diverse and disparate community and it is challenging to create and sustain momentum. Many groups within the community are over consulted, sceptical and fatigued.
- Currently, there is no real sense of urgency - we need a 'call to action'.
- There is strong commitment from the Child Friendly Alice backbone to find new and better ways to engage with community. This forms part of the core direction for 2019.

**Collaboration:**

- There is a growing dialogue amongst the service providers to work differently, however with limited community involvement this can't progress effectively.

**Measurement:**

- Connected Beginnings has coordinated the identification of clear target areas and identified data and evidence that is required. There are still massive data gaps, data sharing issues and lack of consensus on useful data, and issues on common data tools.
- The Child Friendly Alice survey (completed in 2018) and community profile (to be published early 2019) plans involves the use of community feedback and population level data from a range of sources to build a case for change, to create a baseline to inform future collaborative, local planning.

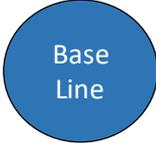
|                                    | LEADERSHIP | COMMUNITY | COLLABORATION | MEASUREMENT |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|
| Large scale impact                 |            |           |               |             |
| Building alignment                 |            |           |               |             |
| Enabling the work                  |            |           |               |             |
| Brokering agreement                |            |           |               |             |
| Building shared understanding      |            |           |               |             |
| Building the container             |            |           |               |             |
| Understanding the System           |            |           |               | ↑           |
| Calling for a new way of working   | ↑          |           |               | ↑           |
| Recognising possibility for change | ↑          |           | ↑             | ↑           |
| Responding but not changing        | ↑          | ↑         | ↑             | ↑           |



## ALICE SPRINGS INTEGRATED SERVICE OUTCOMES PROGRESS

The data presented in relation to the outcomes and indicators below is in relation to the whole Alice Springs population of children aged 0-5 and their families. Some additional data specific to Larapinta CFC is provided in the narrative for each outcome.

### Outcome 1: All children are strong, healthy, confident and capable learners and reach their full potential

|   |  |
|---|--|
|    | <p>% of children 0-5 diagnosed with a chronic health issue.</p>  |
| <br><br>   | <p>% of children 0-5 participated in standards health screens</p> <p>Greater than 80% of children in Alice Springs have an up to date immunisation record (*).<br/>           1 yo: 91.7%<br/>           2 yo: 85.6%<br/>           5 yo: 91.4%<br/>           (*Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017)</p>   |
| <br><br><br><br> | <p>60-80% of children are on track against the social competence domain (*)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 63.9% (Alice Springs)</li> <li>• 69.6% (Larapinta**)</li> </ul> <p>60-80% of children are on track against the emotional maturity domain (*)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75.1% (Alice Springs)</li> <li>• 64.9% (Larapinta**)</li> </ul> <p>29.2% (over ¼) of children in Alice Springs begin school vulnerable in one or more domains</p> |
|    | <p>% of children on track in the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) domains (Cannot indicate progress at this time)</p> <p>Over 360 ASQ-TRAK assessments were completed by Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC) in 2018. Information verbally shared with Connected Beginning Advisory Committee in December indicated an increase in the number of ASQ-TRAKs administered in the last quarter of 2018. This data refers to Indigenous children (aged 0-5 years) only.</p> |
|    | <p>% of children 3-5 participating in quality formal early learning programs at least 80% of the time (Cannot indicate progress at this time)</p>  |

## Outcome 1: Community Narrative

At a local level, Larapinta CFC had a steady increase in the numbers of families with children 0-5 attending various programs onsite. The Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program had over 30 families engaged throughout the year, with 23 families enrolled in the last quarter of 2018, most attending 2 or more times a week. Larapinta Early Learning Centre (ELC) enrolments increased to 55 children (NB. Difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff is the main obstacle in increasing to capacity of 70, as the waitlist is over 200 and closed). Larapinta ELC also achieved an exceeding rating in their first assessment and rating, ensuring quality early learning and care for the children enrolled. At the end of 2018, Larapinta CFC, ELC and Preschool staff worked together to support 9 children and their families (who experience a range of life challenges) for smooth transitions to Preschool and Transition in 2019. One small success example is a single mother of twins who began attending Larapinta CFC by 'dropping in'. This mother was living in emergency accommodation and grappling with multiple life challenges. After becoming comfortable at the CFC, she enrolled her twins into the FaFT program and began attending at least 3 times per week. During this time, Larapinta CFC staff provided high support, including linking her with multiple support services. After some time, she also enrolled her twins into the Larapinta ELC and then another long day care service after securing housing in another suburb. By October 2018, she succeeded in obtaining fulltime work and her children were attending fulltime childcare. She continued to maintain contact with Larapinta CFC and was supported to prepare enrolment and transition for the twins to enter Preschool in 2019. She told Larapinta CFC staff, "I could not have done this without you!"

At the Alice Springs community level, Connected Beginnings formed an Early Learning working group and a Preschool working group with both consisting of a range of services working together to improve enrolment and engagement in early learning across Alice Springs. Each group has met on multiple occasions. The Preschool working group has identified transport as impacting on preschool attendance and are looking for sustainable solutions. Both groups are still in the early stages, however a positive start to interagency collaboration. Connected Beginnings and Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC) have signed an MOU and have partnered to create and share an intake and referral process for young children 'at risk'. An increased rate of standard health screens has been reported to Connected Beginnings by CAAC.

Data collected by Connected Beginnings in December 2018, estimated that approximately 50% (1088) of children aged 0-5 are enrolled (or identified as having attending) quality formal early learning programs. 335 of these children are Indigenous. There is ongoing effort to work with all early learning services to access detailed enrolment and attendance data, however, with the range and number of services and without the relevant information sharing agreements in place, access to such information is difficult.

The AEDC data records that 90% of eligible children in Alice Springs attended a preschool program prior to starting school in 2015. A concerning aspect of the AEDC data shows no significant change since 2009 in the number of children in Alice Springs who begin school developmentally vulnerable in both one or more and two or more domains.

## Outcome 2: All children have a strong cultural identity

|   |  |
|---|--|
|  | % of families indicate that their 0-5 children have a strong cultural identity (Cannot indicate progress at this time) |
|---|--|

## Outcome 2: Community Narrative

Larapinta CFC has a Family and Community Advisory Committee that meets approximately four times a year. This group provided feedback and ideas about how our centre could celebrate NAIDOC Week, which led to the creation of a banner, participation in the Alice Springs NAIDOC March and the sharing of stories about influential Aboriginal women in the lives of our families who attend the centre. A number of Aboriginal mothers who attend our centre talked to Aboriginal staff at Larapinta CFC about wanting to

work together on ways to keep language and culture strong for their children and formed an Aboriginal Language and Culture Group. Results from Larapinta CFC's survey indicated 74% of families say they feel their language and culture is respected at the centre. However, ongoing strategies and action, with measurable outcomes, have not been achieved in specifically for this outcome.

At the Alice Springs level (Child Friendly Alice), a Positive Sense of Culture & Identity is one of the six wellbeing domains of The Nest (ARACY) that has underpinned community consultations and development of the community profile. However, current areas of focus include early learning and health and there are not yet shared strategies or shared measurement in the area of strengthening children's cultural identity. It is anticipated that the Child Friendly Alice Community Profile will assist in identifying common areas of action for 2019 and beyond.

### **OUTCOME 3: All families are strong and empowered as partners in their children's learning and development**

|   |   |
|---|---|
|    | % of families that implement learning and development activities. (Cannot indicate progress at this time)                                   |
|   | % of families seek assistance when they need it. (Cannot indicate progress at this time)  |
|  | % of families indicate they understand their children's learning and development needs. (Cannot indicate progress at this time)             |
|  | Staff indicate that parents understand their children's learning and development needs. (Cannot indicate progress at this time)             |
|  | % of families that report an increased capacity to understand and manage the needs of their family. (Cannot indicate progress at this time) |

### **Outcome 3: Community Narrative**

Whilst data to report on the indicators of this outcome is not currently available for the Alice Springs population, there are snapshots of related data and anecdotal evidence available from the Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program at Larapinta CFC and also from a survey conducted with families attending services and programs at Larapinta CFC.

Larapinta FaFT staff indicate that all 24 parents with children enrolled in the program demonstrated an increased understanding of their children's learning and development needs. From July 2018, 24 families completed Early Years Learning Framework Developmental Milestones Checklists and then worked with FaFT staff to identify appropriate learning activities for their children. All enrolled families, after receiving coaching, took home books and literacy and numeracy learning activities. At least 65% of families have talked with FaFT staff about learning activities they have undertaken at home. FaFT staff believe that at least 85% of families are reading with their children at home (all families engage in reading with their children every time they attend the FaFT program and take home a book, on average, once a week). This anecdotal evidence is

A survey conducted by Larapinta CFC survey in October 2018 indicated:

- 45% of families believe they are significantly better connected to services
- 32% of families believe they are somewhat better connected to services
- 44% of families accessed significant additional early intervention support, and
- 32% of families accessed some additional early intervention support

The survey also found 77% of families believed engaging with Larapinta CFC helped them to know more about their child's learning and development, and that 75% of families believe they are better able to meet the needs of their children and family since being involved with the centre.

There are multiple, complex and challenging factors faced by significant numbers of families in Alice Springs. For example, over 85% of families enrolled in our Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program face multiple, entrenched life challenges (e.g. food and housing insecurity, severe financial hardship and stress, domestic violence, drug or alcohol misuse, mental health conditions, sustained and/ or repeated grief and trauma, sustained poor physical health of adult family members and/ or children and severe isolation within the home). FaFT and other CFC staff support families to access the range of support services in Alice Springs however, as the FaFT families attend the CFC multiple times a week, the relationships that establish often leads to FaFT and CFC staff become significant support people for families. Whilst the priority of the FaFT program is engaging families in the learning and development of the children, families abilities to be actively engaged in the program is often severely compromised by multiple factors such as those listed above.

There are no current measures in place to collect Alice Springs wide data for the indicators of the outcome described above. Nor are there shared understandings or approaches to addressing the deeper implications of the complex challenges families are experiencing that may prevent them from engaging in the learning and development of their children in the manner expressed in this outcome (and indicators).

## OUTCOME 4: All families have a voice and are active partners in the integrated services

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <br>Data Gap | % of families not currently engaged are represented in engagement activities. (Cannot indicate progress at this time)   |
| <br>Data Gap | % of families that are active participants in programs. (Cannot indicate progress at this time)   |
| <br>Data Gap | % of families that believe they contribute to decision making. (Cannot indicate progress at this time)<br><br>Larapinta CFC survey – 39% believe they have contributed to the development of the centre |

### Outcome 4: Community Narrative

In July of 2018, Larapinta CFC staff identified family and community voice as an important focus for our work within the Larapinta Early Learning Community. We worked with families using Appreciative Inquiry<sup>8</sup> techniques and the 'Engoori'<sup>9</sup> approach to discover more about family and community aspirations, values and perspectives. We asked families for advice on gaining deeper engagement with families most affected by complex issues in our community. From our daily conversations with many families and our Family and Community Advisory Committee meetings, families identified NAIDOC activities, 'Playgroup

<sup>8</sup> Appreciative Inquiry is a method for studying and changing social systems. <http://www.davidcooperrider.com/ai-process/>

<sup>9</sup> Engoori is a strengths based approach to complex challenges from the Mithaka people of South West Queensland. <https://www.murrimatters.com/engoori>

in the Park' and the Aboriginal Language and Culture (Ruth's) Group as key strategies to engage more deeply and build relationships with families. Families also suggested a family survey, which we implemented and received 44 responses from a broad cross-section of families who have participated in our CFC over the past 2 years.

Despite this effort, which forged deeper relationships with families and increased our engagement with vulnerable families in the Larapinta area, this work is still very small and limited in range. We do not have the data sources required to report on the indicators above and we do not have a broad engagement base across the Alice Springs level.

Child Friendly Alice undertook a 100 days community engagement strategy in October 2018. This involved a survey (online and paper) that gathered over 1000 voices from the community (over 40% of these were children and youth). During the 100 days, there was a community forum for the community to assist in identifying the appropriate experiences to be represented in the Community Profile. The six wellbeing domains of The Nest<sup>10</sup> developed by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) formed the basis of this consultation. The six wellbeing domains of the ARACY Nest are Loved and Safe, Material Basics, Healthy, Learning, Participating and Positive Sense of Culture & Identity. Further consultation with the same tools was undertaken with families at the Larapinta CFC. The Child Friendly Alice backbone have committed to building more authentic community engagement as a core priority for 2019.

## **OUTCOME 5: Community voice informs service provision in the integrated service (broader community e.g. Aboriginal organisations, employees with lived experience in that community, respected community members, local government)**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <br>Data Gap | % of the general population represented in engagement activities  |
| <br>Data Gap | % of members of the general community that believe they contribute to decision making                               |
| <br>Data Gap | Level of input by local governance groups, and organisations and/or programs that are governed by community members |

### **Outcome 5: Community Narrative**

Child Friendly Alice backbone has met with all levels of government a number of times in 2018. This involved sharing the background of the 'alliance', identifying the common vision, on occasions requesting funding, promoting and then providing feedback from the 100 days of community engagement and providing information about the planned community profile.

A wide range of services, including a number of Aboriginal controlled organisations are involved in the work of Connected Beginnings including the advisory committee and working groups. This also includes a growing awareness of, and a commitment and connection to the work of Child Friendly Alice. The '100 days' of community engagement by Child Friendly Alice included wide public engagement via social

<sup>10</sup> The Nest Action Agenda is an evidence based framework for national child and youth wellbeing (0-24 years), focussed across six wellbeing domains. [www.aracy.org.au](http://www.aracy.org.au)

media, print and radio news articles and announcements, stalls at markets, shopping centres and the public library, as well as events at the public pool. At this stage, much of this is exposure, with a commitment to gaining a broader and deeper community voice in 2019.

## OUTCOME 6: A strong Aboriginal workforce enables sustainable local communities

| Measurable Change | OUTCOME 6 : A strong Aboriginal workforce enables sustainable local communities                                       |
|-------------------|---|
| Data Gap          | % of employees across all service providers are Aboriginal (Cannot indicate progress at this time)                    |
| Data Gap          | % of Aboriginal employees that have formal qualifications (Cannot indicate progress at this time)                     |
| Data Gap          | % of Aboriginal employees are actively working towards a formal qualification (Cannot indicate progress at this time) |

### Outcome 6: Community Narrative

The number of Aboriginal employees at Larapinta CFC has increased slightly in 2018. There are three Aboriginal employees at the Early Learning Centre (20%) and 4 (67%) Aboriginal employees in roles based in the family centre. Of these 7 Aboriginal employees, 3 have formal qualifications and one is working towards a formal qualification. In 2019, 2 Aboriginal Trainees will commence at Larapinta CFC.

There are currently no information sharing agreements across the service community of Alice Springs to make the collection of data for these indicators possible. The very early stages of the work of Child Friendly Alice, means that sourcing such information could be viewed with suspicion from some organisations. The Larapinta CFC Integrated Leader will consider how this information could be obtained for the next report.

