

Rolling action plan: year 1 actions 2021–22

For the Pathways to support
for children and families:
priority setting plan
2021–2024



Other information

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Terminology

In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

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Context

The *Roadmap for Reform: Strong families, safe children* was launched in April 2016 as the Victorian Government's blueprint for strengthening families and communities so that children and young people can be safe and thrive. Roadmap for Reform sets out fundamental, long-term changes to the way government and community come together to support children and families experiencing vulnerability.

The *Pathways to support for children and families: priority setting plan 2021–2024* sets the strategic frame for progressing this child and family system reform agenda over the next three years. It focuses on the most pressing needs of children and families. It also lays the groundwork for future stages of implementing the 'pathways to support' model as the new system architecture for supporting vulnerable children and families.

The priorities in the three-year plan sit across four packages that reflect the three pathways to support – early help, targeted and specialist, and continuing care. An additional fourth package – pathway enablers – will establish the system conditions necessary for the pathways model to succeed.

Primary accountability for coordinating and delivering this plan rests with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, across various teams and program areas. However, much of the work will be led by the funded child and family services sector.

The priority setting plan is an important input into the broader social services reform landscape but does not represent the full range of work underway to progress the Roadmap for Reform vision. Rather, it clarifies where we need to collectively focus our reform efforts across the next three years.

Within this context, this action plan for year 1 (2021–22) activity to progress the priority setting plan does not feature priority actions that are already being progressed through other action plans. Instead, it captures actions that are not covered elsewhere and that represent innovative, transformative changes towards a 'pathways to support' model.

Purpose of this action plan

This document provides:

- a summary of the three-year **priorities** identified in the priority setting plan
- a statement about the **impact** we want to achieve within each of the four action packages across the three years from 2021 to 2024
- a table outlining the **actions** to be delivered in year 1 (2021–22) across the four packages: early help, targeted and specialist, continuing care, and pathway enablers. The table presents the proposed action to be taken against each priority identified in the priority setting plan.

This action plan should be considered alongside a suite of other documents. Together, this package of documents provides the basis for government and sector partners, across central and local contexts, to coordinate efforts to drive system changes to improve experiences and outcomes for children and families. These documents include the:

- *Pathways to support for children and families: priority setting plan 2021–2024*
- *Implementation guide*
- *Statement of intent on child and family system recovery.*

Implementation approach

We know that systemic change is complex and multifaceted. It requires a number of government and sector implementation partners to coordinate and mobilise change across different parts of the system, based on their particular mandate, scope and strengths.

Over the next three years reform activity will be implemented through a combination of the following:

- **Centralised implementation:** Activity that is centrally coordinated and/or implemented on a statewide basis (for example, legislative and practice reforms).
- **Initiative-specific implementation:** Activity is driven through detailed project planning and led through dedicated project governance. These activities may be statewide, divisional, regionally based or place-based, depending on the nature of the change (for example, intensive family preservation and reunification, Common Clients and other reform projects and pilots that take a piloting or sequenced approach to rollout).
- **Locally led implementation:** Activity led by community services organisations and departmental operations divisions and local areas, where opportunities to progress the priorities have been identified through the various service platforms they deliver.

This rolling 12-month action plan largely documents centralised implementation and initiative-specific implementation activity. Local activity is anticipated to be documented in local implementation plans that may bring together activity across a range of strategic frameworks and reform plans.

Reporting and progress updates will highlight the progress and impact from all three avenues of implementation activity.

Implementation partners

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing is the lead for actions in this plan unless otherwise identified. However, in leading implementation activity, a partnership approach will be used. Government will work in partnership with the following groups to collectively progress changes to the child and family system:

- children and families
- carers
- practitioners
- Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs)
- community services organisations
- peak and advocacy bodies
- universal and specialist services.

The Roadmap Implementation Ministerial Advisory Group (RIMAG) was established to guide and advance rollout of the Roadmap for Reform and is a key partner in implementing this 12-month action plan. RIMAG provides strategic leadership, direction and accountability across the sector. RIMAG also has several working groups composed of representatives who are best placed to progress specific priorities and deliverables:

- lived experience members
- representatives from peak bodies and sector organisations
- subject matter experts
- other stakeholders.

For some of the priorities identified in this plan, RIMAG or its working groups may be the lead in progressing the action.

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare is also a key implementation partner for a range of priority reforms, and a co-lead of the RIMAG.

Aboriginal leadership and voice and lived experience representation are a priority across all governance structures.

Critical partners for this rolling 12-month action plan include but are not limited to:

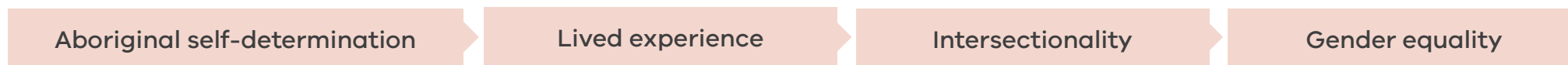
- children and young people and others with lived experience of the child and family system
- practitioners and carers working across the child and family system
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Family Safety Victoria
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Health
- Department of Justice and Community Safety
- Roadmap Implementation Ministerial Advisory Group
- Aboriginal Children's Forum
- Wungurilwil Gaggapduir Implementation Group
- child and family services (including early years, youth, family services, care services and leaving care services)
- family violence and sexual assault services
- child protection (including Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care)
- The Orange Door (including Child FIRST)
- Aboriginal organisations and community partners
- Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare
- Centre for Evaluation and Implementation
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
- Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance
- universal and specialist service providers and community partners.

Three-year impact 2021–2024

This table shows the **impact** we want to achieve within each of the four action packages across the three years from 2021 to 2024.

Early help	Targeted and specialist	Continuing care	Pathway enablers
When children and families show signs of need and vulnerability, universal services and communities identify and respond early with a culturally safe response.	Universal, specialist and community partners work with families to promote children’s safety and wellbeing and keep children safely at home or reunify them when safe to do so. Carers are supported to provide stable and living care in accordance with the permanency objective.	Children and young people in enduring care are provided with safe, quality and stable care. Children and young people in care are supported to achieve positive health and education outcomes. Family connections and cultural identity are supported, including during transition to adulthood. Carers are empowered and supported to provide safe and nurturing care for as long as children need it.	The pathways system is activated through legislative reform, contemporary practice, a supported and skilled workforce, evidence-informed models, smart service networks and strategic investment for impact.

Principles



Three-year priorities 2021–2024

This table outlines the 17 **priorities** to be delivered over the next three years, across the four action packages.

Early help	Targeted and specialist	Continuing care	Pathway enablers
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build capability in universal services, including education and primary health, for identifying and responding to child wellbeing concerns. 2. Improve participation in universal services for vulnerable children and families, including access to education and primary health services. 3. Build capability in the system to better connect children and their families to the right service, early in need. 4. Strengthen communities to actively participate in the support of vulnerable children and families through identifying early help needs and helping behaviours. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Advance Aboriginal-led and culturally safe responses to Aboriginal children and families. 6. Strengthen integration and partnership approaches between child protection, family violence, sexual assault and child and family services. 7. Develop models of care and service responses to strengthen support and practice with priority cohorts of children and families. 8. Strengthen early intervention and prevention approaches, practice and services. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Strengthen support and evidence-informed practice for young people in enduring care and young people leaving care. 10. Improve children and young people’s experience of care through implementing care services reforms. 11. Improve experiences and supports for carers through implementing <i>Strong carers, stronger children</i>. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Legislation: Enact legislative changes that enable reform of the child and family system. 13. Practice: Embed contemporary, evidence-informed, culturally safe best practice that reflects legislative and policy change and reform across the child and family system. 14. Workforce: Strengthen the child and family system workforce through a workforce development plan that identifies requirements for new practice and service models and that supports workforce safety and wellbeing. 15. Outcomes, evidence and learning: Demonstrate the impact on outcomes by building the evidence for what works. This should be informed by the expertise of people with lived experience, Aboriginal ways of knowing, research evidence and practice insights, and supported by increased capability in applying implementation science across the system. 16. Governance: Establish and embed smart service networks to lead local reform implementation and ongoing area-based strategic overnight and operational management functions. 17. Funding and investment: Develop an investment strategy that aligns with reform priorities and delivers resourcing for a sustainable system.

Year 1 actions 2021–2022

Early help action package

The Roadmap for Reform goal for **early help** is to build supportive and culturally strong communities and improve access to universal services.

The early help pathway aims to support more people, more often – early in need and early in life. Early help service offerings support vulnerable children and families with emerging needs.

This pathway is embedded in community and universal services and involves:

- targeting priority groups of children and families with emerging needs
- activating the natural supports that exist in the community
- supporting universal services to identify and respond to emerging wellbeing concerns
- providing a range of self-help options for families to access support when they need it.

Through the early help pathway, the system will better meet the needs children and families at the earliest point possible, including supporting those who are unable to access the current system (for example, due to current thresholds).

The impact we are striving to achieve over the next three years is:

When children and families show signs of need and vulnerability, universal services and communities identify and respond early with a culturally safe response.

Early help action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>1. Build capability in universal services, including education and primary health, for identifying and responding to child wellbeing concerns.</p>	<p>1. Build on and learn from existing models of capability building in universal services to support early help responses for vulnerable children and families, including culturally safe responses.</p>	<p>A. Support and promote efforts to embed the 'Our Place approach' in 10 school sites across Victoria. Our Place is a holistic place-based approach to supporting the education, health and development of all children and families in disadvantaged communities using the universal platform of schools.</p>
		<p>B. Embed family services in universal settings, such as schools, early years services and community health hubs, as an early access point for early intervention in places where families feel safe. This model offers an opportunity for families to be supported through community networks, early in their time of need and before crisis, in settings that are culturally safe, recognise faith and diversity, and are place-based.</p>
<p>2. Improve participation in universal services for vulnerable children and families, including access to education and primary health services.</p>	<p>2. Support reform initiatives that facilitate access to early childhood education and learning and access to primary health services for vulnerable children and families.</p>	<p>A. Support the Department of Education and Training to expand the Early Years Lookout initiative to include children on family preservation orders and in care. The Department of Education and Training is the lead for this action.</p>
		<p>B. Support ACCOs to deliver Aboriginal supported playgroups and in-home coaching as an access and engagement pathway to early years services for Aboriginal children, their families and carers, and to build strong early learning environments at home. ACCO partner identified through Wungurilwil Gapgapduir Implementation Group, in partnership with the department, are the lead for this action.</p>

Early help action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>3. Build in the system to better connect children and their families to the right service, early in need.</p>	<p>3. Explore how the front end of the system can be improved to support self-navigation and sector and community referral to the right help for children and families, early in need.</p>	<p>A. Scope opportunities to redesign the front end of the system with a view to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote self-help and navigation for vulnerable children and families, including access to information to understand and connect with available supports • support universal services and community to identify children and families who are early in need and require referral, access and engagement with support services • support professionals with appropriate referral/report pathways for the children and families they are supporting.
<p>4. Strengthen communities to actively participate in the support of vulnerable children and families through identifying early help needs and helping behaviours.</p>	<p>4. Build and learn from previous research, projects and initiatives that have explored, tested and trailed place-based community networks that identify and safely respond to diverse cultural needs.</p>	<p>A. Scope the preconditions required for communities to participate and engage in community-based responses that support children and families experiencing vulnerability.</p>

Targeted and specialist action package

The Roadmap for Reform goal for **targeted and specialist** support is to support children, young people and families with integrated wraparound supports and targeted early interventions.

This pathway aims to support children and families experiencing a range of complex needs, resulting in increased vulnerabilities or risks, and requiring a more intensive service response.

Through the targeted and specialist pathway, children, young people and families will experience targeted, effective, evidence-informed and coordinated service responses that are child-centred, family-focused and culturally safe. A tailored mix, sequence and intensity of supports will be provided based on their needs, circumstances and preferences.

The impacts we are striving to achieve over the next three years are:

Universal, specialist and community partners work with families to promote children's safety and wellbeing and keep children safely at home or reunify them when safe to do so.

Carers are supported to provide stable and loving care in accordance with the permanency objective.

Targeted and specialist action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>5. Advance Aboriginal-led and culturally safe responses to Aboriginal children and families.</p>	<p>5. Support the vision and intent of the <i>Wungurilwil Gapgapduir: Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement and strategic action plan</i>, which details how services become child-centred, family-focused, strengths-based, celebrate culture and enable families to stay safe and together.</p> <p>Note: <i>The Victorian State Budget 2021–22 continues fund critical components of the tripartite agreement and the commitment to transferring case management care of Aboriginal children to ACCOs.</i></p>	<p>A. Address over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in child protection and out-of-home care by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expanding Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care to include investigations transitioning Aboriginal care to ACCOs strong cultural plans. <p>The Aboriginal Children’s Forum and the Wungurilwil Gapgapduir Implementation Group are the leads for this action.</p>
		<p>B. Expand the Aboriginal Family Preservation and Reunification Response model to build a sustainable, Aboriginal-led approach to implementation.</p>
		<p>C. Support the ACCO-led Child Protection Diversion Trial, the Consortium Project, which trials intervention models in close collaboration with child protection at different sites across Victoria. Relevant ACCOs are the lead for this action.</p>
		<p>D. Establish three Aboriginal access points as part of The Orange Door network. Family Safety Victoria is the lead for this action.</p>

Targeted and specialist action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>6. Strengthen integration and partnership approaches between child protection, family violence, sexual assault and child and family services.</p>	<p>6. Support reform initiatives that enable integrated support by child protection and the sector to vulnerable families, and new ways of allocating support to families based on need and capacity across the system.</p> <p>Note: <i>The Victorian State Budget 2021–22 funds substantial additional capacity for family services to provide early help for 500 additional families.</i></p>	<p>A. Explore options for a model of case contracting and collaboration that recognises the criticality of permanence for children, utilises the child and family services sector mandate, advances Aboriginal self-determination and recognises the needs of high-risk children.</p> <p>Note: <i>Child protection retains responsibility for children and young people requiring an intensive response.</i></p> <hr/> <p>B. Consider how potential amendments to the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 enable joint work between child protection and the sector with vulnerable families, including at investigation phase, and the ability of the Secretary to authorise community service organisations to undertake functions usually undertaken by the Secretary.</p> <hr/> <p>C. Reorient family services to intervene earlier and divert children going deeper into the child and family system by embedding effective, evidence-based and outcomes-focused practice models into family services delivery.</p> <p>Note: <i>Funding to family services has been provided in the Victorian State Budget 2021–22 to embed this new practice model.</i></p> <hr/> <p>D. Support the rollout of the foundational service model for The Orange Door network in Goulburn, Hume Moreland, Inner Eastern Melbourne, Outer East Gippsland, Ovens Murray, Southern Melbourne and Wimmera South West.</p> <p>Family Safety Victoria is the lead for this action.</p> <hr/> <p>E. Implement the <i>Demand management plan</i> (released in January 2020) as an overarching framework for child and family services, reflecting further development undertaken throughout 2021 across family violence demand, and children and families demand.</p> <p>Family Safety Victoria and the department are the joint leads for this action.</p>

Targeted and specialist action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
7. Develop models of care and service responses to strengthen support and practice with priority cohorts of children and families.	7. Develop and test targeted and evidence-informed models of care for priority cohorts and embed these in new initiatives and service responses.	A. Implement Common Client demonstration sites in Brimbank-Melton, Central Highlands, Goulburn, Southern Melbourne and Outer East, Bayside-Peninsula, Loddon and Barwon.
		B. Implement the Putting Families First initiative in Brimbank-Melton and Goulburn. Over the next four years, this initiative will trial a new whole-of-family, interdisciplinary support model of care for families with multiple health, justice, education, housing and human services needs.
8. Strengthen early intervention and prevention approaches, practice and services.	8. Expand existing and support new initiatives that embed evidence-informed practice and services, with a priority focus on family preservation and reunification.	A. Strengthen identification and engagement of children and families most in need of intensive family preservation and reunification support through recruiting 34 Child Protection Navigators. <i>Note: 'The response' is a flagship initiative that progresses key priorities under the Roadmap for Reform, including cohort analysis, client-centred, evidence-informed, outcomes-focused approaches and joined up, collaborative ways of working.</i>
		B. Strengthen the child and family services system response to children and parents with a disability including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expanding access to the Children with Complex Disability Needs program embedding 34 new specialist disability practitioners in family services designing and trialling a program for parents with an intellectual disability.
		C. Trial Family Group Conferencing to divert vulnerable children and families from statutory services through a process led by family members to plan and make decisions for a child who is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect.
		D. Strengthen the targeted and specialist service response for children from diverse communities at high risk of increased statutory intervention or those already in care services through the continuation of the Child Protection Cultural Engagement Team.

Continuing care action package

The Roadmap for Reform goal for **continuing care** is to strengthen home-based care and improve outcomes for children and young people in out-of-home care.

The continuing care pathway aims to support better long-term outcomes for children and young people in care, their carers and families.

Children and young people who are unable to safely live at home will be better supported through responsive, therapeutic and trauma-informed supports – while in care and when leaving care. Their carers and birth families will also be supported, recognising the role they continue to play in a child or young person’s life during enduring care and once they transition to adulthood.

The impacts we are striving to achieve over the next three years are:

Children and young people in enduring care are provided with safe, quality and stable care.

Children and young people in care are supported to achieve positive health and education outcomes. Family connections and cultural identity are supported, including during transition to adulthood.

Carers are empowered and supported to provide safe and nurturing care for as long as children need it.

Continuing care action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>9. Strengthen support and evidence-informed practice for young people in enduring care and young people leaving care.</p>	<p>9. Expand care and supports to young people in care to ensure children and young people's complex needs are supported and that every young person has the stable foundation to begin their transition to independence and adulthood.</p>	<p>A. Support the statewide expansion of Homestretch and Better Futures to ensure every young Victorian in care will be provided with support up to the age of 21, including those subject to permanent care orders.</p> <p><i>Note: Home Stretch provides an accommodation allowance so a young person can remain living with their kinship or foster carer if they wish, or transition to supported independent living arrangements.</i></p> <p><i>Note: The Better Futures program provides young people in care with a range of tailored supports, helping them to prepare for life after care – including education and employment advice and life-skills coaching.</i></p>
		<p>B. Embed the existing Treatment Foster Care Oregon service to deliver time-limited, evidence-based, intensive treatment care options in home-based care settings to children and young people with challenging behaviours and complex needs.</p>
<p>10. Improve children and young people's experience of care through implementing care services reforms.</p>	<p>10. Progress actions and initiatives to improve the quality and safety of care and improve experiences and outcomes of children and young people in care.</p>	<p>A. Roll out a new two-and-three bed residential care model as part of the Residential care action plan.</p> <p><i>Note: This new service model will provide additional system capacity and improve the quality of care to children and young people in residential care placements through increased access to therapeutic and educational supports.</i></p>
		<p>B. Expand the Keep Embracing Your Success program as part of the Residential care action plan.</p> <p><i>Note: Keep Embracing Your Success provides an 18-month transitional support service for young people with complex needs aged 12–16 years, providing wraparound multidisciplinary supports. It includes residential, specialised services and outreach components.</i></p>

Continuing care action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>10. Improve children and young people’s experience of care through implementing care services reforms.</p>	<p>10. Progress actions and initiatives to improve the quality and safety of care and improve experiences and outcomes of children and young people in care.</p>	<p>C. Embed the Keeping Connected – Sibling support and placement service as a targeted response to keep siblings together on entry to care and while longer term placements are identified. The service will deliver therapeutic assessment and support to children and young people and, at a minimum, support meaningful contact across siblings if not placed together.</p> <hr/> <p>D. Trial a Care Hub approach over two years to provide intensive support to children and young people before moving to longer term placements and wraparound support for sibling groups and children entering care for the first time.</p> <hr/> <p>E. Enhance contemporary therapeutic approaches and models of care across the continuum of care services through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fabric and design • design of secure care services • Treatment Foster Care Oregon • Keep Embracing Your Success • asset management strategy • Aboriginal Healing Model.

Continuing care action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>10. Improve children and young people’s experience of care through implementing care services reforms.</p>	<p>10. Enhance children’s rights and the mechanisms through which children’s voices are incorporated into decisions that affect their care.</p>	<p>A. Explore options for establishing an independent children’s advocacy function to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in placement decision making for residential care to prevent unsafe decision making • promote the rights of children to participate in decisions about placement, service delivery and incident investigations that affect them • support or represent children to make complaints about their care and to make representations on behalf of children identified as high risk, or refer serious concerns to independent complaint handling and investigative oversight bodies such as the Victorian Ombudsman • regularly visit and inspect residential care settings • publicly report on its activities and outcomes.
<p>11. Improve experiences and supports for carers through implementing <i>Strong carers, stronger children</i>.</p>	<p>11. Progress a range of actions that address priority goals identified in <i>Strong carers, stronger children</i> to empower and support carers to provide stable and loving care for the children in their care.</p>	<p>A. Progress the <i>Strong carers, stronger children action plan 2021–22</i>.</p> <p>Note: <i>Strong carers, stronger children</i> is the Victorian Government’s strategy to improve the caring experience of kinship, foster and permanent carers and the children and young people they provide care for.</p> <p>The department is the lead for this action in partnership with the Carer Strategy Working Group.</p>

Pathway enablers action package

The Roadmap for Reform goal for pathways enablers is to deliver critical enablers to transform the child and family system. These enablers create the conditions for sustained change.

The impact we are striving to achieve over the next three years is:

The pathways system is activated through legislative reform, contemporary practice, a supported and skilled workforce, evidence-informed models, smart service networks and strategic investment for impact.

Pathway enablers action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>12. Legislation: Enact legislative changes that enable reform of the child and family system.</p>	<p>12. Work to amend and operationalise relevant legislation that supports reform for the child and family system.</p>	<p>A. Amend the <i>Children Youth and Families Act 2005</i> to create a contemporary, rights-based legislative framework that advances Aboriginal self-determination, strengthens integration and partnership approaches between services, and streamlines and strengthens the system that protects children.</p> <hr/> <p>B. Provide advice to the Department of Justice and Community Safety to support youth justice legislative reform and Crossover Kids.</p> <p><i>Note: Crossover Kids examines the association between child protection history and criminal offending to better understand the pathways that lead children into contact with the criminal justice system.</i></p> <hr/> <p>C. Provide advice to the Department of Education and Training to support the implementation of Child Link.</p> <p><i>Note: Child Link will be a web-based platform that displays information about a child to authorised key professionals who have responsibility for child wellbeing and safety. Child Link will show limited but critical information such as a child's participation in key early childhood and education services.</i></p>

Pathway enablers action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>13. Practice: Embed contemporary, evidence-informed, culturally safe best practice that reflects legislative and policy change and reform across the child and family system.</p>	<p>13. Support workforce capability in contemporary, evidence-informed, culturally safe best practice to support positive experiences and outcomes for children and families.</p>	<p>A. Release a revised Best Interests Case Practice Model framework to reflect changes in legislation, policy, services, client voice and contemporary, evidence-informed best practice.</p>
		<p>B. Implement the SAFER Children risk assessment framework to support better risk assessment and case planning for child protection.</p>
		<p>C. Build workforce capability in the use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • core evidence-informed practices that support family preservation and reunification • implementation science (for department and sector staff).
		<p>D. Develop a proposal for an Aboriginal knowledge and practice centre for children, young people and families, for consideration by the Aboriginal Children’s Forum and the Wungurilwil Gapgapduir Implementation Group.</p> <p>This action is led by Aboriginal organisations and communities, including the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, the Aboriginal Children’s Forum and Wungurilwil Gapgapduir Implementation Group, in partnership with the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare.</p>
		<p>E. Work with Family Safety Victoria to continue to embed principles and practices within the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) and information sharing to identify, assess and manage family violence risk across child and family services. Family Safety Victoria is the lead for this action.</p>
		<p>F. Support the continued development of a consistent approach to assessing children and young people in The Orange Door.</p> <p>The department and Family Safety Victoria are the joint leads for this action.</p>

Pathway enablers action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>14. Workforce: Strengthen the child and family system workforce through a workforce development plan that identifies requirements for new practice and service models, and that supports workforce safety and wellbeing.</p>	<p>14. Strengthen the child and family system workforce and plan for the workforce of the future. <i>Note: Based on the 10-year community services industry plan as the shared platform for government and community services to articulate and respond to opportunities and challenges facing the industry.</i></p>	<p>A. Review current and future child and family system workforce planning and development challenges and opportunities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attraction, recruitment and retention • geographical impacts • support for self-determined Aboriginal workforce planning and development • lived experience engagement and peer support • practice, professional and leadership development • safety and wellbeing. <p><i>Note: Completed action to determine and scope future actions in year 2 for workforce redesign and sustainability planning and potential implementation in year 3.</i></p> <hr/> <p>B. Build the workforce through supporting Frontline Victoria, the four-year pilot project to fast-track degree-qualified career changers into a career in the child and family services system. <i>Note: Frontline Victoria offers a bespoke master’s-level qualification program specifically designed to lead evidence-based practice and system reform.</i></p>

Pathway enablers action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>15. Outcomes, evidence and learning: Demonstrate the impact on outcomes by building the evidence for what works. This should be informed by the expertise of people with lived experience, Aboriginal ways of knowing, research evidence and practice insights, and supported by increased capability in applying implementation science across the system.</p>	<p>15. Build the capability of the department, sector and partners to demonstrate impacts on outcomes by building the evidence for what works, including building capability to incorporating client voice into policy, service design and practice.</p>	<p>A. Publish the first Child and family outcomes framework, including cultural outcomes, and establish annual reporting arrangements. This work will align with the Family violence outcomes framework.</p> <p><i>Note: The framework will consider self-determined Aboriginal outcomes and Aboriginal-led data.</i></p> <hr/> <p>B. Continue to build and implement the Menu of Evidence-informed Practices and Programs, including finalising content, launching the What Works approach website that will host the menu and consulting on implementing the menu.</p> <hr/> <p>C. Support the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare to deliver the Outcomes, Practice and Evidence Network (OPEN) to strengthen the capacity of the child and family service system in building and using evidence and evaluation.</p> <p>The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare is the lead for this action.</p> <hr/> <p>D. Develop an operational model for a What Works approach to strengthen the use of evidence to inform policy and practice across the child and family service system.</p>

Pathway enablers action package

Priority	The aim over three years	Year 1 action
<p>16. Governance: Establish smart service networks to lead local reform implementation and ongoing local area strategic oversight and operational management functions.</p>	<p>16. Establish and embed smart service networks statewide as a platform for place-based strategic and operational governance that cuts across service types, and as a vehicle for progressing reform priorities.</p>	<p>A. Finalise the conceptual model for smart service networks by building on existing governance and network arrangements, including The Orange Door, Family Services Alliances, Integrated Family Violence Committees, and Common Clients Local Services Executive Committees.</p>
		<p>B. Capture and disseminate the learnings from early adopters for the initial implementation of smart service networks to develop guidance for other departmental areas (and government and sector partners) to help establish smart service networks across the state. This will include mapping and engagement activity and partnering with early adopters to develop implementation and operational guidance.</p>
<p>17. Funding and investment: Develop an investment strategy that aligns with reform priorities and delivers resourcing for a sustainable service system.</p>	<p>17. Develop an investment strategy that supports system sustainability and reform.</p>	<p>A. Improve demand forecasting models for child and family services and continue to build the key demographic data and outcome analysis capability required to support a targeting/prioritisation of reform effort and strategic investment.</p>
		<p>B. Develop microsimulation models that can enable better targeting of supports and new reforms including avoided costs modelling.</p>

