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Kids **Partnership**

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Putting Queensland Kids First: Submission to the Queensland Government's draft plan

February 2024





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Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands upon which we live and work, and their continuing connection to land and sea, and to kin, culture and community. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and First Nations colleagues.

We are privileged to welcome and grow our children and support our families in these places. We also acknowledge the First Nations leaders, advocates and organisations that have fought for children and their families.

We acknowledge the consequences of adversity and trauma experienced at the hands of systems over generations. We acknowledge the resilience, determination, leadership, generosity and innovation they have long demonstrated.

We acknowledge that First Nations ways of 'knowing, being and doing' have much to teach us.



Challenge Statement

Most Queensland children and young people are doing well, but too many aren't thriving due to adverse life experiences and lack of access to the resources and services they need.

Our systems are not yet sufficiently geared or connected to provide the right opportunities or supports, at the right time, and in the right way. This contributes to enduring inequality and poor outcomes for too many people, and for our community as a whole.

Our challenge, too, is to use who and what we have, and what we know and learn, support leaders and catalysts, and facilitate collaborative action, innovation and development, to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts.



Signatories to the submission

The following system leaders endorse the submission and the Queensland Early Childhood Better Systems Roadmap



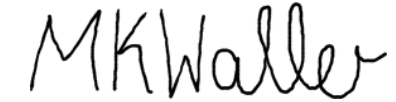
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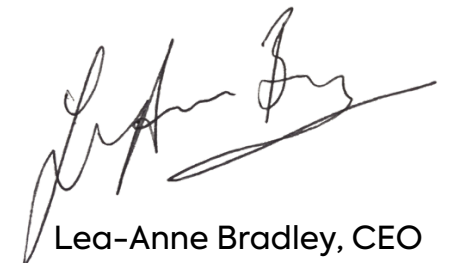
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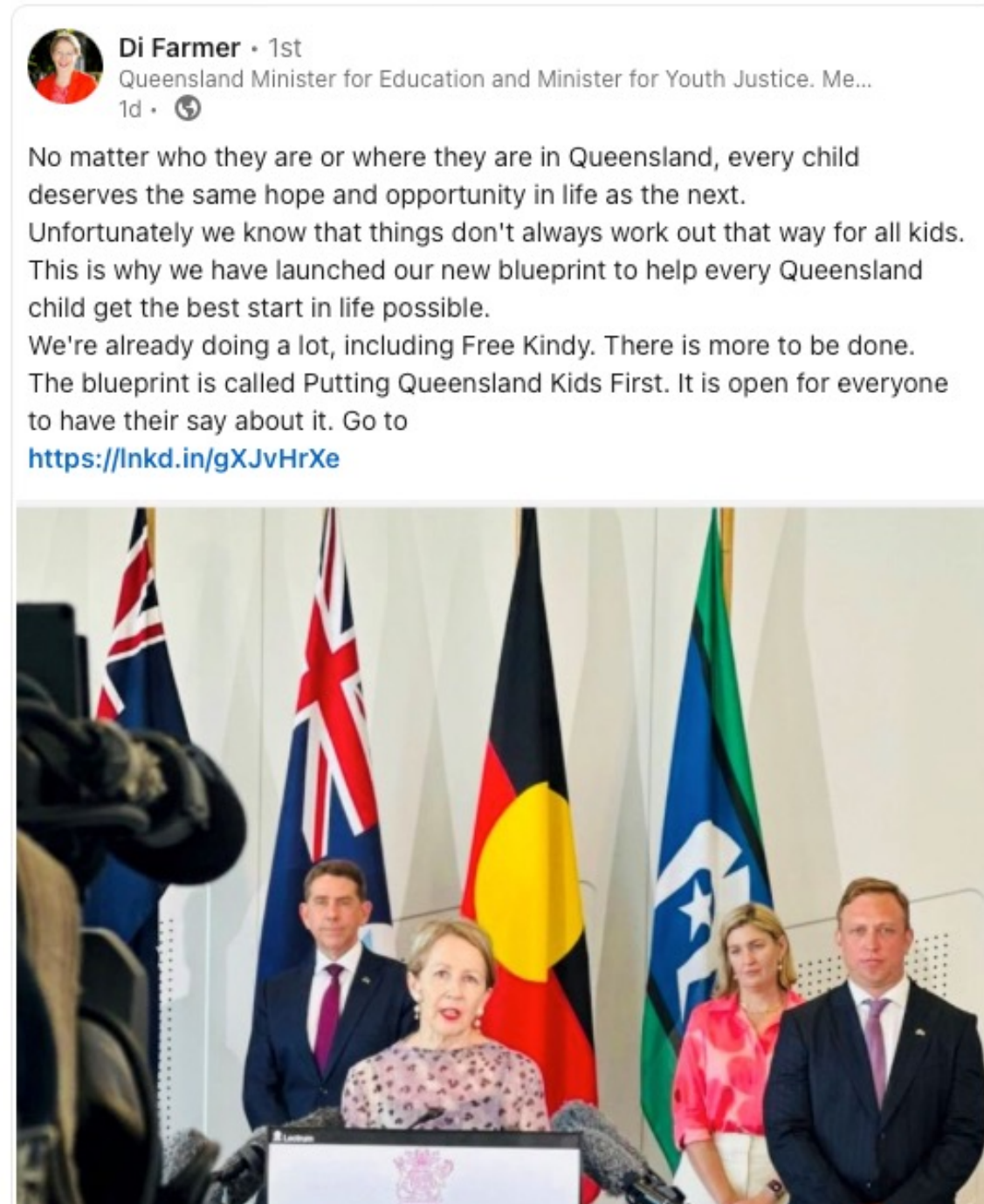


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Queensland Government's Putting Queensland Kids First: consultation draft



Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

TQKP's view is the plan does a good job...

- Focusing on early years and prevention
- Outlining a whole-of-government child development plan – Queensland's first ever
- Highlighting the need for investment – implicit that a funded package will follow
- Linking to social and economic outcomes
- Acknowledging some of the key risk and protective factors that support or get in the way of children thriving
- Seeking and encouraging feedback

Queensland Government's Putting Queensland Kids First: consultation draft

TQKP's view is that the plan is not yet sufficiently...



- Cross-sectoral and whole-of-community
- Systemic – no real attention to key system settings re: leadership, workforce, data, public engagement
- Explicitly ecological – à la The Nest Child and Youth Wellbeing Wheel Outcomes Framework
- Reflective of childrens' and care-givers' voices and experiences
- Explicit about workforce and organisational issues
- Ambitious or benchmarked vis-à-vis other S&T jurisdictions
- Explicit about reporting – e.g. State of the Children report like SA's 'How Are They Faring' 2023
- Positioned vis-à-vis the Australian Government, e.g. draft National Early Years Plan, advocacy role for Queensland Government
- Clear about interaction with other strategies and plans, such as the existing education-focused Queensland Early Years Plan, Health Equity, etc.

TQKP's submission is informed by our co-developed ECD Better Systems Roadmap

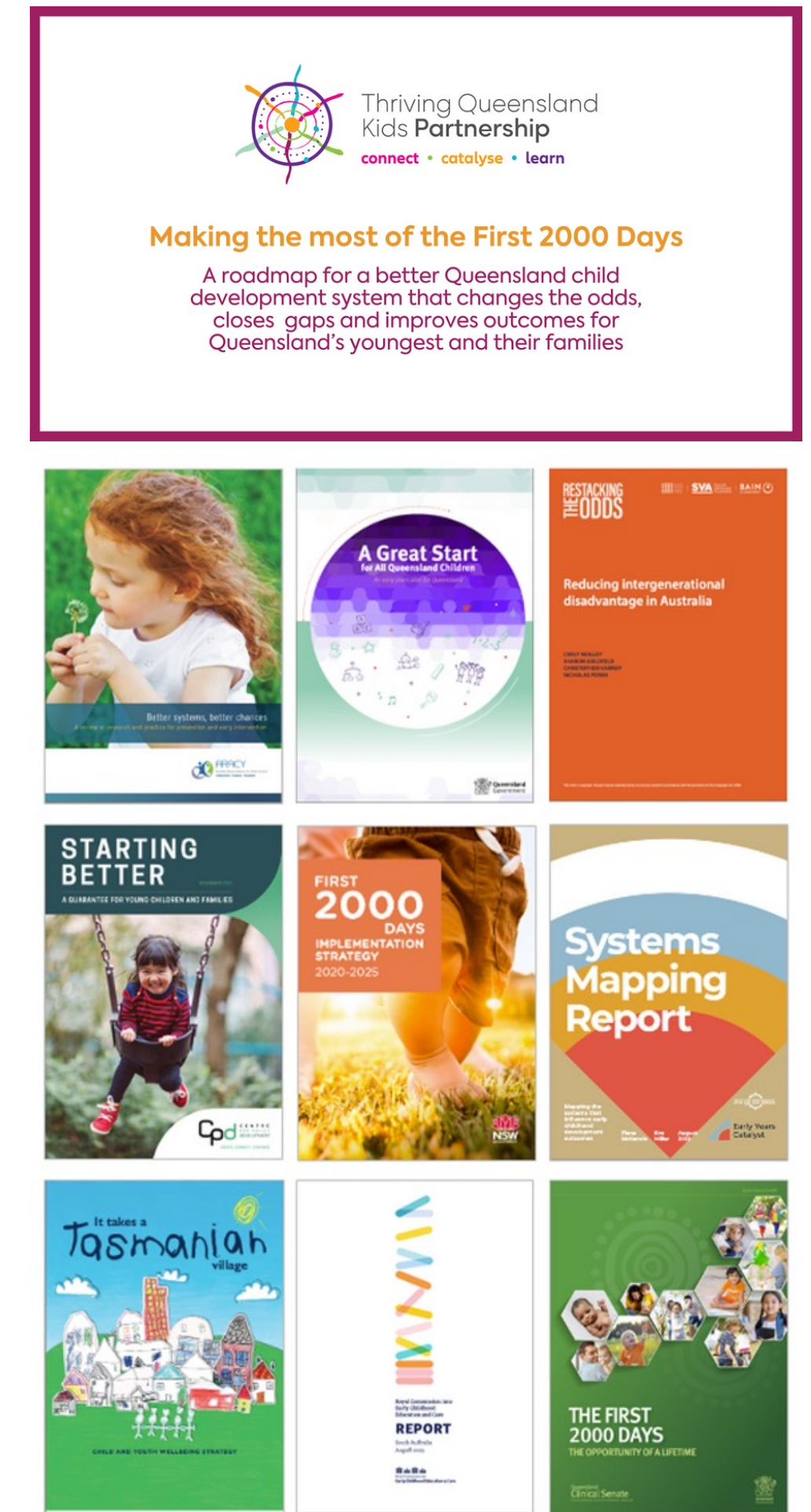
An Early Childhood Development Better Systems Roadmap **Working Group** was formed in early 2022.

Roadmap development was grounded on:

- Core **science, evidence and experience-based frames** from around Australia and beyond (see right).
- Perspectives of **people from multiple systems, sectors** and disciplines from across Queensland and beyond.

The Roadmap Working Group held a series of workshops and forums, and the TQKP Leadership Table held a 'deep dive', on early child development.

- TQKP was also invited to participate and learn from many fora.
- TQKP commissioned Accenture to undertake rapid systems assessment and consultation with a sample of systems leaders using the Six Systems Levers and MCRI's Restacking the Odds frames.



TQKP's submission is informed by our co-developed ECD Better Systems Roadmap

- The roadmap is divided into system reform and investment priorities.
- TQKP has adopted the six system levers outlined by the ANZSOG & Every Child joint project on [Systems Leadership for Child and Youth Wellbeing](#) and **system reforms are provided for each lever.**
- The Nest is Australia's wellbeing framework for children and young people aged 0 to 24 years. The Nest conceptualizes wellbeing as six inter-connected domains, each with many elements, and **investments are provided for each domain.**
- The following two slides summarise TQKP's top system reform and investment priorities for Putting Qld Kids First.
- The level of investment suggested is indicative only of the scale required.
- Later slides map these system reform and investment priorities against Putting Qld Kids First's **five investment priorities** and provide more detail.

Priority actions

- 1.1 Clear ministerial responsibility for child, family and community development and wellbeing in Queensland
- 1.2 Whole of community Queensland Early Years Plan / F2000 Days Strategy
- 2.1 Investment reform to achieve better outcomes
- 2.2 Investment reform to close the gap
- 3.1 Better early child development and parenthood support eco-systems
- 4.1 A cross-sectoral workforce capability action plan
- 5.1 Integrated state-wide system of multi-disciplinary child and family services
- 5.2 Extended and integrated Thriving Kids, Thriving Places Initiative
- 6.1 Improved child wellbeing data, evidence and learning

Priority investments

- 7.1 \$120 million over four years for a Great Start, Get Ready initiative for the pre-conception to birth period
- 7.2 \$1.75 billion for a Great Start Postnatal package
- 8.1 \$1.35 billion to increase access to high quality early childhood education & care
- 9.1 Additional support and wellbeing for Queensland parents
- 10.1 Increase support for early childhood services to be culturally appropriate, welcoming and attractive
- 11.1 Increase opportunities for social gatherings & activities with families & friends
- 12.1 Ensure families have access to material basics



TQKP's top 9 system reform priorities and opportunities in our ECD Better Systems Roadmap



Priority system reforms
Create clear ministerial responsibility for child development and wellbeing in Qld by designating a Minister for Children, Families and Communities with cross-portfolio leadership and coordination
Whole of community Qld Early Years Plan / F2000 Days Strategy in conjunction with communities and the not-for-profit, philanthropic and corporate sectors.
Investment reform to achieve better outcomes – establish a Qld Children and Families endowment fund in conjunction with the Australian Government and Australian and Qld philanthropies
Investment reform to close the gap – establish a Queensland Deadly Families Investment Fund and Great Start Early Years Building Fund to give First Nations and developmentally vulnerable children better access to quality early years services
Better early child development and parenthood support eco-systems – an integrated Great Start Action Plan including a public and caregiver education and information initiative to provide a trusted source of information, education, training and support for caregivers and workforces
A cross-sectoral workforce capability action plan – develop a Great Start Workforce Capability Action Plan, commissioned by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training and Jobs Qld to support ECD workforce capability and wellbeing
Integrated state-wide system of multi-disciplinary child and families services The Qld and Aust Governments should invest in a state-wide network of Great Start Child and Family Hubs and Spokes Initiative, encompassing community, school and health-based child and family hubs
Extended and integrated <i>Thriving Kids, Thriving Places</i> Initiative The Qld Government and the Aust Government co-invest in an expanded Thriving Kids, Thriving Places Initiative that builds on, integrates and extends existing and emerging Qld’s child-focused, place-based initiatives
Improved child wellbeing data, evidence and learning create a Great Start Data initiative, to improve and link ECD-related data systems to inform service planning, funding and delivery, to provide systems and service level quality assurance, and to build data literacy and numeracy across Qld

TQKP's top 10 investment priorities and opportunities in our ECD Better Systems Roadmap



Great Start, Get Ready Pre-conception and Pregnancy Care package	\$120M
Great Start Postnatal package - free consultations, universal child health checks, digital Red Book, Maternal and Child Sustained Home Visiting, extra Child Development Services, Sleep Support package	\$750M
More Kindy for All package – 3year old Kindy and Deadly Kindies, ECEC workforce fund, ECEC Plus	\$1.1Billion
Backing Queensland Parents package - parent information and support, post-natal mental health, mums and dads peer support, FN Family Wellbeing, child-friendly adult services	\$280M
Deadly Start package and Inclusion Development Fund to fill gaps in existing programs and increase support for early childhood services to be culturally appropriate, welcoming and attractive for all	\$65M
Playful Queensland package - extra \$10M for First Five Forever, more support for Playgroups, nature-based play, extra support for child-friendly urban design and play facilities together with local governments	\$100M
Thriving Family Hubs - double number of Early Years Places and integrated school, health and community-based child and family hubs	\$30M
Thriving Places, Thriving Kids – consolidate existing programs and build to 20 x TKTP backbone teams plus innovation and capability development funding	\$20M
Access to Basics - advocacy to Australian Government re affordable and accessible housing, income support, fairer superannuation, Child Care Subsidy reforms, paid parental leave, Medicare items	TBD
Housing for families and young people - Qld Housing Plan, extra social and affordable housing, Homelessness Services, Foyers etc.	TBD

Queensland Government's opportunity to advocate to the Australian Government to support Queensland kids thriving



- The Queensland and Australian Governments should co-invest in a state-wide **Child and Family Hubs and Spokes Initiative**, encompassing all the various current models and varieties of community, school and health-based child and family hubs.
- The Queensland and Australian Governments should co-invest in an expanded Thriving Kids, Thriving Places Initiative that builds on, integrates and extends existing and emerging Queensland's child focused, place-based F3000 days initiatives.
- Advocate to the Australian Government for improved **funding** and improved assessment and rating processes by **ACECQA**.
- Advocating to the Australian Government for increased **income support and minimum wage** levels and more **flexible financial and workplace support** for parents.
- Engaging with other States and Territories to agreed child health and development priorities through **reform of national agreements** and **partnerships** re housing, ECEC, education, health, ECEC, disability, mental health, and justice reinvestment.
- Engaging with the Australian Government to pursue opportunities for collaboration with national philanthropies through the **Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children**.

TQKP responses to key consultation questions

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Q1. What are the core principles you think should inform our early intervention approach to support children, young people and families?



- **What surrounds and happens to us, shapes us.** A child exists and interacts within a family, community, systems and in their natural, built and digital environments. This should underpin all strategies and solutions. The **social, economic and environmental determinants** of health, wellbeing and resilience need to be addressed.
- **Proportionate universalism and equity.** Equity is vitally important. Ensure children experiencing vulnerability are getting the supports they need as early as possible. We need the right mix of a **holistic universal base** accessible by all and a strong targeted stack of early intervention strategies for those that need more or are at risk.
- The **voice of children, family and community** weaved into design, implementation and evaluation, underpinning all solutions with a strong understanding of child, family and community needs across the state.
- **Whole of community** response. Ensuring this plan is engaging, integrating and leveraging the community, and not-for-profit, philanthropy and corporate sectors, at local, regional and state levels.
- **Rights of the Child.** Ensuring the rights of the child are core to all solutions.
- Building neuro-informed **core capabilities** for parenting and caregiving, and of the workforces and organisations that work with them, is a vital way to uplift parents and their children.
- **Inclusion.** Many families are diverse and therefore have diverse needs. Strategies need to reflect such diversity.
- **Better use of the right data.** Ensuring all solutions have a plan to capture high quality child and family data and updating resources, plans and programs accordingly.
- **Accountability and transparency** of agencies, authorities and delivery partners inked to each solution, of all aspects of implementation, evaluation, resourcing and data sharing.

Q2. What are the key protective factors in keeping children and young people on positive trajectories, and how can we further boost these?



Child / prenatal environment	Family & home	Neighbourhood & Community	Social, Economic & Environmental
• Healthy pregnancy • Supportive and nurturing carer / child relationships, secure attachment • Sound and appropriate nutrition inclusive of breastfeeding • Building a sense of self efficacy and perceived control in children • Providing opportunities to strengthen adaptive skills and self regulatory capacities in children • Reading, singing, playing, responsive communications with child • Attendance and engagement in social activities • Voice of child listened to • Successful transitions at key points e.g.: ECEC, prep, secondary	• A stable and responsive environment of relationships • Parental / family mental health and wellbeing • Mobilising sources of faith, hope, friendships and cultural traditions • Parental core capabilities • Family has material basics • Infant sleep spaces with safe sleep education • Parental employment • Parental education • Parental knowledge of early brain development and broader child development • Parental engagement in child’s development and learning • Resilient families who can cope with life stressors • Transportation means • Family harmony and stability	• Safe and supportive physical and built environments • Safe and connected neighbourhoods • Access to stable housing • Access to affordable / free high quality ECEC and schools • Positive school climate and partnerships with children and their caregivers • Affordable / free social and sporting supports in local communities e.g.: playgroups, F5F, team sports • Accessible and high-quality local health and support services • Engagement with a family GP • Culturally appropriate services • Access to health, learning and social services in rural and remote locations • Opportunities for children to play in safe quality spaces • Parents, young people, service providers, coaches, teachers, police, community members all equipped with key neuroscience and child development information • Communities that value the role of parenting • Children and families involved in decision making	• Healthy environmental, political and economic conditions for children to live, play, learn and grow in • Universal health and social care that is neuro and trauma informed • A high-quality integrated workforce across early years, middle years and adolescence (antenatal and postnatal services, child health and development services, ECEC, schools, disability, housing, tertiary providers, etc.) • Child impact assessments • Baseline measures to clearly understand how children are fairing and resources aligned in response • Adequate resourcing of children’s and family services • Fair work conditions and pay • Parental leave paid for 1 year to align with other countries and up to 2.5year of unpaid parental leave options • Developmentally-informed physical and digital environments, including in urban design and infrastructure

Q3. Are there any other priorities you think that *Putting Queensland Kids First* should consider?



- **High quality ECEC** with a priority on better employment conditions and other retention strategies and **access in rural and remote areas** as outlined in the Queensland Thrive By Five Action Plan.
- An explicit and significant commitment to and investment in **workforce and organisational development** that addresses labour supply, skills and support for all the disciplines that engage children and families.
- **Antenatal and postnatal care** that ensures all families receive numerous health and development checks in the first 2000 days, with referral to targeted support systems and follow-up.
- **Stewardship and systems management** – governance that drives, scrutinizes, assesses and distributes based on evidence.
- **Smarter investment** processes that build relationships and trust; elevate the role of communities in planning and delivery; allow for experimentation, reflection and evolution; and rethink funding models.
- **Implementation and evaluation** requires support and adequate funding to execute effectively. Outcomes, inputs and outputs need to be rigorously measured. A framework of continuous improvement needs to be developed across interventions to support evidence-based decision making, evaluation and implementation science.
- Improved access better and coordination of access to evidence-based parent support.
- Connect and coordinate with Qld agencies, media and communications professionals to embed **strategic framing** principles within public messaging related to children and young people.
- A biennial **State of Qld Children report** such as South Australia's 'How are Our Kids Fairing' wellbeing report.
- **Articulate to and leverage existing strategies, plans and programs** within Qld and across jurisdictions.
- Coordinated and integrated **Qld Children's Research and Development Strategy** with all public universities.
- **Quality learning environments and education transitions** are important for children and need to be understood and resourced effectively.
- Developing a stronger policy focus on the **middle years** ages 8-14 as this is a crucial time for cognitive and emotional development of a child.
- An **information-sharing scheme** and related protocols to facilitate holistic, integrated support to children, as per Victoria's Child Information Sharing Scheme.

Q4. How can we best support connection to culture and community for children, young people and families?



- Ensure the **voices of families** from different cultures and communities are integral to **decision making** on policy, program and service design, delivery and evaluation.
- **Place focused and based** approaches need to be adequately resourced and measured through integrating and extending existing place-programs. Consolidate, leverage, tailor and extend evidence informed existing place-based initiatives to cross a child's life course.
- Flexible, innovative, responsive, child and family friendly **integrated services** including hubs. This needs to include **outreach** to where families naturally gather and flexible modalities.
- Ensuring children have plenty of **natural, built and digital play** spaces and opportunities, through inter-generational **Queensland Plays Strategy**.
- Improve access to **culturally safe antenatal and post-natal care**, especially to increase early engagement (first trimester) and frequency of attendance by CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Scaling of evidence-based culturally acceptable interventions in early perinatal and postnatal periods.
- Opportunities for children and families to **participate** in free / affordable sporting, arts, cultural and family friendly activities in their communities.
- Accessible and inclusive **public transport**
- Designing and building **child friendly communities** and cities and towns. Designing services that are child and family friendly that incorporate the voice of families.
- **Strengthen partnerships** with First Nations and CALD leaders and communities to co-design better early childhood services.
- Increase **First Nations and CALD staff**. Including Government and universities encourage and train more culturally diverse people for clinical and nonclinical service roles.
- Expand programs that support CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to **access Kindy and transition** programs, including playgroups, for pre-school and school.
- License and fund community-based **playgroups** in the home, community spaces, libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres and other cultural centres.
- Review the cultural appropriateness of the **Australian Early Development Census** and commit to developing and trialing a First Nations tailored version if needed.
- **Training and resources** for staff, peers and volunteers working across sectors with First Nations and CALD children to boost cultural capability.

Q5. What would it look like for us to work together as partners, all committed to improving outcomes for children and young people?



- **PQKF and all partners use *The Nest*** as a shared outcomes framework, along with a capability development and resilience focus.
- A ***Putting Qld Kids First Charter*** is co-developed as an instrument for other sectors, organisations and institutes to commit to the aims and priorities of *Putting Qld Kids First*
- ***PQKF Statements of Collaboration*** are entered into with the Qld Kids Funders Alliance and Thriving Qld Kids Partnership.
- **Voice of children and families** is woven into the design, implementation and evaluation of policies, programs, projects and practices. Clear processes and pathways to support.
- **PQKF Regional Implementation Plans** are co-produced, facilitated by DPC with relevant Departments, PHNs, NFPs, local governments, philanthropies, and community and business groups.
- An inter-disciplinary **Queensland Council on the Developing Child** is established to provide advice and facilitate data and knowledge generation, translation and mobilisation.
- The Qld Govt collaborates with philanthropies, corporates, and intermediaries such as Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership, to support a **Business' Building Childhoods Roundtable**, akin to a UK initiative of the Princess of Wales Royal Foundation.
- Cooperation to align and link the **Queensland and National** Early Years Strategies and all ECD-related national agreements and related investments – such as for Close the Gap, ECEC, health, mental health, violence prevention, disability and housing.
- **Improved communication and collaboration** guidelines between agencies, support organisations, ECEC centres and schools.
- The Cabinet Handbook provides specific guidance about the assessment of and advice regarding impacts of proposals on children and families in **Impact Assessment processes**.
- A **network of child, family and community hubs** with extensive outreach capabilities, shared information protocols so families don't have to repeat their story multiple times, a person-centred approach and a flexible budget to respond to individual family needs.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to PQKF Investment Priorities

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Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 1:** **Wellbeing from conception and the earliest years of life**



\$120 million for a Great Start, Get Ready initiative for the pre-conception to birth period

Invest in a **Great Start, Get Ready Pre-conception and Pregnancy Care package** to extend and build on existing information and support, including:

- Incorporating contemporary information into secondary school health curriculum and antenatal classes on child development and parenthood, including brain building and other essential contributors to healthy child development over the first 2000 days,
- More accessible **consumer information on pre-conception and pregnancy care** to be available through primary health care, local libraries, early years and local community services, and a Great Start app,
- New Queensland **Clinical Guidelines** on pre-conception care and perinatal mental health,
- During the perinatal period, increase understanding of adverse childhood experiences and improve women's access to trauma informed perinatal care,
- State-wide roll-out of **relationship-based midwifery**, continuity of care across the antenatal and postnatal period, with extra capacity across HHSs, ACCHOs and integrated primary care teams to provide access to a minimum number of consultations with midwives and child health nurses for all expectant mothers in Queensland (starting in the first trimester), with additional consults available for parents at risk of poor health and well-being, and
- Extended **13Health antenatal telehealth service** to provide consistent care from a midwife (without the need for a GP referral) at points between scheduled appointments and in the place of missed appointments.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 1:** **Wellbeing from conception and the earliest years of life**



\$750 million for a Great Start Postnatal package

Invest \$500M in a **Great Start Lets Go** package to provide:

- Guaranteed access for all new parents to **at least 10 consultations in the 12 months after birth** with midwives and child health nurses, starting in areas of highest developmental vulnerability, with additional consults available for parents and infants at higher risk of poorer health and well-being outcomes up to 24 months,
- Guaranteed access for **every Queensland child to recommended child health checks** (including oral health checks) within the First 2000 Days, with opt out, in a culturally safe way,
- Universal access to a **digital Queensland Red Book**,
- Sustained **Health Home Visiting services** in the 40 LGAs with the most numbers and highest proportions of developmentally vulnerable children, and
- Additional **early intervention Child Development services** to ensure children screened receive support without long delays and to address access barriers and follow up missed appointments.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 1:** **Wellbeing from conception and the earliest years of life**



\$750 million for a Great Start Postnatal package (continued)

Invest \$200M in a **Great Start Care Plus** package, providing

- Healthcare card holders who are pregnant mothers, or mothers or fathers of a child aged up to 5 years who have registered with the GP practice via MyMedicare, with an **annual remunerated check by GP practice** of (1) child development, (2) maternal and paternal mental health, and (3) social and economic determinants of health,
- **Timely follow up** of those referred to services for issues identified in the annual check and a review of clinical guidelines with the aim of **shortening follow-up periods** related to developmental concerns.
- Regular online regional **Communities of Practice**, led by consultant paediatrician, to support children at high-risk.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 1:** **Wellbeing from conception and the earliest years of life**



\$750 million for a Great Start Postnatal package (continued)

Invest \$50M in a **Great Start Sleep Support** package including additional funding for:

- Improve access to evidence based professional and peer-based sleep **support information and services**, including expanded Lets Yarn About Sleep initiative with AICCHOs and First Nations family wellbeing services,
- **Upscale the Pēpi-Pod® Program to reach all priority Queensland populations**, including First Nations communities experiencing higher levels of infant mortality and developmental vulnerability,
- Promotion of new Queensland Government **Clinical Guideline: Safer Infant Sleep with targeted resource development to support clinicians to operationalise the guideline**
- Mandatory **safety standards** and information standards for inclined infant sleep and non-sleep products, and
- Antenatal health promotion relating to **maternal sleep** position to reduce the risk of stillbirth

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 2:** **Supporting families and strengthening communities**

An additional \$300M for Queensland parents and communities wellbeing and support

Invest \$180M in a **Backing Queensland Parents** package with:

- \$30M to support the choice and expand the range of evidence-based face to face and digital **parenting information and support programs** available to every Queensland parent,
- \$20M to expand access to the **free 24hr Parentline telephone support line** and integrate with web-based platforms
- \$10M to expand access to, and sustain up-to-date information on, the national Raising Children Network web platform,
- \$15M to support community-based **mums or dads peer support** groups and activities eg: HIPPY
- \$30M to support access to free **post-natal mental health support** for Queensland families needing additional support,
- \$35M for extra supports for **Queensland parents with children with disabilities** to assist with earlier access to paediatric and specialist developmental assessments, including \$18M to roll-out the CliniKids initiative in 40 ECD service locations,
- \$20M to enable **adult crisis and support services** in the housing, domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol, mental health, justice and disaster relief sectors, especially in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities,
- \$20M to address demand pressures on **Family and Child Connect and intensive family support** and wellbeing services.
- Co-invest \$10 million in an integrated **Thriving Places, Thriving Kids** place-based, community-led initiative - with backbone teams in 20 communities.



Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 2:** **Supporting families and strengthening communities**



\$100M for a Playful Queensland Strategy and package to help our kids and their parents get more social and active, including by:

- Extra funding for **playgroups** to ensure all families with children under the age of two have access to playgroup and online resources to accompany playgroup attendance,
- Funding for playgroups for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in priority communities in urban, regional and remote communities, led by fully trained First Nations educators and community members,
- Expanded access to **supported playgroups** for parents needing extra support,
- Co-investing with local governments to enhance local **play facilities** and spaces,
- Additional funding for public schools to upgrade play facilities and spaces,
- More support for locally-initiated **nature-based play** activities,
- Extension of Queensland's home-grown **First Five Forever program** - doubling its current funding through the State Library of Queensland to local governments, which supports early literacy, play based learning, cultural connection and language transmission, and Parents as First Teachers initiatives - both in and outreaching from local libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres,
- Innovative design initiatives that create **playful urban spaces** and facilities, in conjunction with local government and the property and infrastructure industries, and
- Using the **Olympics Legacy Plan** to demonstrate innovative ways of embedding playability into precinct and infrastructure design to enhance child and family wellbeing outcomes.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 2:** **Supporting families and strengthening communities**



Ensuring families have access to material basics

Continuing to grow co-investment with the Australian Government and superannuation funds into additional **affordable and accessible housing**, including:

- Purpose built social housing where families have a tenancy and tenure with easily accessible services , including for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness,
- Families experiencing domestic and family violence,
- Tailored housing responses for First Nations peoples,
- Supported housing investment and service delivery models for those who need it, including younger pregnant and parenting women, in partnership with philanthropy and not-for-profit sectors.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 2:** **Supporting families and strengthening communities**



Ensuring families have access to material basics (cont.)

Advocating to the Australian Government to:

- Increase Commonwealth investment in and rates for **income support and minimum wage levels** that ensure families have enough money for necessities,
- Consider **fairer superannuation** structures which allow women to accumulate equity when they are not earning in the workforce during maternity/early years leave,
- Provide a 100% **Child Care Subsidy** (including for enrolment fees) for families or individuals with children who are experiencing vulnerability,
- Increase flexibility of the childcare subsidy to encompass more than just centre based ECEC allowing parents the choice to home parent full time for the first 2000 days or utilise childcare options,
- Fund an annual **remunerated child health check** by a GP up to 5 years,
- Make continued child related **payments contingent** on up-to-date child health checks as is the case for up-to-date immunisation, and
- Further **increase paid parental leave** arrangements to cover two years to support parents with the option to be with their babies for the first years of life.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 3:** **Identifying and responding to needs for healthy development and positive life courses**

Invest \$150M to support holistic ECEC Plus services in partnership with non-Government early learning providers to services in areas experiencing higher levels of vulnerability and lower access to ECD services (including rural and remote) with extra funding for:

- Highly nutritious food throughout the day
- Essential supplies
- More highly qualified ECEC staff, and higher staff-to-children ratios
- Targeted intensive support
- Mentoring, peer support and other parent care supports
- Child health and development workers on site
- Early childhood navigator roles
- 'Safety net' strategies to catch children early and provide additional support early to families



Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 3:** **Identifying and responding to needs for healthy development and positive life courses**

The **Queensland Government** invest **\$1 billion over 4 years** through a **Great Start Early Years Building Fund** to transform early years infrastructure in Queensland. The Fund should be used in areas with most child development vulnerability to build or renovate:

- Local child and family centres
- Integrated community or school-based early learning centres that combine early learning with wrap around supports
- Child and family hubs on school sites
- Upgrades to play spaces
- Early learning service buildings in areas where it's hard to attract investment



Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to **Investment Priority 3:** **Identifying and responding to needs for healthy development and positive life courses**

Co-develop and deliver better state-wide early child development and parenthood support eco-systems

The Queensland Government co-design and co-deliver an integrated **Great Start Action Plan** which includes a **public and caregiver education and information initiative**, backed by an investment of \$20M over four years, in collaboration with community providers, libraries and others to provide a trusted source of information, education, training and support for caregivers and workforces about the First 2000 Days.

A Great Start Action Plan should provide a comprehensive first 2000 days **web-based platform and app** across ages and stages from pre-pregnancy through to school

- Cooperating with existing trusted platforms such as Raising Children Network, Bright Tomorrows and others
- Using the latest insights from child development sciences and evidence on brains and bodies,
- Using the latest evidence on what works in framing, learning and translating to enable understanding, knowledge and use and redress and avoid stigma,
- Promoting uptake of essential and available local and other supports across the first 2000 days across Queensland, and
- Extending and building upon the successful Connect2U initiative led by Children's Health Queensland.



Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to

Investment Priority 3:

Identifying and responding to needs for healthy development and positive life courses

Co-develop and deliver better state-wide early child development and parenthood support eco-systems

- The Great Start Action Plan should be enabled through a **whole of government partnership**, jointly led by the Departments of Education and Health, together with the key statutory bodies such as Children's Health Queensland, Health and Wellbeing Qld, the Queensland Family and Child Commission, the Queensland Mental Health Commission and the State Library of Queensland.
- The Queensland Government co-invest \$5Mpa in the **Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative**, in conjunction with philanthropies and Queensland institutes, to mobilise and translate the rapidly emerging insights from neurosciences and related fields in caregiver and community information and workforce and organisational development.
- The Great Start Action Plan should enable **local collaborations** to adapt and deploy caregiver and community information, and utilise existing infrastructure including local libraries, ECEC services, Neighbourhood Centres, primary care services, Child and Family Hubs, schools, businesses, Connect for Children networks and others.
- A comprehensive **Great Start Workforce Capability Action Plan (CAP)** should be developed, commissioned by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training and Jobs Queensland, with other agencies and authorities and NFPs, to support ECD workforce capability and wellbeing, building on existing portfolio strategies.



Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to

Investment Priority 4:

Supporting confident transitions into learning, education and training



Increase accessibility to high quality early childhood education and care, building on the Kindy for All strategy through a **\$1.0 billion package, including:**

Invest \$650 Million for a More Kindy For All strategy with:

- \$550M for access to free **15 hours of three-year-old Kindy** to bring Queensland in line with the best practice in Australia and overseas.
- \$100M to support the development of and invest in more First Nations community-controlled **Deadly Kindies**

Invest \$200M for a **Great Start Workforce Fund** to:

- support **better pay and conditions** in public and community-based ECEC services
- subsidise **professional development** including time off the floor for our Early Years workforce
- establish an **Early Years Institute** to attract workers, coordinate career pathways and coordinate high quality training, and
- implement other elements of the Great Start Workforce Capability Plan.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to

Investment Priority 4:

Supporting confident transitions into learning, education and training



Increase accessibility to high quality early childhood education and care including:

Advocate to the Australian Government to:

- Adopt ARACY's **Nest Wellbeing Framework** in the Australian ECEC sector
- Increase **child care subsidy** to 100% for low income families
- Remove the **activity test** for childcare subsidy to early childhood education and care
- Increase the **Community Child Care Fund** and extend beyond 2024
- Introduce **needs-based funding** for early childhood education and care centres and early intervention therapeutic early learning centres, as an incentive to enrol children from vulnerable groups.
- Increase and index the funding allocation to the **Inclusion Support Program** to match the hours a child attends early childhood education and care
- Ensure **ACECQA** introduces:
 - assessment and rating of all centres at least once every three years and annually for centres that do not meet the NQS,
 - process changes to significantly reduce the administrative burden associated with assessment,
 - improved reliability and accuracy of the assessment and rating process,
 - a review of standards with a view to strengthen staff relationships with children by increasing support and strengthening responsiveness, sensitivity and attunement.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to

Investment Priority 5:

Partnering for integrated, place-based and First Nations-led delivery



Build on the outcomes being achieved by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Service by doubling the investment to a total of \$108 million by 2027-2028 to reduce the number of children referred into the child protection system.

Increase support for early childhood services to be culturally appropriate, welcoming and attractive.

\$50M for a **Great Deadly Start initiative** to:

- Improve access to culturally safe antenatal care, to increase early engagement (first trimester) and frequency of attendance by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women,
- Increase First Nations staff in all early childhood settings,
- Strengthen partnerships with First Nations leaders and communities to co-design better early childhood services, including working with Local Thriving Communities,
- Expand programs that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to access Kindy and transition to school,
- Review the cultural appropriateness of the Australian Early Development Census and commit to developing and trialing a First Nations tailored version if needed, and
- License and fund playgroups in the home for First Nation and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse families.

Mapping the Better Systems Roadmap to

Investment Priority 5:

Partnering for integrated, place-based and First Nations-led delivery

\$15M for a Queensland Inclusion Development Fund to fill gaps in the Australian Government program for:

- State government funded occasional care, preschools, kindergartens and early intervention services,
- In Home Care services, and
- Specialist Early Childhood Education and Care services.

The Queensland Government establish a **Queensland Deadly Families Investment Fund and Great Start Early Years Building Fund** to give First Nations and developmentally vulnerable children better access to quality early years services.

The Queensland and Australian Governments establish a **Queensland Deadly Families Investment Fund**, co-designed and delivered with First Nations community-controlled organisations and local governance bodies, to support the expansion of:

- Birthing on Country / Birthing in Our Community collaboratives with HHSs
- First Nations Child and Maternal Hubs
- First Nations playgroups
- Family wellbeing services
- Home visiting and peer support
- Deadly Kindies
- First Nations Hubs and Early Years Places

The Queensland Deadly Families Investment Fund should provide **longer-term investment** into the systems and services which support First Nations child and family development and wellbeing to allow community-controlled organisations to establish, implement and evaluate support services, and make informed decisions on how these initiatives can grow and change according to community needs.



See also:

Queensland resources:

- TQKP's Early Childhood Development Better Systems Roadmap: see [here](#)
- Clinical Senate First 2000 Days Report: see [here](#)
- QCOSS' 2024 pre-budget submission: see [here](#)
- Thrive By Five Queensland Alliance Action Plan: see [here](#)

Resources from other jurisdictions:

- Tasmania's [It Takes a Tasmanian Village: Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- South Australia's [How Are They Faring 2023 Report Card](#)
- ARACY's [What's in The Nest](#)



Making the most of the First 2000 Days

A roadmap for a better Queensland child development system that changes the odds, closes gaps and improves outcomes for Queensland's youngest and their families



Thriving Queensland
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connect • catalyse • learn



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