

## **NATIONAL COALITION ON CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING**

### **ANNUAL MEETING – 22 JUNE 2022**

(Held via Microsoft Teams)

#### **Summary**

Over 75 members and stakeholders attended the Annual Meeting. The meeting was facilitated by Jamie Crosby, CEO Families Australia and Convenor of the National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing (National Coalition).

A copy of the agenda is at **Attachment A**. The list of participating organisations is at **Attachment B**.

Presenters included Tim Crosier - Branch Manager, Children's Policy Branch, Department of Social Services (DSS), Catherine Liddle, CEO of SNAICC – National Voice for our Children. Ms Anne Hollonds, National Children's Commissioner, was also in attendance for part of the meeting.

In addition to questions and answer discussion following each presentation, participants were encouraged to post comments and questions to the 'chat function' throughout the course of the meeting. A summary is at **Attachment C**.

#### **Agenda Item 1: Acknowledgements, welcome and introductions (Jamie Crosby CEO, Families Australia, Convenor of the National Coalition Steering Group)**

Mr Crosby commenced the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country across the multiple traditional lands and sea country on which members and stakeholder were based. He then acknowledged the contributions and stewardship of the National Framework over recent years of former Minister Ruston and former Assistant Minister Michelle Landry. He also advised that he had written to incoming Minister Rishworth on the National Coalition's behalf, seeking a meeting to discuss her priorities and those of the National Coalition. Mr Crosby also acknowledged the work undertaken by the former Convenor of the National Coalition Steering Group, Dr Brian Babington AM who retired from Families Australia in August 2021.

#### **Agenda Item 2: Engaging and growing the National Coalition membership base (Jamie Crosby CEO, Families Australia, Convenor of the National Coalition Steering Group)**

Mr Crosby facilitated a discussion on engaging and growing the membership base. He noted the following points:

- Community expectations, service delivery and the policy environment have all changed significantly over the last 12 years and the focus and direction of *Safe and Supported* is also significantly different to the first National Framework.
- The National Coalition Steering Group are keen to review and reflect on the breadth and diversity of the current membership base of the National Coalition.
- National Coalition membership fluctuates and is currently 245 members
- A demographic profile of the current membership base is as follows (percentages are approximate):
  - 17 to 18%. Peak bodies/ National advocacy organisations
  - 12 to 15% Research institutions (including) standalone think tanks, academic institutions or research bodies attached to philanthropic organisations).
  - 5%. Multidisciplinary community service organisations.
  - 12 to 15 organisations identify as being an Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander led organisations.

The Steering Group is keen to expand the breadth of the National Coalition's membership base, both generally and with targeted engagement. This includes a desire to strengthen connections to education providers, health and allied health organisations and institutions. There is also an aim to develop stronger connections with the Department of Health and the Department of Education, Sciences and Employment.

Mr Crosby encouraged feedback on how the Convener's role, Steering Group members and members of the broader National Coalition could contribute to raising the profile of the National Coalition. For example, members being a point of contact/ information within their state or regional networks and communities on behalf of the National Coalition.

Mr Crosby advised members that Steering Group recently appointed Ms Mary Sayers, CEO of Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) to the Steering Group. He suggested that whilst the National Coalition have had a proud history of engaging with First Nations communities and First Nations organisations, the representation of First Nations organisations within the National Coalition is below where it needs to be. Mr Crosby welcomed ideas on how the National Coalition might grow and develop its relationship with First Nations organisations.

Mr Crosby also requested feedback on the National Coalition's engagement, communication flow and information distribution to the broader National Coalition membership base. Additionally, he sought feedback on member expectations of the Convener and the Steering Group as a body representing the Coalition.

**Agenda Item 3: Department of Social Services Update on *Safe and Supported*: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031 (Mr Tim Crosier Branch Manager, Children's Policy Branch)**

Mr Crosier provided an overview of the work undertaken to date on [Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031](#), and an update on the action plans that will underpin the framework, which are currently under development.

Mr Crosier acknowledged the role that the National Coalition played in supporting the previous National Framework, and in developing *Safe and Supported* as well as the important role they will continue to play as *Safe and Supported* is implemented.

Mr Crosier's presentation focused on four key areas. Firstly, the context for developing the new framework and its action plans. Secondly, key elements of *Safe and Supported*. Thirdly, what's currently happening, and lastly, what the next steps will be.

**Context:** *Safe and Supported* was agreed to and launched by community services ministers in December 2021. Since then, significant developments have occurred, including a new federal government and a new Minister for Social Services, the Honorable Amanda Rishworth MP. Minister Rishworth's keynote speech at the Australian Institute of Family Studies conference noted the government's commitment to implementing *Safe and Supported* and a complimentary whole-of-government early years strategy. She highlighted her interest in evidence-informed approaches that saw the critical role of collaboration across sectors and emphasised the importance of listening to families about what is important to them. DSS will be discussing the development of *Safe and Supported*, and its action plans with Minister Rishworth to ensure that reflects her vision and direction.

The other important development is the release of the latest [Child Protection](#) report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (on 15 June 2022). The report shows that despite efforts under the previous National Framework, the number of all children in out of home care Australia has continued to rise and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander children continue to be overrepresented at about eight times the rate for non-Indigenous children. In out of home care, First Nations Children are represented at over 11 times the rate for non-Indigenous children.

**Key elements of *Safe and Supported*:** The development of *Safe and Supported* was formed in part through an evaluation of the previous National Framework, (in particular, the third and fourth action plans), undertaken by PwC and PwC Indigenous Consulting) and national consultation processes undertaken in 2021, including those led by Families Australia and SNAICC.

A codesign process involving the Commonwealth, State and Territory government, and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander leadership group, as well as also consultation with non-governmental organisations through the National Coalition has significantly informed work to date.

*Safe and Supported* places the best interests of the child at its centre. The vision for the new framework is for children and young people in Australia to reach their full potential by growing up safe and supported free from harm or neglect. And its goal is to make significant and sustained progress in reducing the rates of child abuse and neglect and the intergenerational impacts.

*Safe and Supported* has four priority groups which have been selected because they are most at risk of coming into child protection systems, including:

- Children with multiple complex needs
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people who are experiencing disadvantaged or vulnerable coming into child protection systems
- Children, young people and or parents or carers with disability experiencing disadvantage or who are vulnerable; and
- Children, young people who have experienced abuse neglect, including those in out of home care as well as those transitioning from out of home care into independent living and seeking to adult.

The four priority groups are not mutually exclusive: A child or young person could be in one or a number of those particular groups. The framework also has four focus areas:

- A national approach to early intervention and targeted support for children families experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage, including strengthening the interface between Child and Family Services and as other related services (e.g. Disability Services or mental health services, drug and alcohol services, etc).
- Addressing the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems. This addresses target 12 of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (which focuses on reducing the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care by 45%, over 10 years).
- Improved information sharing, data development and analysis.
- Strengthening the Child and Family sector and workforce capability.

A key learning from the previous National Framework is that the framework can't achieve change by itself. *Safe and Supported* will align and interact with other relevant initiatives that tie that together to support change for children. That includes the new *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children*, as well as also the new *National Strategy to Prevent and respond to Child Sexual Abuse*. And the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.

The new framework has a 10-year lifespan from 2021 through 2031, to be delivered through two sets of five-year action plans, currently being developed. The five-year action plans will include a general action plan and an Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander-specific action plan. There will also be an outcomes framework and a theory of change as well as also a monitoring and evaluation strategy and governance arrangements.

**Current work:** Developing the first set of five-year action plans, the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander specific Action Plan and a general Action Plan. With a view to have those agreed and launched by the end of the 2022 calendar year.

A consultation and a co-design process has been undertaken to develop the action plans, including a public online consultation process through the DSS engage platform, as well as consultations with children and young people, led by the National Children's Commissioner. The co-design and consultation process is continuing with state and territory, colleagues, the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group, and the National Coalition. These parties have been involved in workshops and focused discussions to develop and refine the actions and activities for the action plans. Key areas of focus include:

- Developing strategies and resources to support children and young people and parents and carers who are living with disability or at risk of entering the child protection system.
- Determining the current and future needs of the child and family services workforce, including capability, capacity and resourcing, and developing strategies for building a sustainable workforce.
- Establishing one or more mechanisms to include the lived experience of parents and carers as well as the voices of children and young people in policies, programs and governance structures.
- Assisting nonparent carers by improving access to resources and supports, as well as increasing support for out-of-home care leavers by scoping and reviewing measures for improving assistance with their transition to independent living.
- Improving data collection and evidence, reporting, and dissemination.
- Implementing a community-led place-based approach on new ways to improve child and family safety outcomes.
- A greater focus on early intervention
- Engaging with other relevant portfolios to respond holistically to the social determinants of child protection.

DSS will continue working with the National Coalition Steering Group, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership group, and State and Territory colleagues to further develop and refine the content of the plan.

The Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander specific action plan is being developed to have a strong focus on preventing the growing over-representation of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems and to address the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* target 12. The plan has been co-designed between Commonwealth states and territories and the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group. Key areas that the plan will focus on include:

- Improving self-determination, through exercising authority in child protection systems
- Growing the proportion of services delivered by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations
- Improving data sovereignty and infrastructure for NGOs, building a sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce
- Working to implement active efforts around all five elements of the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander child placement principle
- Improving access to legal services for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander children and families engaged with child protection systems; and
- Engaging in advocating other relevant portfolios around responding holistically to those social determinants of child protection.

Both plans will go to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group for endorsement before going to Community Services Ministers. DSS will consult with the National Coalition and other stakeholders as they work towards finalising the plans, which are expected to be released by the end of 2022.

**Funding for the National Framework and its action plans:** Funding is still under discussion as the action plans are in development. However, the previous government did announce funding commitments in the 2022-23 budget, including through the Commonwealth *Closing the Gap* implementation plan. The initial investment represents around \$135 million over five years.

In the last federal budget, \$30 million was allocated to five measures that will support the delivery of the framework, (announced through the women's safety package).

Funding for a consultation program which the National Children's Commissioner will undertake will be one of the ways to seek to elevate the voice of children and young people in *Safe and Supported* and its action plans.

**Outcomes framework and theory of change:** DSS are also working with stakeholders with a view to agreement and finalisation by the end of the year. There will likely be two outcomes frameworks and two theories of change: A version with all four priority groups under the framework and a separate Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander specific versions to reflect the very different starting point and experience of First Nations peoples.

It is expected that a high-level outcomes framework will include a mix of family-focused and systems outcomes, but also be structured in line with the focus areas under *Safe and Supported*. Work is also being undertaken to ensure that there is direct alignment between the outcomes and activities under *Safe and Supported*. Once the outcomes framework and the theories of change are drafted, they will be tested with stakeholders, including the National Coalition Steering Group, to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

A monitoring and evaluation strategy will also be developed after the after the action plans are finalised.

**Governance:** The National Coalition through its Steering Group will be a key partner in supporting the implementation of *Safe and Supported*. A discussion paper which includes proposed governance structure has been circulated for feedback to all parties to *Safe and Supported*. There is one, single governance structure proposed for overseeing the implementation of the framework to ensure that the general action plan and the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander specific action plan are closely aligned and complement each other. The governance structure will clarify responsibilities, accountabilities and communication channels and will ideally be finalised by the end of 2022.

**Questions:** Mr Crosby collated questions from the meeting chat function and posed them to Mr Crosier. Paraphrased questions and responses are as below

**Question 1: How were children and young people with disability consulted or involved in the process to date? Is there a dedicated action plan for children and families with disability akin to the First Nations action plan and was there a similar co-design process? (Also, recognizing that siblings and family/carers of children with disability are a very important group).**

- In response, Mr Crosier commented that children, and young people with disability took part in the consultations that were undertaken by the National Children's Commissioner. Further consultation is required and DSS are considering actions that support children and young people with disability both outside and inside the NDIS. DSS will soon hold further discussions with state and territory colleagues and National Coalition members on this matter.
- The National Children's Commissioner, Ann Hollonds added: We've met with parents who have disabilities themselves, as well as with children and young people with disability. There's more work that is planned in conjunction with the *National Disability Strategy*.
- Mr Crosier stated that there is not a separate action plan for children and young people with disability akin to that for First Nations peoples, restating that the First Nations Action Plan responds to target 12 of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*. Community Services Ministers had agreed in 2020 that there would be a specific Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander action plan. While there is also a recognition around the higher rates of removal of children with disability coming into child protection systems, particularly through the Disability Royal Commission, this recognition came later in the development of the framework. This recognition led to children and young people with disability being specifically addressed as a priority group for *Safe and Supported*.

- **Question 2: Can you provide some greater clarity or information on the intersection of *Safe and Supported* with the other national plans and frameworks that you referenced? Also, within a social determinant frameworks and early years support. There is, for example, a high level of intersectionality between people with disability, Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander First Nations people, family violence and gender.**
- Mr Crosier responded that one of the actions under development focuses on engagement and advocacy with other relevant portfolios to address the social determinants of child protection, thereby linking to the [National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse](#), and new national plans such as for women's safety, mental health. DSS are also looking at a specific action within both action plans to address the social determinants of intersectionality. DSS are further looking to have a mechanism within their governance arrangements to enable advocacy to, and engagement with, other portfolios.

There were also questions from the audience:

- **Audience Question 1: Is it possible to consider the Steering Group being at the highest levels of the CAFS table to complement the work of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership group?**
- Mr Crosier stated that under the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, there was a commitment made by the previous government which the current government is honouring, around a formal partnership and shared decision making. However, there will be an important, continuing ongoing role for the National Coalition- indicated in the proposed governance arrangements- as part of a strategic advisory body, which involves all four parties to the framework. This will involve providing strategic advice to CAFS, other officials and Community Services Ministers. There may be opportunities for a National Coalition representative to present to CAFS and CSM.
- **Audience Question 2: It is great that parents and family, children and young people are involved in consultations, but what are the plans for involving them in the ongoing governance and planning?**
- Mr Crosier stated that the initial focus was on enshrining the voice of children and young people in terms of decision making, and policy and programs. This has now been broadened to include the experience of parents and carers. DSS are still working through exactly what that mechanism will be to capture those voices and how that will then feed into the governance arrangements. This will be an ongoing discussion with the Leadership Group, the National Coalition Steering Group and with state and territory colleagues.

**Agenda Item 4: Perspective and priorities of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group on *Safe and Supported*: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031. (Ms Catherine Liddle, CEO, SNAICC – National Voice for our Children)**

Ms Liddle stated that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group are incredibly proud of the work they have undertaken towards *Safe and Supported* and the fact that it was negotiated in partnership under the new *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.

Ms Liddle commented that this partnership approach is important because decisions can't be made without Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the room anymore: "Our children could no longer sit in the background of policy reform in a system that separates them from family and culture at shockingly disproportionate rates. "

She noted that the child protection system is hugely risk averse, "but the risks are in the wrong spot, it's the risk of doing something wrong, as opposed to thinking about what the risks are long term."

Further, the system does not really look at or address all the risks that face First Nations children (including risks of developmental, social and emotional vulnerability; becoming isolated from their family and culture; and being lost in the system). Rather, in the long term it multiplies many of these risks.

Ms Liddle explained that First Nations children do better when they're connected to the networks of love and care and culture that they're born into, by living their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures with their communities. "Our families and communities need to be moved into the centre of care and decisions that are made for our children." Therefore, work on the first action plan places self-determination and authority for First Nations communities and organisations at the centre of the decisions made for First Nations children through policy, program design and delivery.

Ms Liddle noted progress had been made in negotiating some important actions for the first action plans. With a focus on their key reform priorities, the Leadership group are hoping to:

- See concrete plans and timelines for jurisdictions to put in place delegation of legislative authority in child protection to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations
- See investment strategies that redirect a proportion of funds in Child and Family Services to Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), in line with the needs and over-representation of First Nations Families in the system.
- See Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led commissioning approaches in Child and Family Service provision.
- See the building of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evidence base for best practice in Child and Family Welfare and build systems for data sovereignty.
- Have the opportunity to work alongside DSS to help shape the *National Centre for Excellence in Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Child and Family Welfare*.
- See a collective and collaborative effort across areas like health, mental health, education, disability, justice, and housing: "We need the framework to drive an agenda that addresses the systemic issues that undermine the strengths of our families to care for children."
- Overarching everything, each element of the new National Framework needs to be aligned with the priority reforms embedded into the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.

In addition to the budget announcement to establish a national advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the Leadership group will continue to advocate for a National Commissioner: "We need a truly independent, empowered and legislated role, that can genuinely drive the system's accountability with a central focus on the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children."

***Mr Crosby asked Ms Liddle if she had any observations on opportunities for non-Indigenous organisations and the non-Indigenous policy or service delivery sector, working with NGOs and First Nations communities within Safe and Supported?*** Ms Liddle suggested there is an opportunity to start looking at how we work alongside each other differently. The expected increased investment into the ACCO sector provides an opportunity to ask "how do we get on the front foot of this? Can we start sharing now, because it will take ACCOs time to be ready to be able to take on this work? Where can we better partner with Aboriginal people and their communities?" She noted that tools were currently being developed to help people understand the difference between co-design and partnership.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Short break**

The meeting adjourned for a short break.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Safe and Supported – Open discussion (Mr Jamie Crosby, CEO, Families Australia)**

Mr Crosby led a member's discussion to reflect upon the presentations by Mr Crosier and Ms Liddle. He commenced by inviting comments on *Safe and Supported* as well as any initial feedback on the CAFS Action Plan Working Group discussion paper on the *Governance structure for implementing Safe and*

*Supported*. The paper, which has a two-week consultation period had been released to Families Australia the day prior to the meeting and circulated to the National Coalition. Mr Crosby informed everyone that after the meeting a communication will be sent to National Coalition members seeking contributions to the National Coalition response.

A range of views were discussed, and questions put forth, including:

- A missing element of framework is the need for easily accessible, free, culturally appropriate evidence-based parenting programs and parenting supports.
- *Safe and Supported's* focus is on system reform for the narrow statutory system, whereas the National Coalition members and others had envisaged the new framework would focus on prevention. How do we best capture the voices of parents who have accessed supports, and for whom that has been helpful, as well as the lived experience of those who have encountered the child protection system?
- Concerning children with disability, it would be good to see a whole-of-family focus: More emphasis on building the capacity of both parents as well as other children in the family because siblings not only can be affected or neglected or harmed, but they can also contribute a huge amount to ensuring that that family stays together.
- How can we better utilize the data that we are collecting across the various systems in a more effective and common way, so that we are producing better outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Given that we've got a crisis in every state and territory, it really is time that those who are going to represent us have the authority to make joint decisions with government, otherwise, this just won't be effective.
- It is essential that we all support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group being at the decision-making table. The National Coalition Steering Group needs to be at that table as well to support those initiatives, because the non-First Nations organisations need to be alongside supporting the transition to ACCOs.

A further view put forth was the need to do more than capture the voices of children and young people: "they deserve to be at our decision-making tables."

Mr Crosby responded that Families Australia, had put together a proposal last year to DSS to provide funding to support the establishment of a children and young people's advisory panel, primarily to focus on safe and supported through the National coalition's work, but also on issues covered by Families Australia more broadly. He noted that Families Australia are currently revisiting the proposal and are hoping to raise the idea with Minister Rishworth in the coming weeks.

**Agenda Item 7: National Coalition Steering Group: Composition and refresh (Mr Jamie Crosby, CEO, Families Australia).**

Mr Crosby announced that, the finalisation of *Safe and Supported* provided an opportunity to undertake a good governance process. Current National Coalition Steering Group members have agreed to soon declare all positions on the Steering Group vacant (except for the role of convener, as that role is set by funding arrangements). In the next four to six weeks the Steering Group will be seeking expressions of interest from National Coalition members who would like to participate as a representative on the national steering group.

Mr Crosby noted:

- The significant and long-standing contribution to the Steering Group made by current members, stating that the decision to declare all positions vacant in no way reflected on the contributions of current members.
- The external environment and the priorities of *Safe and Supported* have changed compared to the previous framework.
- It is likely that some current Steering Group members will lodge expressions of interest to stay on the Steering Group, which would be positive from a continuity perspective.
- Participation in the Steering Group is from an experience and knowledge perspective, members do not directly represent the organisation they work for or interest group that they are aligned with.
- It is expected that Steering Group members will contribute five to eight hours a month, as a minimum, on an ongoing basis.
- To assist consideration of future Steering Group membership, a four person panel will be established to assess the expressions of interest. In addition to the National Coalition Steering Group Convenor, representatives on the panel may include: an external national peak body representative and two members of the National Coalition who are not seeking direct involvement in the Steering Group itself.
- The aim is for the refreshed Steering Group to be in place well before the end of 2022.

#### **Next Steps**

- Information will soon be sent to members on the desired overall composition of the Steering Group. This will include factors such as geographic representation across the country, the involvement of different sectors (including research sectors and service delivery), maintaining a strong presence of First Nations representatives and also ensuring a good mix of larger and smaller organisations, small organisations, gender diversity and the like.
- An EOI template will be provided for prospective Steering Group members to complete and submit.

The meeting closed at: 13:33pm

National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing Annual Meeting 22 June 2022

**ANNUAL MEETING****National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing****Wednesday 22 June 2022****11:00 - 13:30 AEST****Meeting via Microsoft Teams**

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Lead</b>
11:00 – 11:10	1	Acknowledgements, welcome and introductions	Mr Jamie Crosby, CEO, Families Australia
11:10 – 11:30	2	<b>Engaging and growing the National Coalition membership base:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ current membership profile</li> <li>○ growth and diversity</li> <li>○ communication and information flow expectations.</li> </ul>	Mr Jamie Crosby, CEO, Families Australia
11:30 – 12:10	3	<b>Safe and Supported:</b> The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Department of Social Services Update.</i></li> </ul>	Mr Tim Crosier Branch Manager, Children's Policy Branch
12:10 – 12:40	4	<b>Safe and Supported:</b> The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Perspective and priorities of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership group.</i></li> </ul>	Ms Catherine Liddle, CEO, SNAICC – National Voice for our Children
12:40 – 12:45	5	<i>A short break</i>	
12:45 – 13:15	6	<b>Safe and Supported – Open discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Member commentary, observations and questions</li> <li>○ <i>Communications at finalisation and release.</i></li> </ul>	Discussion will be facilitated by National Coalition
13:15 – 13:30	7	<b>National Coalition Steering Group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Composition and refresh.</i></li> </ul>	Mr Jamie Crosby, CEO, Families Australia
13:30	8	CLOSE	

## National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing Annual Meeting 22 June 2022

## Participating Organisations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACT Council of Social Service</li> <li>• ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service</li> <li>• Act for Kids</li> <li>• ACT Human Rights Commission</li> <li>• Allambi Care</li> <li>• Anglicare Australia</li> <li>• Anglicare Southern Queensland</li> <li>• Anglicare Victoria</li> <li>• Association of Children's Welfare Agencies</li> <li>• Australian Catholic University</li> <li>• Australian Federation of Disability Organisations</li> <li>• Australian Foster Carers Association</li> <li>• Australian Human Rights Commission</li> <li>• Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY)</li> <li>• Barnardos</li> <li>• Brave Hearts</li> <li>• Centre for Evidence and Implementation</li> <li>• Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (CFECFW)</li> <li>• CentreCare</li> <li>• Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia Inc.</li> <li>• Commsync</li> <li>• Communities@Work</li> <li>• Department of Social Services</li> <li>• Early Childhood Australia</li> <li>• Emerging Minds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equals</li> <li>• Families Australia</li> <li>• Family and Relationship Services Australia</li> <li>• Family Inclusion Strategies Hunter</li> <li>• Fams</li> <li>• Flinders University</li> <li>• Goodstart</li> <li>• Griffith University</li> <li>• Health Justice Australia</li> <li>• Lady Gowrie Tasmania</li> <li>• Life Without Barriers</li> <li>• MacKillop Family Services</li> <li>• Mission Australia</li> <li>• Ozchild</li> <li>• Parenting Research Centre</li> <li>• Peakcare</li> <li>• Queensland Children's Activities Network</li> <li>• Queensland University of Technology</li> <li>• Relationships Australia</li> <li>• Relationships Australia Canberra &amp; Region</li> <li>• Save the Children</li> <li>• Siblings Australia</li> <li>• SNAICC- National Voice for our Children</li> <li>• Southern Cross University</li> <li>• Start at square one</li> <li>• The University of Melbourne</li> <li>• The University of Sydney</li> <li>• Uniting Communities</li> <li>• University of South Australia</li> </ul>
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## Annual Meeting of the National Coalition 22 June 2022

### Summary of questions and comments provided through the MS Teams chat function

*[Editorial note: To respect the privacy of workshop participants, questions and comments have been depersonalised]*

#### Questions

- I think COVID has helped bring many of us together across depts and agencies. I'm thinking of the NSW COVID child wellbeing taskforce and the networks In Thriving Kids Qld. Perhaps we could get FA to issue an invite through to this membership?
- [Could we have] monthly [National Coalition] lunch time update sessions?

#### Comments

- I agree about growing the membership base in sectors such as education, early childhood, health, allied health, mental health etc.
- Collaborative engagement of children and young people on national issues including health education and cross border safety issues could help lift profile. Would be great to see the Young People's Panel extend.
- While Families Australia - and the National Coalition - argued strongly for the Safe & Supported to extent its remit beyond statutory child welfare, this is not currently the case. So, by extending membership, it's a way of keeping these issues at the forefront as we lobby and work with governments at state/territory and Commonwealth level.
- I agree with new membership ideas and also support lived experience expertise participation
- Agree with growing the membership base in the sectors identified and would add legal assistance, many of whose services are responding to the underlying problems that often drive interaction with child protection, without being connected to (or funded for) child protection work. As an intermediary working across healthcare broadly and with legal assistance, Health Justice Australia can support the connection.
- Agree on moving the 'table' of National Coalition meetings - an opportunity to involve and respond to local issues of national significance. LOVE your email update too.
- The proposed governance arrangements circulated last night are not good enough in recognising the important role, work and contribution of the non-government sector, i.e. outside of governments. This has been lost over time and needs to be strengthened again, direct with the new Australian government Minister and wider. Nothing will be changing unless we are included in the top levels of decision making. The crisis we are now in will get worse without this change.

- And this would align with the National Principles for child safety and the focus on children's rights, including to participate in decision making.
- The Commonwealth Department of Health funds Emerging Minds to upskill the workforce by providing evidence-based online courses, resources, and training, focused on prevention and early intervention approaches. Our resources cover practice skills in key child mental health and wellbeing topics including trauma informed practices, family and domestic violence, children with a disability, parental mental illness and substance use issues.
- Good points particularly in the light of neglect in vulnerable communities continuing to be such a large component of entries to care - the impact of poverty and poor housing options is pivotal to this discussion
- We'll need to get ahead of the housing crisis across the country too, from a policy perspective.
- In relation to parents/lived experience, it shouldn't just be about children/YP's experiences and views of the system (or more accurately, the 8 state/territory systems plural - who should have their own processes for involving, listening and being accountable to young people), but their views of what support for them and their families might look like.
- Perhaps helpful to differentiate between children's Right to be heard and have a say, and the need for learning, design and testing.