



**Children in Care
Collective**

ACHIEVEMENTS

We are always better together than we are apart



Purpose

The Children in Care Collective is an interagency think-tank formed in 2016 to share experience, discuss best practice, learn from researchers and policy experts in out of home care and advocate for change.

Members of the Collective are out-of-home care service providers and academic centres in Australia. Together they provide a unique combination of practitioner and academic wisdom and experience. The Collective uses evidence-based practice, practitioner knowledge, research and the expert knowledge of children and young people themselves to address difficult systemic issues for children and young people with complex needs living in out-of-home care.

A message from the Chair

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which I write this message – the Turrbal and Yuggera people and acknowledge the deep and long history of stewardship of the lands on which we meet – as a Collective across this vast continent and pay my deepest respect to the Elders who guide and support us, for the leaders of the future and for the children, young people, and families we have the privilege to support.

It is hard to believe that 2023 is already upon us. The last year has been another extremely busy year for everyone as we have continued to manage the recovery from COVID-19, a range of natural disasters across the country and the impact of turbulent financial pressure on the economy.

Despite all the competing demands the members of the Children in Care Collective have continued to lead and champion positive outcomes for children and young people growing up in care and drive solutions to difficult systemic practice issues faced by the sector. It was a delight to come together in person (and hybrid virtual) with members of the Collective this year for a strategic planning workshop to review our achievements and update our vision for success and renewed priorities for 2023 and beyond. The new vision and priorities are shared in this 2022 Children in Care Collective achievements document. In 2021 we released a summary Collective Achievements document highlighting the work of the Collective since inception. Following on from the success of that report we have decided that each year in December we will prepare an updated summary of the previous year activity of the Collective.

I would like to thank all the member agencies and institutions of the Children in Care Collective for your feedback, practice wisdom and guidance throughout the year. It remains true that we are always better together than we are apart. I would also like to thank our partners including government, non-government, peaks and the various academic institutions who have supported our work during the year. Working closely to align and complement the activity we undertake has ensured our tight resources across the sector are put to best use.

Thanks also to the many other staff who assist the work of Collective in terms of web, technical support and administration. Finally, I would also like to acknowledge the work of Lindy Annakin our Co-ordinator of the Collective for her leadership, co-ordination, and carriage of the range of projects, submissions, meetings, research and speakers across the year – your support for the Collective is very much appreciated.

Whilst the headwinds we face into 2023 are strong I am confident that we will continue to harness our energy to make a positive impact for those who need us most.

Rob Ryan
Chair Children in Care Collective



Vision of Success

In 2022, the Collective updated its vision of success to emphasise its focus on good outcomes for children and young people growing up in care.

Children and young people with complex needs grow up safely and well in an out-of-home care system that protects and prioritises their rights and wellbeing and supports them to move confidently into adulthood.



Renewed Policy Priorities

The Collective has also reviewed its priorities to ensure it continues to bring a contemporary focus to its work.

With consultation, the Collective has identified the following issues in the out-of-home care system as priorities for action because we believe improvements in these areas will contribute to the achievement of the Collective's vision of success.

We acknowledge there are many other issues and are willing to support others to address the need for change where the outcome is improving the experience of children and young people growing up in out-of-home care system and supporting them to become healthy, strong and self-determining adults.

Improving the health, mental health and well-being of children and young people in out-of-home care

Partnering with ACCOs and First Nations peak bodies to identify strategies to increase the number of Aboriginal children placed with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations

Improving support for children in out-of-home care who have experienced sexual abuse or who have displayed harmful sexual behaviours

Better supporting carers of children and young people with complex needs

Improving planning and support for young people transitioning to independence



Submissions

1. Submission to the NSW Children's Guardian on a proposed code of practice for the statutory out-of-home care and adoption sector, December 2022
2. Submission to the review of the first five years' operation of Victoria's Reportable Conduct Scheme, October 2022
3. Submission to the statutory review of the NSW Children's Guardian Act 2019, focussing on the effectiveness of the reportable conduct scheme and the role of the Deputy Children's Guardian, August 2022
4. Submission on the legislative proposals developed in response to recommendations in the *Family is Culture* report, May 2022
5. Submission to the review of the NSW Children's Guardian's accreditation and monitoring framework for statutory out-of-home care and adoption service providers, December 2021



Speakers/Guests at CCC Bi-Monthly Meetings

2022	○ February	Professor Megan Williams and Mark Ragg, Yulang Indigenous Evaluation
	○ April	Kathy Karatasas, Head of Multicultural Child and Family Program, Settlement Services International; Dr Robyn Miller, CEO. MacKillop Family Services
	○ June	Jamie Crosby, CEO of Families Australia and Convenor, National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing; Kelly-Lee Goodchild and Errin Schumann from Allambi Care
	○ August	Chris Chippendale, Executive Lead Disability Engagement, Life Without Barriers



Research

Placement matching processes in New South Wales in 2022 – a survey of CCC agencies.

Gaps and challenges in accessing the right mental health and healing services for children and young people in out-of-home care – a survey of CCC agencies.

Mapping of mental health and healing services in the Murrumbidgee region - underway.



Updated Membership List

Two organisations joined the Collective in 2022: Pathfinders and the Research Centre for Children and Families (RCCF) – University of Sydney.

Members of the Children in Care Collective:

Allambi Care
 Anglicare NSW South | NSW West | ACT
 Anglicare Sydney
 CareSouth
 Key Assets Australia
 Life Without Barriers
 Mackillop Family Services
 Marist180
 Pathfinders
 Settlement Services International
 Uniting NSW/ACT
 Institute of Child Protection Studies (ICPS) - Australian Catholic University
 Australian Centre for Child Protection (ACCP) - University of South Australia
 Research Centre for Children and Families (RCCF) – University of Sydney



Children in Care Collective

For more details about the Children in Care Collective and to contact us, please visit:

www.childrenincarecollective.com.au

