

GIVE ALL OUR CHILDREN A GREAT START

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DISADVANTAGE, TRAUMA AND DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY.

We call on the Queensland Government to continue investing in early years by targeting vulnerable families: breaking the cycle of harm and trauma and reducing the number of children who are removed from their families.

Many vulnerable families are living with uncertainty and emotional risk as they feel exposed to child protection interventions due to poverty, domestic and family violence, poor health, housing stress, homelessness and in many cases long-term unemployment. We do not want these barriers to leave children and their families behind and isolated from services, resources and opportunities in the community.

We can break the cycle...

with integrated investment and commitment across

- » Child Safety,
- » Housing,
- » Health,
- » Education,
- » Employment and
- » Community-based services

in a roll out of Child and Family Hubs in Queensland using a trauma informed Two-Generation approach.

Family Inclusion Network
SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND



MICAH PROJECTS



Breaking Social Isolation
Building Community

CAUSES OF TOXIC STRESS, TRAUMA AND INTERGENERATIONAL DISADVANTAGE



Parental mental illness and substance misuse

66% of parents with children in child protection have past or current substance use issues¹



Grief



Separation from loved ones



Domestic and Family Violence

49% of parents with children in child protection had experienced DFV within the last year¹



Child abuse and neglect

42% of parents with children in child protection were abused as a child¹



Poverty

1 in 6 children, nationally²



Medical trauma



Exclusion from early learning and school

11 prep/year 1 students are suspended from Queensland schools every day⁴



Homelessness

In 2018–19, 5,381 children (0–4) presented to Queensland Homelessness/DV services³

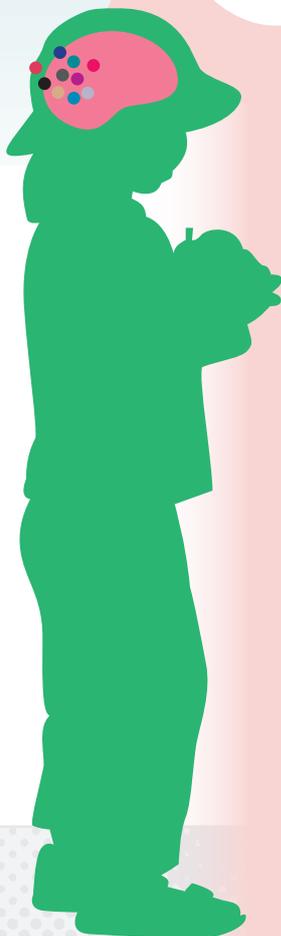


Family involvement in justice system

53% of parents with children in child protection had a criminal history¹



Parental crises and stress



DEVELOPMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) cause chronic stress during childhood. Typically, the more adversity a child experiences, the higher their risk of long-term consequences into adulthood.

Chronic stress and trauma alter the brain, diminishing a child's ability to learn, regulate their emotions and behaviours and interact socially.

PERCENTAGE OF QUEENSLAND CHILDREN VULNERABLE IN 2012⁵



Physical → 11.6% vulnerable to issues with health, independence and motor skills



Social → 9.3% vulnerable to isolation, lack of confidence and underdeveloped social skills



Emotional → 7.6% vulnerable to issues with emotional development and regulation



Linguistic and Cognitive → 6.8% vulnerable to developmental issues with proficiency/interest in language and literacy



Communicative → 9.0% vulnerable to developmental issues with communication

GIVING ALL OUR CHILDREN

A GREAT START

Breaking the cycle of trauma using a **Two-Generation approach** and a trauma informed system.

FAMILY WELLBEING

Individualised family plans with flexible funding (brokerage)

Multidisciplinary outreach teams:

- Nurses • Legal • Parent advocates
- Family support workers
- Early childhood • Housing

HOUSING + ECONOMIC

Housing stability

Housing First approach

Flexible funding enables housing support

Multidisciplinary responses

Work readiness

Adult literacy

SPECIALIST YOUNG PARENTS PROGRAMS

Developmental approach to parent and child

Peer support workers

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Child and Family Hub activities

Peer and family networks

Strengthen community connections

Reduce social isolation

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Free, accessible, quality early childhood education and care located in Child and Family Hubs designed to meet local needs and gaps in services

Home visits to support safe, nurturing environment and education

Break the cycle of trauma

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Continuum of care from pregnancy to school age

Early childhood screening and assessment interventions for development delays

Nurse led multidisciplinary teams

RESULTS

- ↑ Family wellbeing
- ↑ Safe at home, learning and growing
- ↑ School readiness and early childhood services
- ↑ Healthy and supported to achieve developmental milestones
- ↓ Reduced entry into child protection, homelessness and hospitals.

MAKING IT A REALITY

We can break the cycle with integrated investment and commitment across Child Safety, Housing, Health, Education and Employment in a roll out of Child and Family Hubs in Queensland using a Two-Generation approach.

The four elements of this proposal:

- » Establish an 'Early Years Vulnerable Child and Family Investment Fund'
- » Health and Wellbeing Queensland to create a 'Vulnerable Early Years and Family Wellbeing Unit' for coordination and innovation
- » Create a 'Vulnerable Early Years and Family Wellbeing Centre for Excellence'
- » Provide services to children under 5 and families, with infrastructure that is place-based, collaborative and trauma informed:
 - » Child and Family Hubs, including children's services (e.g. childcare)
 - » Mobile multidisciplinary teams: Family Wellness Plans with flexible brokerage funding
 - » Capital infrastructure.

This is possible with a total investment of \$150 million to support operation of sites over four years including a one-off investment (e.g. \$10 million) to support capital infrastructure across Queensland.

Supportive Evidence

- » The Sure Start Program (U.K.)
- » Early Head Start and Head Start programs (U.S.A.)
- » Health Child Programme: Pregnancy and the First 5 Years of Life (U.K.)
- » Parents as Teachers (evidence based home-visiting model)
- » Evaluation of the Wellspring Children and Families' Hub (Micah Projects, Brisbane)

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1. Media Handout: 30 September 2019 Child and Family Performance Statistics, Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.
2. Poverty in Australia 2018, Australian Council of Social Service in partnership with UNSW
3. Specialist Homelessness Services data 2018–2019, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).
4. Brown, Alison, "11 prep and year 1 students suspended from Queensland schools every day", Brisbane Times, September 12, 2018.
5. Caldwell, Felicity, "Queensland school suspensions for five-year-olds doubles in three years", Brisbane Times, July 11, 2017.

Interior content adapted from...

Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, *The Nest* Action Agenda: Improving the Wellbeing of Australia's Children and Youth While Growing our GDP by over 7%

Seattle University's 'Project on Family Homelessness' <http://projectonfamilyhomelessness.org/portfolio/infographics/>

Ascend at the Aspen Institute, 5 key components of the Two-Generation approach <http://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/two-generation/what-is-2gen>

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We are committed to providing services and opportunities in the community to create justice and respond to injustice.

We work collaboratively and respectfully with Indigenous communities and agencies. Micah Projects endorses the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Funded by

