

Keeping
Children
Safe



Change for Children

Tasmania's 10 year Strategy for upholding the rights of children by preventing, identifying and responding to child sexual abuse

CONSULTATION DRAFT

keepingchildrensafe.tas.gov.au



Support

Content in the strategy or its companion documents may raise issues of concern for some readers. We encourage readers to exercise self-care in their engagement with this content and to seek support and care if required. If you need support, a range of completely free and confidential support services are available by phone and/or face-to-face. If you need to talk to someone, you can contact:

State-wide Sexual Assault Support Line

24/7 Support from local specialist counsellors provided by the Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS) and Laurel House: 1800 697 877 (1800 MY SUPPORT)

Lifeline – 24/7 Crisis support: 13 11 14

A Tasmanian Lifeline – 8am–8pm, 365 days a year: 1800 98 44 34 for support and referral

13 YARN – 24/7: 13 92 76

24/7 crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Relationships Australia Tasmania

Specialist complex trauma counselling, trauma informed counselling, wellbeing information and referral

9am–5pm, Monday to Friday: 1300 364 277

Kids Helpline

24/7 Support for children and young people provided by specialist counsellors: 1800 55 1800

A comprehensive list of additional supports is available at [Appendix 2](#).

Reporting child sexual abuse

If you believe or suspect that a child is at risk, you must report it.

For advice or to refer an abuse matter, contact the Advice and Referral Line (ARL) on 1800 000 123.

Where a crime may have been committed, contact police on 131 144 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

For an emergency where there is immediate risk of harm or a crime is happening now, contact police on 000.

Visit the Tell Someone website tellsomeone.tas.gov.au for more information about spotting the signs of child sexual abuse.

Acknowledgment of Aboriginal People and Country

Change for Children acknowledges Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and ongoing custodians of Tasmania and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Caring for Country is caring for children and young people. This connection to Country, culture and community supports the wellbeing of today's children, and the children of tomorrow.

We acknowledge the institutional betrayal of Tasmanian Aboriginal people caused by colonisation, dispossession, discrimination and the forced removal of children from their families¹.

We acknowledge and are committed to taking urgent and positive action, in partnership with Tasmanian Aboriginal people, to remedy the disproportionate overrepresentation of Aboriginal children and young people who have lived, are living with or who remain at risk of child sexual abuse.

Dedication

The victim-survivors, whistleblowers and advocates involved in the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings are the true change makers and champions for children.

Change for Children is dedicated to all victims of child sexual abuse – those who have survived, and those who have lost their lives.

The Tasmanian Government acknowledges the profound trauma that affects victim-survivors of child sexual abuse and their families, caregivers, advocates and supporters. This trauma is lifelong.

As ongoing custodians of the public institutions that failed to protect children from harm, the Tasmanian Government and its administering agencies are deeply sorry.

The Tasmanian Government honours and respectfully remembers the victims of child sexual abuse who are sadly no longer with us.

In their memory and for all victims we commit to real change.



Thank you to contributors

Over 400 Tasmanians contributed to the development of this Strategy.

This builds on the many Tasmanians who came forward and shared their expertise with the Commission of Inquiry and the important reviews that pre dated it.

We sincerely appreciate the contributions of all Tasmanians to this Strategy and Action Plan, and particularly wish to acknowledge the people and groups representing the interests and experiences of:

Victim-survivors of child sexual abuse

Families, caregivers, supporters, friends and advocates of victims and survivors

Children and young people

Tasmanian Aboriginal people

People with disability

Culturally and linguistically diverse people

LGBTIQA+ people

Specialist sexual violence support services

Frontline workers and other child safety experts

Researchers and subject matter experts

Without your wisdom and knowledge, we could not have developed this strategy to inspire and achieve *Change for Children*.

A full list of all contributors to this Strategy and Action Plan is included at [Appendix 3](#).

'Talk with good spirit' Commitment to Tasmanian Aboriginal People

The Tasmanian Government will talk with Tasmanian Aboriginal people with good spirit to achieve this commitment statement². We commit to understanding, involving and empowering Tasmanian Aboriginal people. We will:

Understand and build culturally proficient and responsive care systems that allow truth-telling to be embraced and accepted.

Involve and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expertise and collaborate with Tasmanian Aboriginal people to create culturally appropriate governance models; and

Empower children to keep them with Tasmanian Aboriginal people so they can achieve their rights to grow strong on Country and in culture and thrive within their cultural and care networks.

We commit to continue talks with Tasmanian Aboriginal people in good spirit as we work in partnership to achieve this statement.

Enduring Statement of Intent

The Tasmanian Government, and governments of the future are accountable to the people of Tasmania through the Parliament of Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Government will act with intent, and ensure:

Tasmanian children of today and tomorrow are safe

The rights of all children to safety, being listened to, and respected are upheld in all places where children engage with Government and its services.

All parts of the system Tasmanian children interact and engage with are supported to ensure the failures of the past are not repeated.

Knowledge across communities that children must also be safe in their homes, and with their families and caregivers is shared and strengthened.

Engaging with and listening to victim-survivors and their families as change is implemented is prioritised.

The Tasmanian Government and governments of the future will work in partnership with community organisations and act with sustained transparency to make change for children.



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Change for children

‘One resounding call has emerged: A demand for change’³

‘Who was looking after me?’ This was the question that was repeatedly asked of the Commission of Inquiry⁴. This is a question that should not need to be asked – no child, or adult looking back at their childhood, should feel abandoned by those in charge of their care. It is a betrayal of trust. And it is a question that cannot be ignored.

This question was raised by victim-survivors, and families of those victims who have lost their lives as a result of child sexual abuse. It was raised in earnest and, as the Commission Report reflects, ‘bewilderment.’ The question represents the voices of victim-survivors who have spoken, and those who have never disclosed, but whose experiences have shaped the lives of their own children, grandchildren and community.

The question ‘who was looking after me?’ points to catastrophic failure to care for, and keep children safe, across multiple roles, services, time periods and places in Tasmania. It points to a system which at best could be described as fragmented, and at worst completely dysfunctional. It points to a culture, underpinning this system, that routinely did not listen to children and dismissed victim-survivors who came forward.

The failures of the past have been documented clearly by the Commission, and by other important reviews that pre-dated it. As the starting point of this Strategy, it is important to reflect back and acknowledge these failures and the deep trauma they have caused to Tasmanians, as well as look forward to build and strengthen a system that upholds children’s rights, and values the expertise of victim-survivors.

This Strategy is one outcome of a long process of inquiry centred on the question ‘Who was looking after me?’ Given this, it is critical that this Strategy start with absolute clarity on who is responsible for ensuring the mistakes of the past are not repeated, and specifically, implementing all 191 recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. This strategy starts with accountability and transparency.

Change for Children takes a step forward to fulfil commitments, deliver all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, uphold the rights of all children, centre and believe the voices of victim-survivors – whether they have spoken about their experiences, or not – and ensure that children are safe in the places where they live, play, learn and heal.

This Strategy and associated Action Plans will, over time, transform Government institutions and the system they comprise. The focus of the Commission of Inquiry was Government institutions, and so *Change for Children* shares this focus.

But *Change for Children* goes beyond this, acknowledging that the majority of child sexual abuse happens in homes, not institutions. *Change for Children* reiterates that to further change both Government institutions and the community, we need to address the beliefs and attitudes about children and their rights, of all adults who interact with children.

This Strategy is comprised of five interrelated parts:

- It starts with describing what the future will look like when all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry have been fully implemented. It does this through a vision of the future described by victim-survivors and children and young people;
- It then moves to accountability. Clear accountability and transparency is critical for resetting action to uphold the rights of children, and prevent and respond to child sexual abuse. This Strategy clearly outlines who is accountable, to whom, and in what ways. It also centres the voices of victim-survivors and describes how these voices will continue to inform change – and be valued and believed.
- The Strategy then discusses grounding change in the rights of children. The key purpose of this plan for change is to ensure the rights of all children are upheld – wherever children, live, learn, play and heal. This strategy seeks to support all parts of the system implement the Child and Youth Safe Standards and in so doing, keep children safe.
- It then moves to what changing an entire system needs to involve, and identifies the components parts of the system that are undergoing change and will need to work differently *together*. It specifically focuses on how to build a system that is comprehensive and integrated.
- Finally, and most critically, the Strategy sets out an initial Action Plan, which describes how each recommendation will be delivered through the framework of systems change and meet the Child and Youth Safe Standards.

Change for Children builds on the government’s initial response to the Commission of Inquiry by meeting recommendations 19.1 (see overleaf) and outlining how we will achieve the change needed to keep children safe.

It also includes a detailed outline of terminology and concepts (see [Appendix 4](#)) as well as an overview of the engagement undertaken to inform this Strategy and Action Plan (see [Appendix 3](#)).

It complements the Tasmanian Government’s *Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027: Survivors at the Centre*, and *It takes a Tasmanian Village: Tasmania’s Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy*. It also reflects many reviews and reports submitted to the Tasmanian Government over the past 10 years (see [Appendix 5](#)).

Change for Children is an evolving strategy and will be built on over time through rolling Action Plans informed by evidence, and continual feedback from victim-survivors, children and young people and the community. Implementing *Change for Children* will be supported by funding allocations in State Budgets from 2024-25 onwards, in addition to funding already allocated through previous State Budgets.

Change for Children is not only a call for change, but plan for change. It moves the Tasmanian Government and its agencies and community organisation partners forward in our commitment – recognising that significant reform is already underway, but much more work is yet to be done.

Change for Children represents change for adults too. It’s about empowering adults and centring the voices of victim-survivors and the families of victims who have not survived. Almost every victim-survivor who contributed to this Strategy and Action Plan shared a survivor mission and explained that their will to continually speak out came from a deep desire to make sure that what happened to them, did not happen to any other children. So that no child is left wondering, who is looking after me? And every child is safe.

A guide to *Change for Children*

The below describes what you will find in this Strategy and Action Plan, and how the parts of the Strategy and Action Plan work together.

Data for urgent change

Outlines through statistics the current prevalence of child sexual abuse, and community attitudes that contribute to discrimination against children and young people and harm to children and young people including child sexual abuse.

A changed future

Illustrates the elements of a future where children's rights are upheld, child sexual abuse is prevented, and where it occurs is responded to in a trauma informed and victim-centred way. This vision represents a future as described by victim-survivors, and children and young people. It is intended that implementing the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry will realise this future.

Accountability for change

Outlines who is accountable for delivering reform towards a changed future, including all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. Identifies formal accountabilities as set out in legislation, professional codes of conduct and regulation. Also identifies informal accountabilities where the Government is committed to information sharing and feedback with the Tasmanian community.

Child and Youth Safe Standards

Describes a series of standards, codified in Tasmanian law, which enshrine the rights of children and set benchmarks for all organisations that engage with children to ensure that children are safe and well.

Change for Children will ensure that the Child and Youth Safe Standards are met through delivery of the Strategy, Action Plan and all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry to be delivered through *Change for Children*.

Vision of Change for Children

Sets out a shared vision for the Strategy and Action Plan, to achieve a changed future.

Principles underpinning Change For Children

Sets out shared principles to underpin the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan, and through the Strategy and Action Plan all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. The principles describe a set of essential foundations upon which *Change for Children* will be delivered and a changed future realised.

A child centred system

Describes the elements of the system, and how different parts of the system will be reformed.

Collaborating for Change Action Plan 2024-2026

Sets out the first of three Action Plans, and bringing together activity to meet the Child and Youth Safe Standards, through reforming different parts of the system, and delivering all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. The Action Plan builds on the accountabilities described in *Change for Children*, and the timeframes outlined in the Government's initial response to the Commission of Inquiry findings.

Appendices

1. Summary of Recommendations (Accountable Agencies and Timeframes)
2. Seeking Support and Advice
3. Contributions and Consultation to Inform the Strategy and Action Plan
4. Shared Terminology and Key Concepts
5. Policy Context



Meeting Recommendation 19.1

The below outlines in detail the recommendation of the Commission of Inquiry to deliver this Strategy and Action Plan, and provides commentary to navigate to the parts of the Strategy and Action Plan that address the recommendation.

1. The Tasmanian Government should develop a whole-of-government child sexual abuse reform strategy for preventing, identifying and responding to child sexual abuse, including child sexual abuse in institutions and harmful sexual behaviours.

The strategy should:

- a. describe the system that Tasmania seeks to achieve, including the component parts of that system, how Tasmanians will know it is working, and the role of key initiatives, reforms and recommendations in achieving the intended outcomes
> **See A Child Centred System on Page 24**
- b. be separate from, but complement, the Government's Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan
> **See Appendix 5**
- c. be informed by the voices of children and young people and adult victim-survivors of child sexual abuse (Recommendation 19.5)
> **See Accountability for Change on Pages 13-18, and Appendix 3 outlining contributions to the Strategy in detail**
- d. include agreed definitions of child sexual abuse, institutional child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviours
> **See Appendix 4**
- e. set out guiding principles and objectives to inform preventing, identifying and responding to child sexual abuse
> **See Vision and Principles on Page 23**
- f. identify the agencies, including statutory bodies and non-government organisations, involved in preventing, identifying and responding to child sexual abuse
> **See Accountability for Change on Pages 13-18**
- g. set out processes through which government agencies, statutory bodies and non-government organisations can consult on child sexual abuse reform
> **See Child and Community Voice Priority Area on Pages 46-48**

- h. set out considerations relevant to particular cohorts of children and young people, including Aboriginal children, children with disability, children with mental illness, children who identify as LGBTQIA+ and children from culturally and linguistically diverse communities

> See Aboriginal Commitment Statement on Page iv and Rights for Change on Page 21

- i. outline the sources of funding for key initiatives and reforms set out in the strategy
- > Funding to implement the Strategy associated Action Plan will be delivered through State Budgets.**

- j. outline the governance, monitoring, review and evaluation arrangements for child sexual abuse reform, including that the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, as Chair of the Secretaries Board, is responsible for endorsing, overseeing, coordinating and reporting on the strategy and action plan (Recommendation 19.3).

> See Accountability for Change on Pages 13-18 and Monitoring and Measuring Change on Page 30

- 2. The Tasmanian Government should develop an action plan for the implementation of the child sexual abuse reform strategy. The action plan should:

- a. prioritise all recommendations and reforms for implementation over the short, medium and long term and include expected timeframes for implementing each recommendation

> This was set out in the Government's initial response and recommitted to in this Strategy and Action Plan. See Appendix 1

- b. identify the role holders and agencies that have responsibility for implementation of each recommendation and reform

> See Appendix 1

- c. describe the actions to be taken to implement the recommendations and reforms, including any milestones, sequencing and dependencies

> See Pages 34-60 describing all priority areas containing recommendations, including how they interlink

- d. identify the status of each recommendation and reform (that is, complete, under way or not commenced) and whether it is progressing on time

> See Progress Report of recommendations for completion by 1 July 2024, and Pages 34-60 describing all priority areas containing recommendations

- e. be endorsed and overseen by the governance structure identified in the strategy.

> See Accountability for Change on Pages 13-18

- 3. The child sexual abuse reform strategy and action plan should be:

- a. tabled in each House of Parliament
- b. published on a dedicated website
- c. supported by a communication plan that seeks to inform and provide visibility of reform work to stakeholders and the community
- d. periodically reviewed and updated by the Secretaries Board through the Department of Premier and Cabinet

Data for change

A detailed glossary of Shared Terminology and Key Concepts is included at [Appendix 4](#).

Child sexual abuse can happen anywhere, at any time, in family and community settings, or in organisations and institutions. It's estimated that:

- **1 in 4** Australians aged 16 years and over have experienced child sexual abuse
- Females are twice as likely to have experienced child sexual abuse than males (**37.3%** compared to 18.8%)
- Most victim-survivors of child sexual abuse said it happened more than one time (**78%**)⁵
- On average it took victim-survivors of child sexual abuse **23.9 years** to disclose the abuse to anyone⁶.

Research and data indicates that child sexual abuse does not only happen in institutions. In a study of people who experienced sexual abuse before they were 15 years old, 79% were abused by a relative, friend, acquaintance or neighbour⁷.

Abuse may be in-person or online. When online, children are at increasing risk of being exposed to harmful content, unwanted contact from strangers, grooming, and sextortion⁸.

- Reports of online child sexual exploitation have increased by **over 200%** since 2018⁹.
-

While all children are at risk, particular groups of children and young people are at higher risk of child sexual abuse and/or have additional barriers to disclosure and receiving support:

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children** are significantly overrepresented Child Protection Systems¹⁰.
- **Children with disability** face higher rates of sexual abuse and are often targeted due to their perceived vulnerability and dependence on caregivers¹¹.
- **Gender or sexually diverse children** are more likely to experience child sexual abuse. More than half (51.9%) of all LGBTIQ+ children experience child sexual abuse¹².
- **Children from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds** face increased risks of vulnerability. Disclosure can be affected by different views about what constitutes child abuse and neglect and fears related to visa status¹³.

Children can experience child sexual abuse from other children:

- **10%** other known adolescents (non-romantic)
- **1.6%** siblings
- **2.5%** adolescents (current/former romantic partner)
- **1.4%** unknown adolescents¹⁴.

Child sexual abuse carried out by adolescent boys in peer or intimate partner relationships is the fastest growing form of child sexual abuse in Australia¹⁵.

Those who have experienced child sexual abuse are at higher risk of mental ill health¹⁶:

- twice as likely to have **severe alcohol use disorder**
- almost twice as likely to have **post-traumatic stress disorder**
- around 1.6 times as likely to have **generalised anxiety disorder, major depressive disorder or moderate alcohol use disorder**
- almost 3 times as likely to report **self-harming behaviour**
- more than twice as likely to report **suicide attempts**.

The Government Response to the Commission of Inquiry included a commitment to oversample Tasmanian data in the 2023 Australian Child Sexual Abuse Attitudes, Knowledge and Response Study¹⁷. We heard that:

- **100%** had heard the term child sexual abuse
- **64%** were aware of the term Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The study suggested there are high levels of awareness of child sexual abuse in Tasmania and an appetite for adopting community wide prevention strategies among the general public:

- **81%** of people said they were likely or very likely to know someone who is a victim-survivor of child sexual abuse, significantly higher than the national sample
- **50%** report receiving an adult disclosures, more than the national average of 35%
- **88%** agreed that there are things we can do as a community to reduce the number of children sexually abused

However, the oversampling showed that there are still significant gaps in Tasmanians' knowledge and ability to respond:

- **50%** were not confident or only slightly confident they could recognise the signs a child had been sexually abused
- Only **54%** reported that they know what to do to keep children safe from sexual abuse
- **1 in 5** didn't agree that children should always be believed if they disclose they are a victim of child sexual abuse.

* Tasmanian data from the 2023 Australian Child Sexual Abuse Attitudes, Knowledge and Response Study should be interpreted with caution. This is preliminary analysis and some findings are based on small numbers of responses¹⁸.

A changed future

In the future:

Experience of a child or young person

I am believed when I share my experiences

I am listened to

I am protected and I know what caring for me means, and who is responsible

I have a say in decisions that affect me

I am encouraged to share my thoughts, perspectives and experiences

I feel safe to speak up when I am not comfortable

Experience of a victim-survivor

I was treated with respect

I knew who to speak with to raise my experiences

I was responded to quickly and with care

I can see that coming forward has meant other children are safer

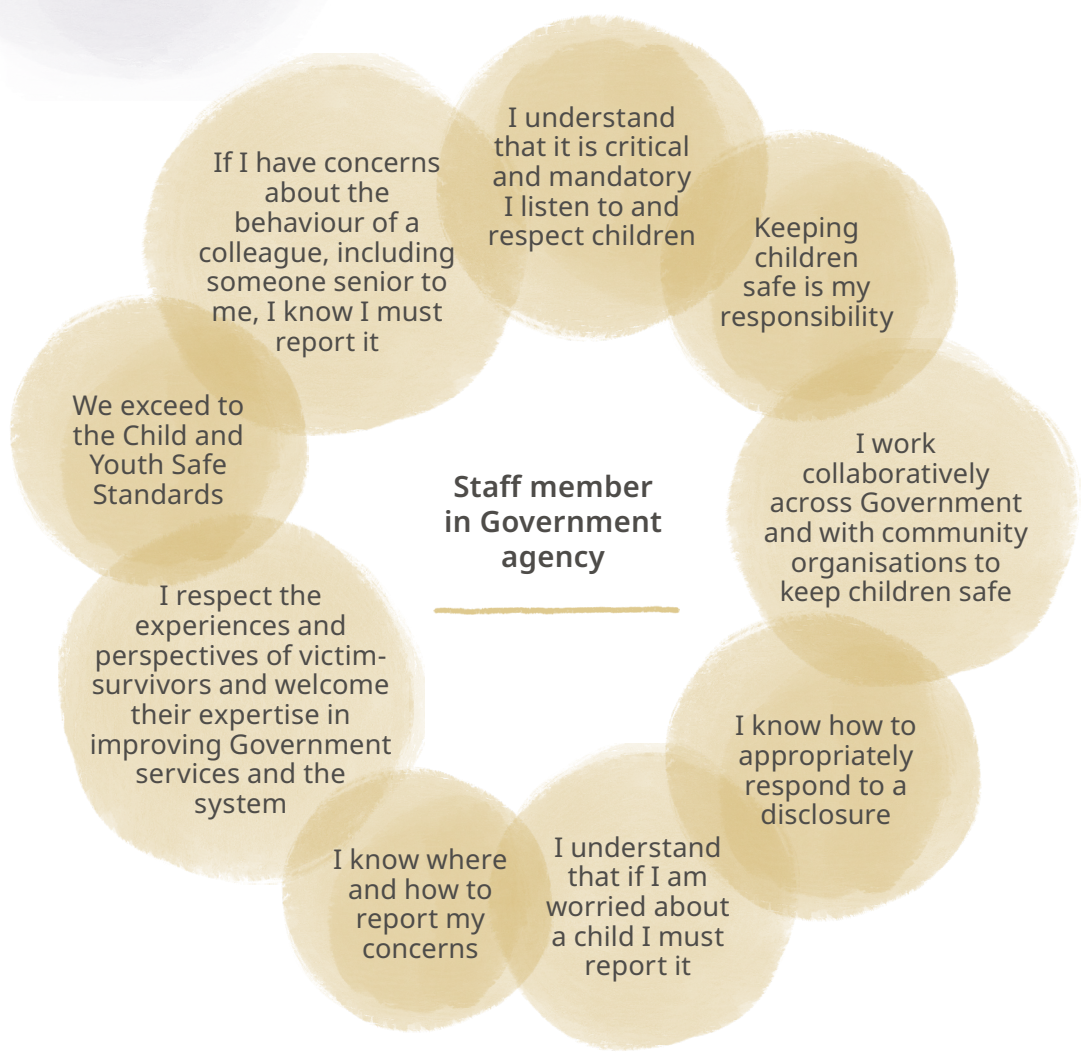
I was listened to and believed

I did not have to repeatedly share my story to get help

Government representatives listened to me

I was not rushed and was given choices in how I wanted to respond

I had access to a range of support options to meet my needs



Accountability for change

Accountability is at the heart of *Change for Children* and underpins all parts of it. Accountability means that decisions can be justified and explained. Accountability can be formal and informal.

All Tasmanians, and most importantly victim-survivors of child sexual abuse, are entitled to know clearly who is formally responsible for making the changes this Strategy and Action Plan outline. Formal accountabilities are those that are outlined in legislation, professional conduct and other policies and regulation.

Victim-survivors are also entitled to understand how they will be involved in the process of change through advisory and other informal accountabilities. These are relationships and forums established for the purposes of best practice, but are not outlined or required in legislation, professional conduct policies and regulation.

Victim-survivors have made clear, they do not want the failures of the past to be repeated. Being clear about all accountabilities is critical to making real change.

Formal accountabilities

Parliament of Tasmania

The Parliament of Tasmania represents the Tasmanian people, is responsible for making laws and keeps accountability and a 'check' on the work of the Tasmanian Government. In addition to oversight through established Parliamentary processes, dedicated committees will provide oversight and scrutiny of the Government's reform program outlined in this Strategy and Action Plan.

Parliamentary committees have the power to carry out inquiries, call witnesses, examine documents, discuss matters in detail and prepare reports. This provides an important mechanism for keeping the community informed about the work the Premier, Ministers and Secretaries are doing to respond to the Commission's report.

Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor

The independent Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor will be responsible for holding the Premier and Ministers, the Secretary Department of Premier and Cabinet, and all Secretaries listed in this Strategy to account. The Implementation Monitor will report to the Parliament of Tasmania.

The Implementation Monitor will:

- report on the implementation and delivery of the program of reform (including all recommendations) outlined in this Strategy and Action Plan;
- report on the implementation and delivery of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse;
- develop an Evaluation Framework and baseline data requirements to evaluate the outcomes of reform implementation over time;
- not be subject to the general direction or control of the Premier or any Minister in respect to their performance of functions, or their exercise of the powers;
- ensure all Commission of Inquiry recommendations result in sustained and systematic improvements towards preventing child sexual abuse in institutions; and
- provide annual reports to maintain momentum for reform, embedding accountability for change and ensuring progress is transparent.

The Implementation Monitor will also provide periodic reports every five years to monitor and mitigate unintended consequences of reforms, and support continuous improvement.

The Implementation Monitor will be able to provide notice to any Secretary if they require any document or information that the Monitor reasonably believes is necessary to fulfil their role.

New Commission for Children and Young People

A new Commission for Children and Young People will act as a strong advocate for children's rights and monitor child-safe practices in organisations.

The new Commission will include the Commissioner for Children and Young People, as well as a range of additional statutory functions and powers.

Two new statutory roles will also be established and embedded within the new Commission:

- a Child Advocate (who will be appointed as Deputy Commissioner) and
- a Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People.

Commissioner for Children and Young People

The Commissioner is an independent and impartial statutory officer established under Tasmania's *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016*. The general functions of the Commissioner are to:

- advocate for all Tasmanian children and young people;
- act as an advocate for young people detained under the *Youth Justice Act 1997*;
- research, investigate and influence policy development in areas relating to children and young people;
- promote, monitor and review the wellbeing of children and young people;
- promote and empower children and young people to participate in the making of decisions, and to express opinions about matters that affect their lives;
- help ensure Tasmania meets its national and international obligations in respect of children and young people; and
- encourage organisations to establish child-friendly mechanisms to assist children and young people to participate in matters that affect them.

The Commissioner's role is generally systemic in nature. The Commissioner advocates for laws, policies and practices that uphold, protect and promote the rights and wellbeing of children and young people.

Independent Regulator

In addition the new Commission for Children and Young People will include the *Independent Regulator*.

The Independent Regulator oversees Tasmania's compliance with the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework. This includes all Tasmanian Government agencies.

The Independent Regulator:

- is independent from the Tasmanian Government and reports to the Parliament;
- builds the capability of organisations to prevent, identify, and respond to harm to children and young people;
- ensures organisations report and undertake investigations correctly in line with the Reportable Conduct Scheme;
- is established and given powers under the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*;
- has significant enforcement powers to ensure compliance;
- can share information in the interests of protecting children and young people;
- will collect and report on trends in relation to child and youth safe organisations; and
- is supported by a Deputy Regulator (yet to be appointed).

A single Commission for Children and Young People will ensure that child safety practices in institutions are overseen by one primary, independent authority with expertise in children's rights and safety.

Tasmanian Government Accountable Officers

All adults are responsible for upholding the rights of children.

All Tasmanian Government organisations are legally required to comply with the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework¹⁹. This means all leaders in the Tasmanian State Service have an obligation to report concerns of conduct related to child abuse involving a worker in their organisation to the Independent Regulator.

Within this broad and shared accountability, there are some roles that have specific obligations to implement this Strategy, Action Plan, and the 191 Commission of Inquiry recommendations that will be delivered through it.

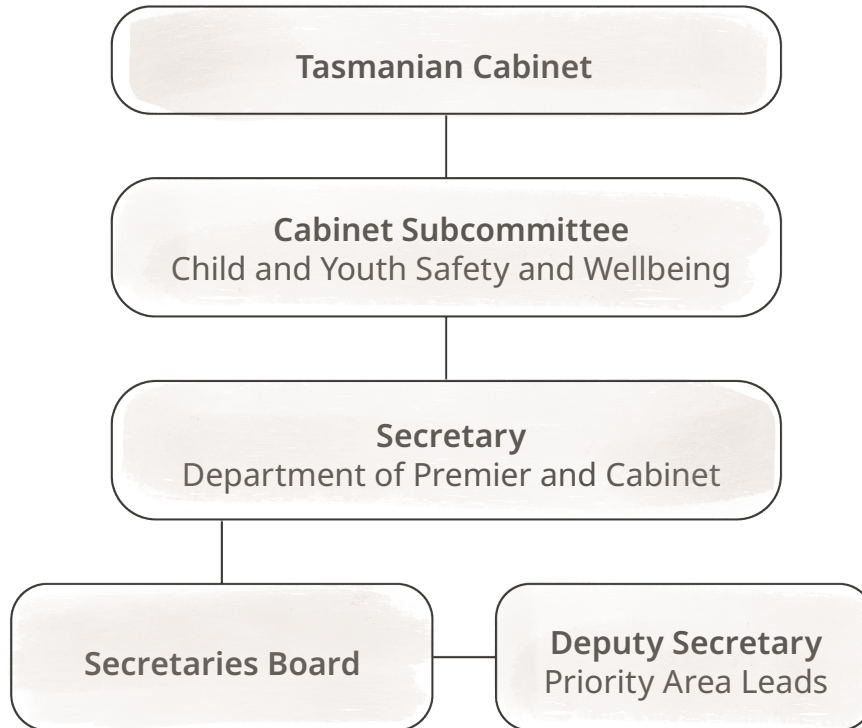
The Premier of Tasmania is ultimately the responsible office holder with accountability to Tasmanians for implementation of this Strategy and Action Plan encompassing all Commission of Inquiry recommendations. Ministers have responsibility for ensuring recommendations that apply within their portfolios are delivered and achieve outcomes.

The Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet is the State Servant ultimately responsible for implementing the Government commitments, and reports to the Premier and Cabinet, who have a responsibility to report to Parliament on the changes that have been realised through this Strategy and Action Plan. The Premier and Cabinet also have responsibility for ensuring that the Tasmanian community receives transparent information and updates about the implementation of this Strategy and Action Plan.

All Secretaries are responsible for ensuring the rights of children are upheld in all services and settings within their Agency, victim-survivors voices are centred and all recommendations that are the responsibility of their agency are implemented in the timeframes set out in this Strategy and Action Plan, and deliver real outcomes.

Secretaries are working together through a coordinated group called the Secretaries Board, to ensure integrated and comprehensive change. The Secretaries Board meets monthly and reports to a dedicated Cabinet Subcommittee comprised of the Premier and Ministers. In addition, groups of recommendations, called priority areas (see [Page 27](#)) have been established. A Deputy Secretary lead has been appointed for each priority area.

Priority area leads are responsible for ensuring the recommendations within their area are connected, integrated and different parts of the system both within and outside of Government are working together to deliver reform.



Informal accountabilities

Tasmanian children and young people

The implementation of *Change for Children*, associated Action Plans, and through them all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry will continue to be informed by the voice of Tasmanian children. This will happen in different ways across the various actions and priority areas that comprise the first Action Plan.

Overall implementation of *Change for Children* will be informed by continual engagement with the Commissioner for Children and Young People’s Children’s Panel. Members of this Panel have contributed their thoughts to the development of this Strategy and Action Plan, and its implementation will continue to be informed by their views and experiences. The Laurel House Lived Experience Advisory Panel for Young People (LEAPY) has also been involved and will continue to be engaged.

Victim-survivors

A Victim-Survivor Advisory Group, to provide ongoing feedback on the implementation of *Change for Children*, and associated Action Plans, is currently being established. This forum will ensure that the Premier and Ministers continue to hear directly from victim-survivors, and victim-survivors hear directly from Government.

A process to form the Group began in late 2023. A specialist Engagement Team has been appointed to progress the formation of the Group, assisted by an expert lived experience consultant. The Advisory Group will then be appointed by the Premier, for the purposes of providing advice directly to the Premier and Cabinet on progress implementing *Change for Children*.

This Advisory Group will be in addition to the Lived Experience Advisory Panel which informed the development of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework and its implementation.

In addition to the Advisory Group, ongoing critical engagement with specialist services will ensure that a diversity of victim-survivor voices are listened to, heard and supported as this Strategy and associated Action Plans are implemented.

The important role of Community Organisations

The Tasmanian Government delivers services to the community directly, and in partnership with community organisations. This includes community organisations delivering vital health, mental health, housing, disability and other critical services. Community organisations have an important role in not only providing services, but challenging and changing cultural attitudes and beliefs that discriminate against some members of the community. Importantly, specialist community organisations also work in partnership with the Tasmanian Government to support victim-survivors to recover and heal. The Commission of Inquiry made a substantial number of recommendations that seek to strengthen the Tasmanian Government's partnership with community organisations and ensure the safety of children and young people in all settings where they live, work, play and heal. These recommendations, and the need to partner with community organisations, as part of a child centred system, are woven throughout this Strategy and Action Plan.

Communication

Updates on progress implementing *Change for Children*, will be published quarterly on www.keepingchildrensafe.tas.gov.au. In addition, case studies of change will be shared on this website on a periodic basis.

Ongoing engagement with children and young people, victim-survivors and all members of the Tasmanian community is fundamental to making real change and being accountable. Forums for ongoing engagement are described throughout this Strategy and associated Action Plans.

Change is urgent and has commenced

Before the Commission of Inquiry's report was handed down, the Tasmanian Government took early action to respond to some of the critical issues raised at the hearings and in previous Reviews.

A significant amount of work has been, and is, underway across Government agencies. It is not possible to outline all of this work in this Strategy and Action Plan, nor is it the purpose of this Strategy and Action Plan. Below provides a summary of work underway but does not capture all activity across all Government agencies, and in partnership with the community services sector.

When the report was released, the Government accepted all 191 recommendations and all 75 findings and established a six-year program of work for delivery in three phases²⁰:

- Phase 1: 48 recommendations (scheduled for delivery by July 2024);
- Phase 2: 110 recommendations (scheduled for delivery by July 2026); and
- Phase 3: 33 recommendations (scheduled for delivery by July 2029).



The initial Government Response: *Keeping Children Safe and Rebuilding Trust* was released in December 2023²¹ and was backed by initial funding of more than \$55 million for immediate action on the most urgent changes. Through this investment, significant change is happening including:

- Amending legislation to improve the prosecution of sexual offences, provide better access to justice for those affected by sexual violence, and hold people to account for failing to protect children and young people from child sexual abuse;
- Additional funding to child safety and front line sexual violence support services to increase statewide availability and access to counselling, crisis support, referral and information as well as expand access to support and treatment of harmful sexual behaviours;
- Establishing the Arch Centres for victims of family and sexual violence to receive multidisciplinary care from government and non-government services;
- Implementing a network of safeguarding leads in all government schools, libraries and Child and Family Learning Centres;
- Prioritising and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre until the facility is shut down;
- Establishing the position, role and independence of the Child Sexual Abuse Reform Implementation Monitor;
- Establishing comprehensive complaints and child safety and wellbeing frameworks, to oversee, monitor and investigate safeguarding concerns in our public health system, supported by statewide services for complaints and child safety and an independent Child Safety and Wellbeing Panel;
- Strengthening the accountability of heads of government agencies, including through revised performance agreements;
- Establishing new frameworks and training resources to improve the culture, knowledge and capability of government workers to respond to concerns, allegations and incidents of child sexual abuse; and
- Centralising the management of Tasmanian State Service Code of Conduct complaints.

A report, *Immediate Change: Recommendations to be implemented by 1 July 2024 (Phase 1) Progress Report* is available on www.keepingchildrensafe.tas.gov.au

Rights for change

"Every child needs to be protected, to have the right to feel safe and the foundations to be safe if they are to move forward and thrive in our society. It is the absolute and sole responsibility of every one of us adults to ensure that this happens."²²

Upholding the universal rights of children in all settings in which children live, learn, play and heal is the foundation of *Change for Children*. Upholding these rights increases the prevention of child sexual abuse, and when rights are breached, reinstating them ensures a trauma informed response.

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* outlines 54 specific rights for children²³. In particular article 34 outlines a child's right to be protected from sexual abuse and exploitation.

In 2017, the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*²⁴ handed down its findings and recommendations. In direct response, the Governments of Australia developed the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*²⁵. The National Principles give effect to the rights of children, by translating them into organisational standards and practices.

The National Principles are now enshrined in legislation as Tasmania's *Child and Youth Safe Standards*²⁶. They reflect and are framed by the universal rights of children.

The Standards guide and will be delivered through this Strategy and associated Action Plans. They knit together the vision, principles, rights, and future state into a set of widely understood benchmarks. They are required to be implemented by all Tasmanian Government agencies and community organisation partners and will be given full effect through the implementation of this Strategy and Action Plan.

A note on Standard Four: Equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice

The needs of diverse children and young people are enshrined in the Child and Youth Safe Standards and the vision and principles that underpin *Change for Children* and associated Action Plans (see [Page 23](#)).

Standard four of the Child and Youth Safe Standards requires that equity and diversity are respected in policy and practice – this applies across all Tasmanian Government agencies, as well as community services. This Strategy takes this Standard further, and includes a Principle to value and respect diversity. This Standard and Principle will be adhered to in a variety of ways across implementation of the recommendations, and will be subject to monitoring by the by the Independent Regulator under the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*²⁷, and reported on publicly by the independent Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor once appointed.

Universal Principle

All standards are to be applied in an environment that ensures the right to cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and young people.



- 1 Child Safety and Wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- 2 Children and Young People are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- 3 Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- 4 Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice.
- 5 People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- 6 Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.
- 7 Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- 8 Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- 9 Implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
- 10 Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

In addition, consultation was undertaken with diverse communities to inform the development of *Change for Children*. During this consultation people gave their time and expertise to explain how discrimination perpetuates cultures of abuse. They told us that it is important to recognise and address these for cultural change to be sustained. We will continue to work with diverse groups to achieve change and more inclusive communities over time. Diversity is also a key element that has informed the composition of Advisory Groups which will guide implementation of this Strategy and Action Plan.

Vision for change

Tasmanian children and young people have what they need to grow and thrive, they are safe and respected in institutions, homes, families, communities and all places where they live, learn, play and heal.



The inherent rights and dignity of all children are recognised and upheld in all settings where children live, play, learn and heal.

All parts of the system are integrated together to uphold the rights of children, and prevent and respond to child sexual abuse.

Guiding Principles for change

The diversity of all children is valued and respected, including cultural and linguistic diversity, gender and sexuality, age and ability.

The Tasmanian Government is transparent and accountable for upholding the rights of children, centring victim-survivor experience and progress to deliver this Strategy.

Victim-survivors are believed and treated as experts of their experience. They are provided with the support needed to heal, and are engaged in reform.

A child centred system

"Where do we begin? I personally feel it will take a complete overhaul of the current system (that I truly believe doesn't work) from the top to the bottom and from the bottom to the top."²⁸

Children in Tasmania interact across a wide range of contexts, settings, and services every day. Children engage with services delivered by Government, funded by Government (but not delivered by Government), and in private and community settings. Children interact with their families and caregivers, neighbours, teachers, nurses and doctors, police, friends, and many other individuals and groups.

This network of environments and individuals that children engage with can be understood as a system. Within the system are specific roles and responsibilities to uphold the rights of children and keep children safe. This includes Government institutions – such as schools, hospitals, police, custodial settings, and children in out of home care.

The Commission of Inquiry found that Tasmanian children who were sexually abused in institutions were caught up in catastrophic system failure. To ensure that the rights of Tasmanian children are upheld, and that children are safe from harm now and into the future, a system response is needed that delivers change across all elements of the system.

System change only occurs where the underlying conditions and elements that hold the most influence over the system, and those people within the system, are disrupted and shifted. These underlying system elements include:

- Structures, policies and practices;
- Resources – people, knowledge, infrastructure and funding;
- Values, beliefs, attitudes that inform how people interact with and within the system; and
- The relationship between the parts of the system.

A deep and accurate understanding of these elements, how they relate and how they influence behaviour in relation to children, their rights and safety, reveal the changes that are most likely to produce the intended outcomes – that children's rights are upheld in all settings where they live, learn, play and heal – that children are safe. The Commission of Inquiry, and the evidence and testimony of victim-survivors, provide this deep and honest understanding.

Commonly visible

Events
Data
Research
Reports

"I wasn't listened to."
"We don't have the resources."
"No-one believes me, no one."
"It is too late for me."

Minimal child and victim-survivor involvement.
Adult behaviour gravitates towards other adults and away from children.
Funding limitations.
Discriminatory attitudes towards children.

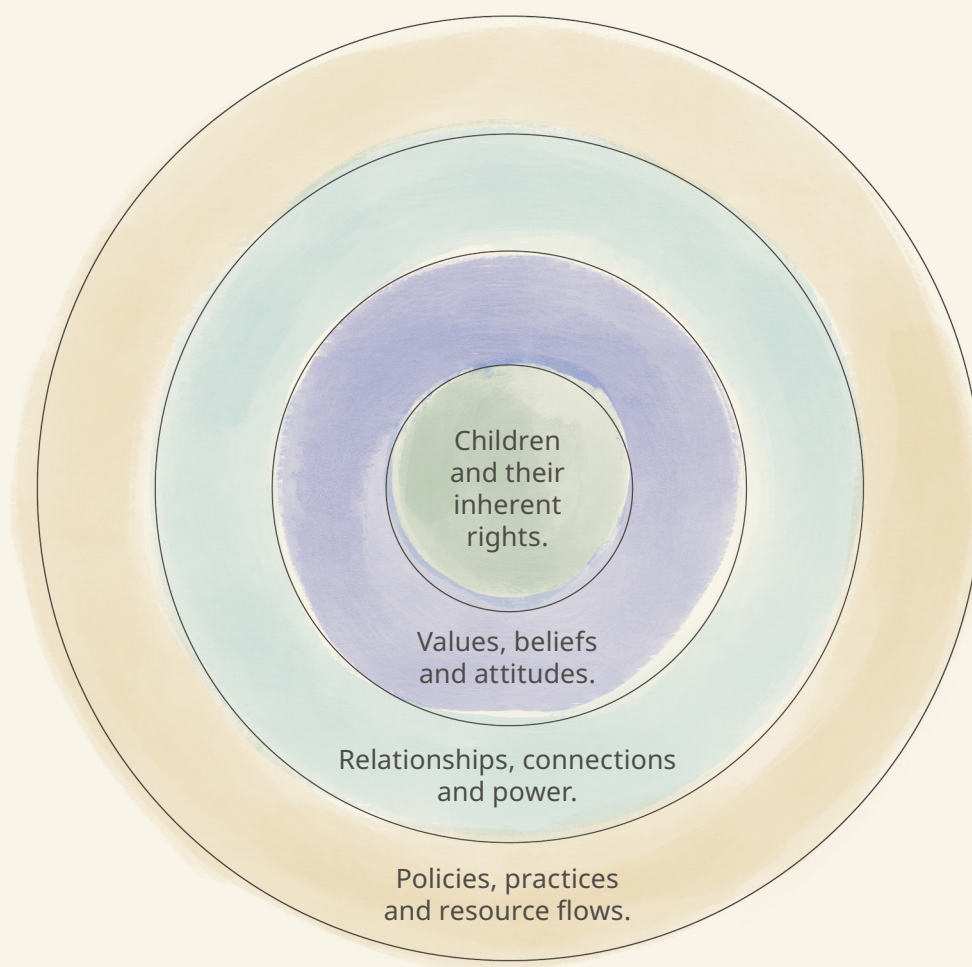
Commonly invisible

System patterns or trends
Policies, practices, resources, relationships
Values, beliefs, attitudes

A truly child-centred system has children and children's rights at its heart, and the expertise of victim-survivors is engaged and respected across all parts of the system.

As children have shared: **"Welcome me, see me, respect me, and listen to me"**²⁹

A child-centred system can be reconfigured as:



All policies are child centred, integrated and reflect best practice. Both children and victim-survivors have been engaged in developing policies and practices.



The system is interconnected and integrated. Complaints and concerns are investigated holistically. Services can be accessed as needed. Victim-survivors do not have to repeatedly tell their stories.



All children are respected, listened to, believed and valued. Their inherent rights are understood and protected.



From the perspective of a child and victim-survivors this may look like:

"I was listened to."

"My experiences were taken seriously."

"I was treated with understanding and care."

"I felt respected and empowered to heal."

"I can clearly see that sharing my experience led to change."

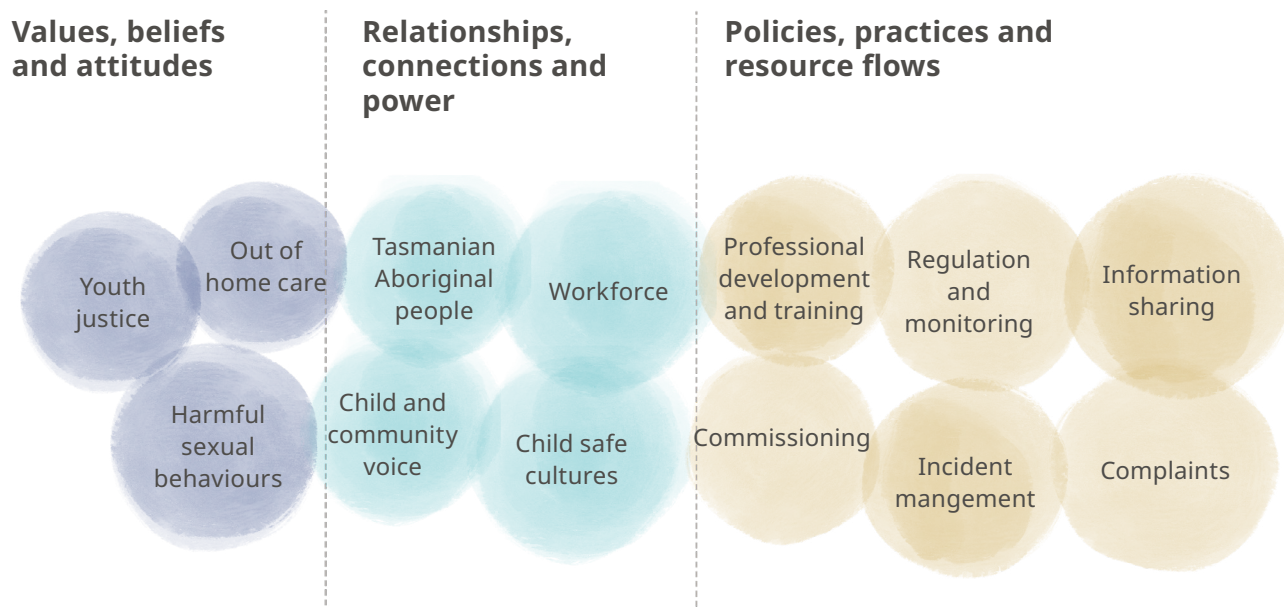
Change for Children seeks to disrupt and shift the elements of the system which hold the problem in place, which pose a risk to the safety of children, and which dismiss the expertise of victim-survivors.

To achieve its vision, *Change for Children* will implement a systems approach to delivering the Commission of Inquiry recommendations. The scale of systems change means that it will take a sustained long-term effort across all areas; beliefs, attitudes, values, relationships, policies, practices and resource flows.

To immediately move towards a child-centred system, informed by the expertise of victim-survivors, *Change for Children* has organised activity and recommendations to break down silos, support cooperation and strengthen the achievement of outcomes for Tasmanians.

Activity has been organised into priority areas which link together recommendations into cohesive programs of work requiring collaboration across agencies and the community services sector. Not all recommendations require a multi-agency response to strengthen implementation. Where recommendations need to stay as single agency action, they do.

The priority areas each address specific elements of systems change, as above, with a key focus on building integration, coherence, and accountability. They are:



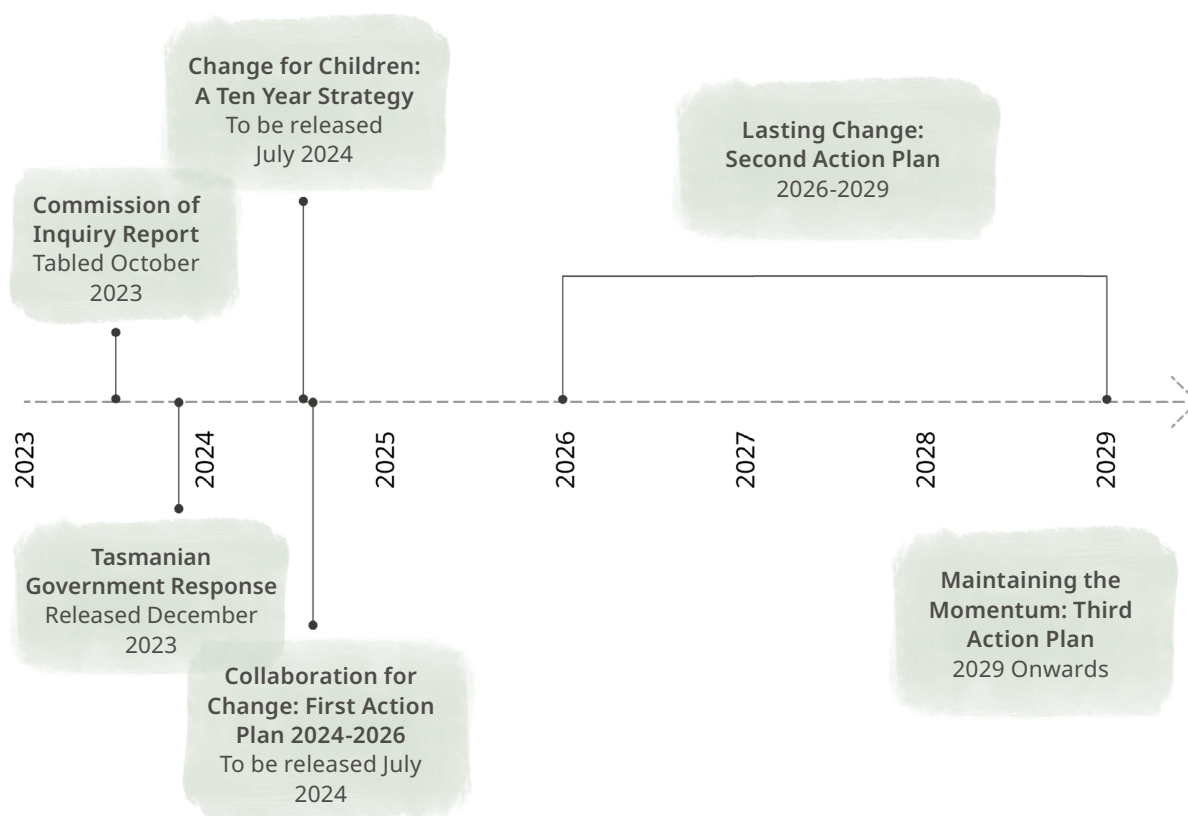
Sustained change

"I think in order to initiate real change, people will have to hear things that aren't very pleasant, things they may not like to hear. Overcoming that is the first step I think, because things need to change."³⁰

To achieve the vision of *Change for Children*, through a systems approach, will require sustained effort. As such, this strategy goes beyond the six-year program of work already committed, and outlines a 10-year Plan to develop, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on change.

The 10-year Strategy will deliver across four stages, which are comprised of the Tasmanian Government Response already published, and three consecutive Action Plans. These are:

1. Government Response 2023: The foundations
2. Collaboration for Change 2024-26 – First Action Plan
3. Lasting Change 2026-29 – Second Action Plan
4. Maintaining the Momentum 2029 ongoing – Third Action Plan



Each Action Plan will further outline and progress important work to build a child centred system, uphold the rights of all children, and in so doing prevent, identify and respond to child sexual abuse.

Collaborating for Change Action Plan

Collaborating for Change is the first Action Plan to implement *Change for Children*. The Action Plan builds on and incorporates the program of work established by the initial Government Response to the Commission of Inquiry. It builds on the important work already underway and sets out a shared way forward.

The Commission of Inquiry and consultation with victim-survivors to inform *Change for Children* told us that successful reform will require a multi-faceted and integrated response across Government and with community organisation partners. *Collaborating for Change* outlines a coordinated and sustained commitment to preventing, identifying and responding to child sexual abuse.

The Action Plan contains a detailed outline of all recommendations describing actions to be taken to implement the recommendations and reforms including any milestones, sequencing and dependencies.



Monitoring and measuring change

Change for Children lays out a plan to achieve different types of change, over a sustained period of time. This change can and will be measured in different ways, and by different roles in the system.

This includes:

- Reporting on the number of recommendations completed and within the timeframes they are completed;
- Evaluating the outcomes of reforms, to ensure they are increasing the safety of children in all places where children learn, play, live and heal;
- The implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards in all organisations required to adhere to them, including Government agencies and community organisation partners; and
- The ongoing safety of children and the upholding of their rights in the youth justice system of today, and the future.

Accountability for delivering all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, and the Strategy outlined in *Change for Children*, is a critical element of changing cultures, beliefs and attitudes in and of themselves.

The Tasmanian Government has committed to providing quarterly updates on progress of all recommendations on the Keeping Children Safe website. In addition, the Parliament of Tasmania and its committees can request detailed information and updates of the Premier and Ministers at any time.

The independent Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor, once appointed, will develop an Evaluation Framework and undertake analysis and public reports on whether outcomes are being realised, and how reforms are being implemented. This includes for both the Commission of Inquiry findings and recommendations, and the recommendations of the Royal Commission to Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Implementation Monitor will be investigating whether sustained and systemic improvements to child safety and preventing child sexual abuse in institutions have occurred.

The Independent Regulator will monitor and assess implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards and is empowered to investigate where there are reports that they have not been upheld or where there are concerns for worker behaviour through the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

This network of ongoing and independent monitoring and evaluation will be critical in ensuring accountability, transparency and making real change for children.

Collaborating for Change

Tasmania's First Action
Plan 2024–2026



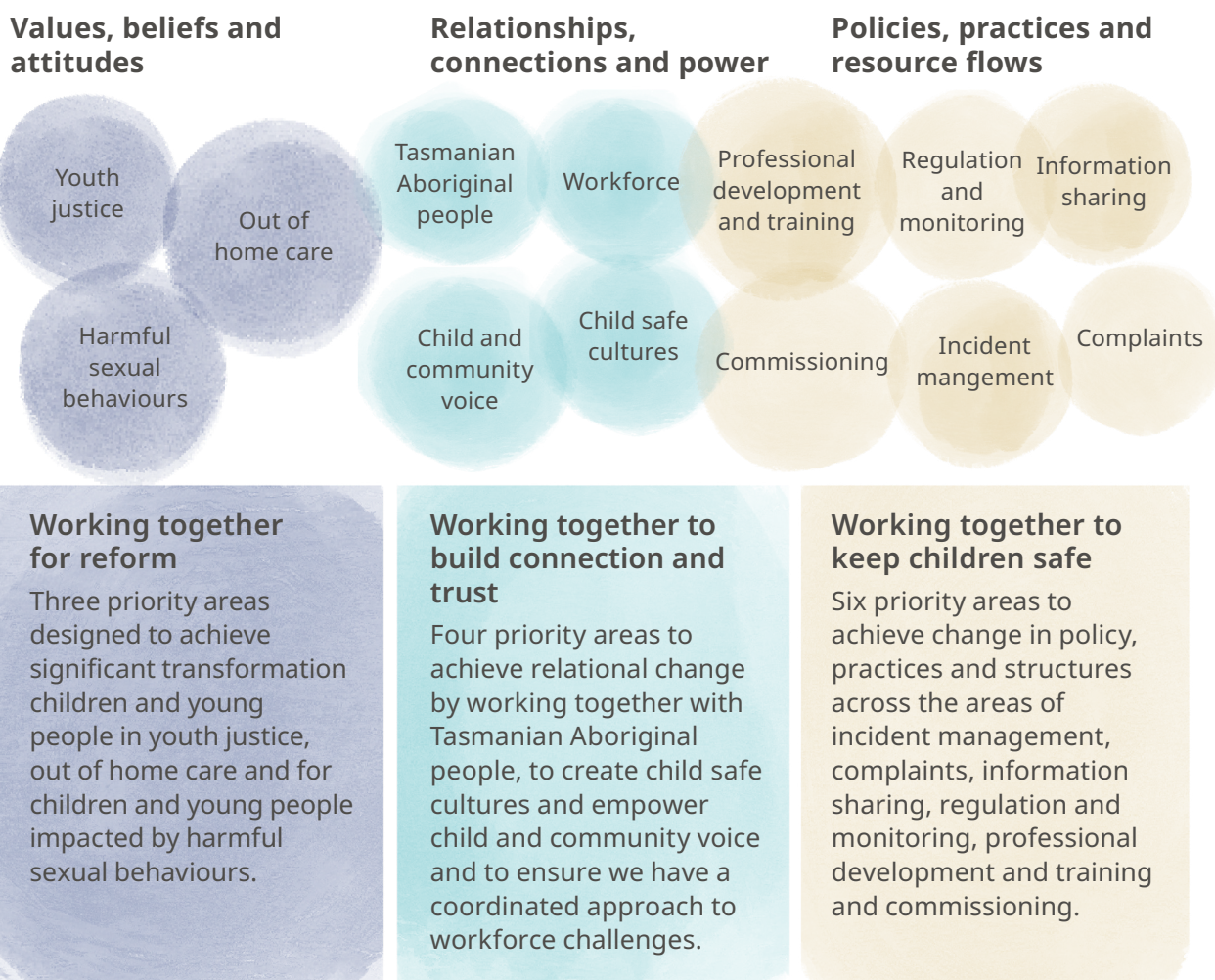
This Action Plan focuses on collaborating for change. By working together, across organisational and institutional boundaries, we will create the cultural and systems change needed to put children at the centre of all that we do. The Commission of Inquiry and the consultation to develop *Change for Children* highlighted the importance of collaborating to improve system responses to uphold the rights of children, and keep children safe.

While the phase one Government Response to the Commission of Inquiry focused on what each individual Government agency would do, and by when, phase two and this Action Plan consider how we will achieve our commitment to all Tasmanians to deliver lasting and real change for children. This Action Plan demonstrates the systems change approach outlined in *Change for Children*.

This Action Plan groups the recommendations by priority areas (see diagram below) that bring agencies and community organisation partners together to address common issues across the system in a coordinated and consistent way. Each priority area is also related to a specific element of systems change, as outlined in *Change for Children*. All recommendations will be delivered within the same timeframes set in the Government’s initial response.

A lead Minister and Secretary are responsible for each priority area and are supported by a dedicated Deputy Secretary, ensuring collaboration across other recommendation owners, as well as community organisations where appropriate. Each recommendation also has a lead agency, as set out in the Government Response.

The following diagram demonstrates how the priority areas relate to key areas of systems change and address the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry in ways that shift and disrupt ‘normal practice.’





Working together for reform

This group of priority areas is designed to achieve significant transformation for children and young people who are being cared for by the State, either through community and/or custodial youth justice, and in out of home care.

Together, this group of priority areas is designed to foster safety – of children, and the whole community. Reforming the system is not at the expense of community safety, it is in pursuit of it. A reduction in youth offending and recidivism will create a safer community for all Tasmanians. Across all priority areas strong engagement between police, justice systems, specialist community services, health services, parents, caregivers and family members will be critical to ensuring the wellbeing of the entire community.



Youth Justice Priority Area



Delivers Standard 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Minister for Children and Youth
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

The Commission of Inquiry recommended that the Tasmanian Government close Ashley Youth Detention Centre as soon as possible and included a suggested timeframe for closure by 1 July 2026³¹. The Tasmanian Government is committed to closing Ashley Youth Detention Centre as soon as possible and working to immediately reduce the number of children entering detention. To directly address the closure of Ashley Youth Detention Centre a dedicated whole-of-government Taskforce is being established, informed by a Community Engagement Group and Expert Panel.

This whole-of-government Taskforce, reporting to the Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet, is providing additional cross-agency support to accelerate and enhance the actions already underway to reform Tasmania's youth justice system. This will include:

- specific actions to support a reduction in the number of children in detention, prioritising those on remand where it is safe to do so. This includes utilising supported accommodation, providing intensive case management and working in partnership with the community services sector;
- the construction of a new youth detention facility at Pontville, aligned with the Commission of Inquiry recommendations. This includes detailed site planning and scope of works, as well as a community consultation plans and dates for the commencement of community consultation; and
- implementation of increased diversion programs, to be delivered in partnership with the community services sector, aligned with Commission of Inquiry recommendations.

The whole-of-government Taskforce will provide the Government with a comprehensive plan of action for these and additional initiatives by September 2024.

Work has already been undertaken, and is underway, to improve safety and security for the young people in the Ashley Youth Detention Centre. This has included review and enhancement of CCTV capability, the introduction of body worn cameras, procedures and training to support the installation of a new body scanner, development of a new Emergency Response System, including procedures and training to support staff to effectively respond to a wide range of incidents and development of a new Use of Force/ Relational Security Model and training package.

In addition to the immediate action as above, the Tasmanian Government has committed to wholesale reform of the youth justice system to address cycles of offending through the Youth Justice Blueprint 2024-2034³². This Blueprint outlines the strategic direction for Tasmania's youth justice system for the next 10 years, and guides the building of a contemporary, integrated and therapeutic system. Through implementation of the Blueprint all youth justice reform related recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry will be completed.

Actions are underway as part of the implementation of the Blueprint, which also respond to the Commission of Inquiry recommendations. This includes work to develop a new therapeutic and small detention centre in the south of the State. A Youth Justice Model of Care is being designed to support a therapeutic approach to youth justice and consultations with all stakeholders, including children and young people have commenced. A Youth Justice Diversionary Services Framework is also being developed to inform the implementation of statewide diversionary programs, which will commence this year.

The whole-of-government Taskforce will lead work to accelerate implementation of the Blueprint and all related recommendations, through the preparation of an immediate Action Plan. This integrated, cross-agency approach in partnership with community organisations will focus on improving the wellbeing of children young people and their families, through addressing the underlying drivers of offending behaviours and improving community safety. This means reducing both the numbers of children and young people entering the youth justice system in the first place, and those re-entering the youth justice system, as well as reducing the amount of time children and young people are in the youth justice system, and their safety and wellbeing whilst in detention. This includes building on significant reform in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service which includes in reach services for children in remand or sentenced to detention, as well as therapeutic residential services.

To deliver this work, agencies holding responsibility for recommendations in the health, education, police, justice and child safety systems will work collaboratively with community organisations to meet the complex needs of children, young people and their families in contact with youth justice. This includes the provision of high-quality education, child safety and out of home care systems, housing, mental health services, drug and alcohol services and family violence services. Wholesale reform of the youth justice system will only be achieved if different elements of the system change the way they work together with a focus on children's rights, understanding the causes of offending, and taking a public health approach to rehabilitation.

Recommendations: 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.6, 12.7, 12.8, 12.9, 12.11, 12.12, 12.13, 12.14, 12.15, 12.16, 12.17, 12.18, 12.19, 12.20, 12.21, 12.22, 12.24, 12.25, 12.27, 12.28, 12.29, 12.31, 12.32, 12.33, 12.34, 12.35, 12.36, 12.38 and 12.39.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).



Out of Home Care Priority Area

Delivers Standard 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Minister for Children and Youth
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department for Education, Children and Young People

Out of home care is the system that provides formal care to children and young people who are assessed by the Child Safety Service as unable to live safely at home with parents or primary caregivers because of concerns for their safety and wellbeing. For children in out of home care, the State is their statutory parent and is responsible to uphold their rights and protect their safety. The Commission of Inquiry found that too often children were not safe in out of home care.

A caring, compassionate and child-centred out of home care system in Tasmania requires adequate funding across the continuum of care, extending from a child or young person's first contact and assessment, through family engagement support, response and further assessment, to potential referral for temporary or permanent out of home care, supported by case management. The ultimate aim of the State in taking on the role of guardian is to increase the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by supporting children and their families to be reunited in nurturing family environments where it is safe to do so, ensuring long-term stability for those children and young people in care or, if right for the young person, supporting their transition to independent living.

This priority area will support a child-centred, rights-based approach to the reform of out of home care, through partnership between Government agencies and the community services sector. The rights and safety of children who have experienced trauma is everyone's business and out of home care service provision needs to be structurally integrated with the range of services required to ensure children are safe and well, and their rights are upheld.

The evidence shows that children and young people experience better outcomes when they, their families and communities are supported to remain together and connected in safe relationships. Investment will be targeted in prevention and early intervention, while also creating more tailored options for family-based foster care, and supported accommodation for those children and young people who require more intensive support. This will achieve the greatest, most sustainable, long-term difference for children and young people in care, while also improving the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in care.

Collaboration across other priority areas is also required to reduce the significant over representation of Aboriginal children and young people in out of home care. A whole-of-government approach to working with Tasmanian Aboriginal people is outlined in this Action Plan and will be critical to successful implementation of this reform.

Through strong partnerships across Government agencies and the community services sector, the Tasmanian Government will implement the changes required to create a service system that delivers caring, compassionate, child-centred services where:

- families are supported to stay connected and together where safe to do so;
- responses are culturally appropriate and led by Aboriginal children and families;
- children and young people have influence over decisions that impact them;
- assessment, treatment and wrap-around supports are available that respect and meet the diverse needs of children and young people;
- placements are stable and care is child centred;
- kinship and foster carers are supported and valued; and
- support is provided for care leavers.

The Commission of Inquiry highlighted that the out of home care system is currently overburdened, with little capacity for developing and implementing new ways of working. This priority area will have an initial focus on developing a whole-of-government plan to sustain and stabilise the out of home care system, including through adequate baseline funding and support for foster carers and the child safety workforce. This priority area will also deliver a detailed business plan to build capacity within the out of home care system to ensure successful reform.

Through this priority area a dedicated Out of Home Care Implementation Reform Unit to work across agency boundaries and drive reform will be established, including:

- contributing to the creation of a dedicated out of home care therapy team in the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service;
- prioritising implementation of key elements of out of home care reform, including the model of care, Out of Home Care System Strategy and the Out of Home Care Outsourcing Strategy;
- building partnerships with the community services sector, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations for delivering out of home care over time;
- articulating a longer-term vision for the future state of the broader child safety system, ensuring out of home care and child safety service reforms are connected and aligned. This will ensure future investment in the whole system is strategic and targeted to improve outcomes for children and young people; and
- developing an accurate current state assessment of service delivery costs across the system and a forecast for future service delivery costs required to deliver the future vision, paired with a business case and fully costed plan to operationalise the vision.

Recommendations: 9.2, 9.3, 9.6, 9.8, 9.9, 9.12, 9.13, 9.15, 9.16, 9.18, 9.19, 9.20, 9.21, 9.22, 9.23, 9.24, 9.25, 9.26, 9.27, 9.29, 9.32, 9.33, 9.36, 9.37 and 9.38.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).



Therapeutic Approach to Harmful Sexual Behaviours Priority Area

Delivers Standard 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Premier
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Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet
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This priority area will develop a coordinated, consistent and appropriate statewide response to children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviours, and children who have been harmed by harmful sexual behaviours.

This response will be developed in partnership with specialist community services and be informed by best practice approaches and evidence from across Australian jurisdictions and internationally. It will build on and integrate pockets of innovative practice in both the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, and the Department for Education, Children and Young People. Working across agencies and in partnership with the community services sector, this priority area will:

- develop a common understanding of harmful sexual behaviours (a shared definition of harmful sexual behaviours is included in Appendix 4);
- develop a framework, based on this shared definition, outlining a therapeutic service system for harmful sexual behaviours;
- clarify roles and responsibilities of Government agencies and community services involved in preventing, identifying and responding to the full continuum of harmful sexual behaviours, including new roles recommended by the Commission of Inquiry;
- develop context-specific policies, protocols and practice guidance for all settings in relation to preventing, identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviours, including within the youth justice system, education, and health settings, aligned with the shared definition and Framework;
- embed good practice responses and guidance on harmful sexual behaviours into all relevant agencies; and
- increase therapeutic services for those who have displayed harmful sexual behaviours and children who have been impacted by harmful sexual behaviours.

This priority area will be delivered through a multidisciplinary team comprised of experts from across agencies and the community services sector. This team will be flexible in moving between agencies and services as the recommendations contained within this priority area are completed.

To adequately respond to harmful sexual behaviours, individuals and organisations who work with children will need to shift deeply held beliefs and assumptions and understand normal sexual development, as well as the contextual factors that can lead a child or young person to display harmful sexual behaviours.


Recommendations: 6.9, 9.28, 12.30, 21.1, 21.3, 21.8, 21.9 and 21.10.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).





Working together to build connection and trust



This group of priority areas is focused on shifting relationships and connections. It will establish partnerships and approaches to involve children, young people, victim-survivors and Tasmanian Aboriginal people in the implementation of *Change for Children* and assist in delivering all Commission of Inquiry recommendations in the way the Commission intended them to be delivered.

The Commission of Inquiry and the consultation for *Change for Children* highlighted the need for government to work collaboratively, establish trauma informed partnerships with victim-survivors, share services with the community services sector, and support Aboriginal self-determination through the transfer of services to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Supporting victim-survivors

Central to partnerships and approaches to involve children, young people, victim-survivors and Tasmanian Aboriginal people in the implementation of *Change for Children*, it is also important that individuals are supported in whatever way and for as long as they need. The Tasmanian Government is committed to action to support ongoing healing, and prevent further harm for victim-survivors.

Recommendations across many of the priority areas focus on partnership with the service sector to ensure it is adequately resourced, funded, and skilled to meet the diverse needs of victim-survivors. The government is committed to delivering these recommendations in a holistic, trauma informed and responsive way.

Partnering with Tasmanian Aboriginal People Priority Area

Tasmanian
Aboriginal
people

Delivers the Universal Principle; All standards are to be applied in an environment that endures the right to cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander Children and Young People

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

This priority area will transform how government agencies work with Tasmanian Aboriginal people to build genuine partnership, and deliver recommendations focused on Aboriginal children, young people and their families in a way that reflects the Priority Reforms of Closing the Gap, which are:

- Formal partnerships and shared decision-making;
- Building the community controlled sector;
- Transforming Government organisations; and
- Shared access to data and information at a regional level.

This priority area will inform and support all other priority areas where recommendations impact Aboriginal children and their families, ensuring that self determination is central to changes to uphold the rights of Aboriginal children, and protect them from harm.

Through this priority area;

- A whole-of-government service to support agencies to build partnerships, undertake shared decision making, and transform practices with Tasmanian Aboriginal people will be established;
- A shared Engagement Framework and Toolkit for Government agencies to ensure consistency in engagement and consultation initiatives with Tasmanian Aboriginal people will be delivered; and
- A program of general professional learning and capacity building for Tasmanian Government agencies in Closing the Gap will be implemented, aligned to the Framework and Toolkit.

Whilst supporting the delivery of all recommendations, the initial focus of this priority area will be supporting Government agencies to partner with Tasmanian Aboriginal people in reforming the youth justice system and out of home care in a way that achieves the key priority reforms of Closing the Gap and the *Change for Children* Aboriginal Commitment Statement.

Recommendations: 9.7, 9.14, 15.10, 16.1 and 21.7. Note Tasmanian Aboriginal People Priority Area underpins several recommendations.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).

Child Safe Cultures Priority Area

Delivers Standard 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

Delivers Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

Key accountability:

Lead Minister Premier

Lead Agency Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

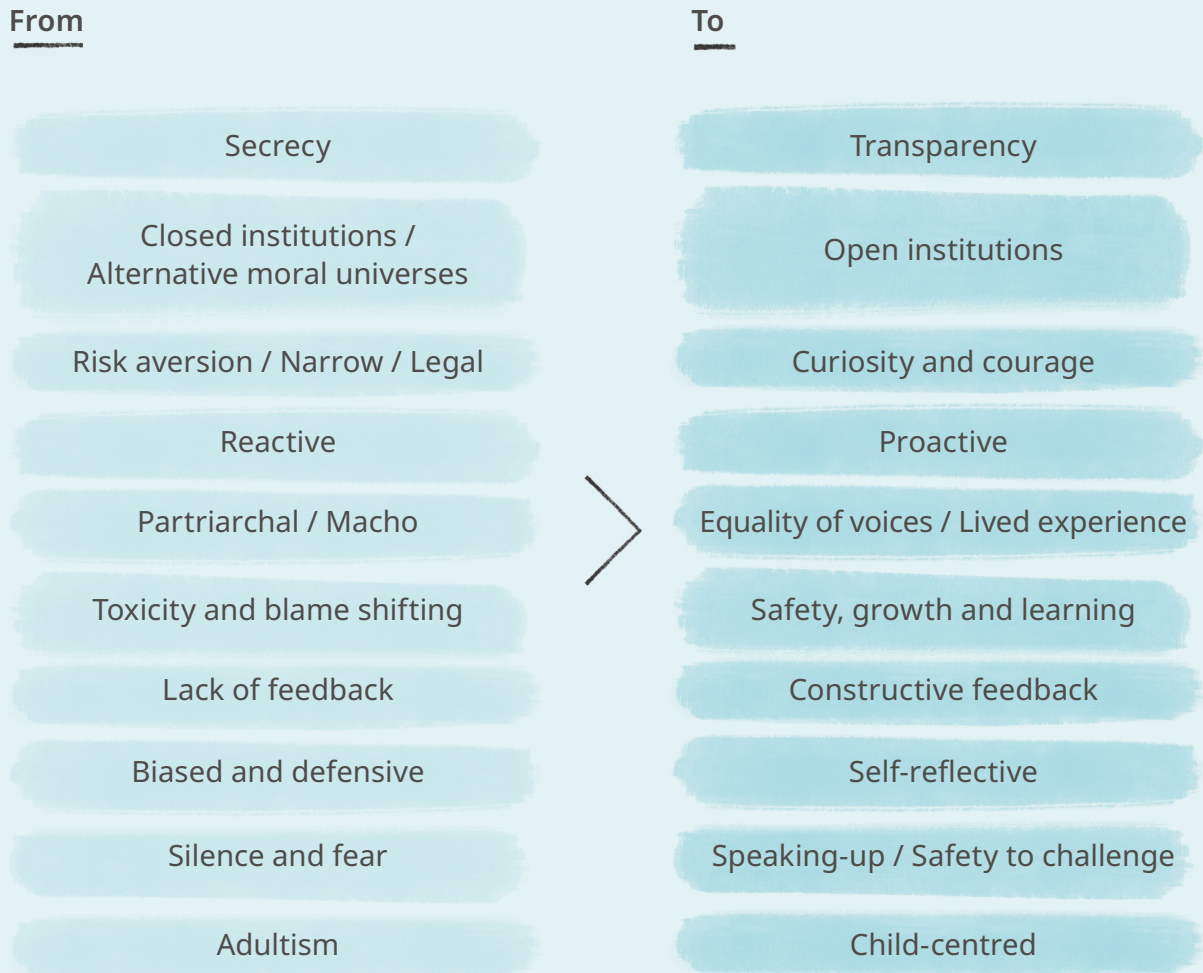
Culture is made up of values, beliefs and behaviours at individual, organisational or institutional as well as community and societal levels. These elements are often invisible in systems, but are extremely powerful.

The Commission of Inquiry report indicated that change needs to happen at all levels to adequately prevent, respond to and identify child sexual abuse. Many of the culture recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry relate to the Ashley Youth Detention Centre, out of home care, and health systems. However, our analysis of the discussion in all Volumes of the Commission's report laid out the changes that need to be made at all levels and in elements of the system.

This priority area will inform and support all other priority areas, enabling a conscious focus in the delivery of all recommendations on the need to change not only practices and structures, but mindsets and beliefs of individuals that work within, and comprise the system. This priority area will also look beyond Government agencies, at community attitudes and how these are reflected in institutions and the wider community.

A key focus of this priority area is changing the way that individuals and organisations perceive children, and ensuring that children are not discriminated against and that they are listened to and their rights upheld.

The below diagram provides a summary of the mindset and belief changes that the Commission of Inquiry recommended, with a focus on Government agencies but recognising that there is a dynamic interplay between community beliefs and attitudes and cultures within institutions.



At its essence this priority area will focus on shifting beliefs so that the rights of the child are central to implementing all recommendation of the Commission of Inquiry. To do this properly it is imperative to understand, act on and amplify the voices and views of children and the community. Therefore, the actions in this priority area and the next will be considered together.

Recommendations: 9.4 and 15.6. Note Child Safe Cultures Priority Area underpins several recommendations.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).

Child and Community Voice Priority Area

Delivers Standard 2: Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Delivers Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Premier
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

Children and adults with lived experience have an important understanding of the system and integrating their knowledge in the system will achieve lasting change.

Creating child centred systems is fundamental to implementing the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework, particularly Standard two – Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

A whole-of-government effort is needed to establish best practice approaches to engagement of children and young people that help to create the conditions for children and young people to express their views; to understand their rights; to be heard; to be believed and to have their views acted on.

The Child Safe Cultures priority area will work collaboratively across agencies and the community services sector on shared approaches to build understanding of child rights, child protection, grooming, and child sexual abuse prevention and response. This priority area will:

- increase community confidence in knowing what to do to prevent and protect children and young people from child sexual abuse;
- increase public confidence and capability in knowing how and when to respond to concerns, suspicions and knowledge of child sexual abuse, including how to speak with and support victim-survivors of all ages;
- break down problematic myths and attitudes, encourage a community culture of zero tolerance and drive community attitudes that reject child sexual abuse and uphold children’s rights; and
- Foster partnerships, including with the Commission for Children and Young People for a child centred approach to culture change.

The Commission of Inquiry recommended that the Government establish a Victim-Survivor Advisory Group. This group will be established to inform sustained change and in addition, there will be multiple channels and opportunities for voices to be heard, both within and outside Government.

To deliver these outcomes and recommendations, this priority area will:

- establish a cross agency community of practice to build on existing initiatives happening across the Tasmanian State Service;
- map culture activities across all agencies to leverage expertise and best practice models;
- establish Community Sector Engagement and Change Leads to work in partnership with government agencies to build child safe cultures within the community services sector, and broader community; and
- work in trauma informed partnerships with children and young people and victim-survivors to engage on their terms, including with:
 - The Commissioner for Children and Young People’s Consultative Council to engage directly with children, in a trauma informed way; and
 - The Victim-Survivor Advisory Group to continually hear feedback and perspectives on implementation of *Change for Children* and associated Action Plans.

It will draw on, complement and supplement existing national and state initiatives and funding to support whole of community cultural change measures for the prevention of child sexual abuse. The Tasmanian Government continues to work closely with the Australian Government and other State and Territory governments to progress initiatives through the *National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021–2030*, the National Office for Child Safety and the National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse.

Recommendations: 16.2, 19.5 and 21.4. Note Child and Community Voice Priority Area underpins several recommendations.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).



The Children and Young People Consultative Council – The Voices for Tasmanian Youth: Speaking out for a Safer Tomorrow

The Council, convened by the Commissioner for Children and Young People, consists of 19 children and young people aged between 10 and 18-years old. Council members live in communities across Tasmania and represent a diverse range of identities, backgrounds and lived experience.

Council members determine how they wish to participate in engagement opportunities and the frequency of their participation. Council facilitation has been guided by trauma informed practice, recognising the impact of trauma while prioritising safety, empowerment, choice, collaboration, and cultural humility.

Safety check-ins are conducted on a regular basis, and Council members have access to 24-hour support from SASS and Laurel House. SASS and Laurel House have also provided education and training for Council members to learn about sexual safety, consent and how to look after themselves when speaking about sensitive content and engaging in this work.

The Council contributed their perspectives to this Strategy and Action Plan across five key areas:

- Updating communication and education about sexual abuse;
- Ensuring young people’s voices are being heard;
- Feeling safe in institutions improves attendance and engagement;
- Improving reporting systems to make them safer and more accessible; and
- A greater focus on prevention and rehabilitation to improve safety.

The Council has its own mission statement *speaking out for a safer tomorrow* – and its own voice to inform Government and community action, including this Strategy and Action Plan. The Council will continue to be consulted and have their voice heard through implementation of this Strategy and Action Plan, and delivery of its priorities and all recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry.

Workforce Priority Area

Delivers Standard 5: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Premier
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

Child-centred systems require empowered, fully staffed workforces who understand the rights of children, and will act as champions to meet the needs of children.

Implementing 191 recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and adequately staffing service systems will be challenging and needs a multi-faceted approach. Workforce is a critical component to deliver the lasting and systemic change required to meet the scale of reform, and underpins all other priority areas. It will require a strong collaborative partnership between government and the community sector, recognising that both government and the sector have areas of strength and are in partnerships for the system.

This priority area links closely with the Professional Development and Training priority, and will consider workforce needs across a range of recommendations, drawing them together and developing broad based approaches to address skills shortages and gaps. It will also look at whole-of-service capability to build a capable and committed Tasmanian State Service workforce.

To achieve this priority area:

- Targeted occupational group strategies will be established to focus and drive action. Key focus areas include the child safety workforce, allied health professionals, teachers, and specialist practitioners;
- A focus on youth employment including targeted programs such as cadetships to address employment shortages where workforces are reaching retirement age. This also includes reinforcing partnerships to establish improved pipelines and entry pathways to attract and develop skilled staff;
- Addressing tools for attraction, retention and flexibility. This will be directed towards skilled workers, hard to staff roles and/or key occupational groups; and
- Targeted campaigns to attract applicants for roles from across Tasmania, nationally and globally to highlight working in the Tasmanian State Service will be developed and implemented.

Recommendations: 9.10 and 21.6. Note Workforce Priority Area underpins several recommendations.

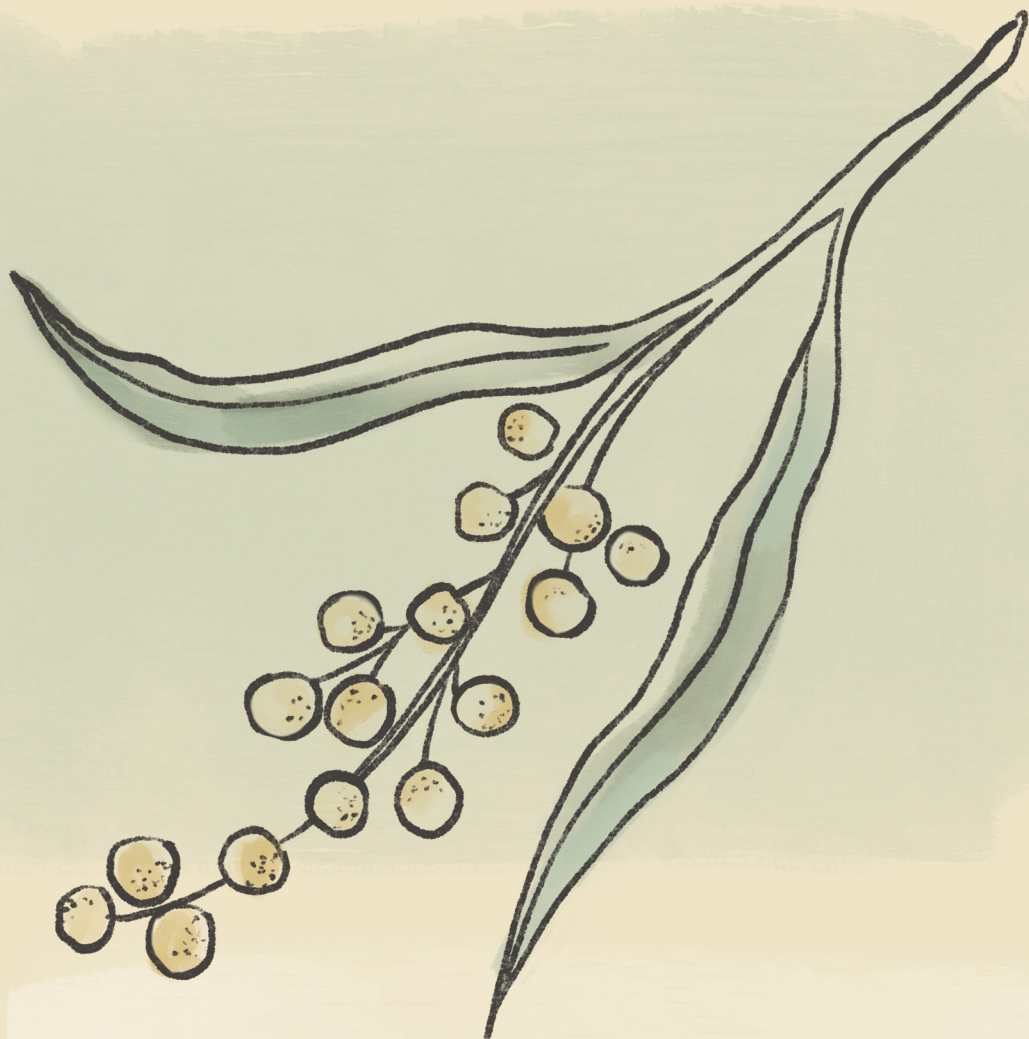
A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).





Working together to keep children safe

This group of priority areas is designed to achieve change in policy, practices and structures across the critical operational areas of incident management, complaints, information sharing, regulation and monitoring, professional development and training and commissioning. All of these priority areas will be informed by the priority areas in the previous section of this Action Plan focused on Working Together to Build Connection and Trust.



Professional Development and Training Priority Area

Delivers Standard 7: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Premier
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

The State Service Management Office (SSMO), in collaboration with an external partner and representation from five lead Government agencies have developed a whole-of-government Trauma Informed Knowledge and Skills Framework (the Framework). The Framework will provide a consistent guide to developing a trauma informed, skilled and supported workforce that is culturally safe, person-centred and learning together. It will provide clear and consistent capability requirements across the workforce as well as requirements for agencies to enable this holistic workplace culture change program. The Framework will also set the foundation for procuring, designing, developing and delivering professional development services for trauma specific programs and also other programs to ensure they are trauma informed and aligned with the whole-of-government Learning and Development Strategy currently under development. The current whole-of-government approach to professional development on responding to trauma (Recommendation 19.2) will be expanded to include the Child and Youth Safe Standards and leadership development.

Through the adoption of the Framework the Tasmanian State Service will be better positioned to implement consistent approaches to professional development and training focused on increased awareness, common understanding, capability and expectations of the workforce in how to uphold the rights of children, prevent and respond to child sexual abuse.

Across the Tasmanian State Service and through the implementation of Commission of Inquiry recommendations, there are several similarities in training and professional development requirements. Recognising the maturity of our agencies in learning and development capability and access to professional development services, there is an opportunity to leverage cross-agency expertise, sharing of knowledge and establish a core mandatory knowledge base across all State Service employees.

The overarching objective of this priority area is to protect children and ensure best child safeguarding practices are upheld across agencies, and partner community services, through ongoing professional development.

To deliver this priority area agencies will be supported to procure, design and deliver professional, trauma informed development with mandated core knowledge on:

- The rights of children, through the Child and Youth Safe Standards;
- Identifying the signs of child sexual abuse;
- Responding to child sexual abuse;
- Trauma informed practice;
- Working with Tasmanian Aboriginal people and supporting self determination; and
- Understanding Harmful Sexual Behaviours.

In addition to mandated core knowledge for all State Servants, this priority area will provide assistance and support to agencies in developing tailored and detailed professional learning.

Recommendations: 6.5, 9.11, 15.15, 16.3, 16.8, 16.16, 17.2, 17.6 and 20.15.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).

System Regulation and Monitoring Priority Area

Delivers Standard 9: Implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Attorney General
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Justice

To deliver child centred and safe systems it is important that the right mechanisms are in place to ensure oversight of institutions and accountability of the Premier, Ministers and senior officers.

The function and remit of different oversight bodies overlap and can be confusing and inaccessible for the community. There is a risk that this complexity and confusion will increase as new oversight arrangements are established.

The objective of this priority area is to ensure that victim-survivors, complainants and the community can understand the regulatory and monitoring system, and processes can be streamlined to ensure access, remove barriers to scrutiny and minimise impact on victim-survivors and complainants.

Recommendation 18.14, of the Commission of Inquiry recommends that the Commission for Children and Young People, the Registrar Working with vulnerable people (RWVP), the Integrity Commission and the Ombudsman work jointly to develop a user-friendly guide for the community relating to the activities of key oversight bodies for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The recommendation arises from the Commission's observation of a 'confused and complex oversight system' in Tasmania.

An Independent Statutory Officer Working Group has been established to progress this priority area.

To support an oversight system that scrutinises Government agencies, and holds them to account, as well as ensuring the voice of victim-survivors is central, this priority area will:

- Complete a mapping and sector review to inform opportunities to improve accessibility and administrative functions, with a focus on ensuring that there are no barriers to scrutiny and that making complaints and notifications is straightforward for the community;
- Explore a review of relevant statutory functions to examine if there are areas of duplication and overlap and what might be needed to address these; and
- Establish and embed a process to centre lived experience of victim-survivors across legislation and regulation mechanisms, reducing confusion and ensuring that complaints and notifications are handled in a timely, trauma informed way.

Recommendations: 6.10, 6.11, 6.12, 6.13, 6.15, 9.35, 15.21, 16.10, 16.13, 16.14, 16.15, 17.7, 18.5, 18.11, 19.6 and 20.12.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).

Legislative Change

The Commission of Inquiry provided 54 recommendations for changes to Tasmanian laws. A number of proposed legislative changes have already progressed to the Parliament of Tasmania and are being considered, this includes the creation of the Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor. Further legislative change is planned over the course of implementing reform to 2029. A whole-of-government Steering Committee, chaired by the Department of Justice, has been established to guide all legislative change. For detailed and up to date information on legislative change, please visit keepingchildrensafe.tas.gov.au

Information Sharing Priority Area

Delivers Standard 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Premier
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

The objective of this priority area is to remove barriers to and encourage the sharing of information that is known by institutions that would assist in reducing risks to children and young people and upholding their rights.

This priority area will examine information sharing both internal to government and external to the community and thereby also seek to increase transparency and accountability.

The Tasmanian Government is working toward an open culture of information sharing across agencies to keep children safe and also with the Tasmanian community to rebuild trust. The priority area will look at information in the categories of intake, process and transparency:

- Intake – It will ensure that information received is recorded properly and acted on and that members of the community know how to report information to government and statutory oversight entities;
- Process – It will work on consistent and shared systems and standards to share information within and between government agencies and statutory authorities; and
- Transparency – It will work on sharing as much information as possible with the Tasmanian community and removing barriers to releasing information.

To deliver this priority area:

- A whole-of-government policy on information sharing will be developed and published.
- An outcomes statement will be prepared that:
 - Places the needs of children, including their protection and trauma informed response, as well as the needs of victim-survivors, at the centre of changes to processes, structures and practices in relation to information sharing;
 - Focuses on strengthening existing processes or identifying where existing processes are not fit for purpose and require replacement; and
 - Scopes an expansion of the Safe Families Coordination Unit to undertake detailed mapping of child sexual abuse incidents to notify all relevant services, and take cohesive, best practice action in response. This mapping will also contribute to prevention, by determining trends and enabling early identification of behaviour patterns.

Recommendations: 12.4, 12.5, 16.20, 17.8, 18.15, 19.7, 19.8 and 20.9.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).

Incident Management Priority Area

Delivers Standard 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Premier
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

This priority area will work with all agencies to improve processes for response to breaches of the State Service Code of Conduct. There is significant improvement required for current processes so that complaints can be addressed, and matters concluded in an appropriate, trauma informed and timely way. This will alleviate stress and re-traumatisation for victim-survivors, enable swift conclusions for employees and build shared capability for investigation of serious breaches of the State Service Code of Conduct.

An example of this is that the Head of the State Service is considering the status of all Commission of Inquiry assessments and Employment Direction No 5 investigations in relation to current and former employees to improve timeliness of resolution and increase transparency through publishing the maximum amount of information legally allowable, to ensure the State Service is accountable to the community.

This priority area will continue the approach of removing any State Servants from their workplace where an allegation of a serious breach of the State Service Code of Conduct is made, maximising the safety of children and young people while investigations are underway.

This priority area is closely linked with the Child Safe Cultures, Information Sharing and Complaints priority areas, and will:

- Implementing a centralised approach for managing investigations of potential serious breaches of the State Service Code of Conduct;
- Through this centralised approach, build consistency and best practice, including through trauma informed approaches to investigation, response, and communication;
- Substantially decrease the length of time it takes to resolve an investigation of a breach of the State Service Code of Conduct, through additional staffing, clearer processes and protocols, and external expertise;
- Build trust and confidence among children and young people, families, staff and the community that incidents will be taken seriously and addressed transparently and appropriately; and
- Ensure consistent responses to allegations of child related misconduct in the State Service that mitigates the risk to children by thoroughly investigating and actioning potential breaches.

Recommendations: 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 15.17, 15.19 and 20.7.

A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).



Complaints Priority Area

Delivers Standard 6: Processes to respond to complaints and concern are child focused

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Minister for Health
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Health

This priority area is interlinked closely with the Child Safe Cultures, Monitoring and Oversight, Investigations and Incident Management priority areas and will put the needs of children and young people and victim-survivors at the centre of all complaints management processes across Government agencies.

Improving complaints processes will most importantly enable early intervention to prevent harm to children and young people. This priority area will complement the implementation of existing recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and ensure that work already undertaken and in development across Government can be of benefit to all agencies, specifically the priority area will:

- Develop and implement a consistent whole-of-government complaints framework; and
- Investigate and scope a central complaints management system for collecting and sharing information.

The Department of Health has undertaken significant work in reforming complaints management across the health service in response to the Commission of Inquiry and is well placed to lead preliminary work in this space.

The development of a consistent whole-of-government framework for managing complaints will be initiated through the development of a set of shared principles, and this work has already commenced.

Recommendations: 9.31, 20.6, 20.8 and 20.10.
 A description of all recommendations is included in [Appendix 1](#).

Government Funded Service Commissioning Priority Area

Commissioning

Delivers all Standards

Key accountability:

Lead Minister	Premier
Lead Agency	Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

The Tasmanian Government purchases a large number of its services for children and young people through contracts with community sector organisations. In contracting community sector organisations the Tasmanian Government is seeking to purchase both outcomes, and services that lead to these outcomes.

A shared approach to commissioning will ensure that funded services interacting with any Tasmanian Government have consistent expectations to uphold the rights of children, and prevent and respond to child sexual abuse in trauma informed ways.

Greater consistency in commissioning will also make it easier for services who partner with multiple agencies. It will lead to streamlined reporting, contractual obligations and reducing administrative components, enabling services to focus their resources on the needs of children and young people.

The objective of this priority area is to ensure that the rights of children are upheld, and children are safe in community organisations that deliver services on behalf of the Tasmanian Government. To deliver this, this priority area will:

- Develop a whole-of-government framework to guide purchasing for outcomes, including safety and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people;
- Develop a whole-of-government Quality and Safety Framework which sets the overarching standards for quality and safety for services purchased by the Tasmanian Government regardless of which agency is purchasing the service. This Quality and Safety Framework will incorporate the Child and Youth Safe Standards; and
- Provide a range of tools to assist community services to ensure they are complying with the Quality and Safety Framework, and to assist agencies to monitor adherence to standards.

This priority area will focus on a whole-of-government approach, but will also assist agencies to develop tailored commissioning strategies for particular service types, including out of home care, and transfer of services to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

A whole-of-government Steering Committee to deliver this priority area has been established, chaired by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and including the Department of Treasury and Finance who administer the Treasurer's Instructions that guide the purchase of services by the Tasmanian Government.

A review of existing quality and safety approaches is underway. Tasmanian Government agencies, through the Steering Committee, will partner with the community services sector to ensure that a whole-of-government commissioning approach supports the sector to ensure the rights of children and young people, and keep children safe.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations. Recommendations included across other priority areas.

Appendices



Appendix 1: Summary of recommendations

Recommendations listed below have been shortened to include only the first section of recommendations. The Tasmanian Government has accepted all 191 recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and will be implementing them in the timeframes outlined in the Tasmanian Government Response: Keeping Children Safe and Rebuilding Trust. To see full list of recommendations, including a report on all recommendations to be delivered by July 1 2024, please see the Keeping Children Safe website: www.keepingchildrensafe.tas.gov.au

Youth Justice Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
12.1	The Tasmanian Government should close Ashley Youth Detention Centre as soon as possible.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.2	Once Ashley Youth Detention Centre is closed, the Tasmanian Government should establish a memorial to victim-survivors who experienced abuse at the Centre. The form and location of the memorial should be decided in consultation with victim-survivors of abuse at Ashley Youth Detention Centre.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.3	The Tasmanian Government should ensure no person who has been detained at Ashley Youth Detention Centre is detained or imprisoned in any redeveloped facility at the same site unless the person expresses a preference for this to occur.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.6	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should have appropriate processes in place to ensure leaders in youth detention have the knowledge, skills, aptitude and core capability requirements to effectively manage people and to lead a child safe organisation.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together for reform

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
12.7	The Tasmanian Government should develop measures to monitor and evaluate progress towards cultural change in youth detention and include these in the Outcomes Framework under the Youth Justice Blueprint and associated action plans.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.8	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should, in consultation with the new Commission for Children and Young People (Recommendation 18.6), develop an empowerment and participation strategy for children and young people in detention, having regard to best practice principles for children's participation in organisations.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.9	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should initiate a change management process that includes identifying the aptitudes, attitudes and capabilities expected of youth workers, and requires all current youth workers to reapply for their positions.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
12.11	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to increase the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 14 years, without exception.	Department of Justice	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
12.12	The Tasmanian Government should ensure legislation to replace or amend the Youth Justice Act 1997 contains updated general principles of youth justice that reflect contemporary understandings of child development, children's antisocial behaviour and children's needs.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.13	The Tasmanian Government, in reviewing current diversion processes and developing a Diversionary Services Framework.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
12.14	The Tasmanian Government, to maximise opportunities for children and young people to be admitted to bail and minimise the number of children and young people on remand.	Department of Justice	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
12.15	The Tasmanian Government should ensure any legislation designed to amend or replace the <i>Youth Justice Act 1997</i> provides that rehabilitation is the primary purpose of sentencing a child.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
12.16	The Tasmanian Government should ensure its proposed new detention facility (and any future detention facilities) are small and homelike and incorporate design features that reflect best practice international youth detention facilities.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.17	The Tasmanian Government, to enhance the safety of children and young people in Ashley Youth Detention Centre and any new detention facility, should ensure all public areas of the facility are subject to electronic surveillance.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.18	The Tasmanian Government should ensure use of the Behaviour Development Program is discontinued in Ashley Youth Detention Centre and not adopted in any new detention facility.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.19	The Tasmanian Government should establish clear processes and guidelines for assessment, case planning and case management for children and young people in detention, to enable the delivery of tailored, multidisciplinary, therapeutic responses to each child and young person as part of their daily routine, which meet their health and wellbeing needs and address the factors contributing to their offending behaviour.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together for reform

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
12.20	The Tasmanian Government should ensure there are appropriate mechanisms and pathways for children in contact with the criminal justice system to be diverted to the mental health system for assessment and treatment.	Department of Health	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
12.21	The Tasmanian Government should ensure children and young people in detention (including on remand) receive a mental and physical health assessment on admission to the detention facility, and when needed while in detention.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.22	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure the Youth Justice Model of Care emphasises the central importance for children and young people in detention of access to high-quality education and vocational training that is tailored to their individual learning needs and that includes learning life skills.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.24	The Tasmanian Government should establish an integrated throughcare service for children and young people in detention.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
12.25	The Tasmanian Government should introduce a new process for approving transfers of young people from youth detention to an adult prison facility that limits transfers to young people aged 16 years or older.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
12.27	The Tasmanian Government, to protect Aboriginal children and young people against the risk of sexual abuse in youth detention, should urgently develop, in partnership with Aboriginal communities, an Aboriginal youth justice strategy that is underpinned by self-determination and that focuses on prevention, early intervention and diversion strategies for Aboriginal children and young people. Aboriginal communities should be funded to participate in developing the strategy.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.28	The Tasmanian Government should ensure any new facilities intended to replace Ashley Youth Detention Centre are co-designed with Aboriginal communities and include culturally enriching environments for Aboriginal children and young people that promote connection to family, community and Country.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.29	The Tasmanian Government should take steps to ensure Ashley Youth Detention Centre and any replacement facilities are culturally safe for Aboriginal children and young people.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.31	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the Youth Justice Act 1997 to ensure the Act expressly prohibits fully unclothed searches of children and young people in detention.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.32	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the Youth Justice Act 1997 to ensure the Act makes clear that confining a detainee in their room or unit and preventing them from having contact with other detainees (other than overnight) constitutes isolation, regardless of the label used to refer to the practice.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together for reform

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
12.33	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the Youth Justice Act 1997 to provide that subject to sections 25E and 133, force may only be used when reasonable and necessary to prevent an imminent and serious threat of harm to a person or to prevent an imminent escape, and when all other means of control have been exhausted.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.34	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should provide regular joint training and professional development for staff who have contact with children and young people in youth detention facilities and relevant staff of the Youth Justice Services directorate on laws, standards, policies and procedures regarding the use of isolation, the use of force and searches of children and young people in detention to ensure consistency in understanding and application. This training should be mandatory.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.35	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should update its complaints procedure and practice advice for youth detention.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.36	The Tasmanian Government, in establishing and resourcing the new independent community visitor scheme (Recommendation 9.34), should ensure independent community visitors visit children and young people in detention facilities weekly, at a minimum.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
12.38	The Tasmanian Government should ensure the Commission for Children and Young People (Recommendation 18.6) has functions and powers to monitor the operation of youth detention centres and other residential youth justice facilities, and the safety and wellbeing of, and the provision of services to, children and young people in detention, and in the youth justice system more broadly.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.39	The Tasmanian Government should appoint the Commission for Children and Young People (Recommendation 18.6) as an additional National Preventive Mechanism under the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT), with expertise in child rights, child trauma, the prevention and identification of child abuse, the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and the needs of children and young people with disability, and with power to inspect places where children and young people are detained.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together for reform

Out of Home Care Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.2	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should outsource the provision of all forms of out of home care to the non-government sector.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.3	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop new funding agreements with non-government out of home care providers that set quality and accountability requirements.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.6	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should, in consultation with the Commission for Children and Young People (Recommendation 18.6), develop an empowerment and participation strategy for children and young people in out of home care. This strategy should have regard to best practice principles for children's participation in organisations at the individual and systemic levels.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.8	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop a strategic plan for the out of home care system.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
9.9	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should establish an outcomes and performance reporting framework against which it can measure the performance of the out of home care sector, including in relation to child safety.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.12	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure the Foster and Kinship Carers Handbook is updated.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.13	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure staff have access to the latest out of home care practice knowledge by becoming a learning organisation.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
9.15	The Tasmanian Government should fully implement all elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
9.16	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure all children in care, including those on guardianship orders until age 18, have a case manager.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.18	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should require out of home care to be trauma informed and therapeutic and identify the key components of trauma informed, therapeutic models of care.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.19	The Department for Education, Children and Young People, in developing a professional conduct policy (Recommendation 20.2), should ensure there is a separate professional conduct policy for staff who have contact with children and young people in Child Safety Services and out of home care.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.20	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should establish and maintain a Carer Register of all types of carers in the out of home care setting to ensure all third-party guardians, and foster, respite, kinship, and salaried residential carers can provide quality care to children and act protectively.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029

Working together for reform

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.21	To improve placement stability and the oversight of the care of children by third party guardians, the Department for Education, Children and Young People should make publicly available the criteria and process for a carer to become a third party guardian.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
9.22	The Department for Education, Children and Young People's out of home care processes, including assessments, placements and care planning, should be tailored to address the specific needs of individual children.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.23	The Tasmanian Government should ensure all children in care have access to a timely holistic assessment when entering care across all domains of physical health, trauma and mental health, disability and educational need.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.24	The Tasmanian Government should increase funding for specialist trauma therapy services for children in care to ensure their needs are met.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.25	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should improve placement stability and reduce the risk of sexual abuse of children in care.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.26	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure each child is involved in developing their care plan.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.27	In its role as statutory guardian of a child in care, the Department for Education, Children and Young People should ensure a representative of the Department with knowledge of the child appears for a child in out of home care in the Magistrates Court (Youth Justice Division) and in the new specialist children’s division of the Magistrates Court (Recommendation 12.15).	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
9.29	The Department for Education, Children and Young People and Tasmania Police should work with non-government providers and other relevant stakeholders to develop a framework for preventing and responding to sexual exploitation of children in care that is informed by best practice and evidence from other jurisdictions.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
9.32	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop a new policy to guide responses to concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children in care.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
9.33	The Tasmanian Government should establish an independent Child Advocate, to be included in the Commission for Children and Young People (Recommendation 18.6).	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.36	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to expand the jurisdiction of the Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal to include review of decisions of the Department for Education, Children and Young People in exercising its custody or guardianship powers— including decisions about where a child should live and arrangements for the child’s care.	Department of Justice	Phase 3: 1 July 2029

Working together for reform

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.37	The Secretary of the Department for Education, Children and Young People should notify the Commission for Children and Young People of sexual abuse allegations involving children in out of home care that fall outside the Reportable Conduct Scheme, including incidents of child abuse by non-carers, and of the outcomes of investigations into those allegations.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.38	The Commission for Children and Young People should have the following functions in relation to out of home care monitoring the operation of the out of home care system and the provision of out of home care services to children, by regularly monitoring data and conducting own motion systemic inquiries into aspects of the system.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029

A Therapeutic Service System for Harmful Sexual Behaviours Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
6.9	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop detailed education-specific policies, protocols and guidelines for preventing, identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviours in schools.	Department of Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.28	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should establish a Harmful Sexual Behaviours Support Unit to support best practice responses to harmful sexual behaviours across the Department, including in schools, Child Safety Services, out of home care and youth detention.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.30	The Harmful Sexual Behaviours Support Unit (Recommendation 9.28) should develop detailed youth justice-specific policies, protocols and practice guidelines to support best practice responses to harmful sexual behaviours in youth detention and other residential youth justice facilities.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
21.1	The Department of Premier and Cabinet should lead, coordinate and fund a therapeutic service system for child and adult victim-survivors of child sexual abuse and children who have experienced or displayed harmful sexual behaviours.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
21.3	The Tasmanian Government should establish a peak body for the sexual assault service system, including therapeutic interventions for children who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviours.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together for reform

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
21.8	The Tasmanian Government, in collaboration with key stakeholders, should develop a statewide framework and plan for preventing, identifying and responding to harmful sexual behaviours.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
21.9	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the <i>Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997</i> and the <i>Youth Justice Act 1997</i> .	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
21.10	Tasmania Police and the Department for Education, Children and Young People should update the Keeping Children Safe Handbook to reflect the Tasmanian Government's statewide framework and plan for addressing harmful sexual behaviours.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Tasmanian Aboriginal People Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.7	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should appoint an Executive Director for Aboriginal Children and Young People for the whole of the Department.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.14	The Tasmanian Government should appoint a Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People with statutory powers and functions to monitor the experiences of Aboriginal children in out of home care and youth detention.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
15.10	The Department of Health should work with relevant stakeholders to consider the needs and backgrounds of children and young people using health services, including Aboriginal children, children from culturally diverse backgrounds, children with disability, children with mental illness and children who identify as LGBTQIA+. The Department should consult with Aboriginal communities on how it can provide culturally safe spaces for Aboriginal children across its health services.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.1	The Tasmanian Government should fund and establish specialist units in Tasmania Police, based on the Victorian Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Teams model, to investigate child sexual abuse and to be based in three locations (Hobart, Launceston and the North West).	Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
21.7	The Tasmanian Government should improve healing services for Aboriginal victim-survivors and their families and communities.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 3: 1 July 2029

Working together to build connection and trust

Child Safe Cultures Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.4	The Tasmanian Government should fund and restructure the Department for Education, Children and Young People to ensure (in addition to the current roles of Deputy Secretary for Keeping Children Safe, and the Executive Director for Youth Justice).	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
15.6	The Department of Health, to support health services become child safe organisations.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Child and Community Voice Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
16.2	Tasmania Police should establish ways for people to report child sexual abuse online.	Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
19.5	The Tasmanian Government should ensure, in setting out the governance structure for the child sexual abuse reform strategy and action plan, that children and young people and adult victim-survivors of child sexual abuse are part of this governance structure.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
21.4	The Tasmanian Government should increase the funding for free or low-cost sexual assault counselling services.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Workforce Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.10	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop a workforce strategy for the child and family welfare sector.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
21.6	The Tasmanian Government should ensure that the needs of particular groups of victim-survivors are met by the therapeutic service system and related contracting of services.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together to keep children safe

Professional Development and Training Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
6.5	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should adopt and implement a training certification program that is mandatory for all education staff and volunteers.	Department for Education Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.11	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should establish mandatory core knowledge requirements for Child Safety Officers which are to be attained during induction periods and regularly refreshed.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
15.15	The Department of Health should identify minimum requirements for professional development on child safety for different levels of staff, including staff, volunteers and contractors, as well as leadership.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.3	Tasmania Police should review its professional development on child sexual abuse.	Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.8	The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions should provide ongoing professional development to staff on child sexual abuse.	Independent Statutory Officer	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.16	The Tasmanian Government should fund the Supreme Court to support the professional development of judicial officers on the dynamics of child sexual abuse and trauma informed practice and consider introducing legislation.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Regulation and Monitoring Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
17.2	The Tasmanian Government should ensure all lawyers who act for the Tasmanian Government in civil claims relating to child sexual abuse receive regular professional development relating to child sexual abuse and victim-survivors.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
17.6	The Department of Justice should ensure that staff in Victims Support Services receive regular professional development on the effects of child sexual abuse and how to respond to victim-survivors in a trauma informed manner.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
20.15	The Government should fund the Tasmanian Industrial Commission to enable its members to attend training on child sexual abuse either locally or through any relevant interstate program or training, such as the programs offered by the Judicial College of Victoria.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Regulation and Monitoring Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
6.10	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to allow the Teachers Registration Board to compel relevant entities to give the Board information or documentation that is relevant to child sexual abuse matters involving a registered teacher or a holder of a Limited Authority to Teach.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together to keep children safe

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
6.11	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the <i>Teachers Registration Act 2000</i> (or regulations) to require details of the prospective or current place of employment of a teacher (or a holder of Limited Authority to Teach) to be included on the Register of Teachers.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
6.12	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the <i>Teachers Registration Act 2000</i> to allow administrative infringement notices to be issued for noncompliance with the provisions of the Act that currently carry penalties in the form of fines.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
6.13	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend section 24B of the <i>Teachers Registration Act 2000</i> to allow for the immediate rather than emergency suspension of registration or a Limited Authority to Teach when the Teachers Registration Board considers there is an unacceptable risk of harm to children.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
6.15	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the <i>Teachers Registration Act 2000</i> to allow the Teachers Registration Board to set requirements for minimum training and ongoing professional development.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.35	Legislation establishing an independent Child Advocate in the Commission for Children and Young People should provide the Child Advocate with power to make a complaint to the Ombudsman on behalf of a child who is in out of home care, youth detention or another residential youth justice facility, seeking the child's permission to do so first.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
15.21	The Tasmanian Government should ensure a review of the <i>Health Complaints Act 1995</i> is completed and considers the role of the Health Complaints Commissioner.	Department of Justice	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
16.10	The Tasmanian Government should extend the Witness Intermediary Scheme to include children who are under investigation for, or who have been charged with, sexual offences, and fund it to do so.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.13	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to extend the principles of section 13B of the <i>Family Violence Act 2004</i> to sexual assault matters, including child sexual abuse.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.14	The Tasmanian Government should, in similar terms to sections 199, 204 and 205 of the <i>Criminal Procedure Act 2009</i> (Vic), amend the <i>Criminal Code Act 1924</i> (including section 361A).	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.15	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to require trial judges to explain to juries the difficulties child witnesses often face in giving evidence in court, and the distinctive ways in which they give evidence, in cases where the reliability or credibility of a child witness is likely to be in issue.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
17.7	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 1976 to create a right of review on the merits by the Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal in relation to a decision of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Commissioners.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together to keep children safe

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
18.5	The Tasmanian Government should ensure its independent three-year review of the <i>Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023</i> has a particular focus on whether the Independent Regulator is sufficiently resourced and empowered to perform its functions effectively, and new or additional resourcing, functions and powers are necessary to support compliance.	Department of Justice	Phase 3 : 1 July 2029
18.11	The Tasmanian Government should implement Recommendation 11 of the Independent Reviewer's 2016 Report Independent Review of the Integrity Commission Act 2009, which would oblige public authorities to notify the Integrity Commission of any allegations of serious misconduct.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
19.6	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend the <i>Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013</i> to clarify that, in addition to the duty to report in certain circumstances, any person can notify reportable behaviour to the Registrar of the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Scheme.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
20.12	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to amend Employment Direction No. 6—Inability.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Information Sharing Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
12.4	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should work with the Office of the State Archivist.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
12.5	The Tasmanian Government should conduct an audit of allegations arising and ensure the names and details of any staff or carers identified by the audit are added to the cross-government register of misconduct concerning child sexual abuse.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.20	The Department of Justice should prioritise collecting and publishing key data about institutional child sexual abuse and support the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to improve its data collection for child sexual abuse cases.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
17.8	The Tasmanian Government should review and reform the operation of the <i>Right to Information Act 2009</i> and the <i>Personal Information Protection Act 2004</i> to ensure victim-survivors of child sexual abuse in institutional contexts can obtain information relating to that abuse.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
18.15	The Commission for Children and Young People, the Integrity Commission, the Ombudsman and the Registrar of the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Scheme should develop a formal memorandum of understanding relating to the management and oversight of reports, complaints and concerns relating to child sexual abuse and information sharing.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together to keep children safe

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
19.7	The Tasmanian Government should review confidentiality and secrecy provisions in Tasmanian legislation, including the <i>Personal Information Protection Act 2004</i> , to identify any specific legislative barriers that hinder the sharing of information necessary to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and remove these barriers.	Department of Justice	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
19.8	The Department of Premier and Cabinet should lead the development of child safety information sharing, coordination and response guidelines to support government and government funded agencies and statutory bodies to respond to child safety issues. The Tasmanian Government should fund the culture change work required to achieve good information-sharing practices.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
20.9	The Tasmanian Government should maintain a central cross-government register of misconduct concerning complaints and concerns about child sexual abuse and related conduct. This register should contain records of substantiated and unsubstantiated matters, including those that did not proceed to investigation.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Incident Management Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
6.6	The Tasmanian Government should establish a Child-Related Incident Management Directorate.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
6.7	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop guidelines that outline the ongoing supports that should be provided for victim-survivors, families, staff and the school community when there are allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse by staff or harmful sexual behaviours.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
6.8	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should work with the Catholic and independent school sectors to adopt a statewide approach to responding to child sexual abuse in schools.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
15.17	The Department of Health should establish a separate Health Services Child Related Incident Management Directorate or partner with the Child-Related Incident Management Directorate (Recommendation 6.6) to respond to allegations of child sexual abuse and related conduct by staff, breaches of the State Service Code of Conduct and professional conduct policies, and reportable conduct (as defined by the <i>Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023</i>) in health services.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
15.19	The Department of Health should develop and implement a critical incident response plan for human-caused traumatic events where numerous staff and patients are affected, including serious child-related incidents.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Working together to keep children safe

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
20.7	The Tasmanian Government should ensure investigations into misconduct in relation to child sexual abuse or related conduct by State Service employees of the Department for Education, Children and Young People and the Department of Health under Employment Direction No. 5—Breach of Code of Conduct are conducted by the Child-Related Incident Management Directorate.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Complaints Management Priority Area

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
9.31	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should develop and maintain a complaints policy and procedures for Child Safety Services and out of home care.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
20.6	The Tasmanian Government should amend Employment Direction No. 4—Suspension.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
20.8	The Tasmanian Government should amend Employment Direction No. 5—Breach of Code of Conduct, as it relates to child sexual abuse or related conduct.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
20.10	The Tasmanian Government should take measures to ensure that misconduct investigations under Employment Direction No. 5—Breach of Code of Conduct in relation to complaints and concerns of child sexual abuse are able to take into account prior substantiated, untested and unsubstantiated complaints, allegations and disciplinary action, in addition to the immediately alleged misconduct.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Single agency recommendations

Single Agency Recommendations

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
6.1	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should introduce and fund a mandatory child sexual abuse prevention curriculum as part of the mandatory respectful behaviours curriculum from early learning programs to Year 12, across all types of government schools (including specialist schools).	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
6.16	The Tasmanian Government should ensure the Teachers Registration Board is funded to perform its core function of regulating the professional conduct of teachers.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.5	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should establish a Quality and Risk Committee for Child Safety Services, out of home care, and youth justice.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
9.17	The Department for Education, Children and Young People should appoint a Chief Practitioner to lead clinical practice and quality assurance across Child Safety Services, the Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line, and out of home care.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
9.34	The Tasmanian Government should introduce legislation to establish an independent community visitor scheme for children in out of home care, youth detention and other residential youth justice facilities.	Department for Education, Children and Young People	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
15.2	The Tasmanian Government and Department of Health should continue to implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations across all health services.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
15.9	The Department of Health should require its health services to undertake regular and ongoing monitoring of children and young people's sense of safety in health services to inform continuous improvements to child safety, including in the safety of the physical environment.	Department of Health	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
16.4	Tasmania Police should develop and implement quality audit and assurance processes for investigating child sexual abuse offences, including random file sampling.	Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.5	Tasmania Police should review the adequacy and availability of equipment used to record evidence by video or audio, and ensure this equipment is available in all police facilities where victim statements relating to child sexual abuse are taken.	Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.6	The Department of Health should increase the availability of forensic medical examination services for child victim-survivors of sexual abuse to ensure all child victim-survivors can access an examination with minimal delay.	Department of Health	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.7	Tasmania Police should establish a clear, publicly accessible process for reporting and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse against a member of Tasmania Police, including the ability to report to an entity independent of police such as the Integrity Commission.	Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.12	The Tasmanian Government should update the audiovisual equipment available to the Supreme and Magistrates Courts.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
16.17	The Tasmanian Government should ensure preventive programs for adults who are at risk of abusing, or have abused, children are available beyond the custodial setting.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Single agency recommendations

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
17.1	The Tasmanian Government should ensure victim-survivors of child sexual abuse in Tasmanian Government institutions have access to a redress scheme irrespective of when the abuse occurred, when they were born or whether they have committed a serious offence.	Department of Justice	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
18.1	The Tasmanian Government should continue to advocate for Tasmania to receive the full benefit of Australian Government prevention strategies, including under the <i>National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021–2030</i> .	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
18.8	The Tasmanian Government should ensure the Commission for Children and Young People is separately and directly funded, rather than through the Department for Education, Children and Young People. Any funding arrangements or conditions should be structured to ensure the Commission has power to control its budget and staffing.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
18.9	A joint standing committee of the Tasmanian Parliament should oversee the performance and proper execution of functions of the Commission for Children and Young People.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
20.1	The Tasmanian Government should, by introducing legislation or through other means, ensure that the State Service Code of Conduct includes binding obligations.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 3: 1 July 2029
20.5	The State Service should develop guidance material for conducting preliminary assessments to ensure they are conducted quickly (within three to five business days after an allegation is received).	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Rec #	Recommendation	Agency	Phase
20.11	The Head of the State Service should monitor and publicly report annually on the management of misconduct matters related to child sexual abuse or related conduct.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
20.13	The Head of the State Service should issue guidance on State Service disciplinary processes that contains key principles and procedures to be followed.	Department of Premier and Cabinet	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
21.2	The Tasmanian Government should conduct an independent process and outcomes evaluation for the pilot multidisciplinary Arch centres and any future centres after three years of operation to inform the Government of any systems improvements that could be made to the centres and whether they have resulted in improvements in client outcomes.	Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management	Phase 2: 1 July 2026
21.5	The Tasmanian Government should increase the capacity of the Victims of Crime Service.	Department of Justice	Phase 2: 1 July 2026

Appendix 2: Seeking support and advice

Child sexual abuse is a crime.

If you have any concerns for the wellbeing and safety of yourself or any other person, including those who may have experienced or are at risk of experiencing child sexual abuse, please seek help.

In an emergency, call 000 for urgent police or medical assistance.

An alphabetical list of relevant, freely available services is provided below.

You may also wish to seek help from your GP, another professional or a counsellor

Services available 24 hours a day

- 13 YARN (24/7) 139 276 or www.13yarn.org.au
- 1800 RESPECT (24/7) 1800 737 732 or www.1800respect.org.au
- Beyond Blue (24/7) 1300 224 636 or www.beyondblue.org.au
- Headspace 1800 650 890 or www.headspace.org.au
- KidsHelpline (24/7) 1800 55 1800 or www.kidshelpline.com.au
- Lifeline (24/7) 131 114 or www.lifelinetasmania.org.au
- MensLine Australia (24/7) 1300 789 978 or www.mensline.org.au
- Statewide Sexual Assault Support Line (24/7) 1800 697 877 or 1800 MY SUPPORT
- Strong Families, Safe Kids (24/7) 1800 000 123 or www.strongfamiliesafekids.tas.gov.au
- Suicide Call Back Service (24/7) 1300 659 467 or www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au
- Tasmania Police (non-emergency 24/7 assistance line) 131 444 or www.police.tas.gov.au
- Tell Someone (for children and adults, links to 24/7 services) tellsomeone.tas.gov.au

Services that may not be contactable by phone or email outside business hours

- Autism Connect 1300 308 699 amaze.org.au / autismconnect.com
- Blue Knot Foundation 1300 657 380 or blueknot.org.au
- Bravehearts 1800 272 831 or bravehearts.org.au
- Laurel House 6334 2740 (North) or 6431 9711 (North-West) or laurelhouse.org.au
- National Redress Scheme 1800 737 377 or nationalredress.gov.au
- Relationships Australia Tasmania 1300 364 277 or tas.relationships.org.au
- Survivors & Mates Support Network 1800 472 676 or samsn.org.au
- Sexual Assault Support Service 6231 0044 or sass.org.au
- Victims of Crime 1300 300 238 or justice.tas.gov.au/victims/services/victims-of-crime-service
- Working it Out 6231 1200 or workingitout.org.au

Appendix 3: Contributions and Consultation to inform the Strategy and Action Plan

We sincerely appreciate the contributions of everyone involved in developing this Strategy and Action Plan. Without your wisdom and knowledge, we could not have developed this strategy to inspire and achieve real and meaningful *Change for Children*. Our primary consultation partners and companion documents to this strategy are detailed below. All companion documents are publicly available at www.keepingchildrensafe.tas.gov.au.

Consultation partner	Companion document
Commissioner for Children and Young People	Companion Document: <i>a decade on Children's voices on Child Safety</i> Companion Document: <i>the Voices for Tasmanian Youth</i> .
EverettSmith (Mina nina), Wilcox (Cooee tunapri)	Companion Document: <i>Kani paliti: Aboriginal Cultural Safety Commitment Statement, Keeping Children Safe</i>
Lived Experience Advisory Panel, convened by Department of Justice	Consultation through Advisory Panel Meetings. Including testing key concepts, themes, and understanding the perspectives of victim-survivors for reflection in the Strategy and Action Plan.
Laurel House	Companion Document: <i>Consultation report to inform development of Tasmania's Child Sexual Abuse Reform Strategy</i> And Laurel House Expert Advisory Panel for Youth (LEAPY) were also consulted to inform this Strategy.
Sexual Assault Support Service	Companion Document: <i>Child Sexual Abuse Reform 2024: What Matters Most</i>
Workshops Attendees	In developing the Strategy, we held workshops with victim-survivors, children, young people and adults living with disability; from LGBTIQ+ communities and from Culturally and Linguistic and Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and a Relationships Australia (Tasmania) trauma informed art therapy workshop with victim-survivors.
Courageous Conversations Towards Collective Action Event	A two-day event hosted by Sexual Assault Support Service and Laurel House to bring together leading therapeutic, academic, policy and lived expertise to work towards a Tasmania free from child sexual abuse.

Consultation partner	Companion document
Folket Consultancy	Companion Document: <i>Tasmania's Connectedness: A source of strength or a tool of silence?</i> Companion Document: <i>Analysis of past inquiries into institutional child sexual abuse</i>
University of Tasmania	Companion Document: <i>A comparative review of child sexual abuse definitions</i> Companion Document: <i>A comparative review of strategies to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse</i>
Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance	Companion Document: <i>Three essential elements of an effective Tasmanian Child Sexual Abuse Reform Strategy and Action Plan</i>
Tasmanian Council of Social Services	Companion Document: <i>TasCOSS Input to the Child Sexual Abuse Strategy and Action Plan</i>
MacSween, Melhem and Petridis	Companion Document: <i>Experts by Experience: What we can learn from the Commission of Inquiry Case Studies</i>
Van den Berg and Banks	Companion Document: <i>A Socioecological Model of Child and Adolescent Development and Preventing, Identifying and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse</i>
Banks and Van den Berg	Companion Document: <i>Response to Keeping Children Safe and Rebuilding Trust – Ecosystem mapping</i>
3P Advisory	Companion Document: <i>Systems Change – What works in public service environments? Scan of literature</i>

Appendix 4: Shared Terminology and Key Concepts

We listened carefully to what victim-survivors told the Commission of Inquiry as the experts by experience to understand what matters most for victim-survivors. From this work we have drawn together terms, definitions, and key concepts both referred to throughout *Change for Children* and additional concepts that provide important background to understand victim-survivors' experience of child sexual abuse and the institutional response to their experience. It gives us a common understanding of meanings, from the perspective of lived experience of child sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in any sexual activity that the child does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, is developmentally unprepared for, or otherwise violates the laws or norms of society. Children can be sexually abused by adults or by the harmful sexual behaviour of other children. Children may be sexually abused through physical contact (penetration, masturbation, touching, kissing, rubbing) or non-contact acts (such as encouraging or involving a child in producing or viewing sexual images, activities or inappropriate sexual behaviour). Child sexual abuse may occur in-person and online, in families, in educational, sporting, community and faith-based settings, and in government and non-government organisations and institutions.

Child sexual exploitation and sextortion are forms of coercive or manipulative child sexual abuse in which the perpetrator abuses or attempts to abuse a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, with the aim of profiting financially, socially or politically from sexually exploiting a child. To achieve this, the perpetrator may entice the child by offering tangible or intangible goods, such as food, shelter, affection, drugs or alcohol.

Grooming is sexual abuse through deliberate acts intended to manipulate and control a child, their parent/s, caregivers, support networks or other organisations, in an effort to: build trust and gain access to the child, obtain the child's compliance, maintain their silence, and/or avoid discovery. A child may be groomed in-person or online, by an adult or another child, often by someone they already know.

Institutional child sexual abuse is abuse that occurs within, is enabled by or attributable to the premises, action, inaction, activities or operations of a government or non-government organisation and/or its paid/unpaid **workers** in the course of or in connection with their duties.

Children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviours is the term used to describe children and young people who have displayed sexual behaviours that fall outside what may be considered developmentally expected or socially appropriate, cause harm to themselves or others, and occur either face to face and/or via technology. When these behaviours involve others, they may include a lack of consent, reciprocity, mutuality, and may involve the use of coercion, force, or a misuse of power. Harmful sexual behaviours invoke worry about the development and wellbeing of the child, young person, or others involved, and where they involve other children or young people, the behaviours may cause significant harm and may be experienced as abusive by other children and young people involved. Harmful sexual behaviours can occur in any setting, including in person and online.

Term or definition	Meaning
Age of consent	Tasmania’s age of consent is 17 years. This is the age at which a person can legally agree to consensual sex acts with another person aged 17 or over. Tasmanian law allows legal defence for consensual sex with a person under the age of 17 if the two parties are of similar age, such as when: a) a person having consensual sex with a 15-16 year old is no more than five years older; or b) a person having consensual sex with a 12-14 year old is no more than three years older. No one of any age can freely consent to sexual activities if they are unable to fully comprehend what is going on or if they are drunk, drugged, unconscious, asleep, forced, tricked or threatened into participation.
Arch Centres	multidisciplinary centres established in Tasmania to provide immediate, trauma informed care, clear and consistent information and streamlined response services for people of any age who have experienced or are experiencing sexual abuse. Arch centres bring together specialist personnel from government and non-government services in one location, with the aim of improving victim-survivor experiences, integrating processes and strengthening criminal justice outcomes.
Child or children	a person or people under the age of 18. For the purposes of this document, reference to a child or children is also intended to include a young person or people aged 12-17.
Child abuse	the maltreatment of a child that includes neglect, physical abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, sexual abuse and exposure to or involvement in domestic or family violence. The abuser may be an adult or another child, direct or indirect, in-person or online.
Child maltreatment	Child maltreatment refers to physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, exposure to domestic and family violence, and/or neglect. Sexual abuse rarely occurs in isolation. It often happens alongside other forms of child maltreatment.

Term or definition	Meaning
Child safe organisation	an organisation that consciously and systematically: creates an environment in which children’s rights, safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values and actions; engages with children and young people to create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm; creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying potential harm; and responds to concerns, suspicions, allegations and disclosures of abuse
Child sexual abuse	the involvement of a child in any sexual activity that the child does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, is developmentally unprepared for, or otherwise violates the laws or norms of society. Children can be sexually abused by adults or by children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour. Children may be sexually abused through physical contact (penetration, masturbation, touching, kissing, rubbing) or non-contact acts (such as encouraging or involving a child in producing or viewing sexual images, activities, or inappropriate sexual behaviour). Child sexual abuse may occur in-person and online, in families, in educational, sporting, community and faith-based settings, and in government and non-government organisations and institutions. Child sexual abuse can include not only perpetrators but third parties too, for example in the context of child sexual abuse material.
Child sexual abuse material	any material that depicts or describes a child, or a representation of a child, who is or appears to be under the age of 18, and who is or appears to be in a sexual pose or sexual activity, or that shows or describes the person’s sexual organs or breasts as a dominant characteristic.
Child sexual exploitation and sextortion	forms of coercive or manipulative child sexual abuse in which the perpetrator abuses or attempts to abuse a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, with the aim of profiting financially, socially or politically from sexually exploiting a child. To achieve this, the perpetrator may entice the child by offering tangible or intangible goods, such as food, shelter, affection, drugs or alcohol.

Term or definition	Meaning
Children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviours	<p>children and young people who have displayed sexual behaviours that fall outside what may be considered developmentally expected or socially appropriate, cause harm to themselves or others, and occur either face to face and/or via technology. When these behaviours involve others, they may include a lack of consent, reciprocity, mutuality, and may involve the use of coercion, force, or a misuse of power. Harmful sexual behaviours invoke worry about the development and wellbeing of the child, young person, or others involved, and where they involve other children or young people, the behaviours may cause significant harm and may be experienced as abusive by other children and young people involved. Harmful sexual behaviours can occur in any setting, including in person and online.</p>
Closed Institutions	<p>The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Australia defines "closed institutions" as settings where children are confined or have limited freedom of movement and are isolated from the broader community³³. These environments typically have strict, tightly controlled daily schedules and are characterised by secrecy and restricted information flow. They can include detention centres, boarding schools and mental health facilities. Daily life in a closed institution is markedly different from living in the community, where we live, work and socialise in different places, and with different people³⁴.</p> <p>Cultural factors associated with closed institutions may make them more conducive to perpetration of child sexual abuse, particularly because they may be resistant to timely detection and discourage effective response to child sexual abuse³⁵.</p> <p>When discussing the operation of youth detention centres as closed institutions, the Royal Commission noted that:</p> <p>Because they may also promote secrecy, and withhold information about their own operations (from children themselves, staff and external authorities) opportunities for (more extreme) abuse are enhanced, while detection efforts and meaningful responses are impeded³⁶.</p>
Commission of Inquiry	<p>Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings</p>

Term or definition	Meaning
Cultural humility	an ongoing process of self-reflection whereby an individual not only learns about another’s culture, but examines and critiques their own beliefs and cultural identities
Cultural safety	an environment in which the inherent rights, beliefs and traditions of a particular culture and/or all cultures are recognised, respected, protected and advanced
Experts by Experience	The concept of expertise through experience is well recognised in mental health, disability and family violence, based on the understanding that people who have lived experience can contribute to service planning, development and evaluation, and to de-stigmatising education for staff and awareness raising for the broader public ³⁷ . There is a rich literature exploring the different definitions of expertise by experience, best practice for engaging victim-survivors in collaborative work, and ways of working in non-tokenistic partnership. In recent years, governments across Australia have demonstrated growing understanding of the importance and value of Lived Experience in shaping public policy.
Grooming	<p>behaviours that manipulate and control a child, their parent/s, caregivers, support networks or other organisations, in order to perpetrate child sexual abuse. The intent of grooming is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – gain access to the child or young person to perpetrate child sexual abuse – obtain sexual material of the child or young person – obtain the child or young person’s trust and/or compliance – maintain the child or young person’s silence, and/or – avoid discovery of sexual abuse³⁸. <p>Grooming behaviours are not necessarily explicitly sexual, directly abusive or criminal, and may be consistent with behaviours or activities in non-abusive relationships. They can often be difficult to identify and may only be recognised in hindsight³⁹. Grooming behaviours may constitute child sex abuse offences⁴⁰.</p>

Term or definition	Meaning
Institutional Betrayal	Institutional Betrayal refers to <i>wrongdoings perpetrated by an institution upon individuals dependent on that institution, including failure to prevent or respond supportively to wrongdoings by individuals...committed within the context of the institution</i> ⁴¹ . When institutions cover up sexual violence, institutional betrayal undermines recovery. Institutional betrayal can occur in relation to isolated incidents, or in relational to systemic issues; it can include betrayal by omission, and betrayal by commission ⁴² .
Institutional child sexual abuse	is abuse that occurs within, is enabled by or attributable to the premises, action, inaction, activities or operations of a government or non-government organisation and/or its employees/volunteers in the course of or in connection with their duties or on the premises by a third party (for instance another child). This may include child sexual abuse that has occurred on an organisation’s premises or at other locations where the operations of the organisation are taking place.
LGBTIQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and other gender and sexually diverse people. It is important to recognise that this acronym does not cover all forms of sex, gender and sexuality diversity and is not intended to be limiting. The ‘+’ after the acronym is in recognition of this, and points to the fact that there are other terms and language people might want to use to describe these experiences and concepts.
National Principles	<u>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</u>
National Strategy	<u>National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021-2030</u>

Term or definition	Meaning
Online child sexual abuse	<p>any form of child sexual abuse with links to the online environment, including situations in which a person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – engages in an online act, experience or contact with a child that involves sexual content or sexually explicit comments or conversations – sexually exploits a child by sharing or threatening to share a sexual or sexualised image or video of a child, whether it was produced by the child or someone else – livestreams sexual or sexualised activity or conversations with a child online, for example via a video call or video chat – encourages or coerces a child to livestream sexual or sexualised activity or conversations online – uses grooming to manipulate a child into trusting them, to make it easier to have sexual contact with them online or in person – blackmails a child who has already shared sexual content into sending money, more sexual images or videos, or getting sexual over a video call or video chat – uses phishing or other security breaches (such as remotely activating a webcam to monitor a child in private settings without their knowledge or consent) for sexual gratification.
Out-of-home care	<p>the system of formal care provided to children and young people assessed under the <i>Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997</i> as unable to live safely at home with parents or primary caregivers because of concerns for their safety and wellbeing</p>
People with disability	<p>People with disability include, but are not restricted to, those who have long-term physical, mental, cognitive, intellectual, or sensory impairments. People with disability have specific needs, priorities and perspectives based on their individual identities including their gender, age, sexuality, race, and cultural background, and can face additional barriers and inequities⁴³.</p>
Rights-based	<p>describes an approach that upholds the rights of children, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</p>
Royal Commission	<p><u>Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</u></p>

Term or definition	Meaning
Safeguard	to protect a person’s health, wellbeing and human rights, enabling them to live free from harm
Staff	a paid worker employed or engaged by an organisation or institution
Standards	Tasmania’s Child and Youth Safe Standards and Universal Principle to ensure Aboriginal Cultural Safety
Survivor Mission	<p>Judith Herman describes the Survivor Mission as follows: most survivors seek the resolution of their traumatic experience within the confines of their personal lives. But a significant minority, as a result of the trauma, feel called upon to engage in a wider world. These survivors recognize a political or religious dimension in their misfortune, and discover that they can transform the meaning of their personal tragedy by making it the basis for social action. While there is no way to compensate for an atrocity, there is a way to transcend it, by making it a gift to others. The trauma is redeemed only when it becomes the source of a survivor mission⁴⁴. Working collaboratively with others to raise awareness, provide support or prevent victimization is recovery-promoting: it supports empowerment, and provides trustworthy connection.</p>
Trauma informed organisation	<p>Wilson et al tell us: In the simplest terms, the concept of trauma informed care is straightforward. If professionals were to pause and consider the role trauma and lingering traumatic stress plays in the lives of the specific client population..., how would they behave differently? ...How can they better help their traumatized clients heal? ... [b] y looking at how the entire system is organized and services are delivered through a `trauma lens’, what should be done differently? The answer can be used to guide practice, policy, procedures, and even how the physical caregiving environment is structured⁴⁵. A trauma informed organisation understands the prevalence of trauma in their client groups – and among their staff. Further, the trauma informed organisation understands that trauma informed practice is helped by trauma informed systems and culture, and hindered where these are absent.</p>

Term or definition	Meaning
Trauma informed practice	an approach that reflects and embeds trauma awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness across the entire organisation and its work
UN Convention	<u>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</u>
Victim-survivor	victims-survivors refers to people who have been sexually abused as children or young people.
Victims and survivors	<p>Victims and survivors refers to people who have been sexually abused as children or young people. We use both terms in an attempt to capture victims and survivors' preferences for terminology, and to capture current and historical abuse. In some contexts, the term 'victim' has a defined legal meaning.</p> <p>We recognise that some people prefer the term 'survivor' because of its association with resilience and empowerment. We also recognise many have lost their lives as a direct result of abuse, or do not feel they have 'survived' the abuse and its impacts. In these cases, the term 'victim' may be more appropriate.</p> <p>We recognise that some people do not identify with either of these terms⁴⁶.</p>
Volunteer	an unpaid worker who participates in or supports the work of an organisation or institution
Worker	any person who carries out paid or unpaid work for on behalf of an organisation or institution; includes staff and volunteers as defined above
Young person or people	for the purposes of this document, the term young person is generally used to refer to a child or children aged 12-17, but use of the term is not intended to exclude a child under the age of 12

Appendix 5: Policy Context

Change for Children acknowledges the range of strategies, programs, plans and initiatives and ongoing efforts aimed at improving children's lives and addressing child sexual abuse through prevention, identification, and response. *Change for Children* enhances current efforts and reflects many reviews and reports submitted to the Tasmanian Government over the last 10 years. Related Strategies, Action Plans, Frameworks, Policies and Reports include:

1. Tasmanian Government

1.1 Children and young person specific

- *It takes a Tasmanian Village: Tasmania's Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy*
- *Youth Justice Blueprint 2024-2034*
- *Wellbeing for Learning: Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy*
- *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework*
- *Child Safety and Wellbeing Framework*

1.2 Related strategies and policies

- *Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027: Survivors at the Centre**
- *Closing the Gap: Tasmanian Implementation Plan 2021-2023*
- *Accessible Island: Tasmania's Disability Framework for Action 2018-2021*
- *Our Multicultural Island: Tasmania's Multicultural Policy and Action Plan*

2. Australian Government

2.1 Children and young person specific

- *The National Strategy for Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021-2030*
- *Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children*
- *Safe and Supported: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan 2023-2026*

2.2 Related strategies and policies

- *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*
- *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*
- *The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*
- *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31*

3. Relevant Inquiries, Reviews and Reports

3.1 Child and young person specific

- *The Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings*
- *Take Notice, Believe Us and Act! Report of the Commissioner for Children and Young People*
- *Independent Inquiry into the Department of Education's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*
- *Independent Child Safe Governance Review of the Launceston General Hospital and Human Resources*

3.2 Related reviews and reports

- *The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*
- *The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability*
- *The Blake Review*
- *The Woolcott Review (not finalised)*
- *The Weiss Independent Review*
- *Tatarka Independent Review*
- *Review of the Commission of Inquiry Act 1995 (Tasmanian Law Reform Institute)*

* Survivors at the Centre: Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan

There is a close, intersecting relationship between child sexual abuse and family and sexual violence. Violence against children and gender-based violence have shared risk factors. By strengthening our systems to prevent, identify and respond to child sexual abuse, we will be improving our family and sexual violence responses.

This Strategy complements the work already underway to prevent and respond to family and sexual violence through *Survivors at the Centre: Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027* (Survivors at the Centre). Child Sexual Abuse is widespread in Australia and Tasmania – including in family, neighbourhood, and community settings. Evidence tells us that child sexual abuse and family and sexual violence are intersecting, co-occurring and cyclical⁴⁷. Our responses to both issues must reflect this.

Sexual violence perpetrated against children below the age of consent is child sexual abuse. The drivers and impacts of child sexual abuse can be vastly different to those of adult sexual abuse, and they require different responses⁴⁸.

Survivors at the Centre focuses on sexual abuse in mainly adult contexts, with three of 38 actions directly relating to child sexual abuse. Activity in our Action Plan and outlined by the Commission of Inquiry will ensure Change for Children and Survivors at the Centre will work together, to ensure they address the underlying drivers of violence across our communities.

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