

## Early Years Partnership Frequently Asked Questions

### Why focus a partnership on the Early Years?

The first five years of a child's life are critical for positive life outcomes. It is during this time that they build the foundation for lifelong learning, health, and wellbeing. However, one in five children in Western Australia is considered developmentally vulnerable by the time they start full-time school, as measured by the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).

In recent years, despite significant investment from all levels of government and community services, there has been minimal improvement in key developmental indicators for young children in many high-needs communities. Research shows that change requires a variety of different approaches which suit the unique contexts of communities to ensure that every young child and their family has what they need to thrive.

### What is the Early Years Partnership (EYP)?

The EYP aims to improve children's well-being and school readiness in four Western Australian communities and in doing so learn what it takes to create change for children across the State.

The EYP recognises that children are born into families, families live in communities and communities are impacted by state and federal government system and policies. Therefore, change is required at all levels.

The EYP works with communities to identify local priorities for child well-being, considering a range of areas:

- Child development
- Child Health
- Maternal Health
- Parent Health
- Family Safety
- Family financial well-being
- Family Social Connection

### Who is involved in the Early Years Partnership?

The EYP is a partnership between the WA State Government (Department of Communities, Health and Education) and the Minderoo Foundation, with the Telethon Kids Institute as the Initiative's evidence and evaluation partner. The Australian Government became a supporting partner in 2021 through the Connected Beginnings program, a 'place-based' grants program which provides funding to Aboriginal-led 'backbone' organisations which work with communities to co-design goals and solutions to support children. The EYP's Board is comprised of representatives from the partner organisations, with two independent co-chairs.



**There are four Early Years Partnership community sites:**

- Derby (including Mowanjum and Pandanus Park)
- Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community
- Armadale West
- Central Great Southern (Comprising the Shires of Katanning, Kojonup, Gnowangerup and Broomehill-Tambellup)

**How will the Partnership create change?**

The Partnership has brought together community leaders, state and federal government, researchers, and philanthropy to achieve better outcomes for Western Australian children and their families.

The EYP is a commitment to listen and work collaboratively with communities to create change for children. We aim to do this by increasing awareness about the importance of early development, strengthening whole-of-community governance and collaboration, providing the best data and evidence and mobilising resources at community, state, and federal level.

In doing so, EYP Communities are supported to identify the main enablers and barriers to children thriving in their communities, co-design agreed and targeted community plans and test, trial and learn from evidence-based solutions.