



EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIP

Bidyadanga

Yija Tili

(True Sparks)

Early Years Community Plan

2023



Acknowledgement of Country

The Early Years Partnership team and partner organisations proudly acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country, the Karajarri people, and acknowledge this land is also home to Juwalliny, Mangala, Nyungumarta, and Yulpartja language groups. We recognise their continuing connection to their culture, lands, families and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

The Early Years Partnership would also like to acknowledge the work of our Connected Beginnings partner, Bidyadanga Aboriginal Corporation La Grange Inc (BACLG) for their continued work to support Bidyadanga children and families.

A note about language

In this document, the term Aboriginal people is used in preference to “Indigenous” or “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander” people, in recognition that Aboriginal peoples are the original inhabitants of Western Australia.

Yija Tili

The name of this Community Plan, *Yija Tili*, which means True Sparks in the Karajarri language.

Yija Tili is pronounced Ij-ja-dee-ly (Iy as in million).

Yija Tili are the tiny sparks that ignite to start a fire. They represent the start of an idea or a solution to a problem.

Executive Summary

In March 2018, Hon Mark McGowan MLA, former Premier of Western Australia, and Hon Simone McGurk MLA, former Minister for Community Services, announced the State Government's investment in what was then known as the Early Years Initiative and is now known as the Early Years Partnership.

The Early Years Partnership aims to improve children's wellbeing and school readiness in four WA communities and in doing so learn what it takes to create change for children across Western Australia. The Early Years Partnership is a 10-year partnership between four communities, State Government and Minderoo Foundation, with Telethon Kids Institute as evidence and evaluation partner. The Australian Government also supports the initiative through participation by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and a partnership via the Commonwealth Connected Beginnings program. Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange Inc. (BACLG) is the local EYP Connected Beginnings partner.

In 2019, it was agreed by the Early Years Partnership Board that Bidyadanga would be the very remote community. For the purposes of the Early Years Partnership, the other three communities are the 'metropolitan' community of Armadale West, the 'remote' community of Derby and the 'regional' community of Central Great Southern.

At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 50 children under the age of four years reported to be living in Bidyadanga, 45 (90 per cent) of whom were Aboriginal!

This Community Plan is the result of a co-design process with the Bidyadanga community involving group model building workshops. This co-design process is detailed in section 2.3. This Community Plan articulates the priorities identified by the community as critical factors to improving the wellbeing and school readiness of their children.

These five priority areas, and associated actions, form the roadmap for change for children living in Bidyadanga, these are:



Child development – to increase the number of children meeting developmental milestones and entering school developmentally ready (as measured by the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and Australian Early Development Census tools (adjusted for cultural relevance as appropriate)).



Parent health – to strengthen cultural identity and overall wellbeing of parents and carers to enable positive parenting practices.



Family financial wellbeing – all children aged 0–4 years live in households with an adequate standard of living.



Community physical and social aspects – to create the physical and social infrastructure in the community that strengthens the cultural identity of families and supports families to care for their children.



Community service aspects – to provide culturally safe, coordinated health and wellbeing service delivery in the community.

It is important to note, that the Bidyadanga La Grange Council did not want culture as a standalone priority area, rather they wanted to acknowledge that Aboriginal cultural and language groups of Bidyadanga are considered as underpinning all priorities to improving child wellbeing, which has been expressed throughout this community plan.



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Introduction

Why the early years are so important

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 (19.4%) is considered developmentally vulnerable by the time they start full-time school, as measured by the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).²



In Bidyadanga and surrounding areas nearly one in two children (41%) are considered developmentally vulnerable at the time of starting school.³



Purpose of this document

This Community Plan articulates the factors that have been identified and prioritised by the Bidyadanga community as being important factors in improving the wellbeing and school readiness of their children. The plan identifies aims, objectives and actions for each of these priorities at both local and system levels and is a guiding document to help the Bidyadanga community, government, and service providers to achieve better outcomes for children and families in the community.

The Community Plan is intended to be a 'living document' which will be reviewed annually and updated as needed in consultation with the Bidyadanga Community Working Group and Council.

Of importance in the framing of this plan is the community's preference to adopt a strengths-based approach, as is evident in the language of this plan and their approach to this work.



Early Years Partnership

The Early Years Partnership aims to improve children's wellbeing and school readiness in four WA communities and in doing so learn what it takes to create change for children across Western Australia.

The Early Years Partnership was launched by the former Premier of Western Australia, the Honourable Mark McGowan, and former Minister for Community Services, the Honourable Simone McGurk, alongside Nicola Forrest Co-Founder of the Minderoo Foundation, in March 2018. The Early Years Partnership has partnered with four communities within Western Australia:

- Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community (very remote),
- Derby (remote),
- Armadale West (metropolitan) and
- Central Great Southern (Comprising the Shires of Katanning, Kojonup, Gnowangerup and Broomehill-Tambellup) (regional).

The Early Years Partnership is a partnership between these four communities, the State Government, Minderoo Foundation and Telethon Kids Institute as evidence

and evaluation partner. The Western Australian Government participates via the Department of Communities (lead partner), Department of Education and WA Health. Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange Inc. (BACLG) is the local lead partner via Connected Beginnings.

The \$49.3 million partnership includes:

- State Government investment of \$24.6 million over 10 years, which includes project management and effective alignment of existing funding to community priorities, and
- Minderoo Foundation investment of \$24.7 million over 10 years to test, trial and learn from new initiatives as well as fund research and evaluation by the Telethon Kids Institute.

In addition, the Australian Government will contribute \$2.7 million over three years (from 2021) via the Connected Beginnings Program across the four communities.

The Early Years Partnership aims to create change through 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, Early Years Partnership communities are empowered 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-informed solutions.

This Community Plan is a result of these co-design processes. It aims to improve the wellbeing of children and families in Bidyadanga and support children to be ready for school. In doing so, it aims to create learnings to inform future reforms in our State.

Bidyadanga

Bidyadanga is the very remote community partner of the Early Years Partnership and covers 21.5 square kilometres. This includes the La Grange Remote Community School. Bidyadanga was chosen by the Early Years Partnership Board due to demonstration that there is:

- a need for better outcomes for children under school age and their families

- sufficiently broad and genuine interest within the community to achieve change
- a level of capacity to do so.

Connected Beginnings

Each Early Years Partnership community is supported by Connected Beginnings.⁴ Connected Beginnings facilitates greater integration of services to ensure children have the best chance to reach developmental milestones before school. Connected Beginnings uses a collective impact approach meaning community members and organisations work together to:

- identify the community's strengths, skills and resources
- identify issues affecting their community
- co-design solutions to these issues.

Bidyadanga Aboriginal Corporation La Grange (BACLG) is the Connected Beginnings Partner in Bidyadanga.

▼ Location of Bidyadanga



Early Years Partnership Co-Design

Early Years Partnership Principles

The Early Years Partnership's community engagement, planning and design process is based on the following principles:

-  **Children, families and communities are at the heart of everything we do**
-  **We listen to and act upon the wisdom of families, communities and their children**
-  **We value the strengths of the community, the assets and knowledge they already have**
-  **We take a place-based approach; community is at the core**
-  **We try, test, learn and improve, again and again**
-  **We build trust through equal partnership.**

Early Years Partnership Impact Pathways

The Early Years Partnership Impact Pathways is an evidence informed tool that supports communities to identify the main enablers and barriers to children and families thriving in their communities. These Pathways acknowledge that children are born into families, families live in communities and communities are impacted by state and federal government policies and systems.

Bidyadanga Co-design Process

Bidyadanga has been supported through a community planning process that occurred over a long period due to significant disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns. The process has drawn from place-based data provided by Telethon Kids Institute, stakeholder knowledge and experience, and families with lived experience of raising children in the community.

Outlined below is the seven-step community design process:

1 Engaging and listening

In 2019, Bidyadanga was identified as the very remote Early Years Partnership community site. The Early Years Partnership project team identified and engaged with key stakeholders and existing governance groups, to understand community aspirations for change and strengths that could be built upon.



2 Establishing

In consultation with local leaders, a community working group was established to explore the local existing supports and services available for families with children aged 0-4 years and to identify future overarching needs.



3 Discovering

The Bidyadanga Local Working Group met regularly to discuss the identification of local priorities. A situational analysis – “The ‘here and now’ for little kids and families in Bidyadanga, 2022” was developed by Telethon Kids Institute. The report provided insight to local data and built a shared understanding of the needs and opportunities for local children.

Appendix A shows a snapshot of data related to the Bidyadanga area drawn from a variety of sources as noted with each datapoint. The full situational analysis can be found on the [Early Years Partnership website](#).



4 Co-designing local priorities

The local working group formed in early 2022 to decide the priority areas for child development in Bidyadanga. At that time the priority areas were identified as: child development, financial wellbeing, family safety and parent health. Early actions were undertaken at this time which built local momentum. In Bidyadanga there was also a focus on barriers and enablers for change beyond the individual and family level, therefore community level impact pathways became relevant.



5 Co-designing actions

Two Group Model Building (GMB) workshops were held with local service providers and community members as part of further planning for co-design and implementation of the Early Years Partnership in the region.

The first GMB workshop was held on 11 November 2022 at the Family Centre in Bidyadanga and attended by eight participants who represented health, education, community organisations, community members and community Elders. The second GMB workshop was held on 21 February 2023 and attended by 24 participants (BACLG, Kullarri Regional Communities Indigenous Corporation, LaGrange remote community school (including KindiLink), Boab Health, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS), WA Police Force, and community representatives).



5 Co-designing actions (continued)

In these workshops participants worked together to identify the main drivers of child wellbeing in their communities (including the impacts of family and community wellbeing on the child) for children aged 0–4 years. The key output of the workshop was a causal loop diagram (CLD) which summarises the group’s views of drivers of child wellbeing. A full report of the GMB workshop can be found on the Early Years Partnership website [Early Years Partnership – Creating Change for WA Children](#).

On 1 May 2023, an in-person working group attended by 11 people representing both community members and place-based organisations, endorsed all actions with minor revisions which were subsequently endorsed on 30 May. On 12 June 2023, the plan was endorsed by the Bidyadanga Council, with one amendment, which was to remove culture as a priority area and embed it as an essential element across all priority areas.

6 Collaborate and Deliver

This Community Plan forms the foundation for the collaboration and delivery on improved wellbeing for children living in Bidyadanga, with the support of the Early Years Partnership Implementation Group and Board.

The Early Years Partnership project team and Telethon Kids Institute will, where relevant, identify national



and international experts in the identified priority areas and explore evidence-based initiatives that could be adapted to local context. Relevant service providers that impact child development will continue to inform the service context with local and system-level actions. All actions will be planned and implemented with consideration to sustainability, scalability and lasting impact.

Implementation of the priority actions will be supported by an evidence-based implementation science framework called PRISM (Practical, Robust Implementation and Sustainability Model) to ensure the robust translation of research into practice, with specific attention to the local context and ensuring equity (reach and representation).

Where relevant, the Local Working Group will be supported to submit funding proposals to the Implementation Group or Board (as appropriate) to test and trial new innovations and learn whether they can be scaled up to be delivered across the State.

7 Review

The community will be supported to continually monitor and evaluate implementation of the plan to ensure actions are addressing the multiple system challenges identified and creating impact for children.

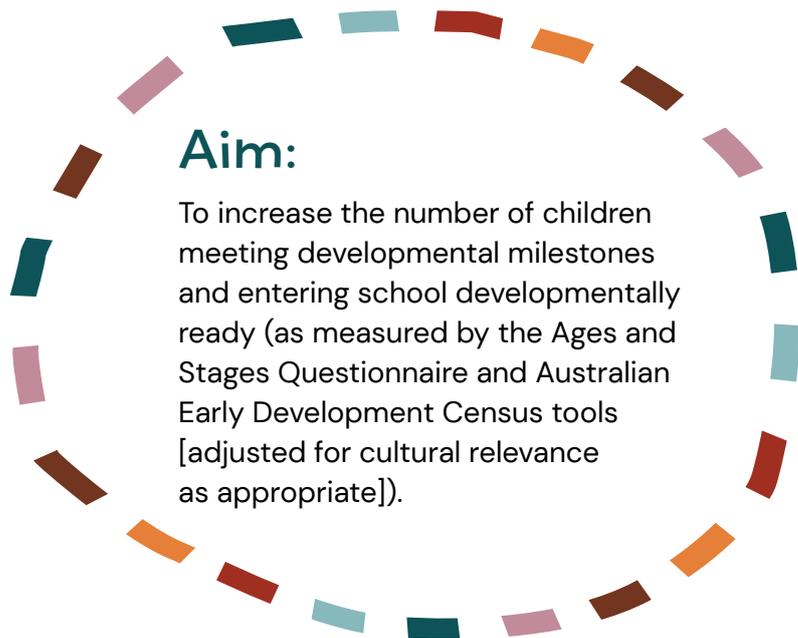




Bidyadanga Priorities

This section outlines each of the priority areas to improve child wellbeing and school readiness in Bidyadanga. Each section includes a brief overview of evidence and local data to support the priority area, an overarching aim, specific objectives, and actions.





Aim:

To increase the number of children meeting developmental milestones and entering school developmentally ready (as measured by the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and Australian Early Development Census tools [adjusted for cultural relevance as appropriate]).



Child Development

Evidence:

Child development refers to the physical and psychological growth of a child from conception through to early childhood. In Western Australia, child health checks are available for all children at five time points (14 days, 8 weeks, 4 months, 12 months, 2 years) through the ages and stages questionnaire (ASQ). These health checks help to understand the child's growth and detect any developmental delay. Evidence has demonstrated links between increased health checks and enhanced referrals, especially for psychosocial problems in children, but availability of timely care for these referrals is a concern due to significant waitlists for child development services in Western Australia.

Local data:

In the first year of full-time primary school, all children are assessed for development using the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). Child development data specific to Bidyadanga is not available due to the small population so this data is incorporated into the larger data set of Roebuck SA2.⁵ This data tells us that almost half of the children (41%) in the region are developmentally vulnerable as measured by the AEDC.





Objective 1:

To increase the number of children attending universal health checks with a child health nurse.

Local level action	Systems level action
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LA1. Co-design and implement strategies to improve attendance at child health checks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SA1. To explore innovative models of delivery of child health checks (e.g. online).• SA2. Provision of transport options to assist parents and children to attend child health checks.

Objective 2:

To increase engagement with early education through more children regularly attending early learning programs such as playgroups and KindiLink.

Local level action	Systems level action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SA3. To ensure that KindiLink has appropriate facilities including child-friendly bathrooms.• SA4. Provision of transport options to help parents take children to early learning activities.

Objective 3:

To increase parent knowledge of early brain development.

Local level action	Systems level action
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LA2. Distribute the Brain Boxes education tool (supplied by the Early Years Partnership) to professionals working with families in early years settings.• LA3. Engage in conversations/ activities about the importance of brain development.• LA4. Continue participation in early years programs, for example, Building Babies Brains.	





The Bidyadanga Family Centre

The Bidyadanga Family Centre was created by Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange (BACLG) Inc. with the support of the Early Years Partnership, officially opening in July 2022. The Family Centre provides a welcoming and culturally safe space for families to engage with agencies and programs that support child and family wellbeing. \$20,000 was provided to BACLG by the Early Years Partnership which supported building renovations and establishment of gardens. The Family Centre is now a bright space with beautiful local artwork, gardens and functional areas.

The need for this Centre is clear: the first event took place two hours after the driveway was complete. The Centre has hosted parenting workshops, child-medical assessments, family counselling services and playgroups. The Bidyadanga community believes a holistic approach to family wellness is the most effective way to improve

outcomes for children. The Centre has become a hub for all agencies with links to children or families across a diverse range of services.

The Family Centre is run by BACLG staff. The Centre hosts meetings for the Local EYP Working Group and has become the central point when discussing joint projects with local partners, including the school, police, and community clinic. For example, in August 2023, the school principal, clinic manager, and child health nurse met at the Family Centre to discuss the possibility of working together to target all children aged four years and under for their universal health checks. A plan was devised to cover the logistics of a mobile clinic. The health checks successfully engaged more than twice the expected number of children (19 children, almost half the number of 0-4 year olds in the community) and 13 caregivers.

This local collaboration has also included working closely with KindiLink, targeting support to families who are not attending to improve the health and wellness of the family unit and thereby work towards better engagement with early learning. Child and maternal health assessments also now take place at the Family Centre.

BACLG liaises with visiting organisations, promotes their services to families and provides a culturally safe space at the Family Centre for families to access their services.

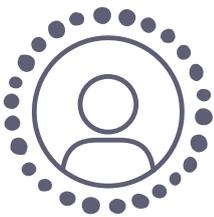
There has been tremendous support from partner agencies. BACLG are optimistic about the future of Bidyadanga because of the way local agencies work together to improve outcomes for children and their families.





Aim:

To strengthen cultural identity and overall wellbeing of parents and carers to enable positive parenting practices.



Parent Health

Evidence:

Supportive parenting practices in early childhood are associated with improved child development.⁶ Parental mental health is a significant contributor to the quality of interactions that parents have with their children,⁷ and is associated with harsher disciplinary methods and fewer positive parenting practices such as rewarding good behaviour, and talking to children about problems.⁸ Strong connection to culture is also associated with positive outcomes across multiple socio-economic and wellbeing indicators, including higher levels of employment, lower levels of arrests, and good health.⁹

Data:

There are limited data sources that provide evidence of mental health challenges in Bidiyadanga. However, qualitative data from community consultations has shown that parent health is impacted by social and emotional stress and is linked to alcohol and drug use which all impact good parenting practices.

Parent health and wellbeing can both be impacted by and result in family violence. Department of Communities data shows that more than one in four (28 per cent) of all children aged 0–4 years old in Bidiyadanga interacted with family violence over the 12 months from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. This means the children were either victims of family violence or were present when family violence occurred.



Strong connection to culture supports positive parent and child wellbeing.

Objective 1:

To improve the physical and mental health of dad’s and carers with young children to enable positive parenting practices.

Local level action	Systems level action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA5. Provide holistic service provision in a culturally safe space to support men’s mental wellbeing and parenting practices, this could include parenting yarning circles, perpetrator accountability programs and mental health counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA5. To develop a culturally appropriate space for men to engage with their own health and wellbeing as caregivers, their parenting practices and their child/ren’s wellbeing. • SA6. Establish a sustainable operational model for program delivery from the men’s space.

Objective 2:

To improve overall parent and carer health.

Local level action	Systems level action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA6. Provide regular health and wellbeing classes for men and women. • LA7. Promote and continue to provide annual health checks for men and women (i.e. Indigenous Health Checks – MBS 715). • LA8. Co-design culturally appropriate parent wellbeing programs. • LA9. Reinstate Palya Mayi (good food) into the local food store. Palya Mayi is a coding system to assist with the easy identification of healthier choices at the local store. • LA10. Co-design an in-store initiative that includes recipes with shelf promotions of healthy and cheaper food choices within store (and package with cooking demonstrations where resources are available). 	





Bidyadanga Men's Space

The need for a culturally safe space for men to gain skills, build relationships, and connect discretely with health and wellness experts was identified as a priority by community members during an Early Years Partnership planning meeting. While there has been improved outcomes for women and families through their engagement at the Family Centre and Women's Centre, there was no service like this for the men who are also an important part of the family unit and the community.

The Men's Centre has been established to provide a space for men to connect daily to receive respite and services discretely. The program has seen early solid engagement, with many men attending daily, even before it has officially opened.

Men who have not participated in many community programs visit the Men's Centre daily to break up their day and receive respite through a cup of coffee and a chat. News of the centre has been spread by word of mouth and advertising on social media.

Before this culturally safe space was identified, some services operated in Bidyadanga, however there was no discrete meeting area so women and children in the community were aware of the services men were accessing. This resulted in low engagement in mental health counselling, alcohol and drug counselling and domestic violence behaviour-changing workshops as men felt shame about the community knowing what courses and services they were engaging with.



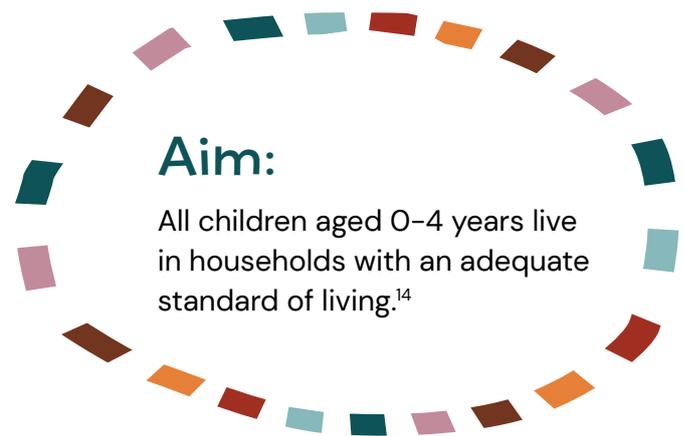
With a culturally safe place established in the community, BACLG have already seen men's engagement increase. This includes respite, as well as engagement with services such as mental health counsellors, financial planners, Sexually Transmitted Infection specialists, and employment services. The long-term goal is to coordinate services for men in the community and to schedule services for the men in a discrete and culturally safe manner.

Providing services through the centre will improve men's health, job readiness, wellness and wellbeing resulting in a safer and healthier community and better outcomes for children and families.

As well as regular visiting services, the centre will host a men's health and wellbeing on-country camp with 20 local participants, 10 visiting agencies, and local ranger groups. The intent is to build relationships between the men and the agencies so that men understand what services are available and whom to approach if they need assistance.

This project has been a collaboration between the Early Years Partnership, Connected Beginnings, Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange (BACLG) Inc., and Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS). Sponsors include BACLG, KAMS, Minderoo, The Local Drug Action Group (LDAG), ConnectGroups, MIB Employment Services, and Bidyadanga Store.





Aim:

All children aged 0-4 years live in households with an adequate standard of living.¹⁴



Family Financial Wellbeing

Evidence:

Children living in households experiencing financial hardship are at greater risk of poor health and educational outcomes, both in the short and long term.¹⁰ Children from low-income families are more likely to experience psychological or social difficulties, behaviour problems, lower self-regulation, and higher physiological markers of stress.¹¹ Low income can also affect a child's diet and access to medical care, the safety of their environment, level of stress in the family, quality and stability of their care and provision of appropriate housing, heating, and clothing.¹² Poverty is the underpinning determinant of food security and solutions require system change at multiple levels. By addressing the priorities of housing, income and electricity supply, food security will be improved.

Data:

More than six in 10 families in Bidyadanga receive income of less than \$1000 per week, and one in four families receive incomes less than \$500 per week.¹³ Approximately three in four (76%) children aged 0-4 years in Bidyadanga live in a family where no parent is employed (this contrasts with the Kimberley and Western Australian average of 33% and 14% respectively).





Objective 1:

Improve employment readiness and opportunities within Bidyadanga to increase household incomes.

Local level action

- **LA11.** Provide opportunities for employment readiness through the Women's Centre, Early Years Centre and Men's Shed.
- **LA12.** Engage employment agencies to support caregivers with children 0-4 years with employment readiness.
- **LA13.** Mentor the local early years workforce to build capacity for sustainable employment.

Systems level action

Objective 2:

To index welfare payments to reflect the increased cost of living in 'very remote' communities, and thereby increase household income of local recipients.

Local level action

Systems level action

- **SA7.** Early Years Partnership Board to engage with the Australian Government regarding the need for a 'very remote' category in the Remote Area Allowance to ensure welfare payments reflect the cost of food, fuel, and power in very remote communities.





Objective 3:

To streamline paperwork requirements across government services (Centrelink, Medicare) to ensure families can access financial services they are eligible for.

Local level action

- **LA14.** Continue to work with the government agencies and banking teams that deliver services in Bidyadanga to simplify access to services.

Systems level action

- **SA8.** Identify and adopt existing or future technology that streamlines paperwork requirements for all government (Centrelink, Medicare) and/or business (banking) financial services.

Objective 4:

To improve access to banking for community members in Bidyadanga.

Local level action

- **LA15.** Continue to work with local banking partners to identify barriers to access and co-design locally streamlined service delivery for both deposits, withdrawals, and transfers.

Systems level action





Aim:

To create the physical and social infrastructure in the community that strengthens cultural identity of families and supports families to care for their children.



Community Physical and Social Aspects

Evidence:

Multiple factors contribute towards early childhood developmental outcomes including the social and physical environments in which they are raised. If the community is safe and strong, its children will feel safe and strong. There is compelling evidence of association between geographic disadvantage and the developmental outcomes of young children, and the built environment is one way this can be addressed.¹⁵ This can range from safe and secure housing to child-friendly community

facilities and the application of urban design principles such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).¹⁶

The quality and design of housing can have major implications for people’s health. Ensuring housing is safe and functional to support healthy living practices, and suitable to the environmental conditions can reduce disease, increase quality of life, and reduce poverty.¹⁷

Creating a socially connected community has been linked to reduced rates of criminal activity.¹⁸ This relates to child development of 0–4 years through creation of healthier role models for 0–4 years and stronger families.

Data:

On Census night 2021, the Australian Bureau of Statistics recorded a total of 177 private dwellings (151 occupied and 26 unoccupied).¹⁹ Of these, the Department of Communities manages 137 dwellings under a Housing Management Agreement and 27 Government Regional Officers Housing (GROH) properties.

If the community is safe and strong, its children will feel safe and strong.

Objective 1:

To improve access to fit-for-purpose housing in Bidyadanga.²⁰

Local level action	Systems level action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA9. To identify opportunities to work in partnership with BACLG to define fit-for-purpose housing and increase the number of fit-for-purpose houses available in Bidyadanga for community members either through new construction or refurbishment of existing housing as per demonstrated need and available funding.

Objective 2:

Reduce the overall cost of living in Bidyadanga through sustainable and reliable energy supply.

Local level action	Systems level action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA10. To investigate options to increase renewable power utilised by households in Bidyadanga through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. exploring renewable energy options relevant to the Bidyadanga community and developing costings for the preferred option, b. implement preferred renewable energy option, dependent on available funding.

Objective 3:

To create a community where families feel confident and safe raising their children.

Local level action	Systems level action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA16. Provide a safe space for youth to engage with healthy recreational activities. • LA17. To co-design with youth a coordinated set of actions that promote engagement and re-orient their activities away from crime. Specific programs to be explored include: Fair Game, Garnduwa, The Yiriman project/ranger program. • LA18. Strengthen advocacy skills to empower community members to act locally against behaviour that impacts on child wellbeing, e.g. family violence, drug and alcohol, late night parties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA11. Develop a community participation mechanism for the Council to provide feedback on how government funding and programs are distributed or delivered in the community. • SA12. Develop a community cultural centre.



Community Service Aspects



The service aspect of community relates to the quality, scope, range, quantity, access (cost, location, frequency, and cultural safety) and coordination of services that support families in the community to raise developmentally healthy children.

Evidence:

Child development is impacted by access to the quality and quantity of services available to support children (aged 0–4 years) and their parents. The availability and coordination of service delivery also impacts this healthy development.

Data:

Community consultations highlighted the need for coordinated service delivery. It is essential that community members know what services are visiting, how frequently they are visiting and there is a preference for a consistent, family centric, non-judgmental presence to build trust and rapport. Local knowledge suggests that approximately 72 services regularly visit Bidyadanga.

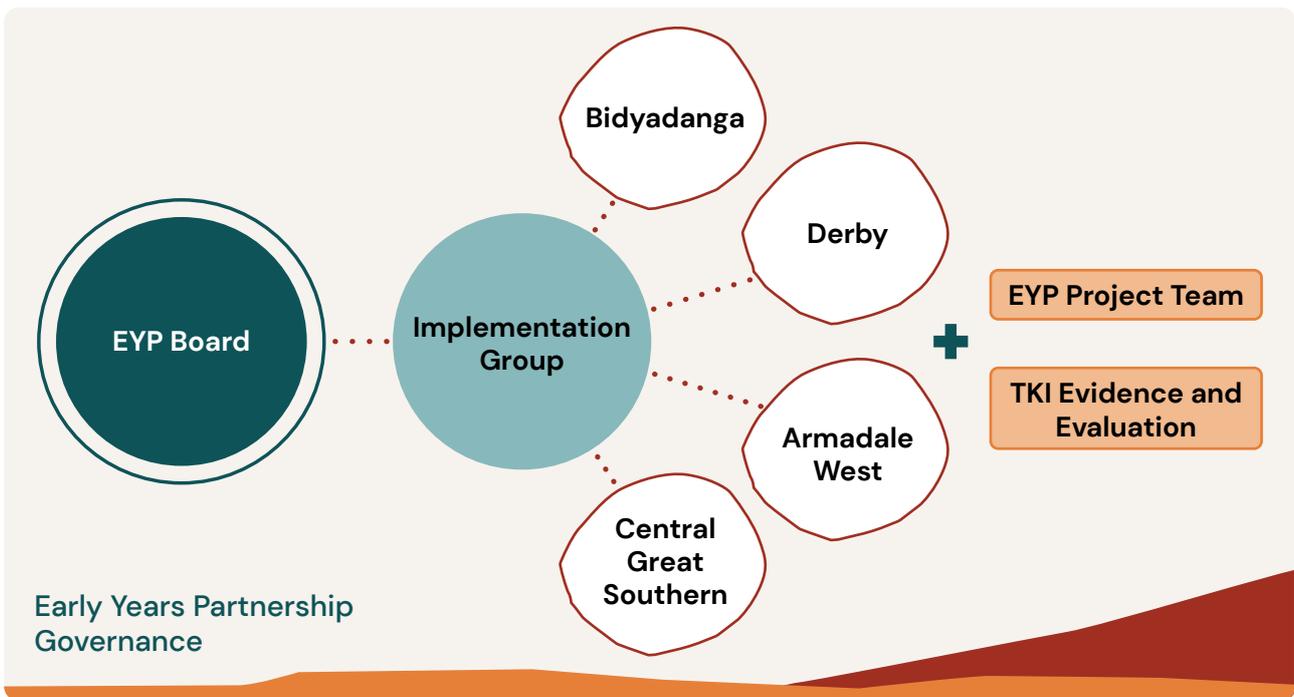
Objective:

To ensure all services within Bidyadanga are culturally safe, well networked, and accessible to all community members.

Local level action	Systems level action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA19. To continue to raise community awareness of and connection to services that visit Bidyadanga. • LA20. Engage services in current culturally safe community spaces (family centre, women’s centre, clinic and men’s space) and ensure good communication between service providers to support ease of transition for community members between services. • LA21. Connected Beginnings partners facilitate connections between community members and service providers. • LA22. Provide a mechanism to support all service providers to be culturally aware. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA13. To increase the number of accommodation options available in Bidyadanga for visiting service providers. • SA14. Develop a formal partnership agreement between local services, to share information about families, to reduce the need for families to repeat their stories and increase holistic support that can be provided.

Governance

Governance of the Early Years Partnership is three-tiered with an executive level board, an implementation group and a local working group. This encourages and enables both system level changes and community-led changes.



Early Years Partnership Board

The Early Years Partnership Board creates the authorising environment and mobilises the resources that enables the delivery of the partnership. The Board meets quarterly²¹ to provide strategic direction, oversee the delivery of the partnership, ensure agreed outcomes and targets are achieved and that any emerging risks or issues are appropriately managed. It also provides advice and direction when issues are raised by the community. The Early Years Partnership Board includes two independent co-chairs and representatives from the partner organisations:

- Matthew Cox, Independent Co-Chair
- Glenda Kickett, Independent Co-Chair
- Mike Rowe, Director General, Department of Communities
- Jay Weatherill AO, CEO Thrive by Five, Minderoo Foundation
- Juan Larrañaga, Policy and Portfolio Manager Thrive by Five, Minderoo Foundation
- Jeff Moffet, Chief Executive Western Australia Country Health Service (WACHS), Department of Health
- Lisa Rodgers, Director General, Department of Education,
- Jacqueline McGowan-Jones, Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Implementation Group

The Board is assisted by an Implementation Group which includes representatives from the partner agencies plus the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and Telethon Kids Institute. The Implementation Group meets fortnightly to:

- oversee the scope, schedule and overall delivery of activities that enable the development and progress of Community Plans and the Early Years Partnership as a whole,
- respond to and resolve issues that are raised by the community via community governance,
- provide advice, recommendations, and updates to the Board, including escalating matters that cannot be resolved by the Implementation Group
- approve funding for actions that require new resources as per agreed Community Plans within its funding delegation.

▼ Bidyadanga Council, BACLG staff and EYP Project Team.



Community Working Group

The Local Working Group comprises community representatives from a variety of organisations, ensuring local knowledge, engagement and ownership of solutions and activities, including identifying opportunities and managing local level risk. The Local Working Group oversees the development and implementation of the local community plan.

The group works together to provide specialist advice, local knowledge, and transparent decision making, to inform the strategic and operational priorities of the Early Years Partnership in Bidyadanga and ensure these are successfully achieved to meet the local need.

Bidyadanga La Grange is overseen by a Council, made up of local representatives. Significant decisions made by the Community Working Group, such as endorsement of this Community Plan, are presented to the Council for final decision.

The 15 members of the local working group include:

- two local community members – representatives of parent's voice in the community
- four school representatives – including one member of the school leadership team
- two child health specialists
- seven service representatives – from organisations that provide services to families (including two community members)
- one District Leadership Group representative
- one Senior Community Engagement Officer

Other relevant stakeholders are invited to participate on an as needs basis.

Connected Beginnings

Each Early Years Partnership community is supported by Connected Beginnings, a Commonwealth funded initiative. Connected Beginnings facilitates greater integration of services to ensure children have the best chance to reach developmental milestones before school. Connected Beginnings uses a collective impact approach meaning community members and organisations work together to:

- identify the community's strengths, skills and resources,
- identify issues affecting their community,
- co-design solutions to these issues.

In Bidyadanga, Bidyadanga Aboriginal Corporation La Grange (BACLG) is the Connected Beginnings partner for early education services and the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service (KAMS) is the Connected Beginnings partner for child health services.



Monitoring and Evaluation

The Early Years Partnership evaluation will incorporate a range of measures to capture the effectiveness of the initiative. That is, what works, for whom and under what circumstances in improving child wellbeing and school readiness for children aged 0–4 years in four distinct types of communities (metropolitan, rural, remote and very remote).

The Early Years Partnership will be evaluated using the Developmental Evaluation Framework. Developmental Evaluation is used to evaluate innovative, radical program design, and complex issues. This framework can help by framing concepts, test quick iterations, track developments, and monitor arising issues.

The Early Years Partnership evaluation aims to capture change at three levels: child, family, and community. Several linked data sets will be used to measure change in outcomes for children over time. Family outcomes will be captured using a series of online and hard copy surveys, and through other methods co-developed with communities. To measure changes in the strength of collaborations between organisations, innovative methods such as the use of a 'virtual' map of services

targeting 0–4-year-olds in the community sites. This 'virtual' map will be overlaid by a social network analysis that will be used to 'fact check' service access, reach and strength of collaboration between services.

Critical to the Early Years Partnership's aim of learning what it takes to create change for all Western Australian children is understanding 'how' the initiative made an impact. Concepts from 'Implementation Science' will be used to understand how implementation occurred within the communities and what implementation strategies were most effective. The PRISM (Practical Robust Implementation and Sustainability Model)²² framework will be used to support the development of strategies for each action. RE-AIM is a framework used to guide the planning and evaluation of programs according to the five key RE-AIM outcomes: Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation, and Maintenance. RE-AIM framework will be utilised to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the major strategies within each priority area.







Conclusion

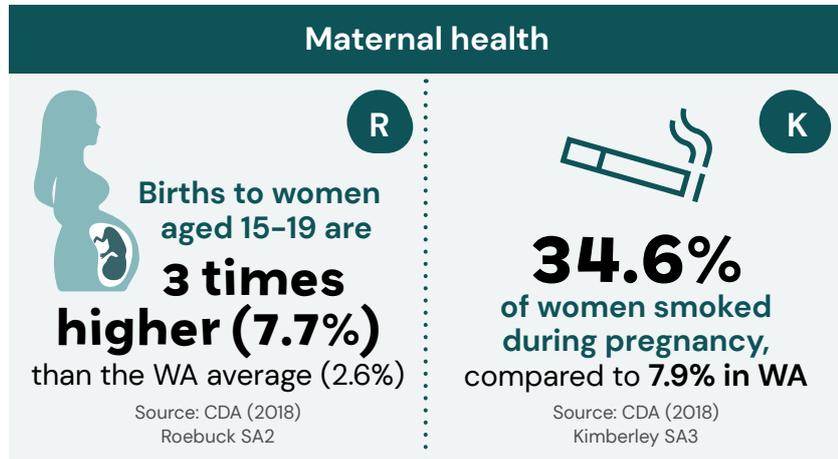
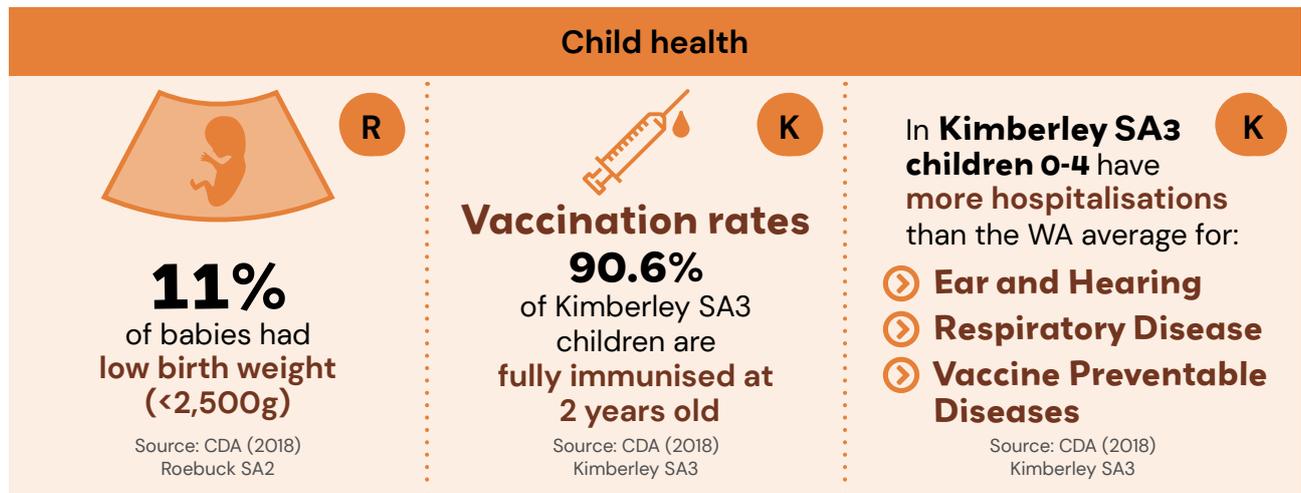
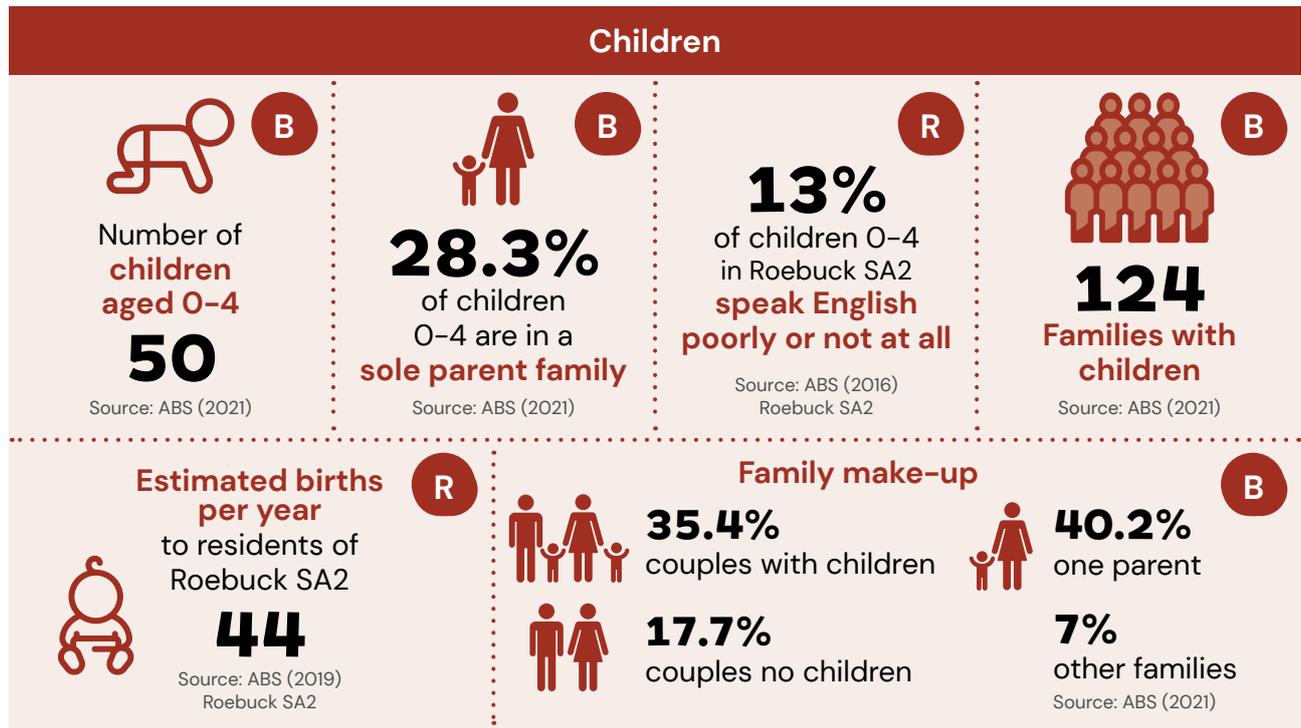
This Community Plan represents the next stage in the Early Years Partnership for families living in Bidyadanga. It provides a roadmap for continuous improvement for children and families in the community over the next five years.

This Plan is an active document that will be reviewed annually and updated as required to ensure it stays up to date and relevant, including the addition of new actions as they are identified. More detailed implementation plans will be developed to allocate responsibilities and ensure accountability of delivery across the partnership.

While the community continues to lead and implement local level actions, the Early Years Partnership team will continue to engage experts across the sector and key actors across the system.

The Early Years Partnership is committed to working together with the Bidyadanga community to improve child wellbeing and school readiness and in doing so learn what it takes to create change for all Western Australian children.

Appendix A – Bidyadanga Data Snapshot



Education



B

13%
of school students
(Yr 1-10)
attend school more
than 90% of the time

Source: My Schools website (2019)



B

66.7%
of homes
have internet
access

Source: ABS (2016)

**Australian
Early Development
Census**

R

40.9%
of children are
vulnerable on one or
more domains

Source: AEDC (2021)
Roebuck SA2

Hospitalisation



K

**Hearing related
hospitalisations for
0-4 year olds**

3.6
per 100 persons aged 0-4
(compared with 1.9 for WA)

Source: CDA (2018)
Kimberley SA3

Language

66.6% of people
speak only English
at home

B



28.2%
of people
speak an Australian
Indigenous language

Source: ABS (2021)

**Main other
languages spoken**

B

16.5% Kriol
4.5% Karajarri
3.4% Mangala
2.5% Walmajarri
2.1% Yulparija



Source: ABS (2016)

Community

**Highest level
of education**

B



12% Year 10
20% Year 11
31% Year 12

Source: ABS (2016)

**Index of relative
socio-economic
disadvantage**

R

**Roebuck
SA2 =
709**



which is in the
lowest decile

Source: ABS (2016)
Roebuck SA2

Economy

Workforce

B



28.8% work full-time
18.8% work part-time
50.3% are unemployed
1.6% are away

Source: ABS (2016)



B

**Weekly income
for family households**

62.5%
less than \$1,000
16.1%
more than \$2,000

Source: ABS (2021)

Key: Data availability

B

Data available for
Bidyadanga SA1

R

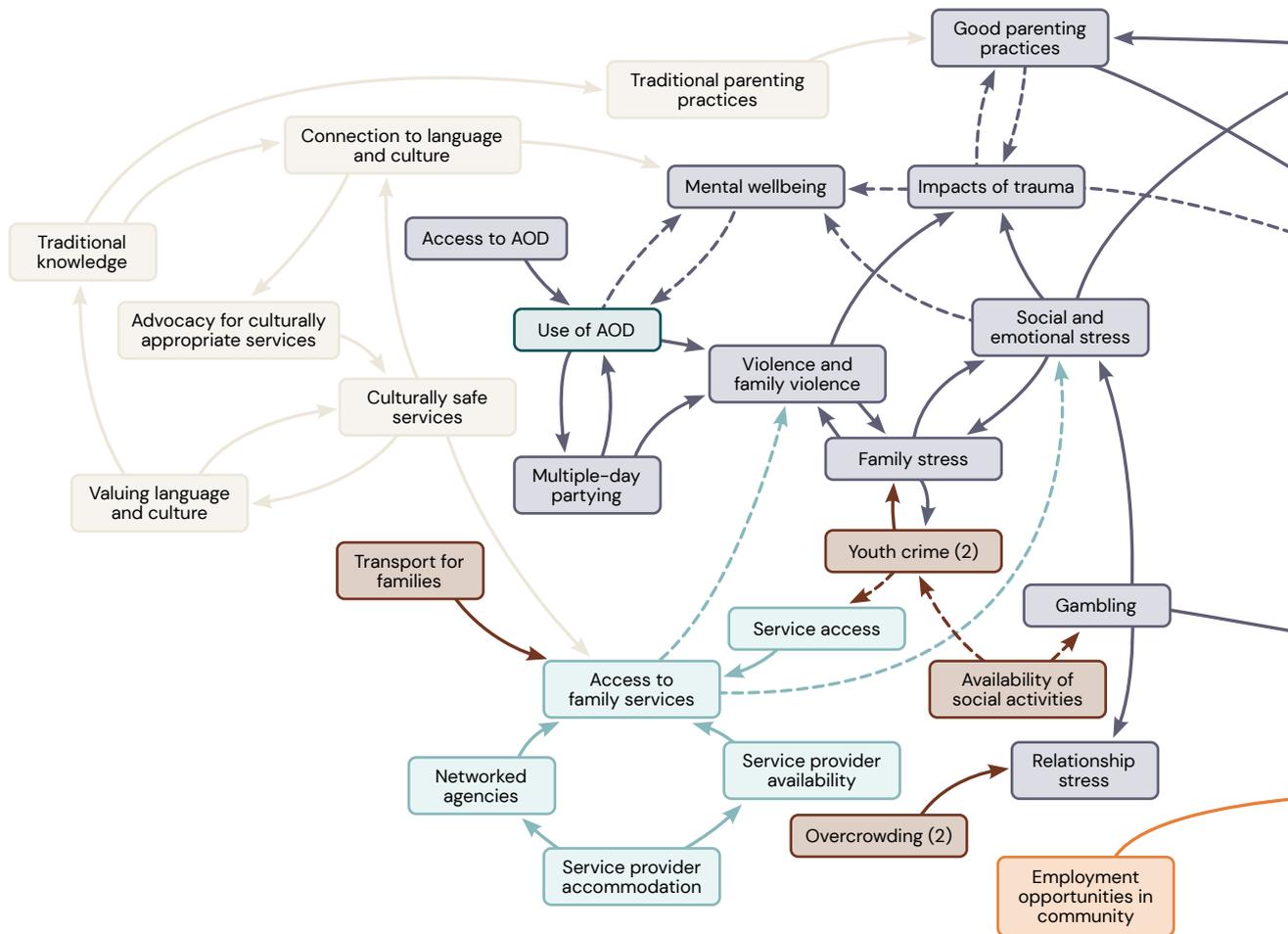
Data available only
for Roebuck SA2
(excludes Broome)

K

Data available only
for Kimberley SA3

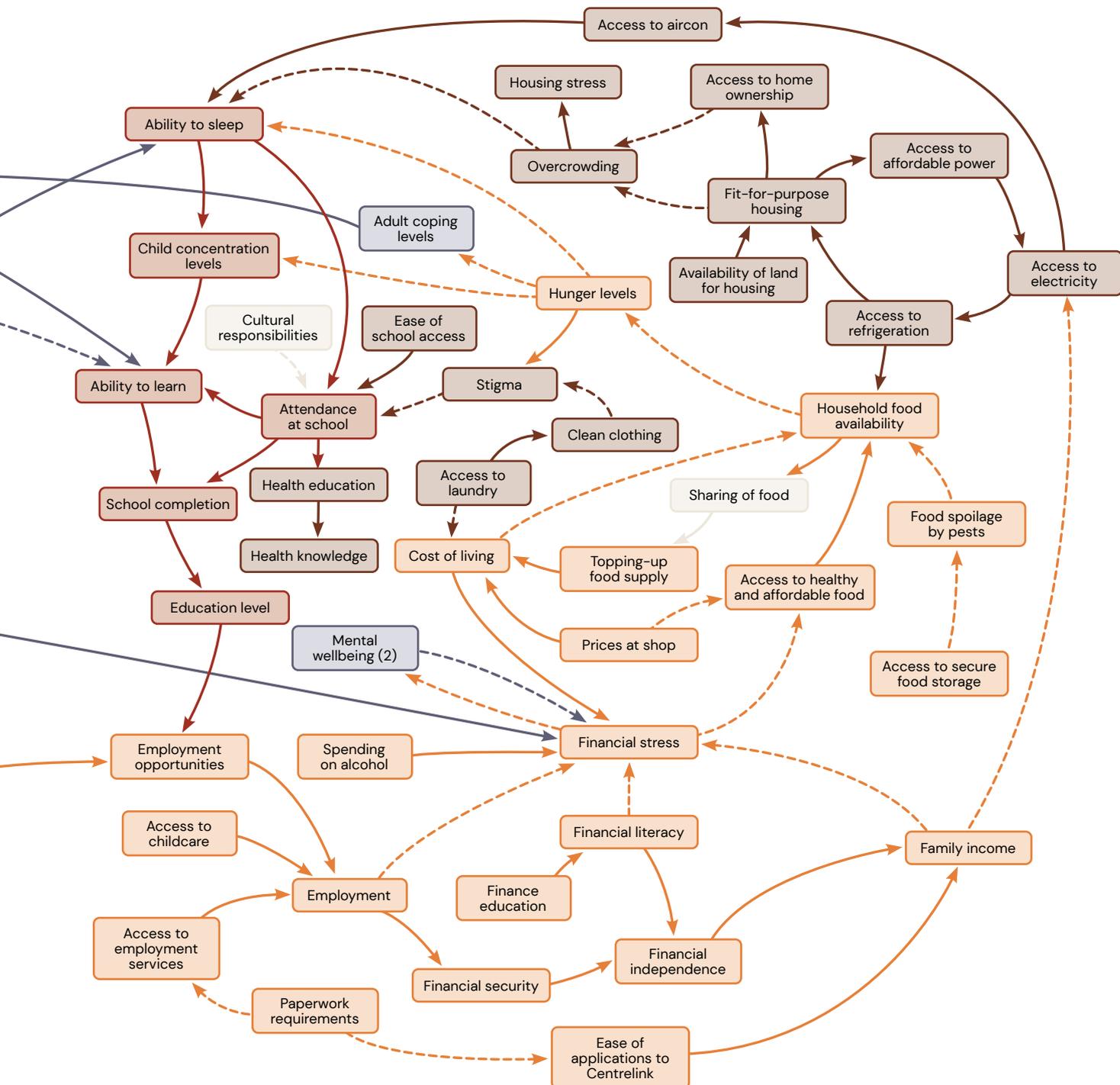
Appendix B – Causal Loop Diagram

What are the things that have the greatest impact on families and communities raising babies and kids (0-4 yrs)



Priority Areas

 Child Development	 Parent Health	 Family Financial Wellbeing
 Community Physical and Social Aspects	 Community Services Aspects	Culture and language



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Appendix C –

Potential Additional Actions

In addition to the priority actions identified in this Community Plan, community participants in the Group Model Building workshops identified potential additional actions which will be investigated further. These are outlined below. This community plan is a living document and new actions will be added during the life of this plan as new priorities emerge and existing priorities are met.



Priority area: Child development

Action Idea	Description
Parent and school co-design of early childhood education – 0–3 years	<p>Work together to ensure families have more knowledge about what their child should know or be able to do/learn through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• connecting families with KindiLink• connecting families with Family Centre services• better coordination of service delivery from service perspective• provision of wrap-around services for families• raising awareness of role of services and link families with relevant services.
Provide social activities for children in Bidyadanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bidyadanga Olympics (or obstacle course) – an event that brings together fun and movement, includes all ages (could include cultural activities) – links to other youth activities in family safety (prevention of youth crime).• Linking agencies together for comprehensive youth activities (e.g. activity, food, safe environments).• Activities outside of ‘work hours’ to provide respite through recreation and educational wellbeing for children, young people and their families.



Priority area: Financial wellbeing

Action Idea	Description
Food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand lunch program at school, including exploration of the provision of free lunches.• Utilise cooking classes at school to cook food for younger children during school hours.• Extend the hours of the existing breakfast club to better suit the demand of students.• Develop and implement holiday food programs to address the lack of food availability for children during school holidays.• To work with the local food store to subsidise healthier choices (make healthy food cheaper than less healthy options).



Priority area:
Financial wellbeing (continued)

Action Idea	Description
Meal preparation in the home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pest control and maintenance of cooking equipment – access to affordable pest control – impacts food storage. Also impacts child development as it is not safe for the child to move around the house.
Access to supplies from Broome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore feasibility of a of bus run to town and a click and collect access for Bidyadanga online purchases – (access for community to order supplies from Broome supermarkets with delivery a few times a week).
Access to childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore ways in which childcare could be provided in the community so that parents have more opportunities to work or become work-ready.
Provision of baby supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding and expanding networks to provide families with baby supplies to provide more mobility and freedom to move around the community (home to KindiLink or school with one or more children). This would also ensure easier access to school and so encourage attendance.
Meal preparation in the home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long term investment in fresh food gardens providing healthy, affordable food for the table and creating employment and business opportunities.

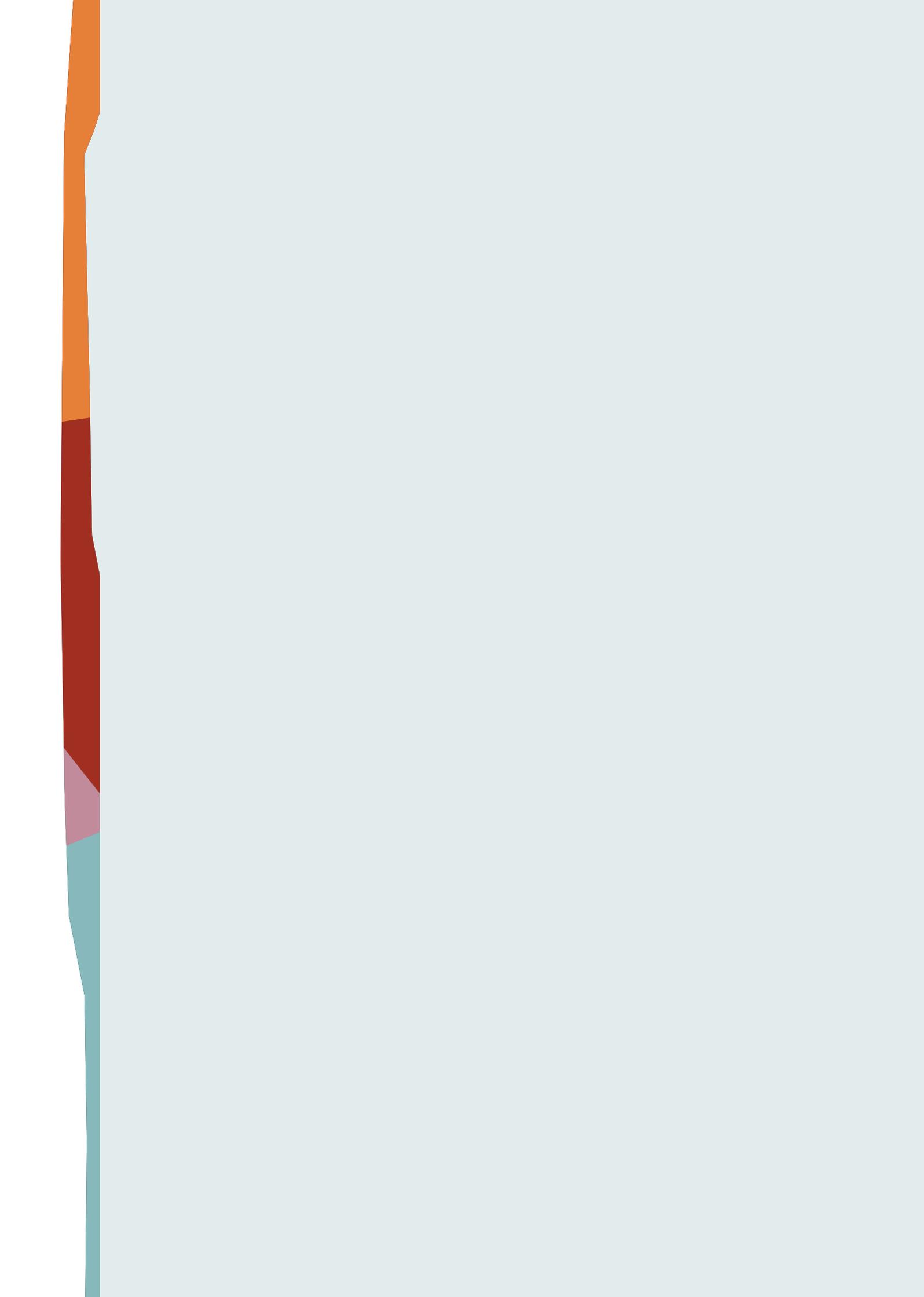


Priority area:
Community physical and social aspects

Action Idea	Description
Meal provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community dinner – provide dinner during the week and/or cooking classes (could also enhance social relationships and strengthen community to deal with other problems).

Endnotes

- 1 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census.
- 2 AEDC measures five domains: physical health and wellbeing; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills; communication skills and general knowledge. This measure has been shown to be a reliable predictor of literacy and numeracy in later primary school years. Between 2007 and 2009, revisions were made to the tool to make it more culturally appropriate for Aboriginal children with a preference that the AEDC measure be administered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with an Indigenous Cultural consultant present. In 2020, AEDC was included in Closing the Gap targets with a strengths-based focus and movement from 'developmentally vulnerable' to 'developmentally on track'. The latest AEDC data (2021) shows that 57% of all Western Australian children and 31% of Aboriginal children were developmentally on track across all five domains.
- 3 Commonwealth of Australia and Department of Education, Western Australia, 2019. Early childhood development for children living in Western Australia by region: Australian Early Development Census 2018. Accessible via <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/dl/vnnm73>. Note: Child development data specific to Bidyadanga is not available due to the small population so this data is incorporated into the larger data set of Roebuck SA2.
- 4 [Connected Beginnings – Department of Education, Australian Government](#)
- 5 Roebuck RA2 covers 55 343 km², population approximately 2500 so may not accurately reflect the situation in Bidyadanga, however this is the best data source available.
- 6 Bornstein MH, Putnick DL, Suwalsky JTD. Parenting cognitions → parenting practices → child adjustment? The standard model. Development and psychopathology. 2018; 30:399–416.
- 7 Reupert, A.E., Maybery, D.J., & Kowalenko, N.M. (2013). Children whose parents have a mental illness: Prevalence, need and treatment. *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 199(3), 7–9.
- 8 Millward C, Matthews J, Wade C, Forbes F, Seward A. Parent Mental Health (Research Brief). Melbourne, Australia: Parenting Research Centre 2018.
- 9 Dockery AM. Culture and Wellbeing: The Case of Indigenous Australians. Social indicators research. 2010; 99:315–32.
- 10 Ryan RM, Fauth RC, Brooks-Gunn J. Childhood poverty: Implications for school readiness and early childhood education. In: Saracho ON, Spodek B, editors. Handbook of research on the education of young children. New York: Routledge; 2013. p. 301–21.
- 11 Barnett MA. Economic disadvantage in complex family systems: Expansion of family stress models. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*. 2008;11(3):145–61.
- 12 Australian Government, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. A picture of Australia's children 2012. Cat. no. PHE 167. Canberra AIHW; 2012.
- 13 ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021.
- 14 Australia is a party to seven core international human rights treaties including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). ICESCR recognises that everyone has a right to adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/rights-and-freedoms/right-adequate-standard-living-including-food-water-and-housing>
- 15 Villanueva, K., Badland, H., Alderton, A., Higgs, C. Turrell, G. Goldfeld, S. (2020). Creating and testing neighbourhood built environment indicators for better child development outcomes. Australian Early Development Census – Built Environment (AEDC-BE) study. Murdoch Children's Research Institute and RMIT University: Melbourne, Australia <https://www.rch.org.au/uploadedFiles/Main/Content/ccch/images/CCCH-AEDC-BE-Report-December-2020.pdf>
- 16 <https://www.cpted.net/Primer-in-CPTED>
- 17 WHO Housing and health guidelines. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
- 18 Bryan A. Stuart, Evan J. Taylor; The Effect of Social Connectedness on Crime: Evidence from the Great Migration. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 2021; 103 (1): 18–33. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/rest_a_00860.
- 19 A dwelling is a structure which is intended to have people live in it, and which is habitable on Census Night. Examples of dwellings are houses, motels, flats, caravans, prisons, tents, humpies and houseboats. Private dwellings are enumerated using online or paper household forms, which obtain family and relationship data as well as information on the dwelling itself such as rent or mortgage payments and ownership.
- 20 'Fit-for-purpose' can mean housing that is safe, functional and built for the environmental conditions. A co-design approach needs to be taken with Aboriginal communities to ensure the housing supplied meets their needs. A one-size-fits-all approach doesn't allow for appreciation of how deep connections to country and kinship groups affect improving outcomes for Aboriginal families.
- 21 The Board may meet out of session if required.
- 22 <https://re-aim.org/>





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