



Our vision for change

Improving child wellbeing and school readiness for our children and learning what it takes to create change for all Western Australian children.



EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIP

Mowanjum

Wirriya Dunyji Ooba Babanil Ingun (Happy Strong Small Children)

Early Years Community Plan

2023



earlyyearspartnership.org.au

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DC1282_0823

Why we need change

In the Derby community (including Mowanjum) approximately

1 in 2



children are considered developmentally vulnerable.¹



1 AEDC 2021.

How we will create change

Six key priorities have been identified locally to improve the wellbeing and school readiness of children living in Mowanjum.



Child Health – To improve the health of babies and children and to increase the proportion of children entering school who meet the developmental physical domain (AEDC).



Child development – To increase the number of children meeting developmental milestones and entering school developmentally ready.²



Family safety – To reduce the number of children (aged 0-4) who have interactions with family and domestic violence.



Family financial and wellbeing – Children aged 0-4 years live in households with an adequate standard of living.



Community service aspects – To provide a culturally safe and coordinated health and wellbeing system for families and children.



Community physical and social aspects – To create the physical and social infrastructure in the community that enables families to care for their children.

2 As measured by the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ3) and Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) tools (adjusted for cultural relevance as appropriate).



Who will be involved

The Mowanjum community, broader Derby partners, State Government, the Minderoo Foundation and Telethon Kids Institute (TKI) as evidence and evaluation partner, are working in partnership to create change. The West Australian Government participates via the Department of Communities (lead partner), Department of Education and the Department of Health. Ngunga Group Women's Aboriginal Corporation are the Connected Beginnings partner.

What we will do to create change

The detailed Wirriya Dunyji Ooba Babanil Ingun – early years plan that outlines actions for change can be found at earlyyearspartnership.org.au





Child health

Aim: To improve the health of babies and children and to increase the proportion of children entering school who meet the developmental physical domain (AEDC).

Objective 1:

To increase children's nutritional intake.

Local level action:

- **LA1.** Provision of food at early education services e.g. playgroups.
- **LA2.** Run healthy eating programs for carers with young children, including packing a healthy lunch box.

Objective 2:

To increase access to child and family health services.

Local level action:

- **LA3.** Hold a 'Child Health Day' for community members to see visiting service providers, get referrals and health checks and participate in a variety of child focused activities in one place at one time.
- **LA4.** DAHS and WACHS to develop a communication mechanism to better coordinate health services in Mowanjum.

System level action:

- **SA1.** Re-establish a health clinic in Mowanjum to provide access to general health services.
- **SA2.** Co-design and deliver an early identification program for all pregnant women to improve first trimester antenatal screening.



Child development

Aim: To increase the number of children meeting developmental milestones and entering school developmentally ready.

Objective 1:

To strengthen cultural identity and social confidence through supporting the transfer of cultural knowledge from Elders to children.

Local level action:

- **LA6.** Arrange back to country trips for Elders with children, parents/ caregivers, and service providers.

Objective 2:

To increase parent knowledge of early brain development, child wellbeing and school readiness.

Local level action:

- **LA7.** Distribute the Brain Boxes education tool (supplied by the Early Years Partnership) to professionals working with families in early years settings, e.g., Kindilink and playgroups.
- **LA8.** Engage parents in conversations/ activities about the importance of brain development and school readiness in a variety of early years settings including Kindilink and playgroups.
- **LA9.** To engage local organisations (as far as possible) to deliver training to all early years education staff about the impacts of trauma and effective methods to support individuals and families who have experienced trauma.
- **LA10.** Run workshops for parents and carers about the importance of child development with content aligned to the approach used in the local early years services to ensure consistent messaging.⁴
- **LA11.** Encourage parents to bring their children to playgroups and stay to participate by cooking and sharing food as part of the program.
- **LA12.** Co-design and establish a playgroup specifically for dads and led by a male.

Objective 3:

To improve access to culturally safe early years education.

Local level action:

- **LA13.** Engage with early education providers to identify opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal ways of learning, being and doing into the curriculum, including out on country opportunities.
- **LA14.** Include young children in community-based school holiday activities.

System level action:

- **SA4.** Increase the number of ACCO-led, culturally appropriate childcare places by supporting the design and development of an ACCO-led early years education centre for children based in Derby.



Family safety

Aim: To reduce the number of children (aged 0-4) who have interactions with family and domestic violence.

Objective 1:

To improve the safety of children, families, and community members.

Local level action:

- **LA18.** Work with community leaders to establish the role of a Community Warden/Night Patrol to encourage good behaviour, keep community peace and help stop alcohol and drugs coming into the community.



Mowanjum Priorities³



Family financial wellbeing

Aim: Children aged 0-4 years live in households with an adequate standard of living.

Objective 1:

To increase training, job readiness and employment opportunities in the Derby Community, including access to childcare, to increase household incomes and purchasing power.

Local Level action:

- **LA 19.** Local Working Group to work with Kimberley training providers for a wider variety of training courses relevant to local industries to support employment opportunities.
- **LA21.** Investigate the development of employment and training opportunities so people can stay and work in the community.

System level action:

- **SA12.** To secure funding from the Commonwealth Department of Education Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) by accessing the restricted fund to supplement fee income for the proposed service to support families, to enable parents and carers to enter education, training or the workforce while supporting child development in a culturally safe environment (relates to SA4).
- **SA13.** To streamline paperwork requirements across government services (Centrelink, Medicare, births, deaths, and marriages) to support parents to access financial services they are eligible for after the birth of their child.
- **SA14.** Engage with the Australian Government regarding its review of the Community Development Program (CDP) to better support family financial wellbeing and increase community participation in local jobs.

Objective 2:

To improve financial literacy including bill payment management.

Local level action:

- **LA22.** Improve awareness about availability of financial assistance programs (such as the Hardship Utility Grants Scheme (HUGS), WA No Interest Loans Scheme (WA NILS), electricity card app), by delivering culturally safe information sessions and resources in all communities.
- **LA23.** Provide energy coaching to reduce the cost of living.
- **LA24.** Provide food education training using generic labelled foods, to reduce cost of living.
- **LA25.** Provide access to affordable white goods to help improve hygiene.



Community service aspects

Aim: To provide a culturally safe and coordinated health and wellbeing system for families and children.

Objective 1:

To improve the cultural safety of the health and wellbeing service system.

Local level action:

- **LA26.** Work with local services to improve the cultural appropriateness of services and promote awareness of these to community members.
- **LA27.** Co-design and introduce a cultural awareness check and certification for service providers (similar to a Working with Children Check or a Working with Vulnerable Persons Check), including through awareness training for staff.

Objective 2:

To ensure services within the Derby community are well networked, coordinated, and accessible to all community members.

Local level action:

- **LA28.** Connected Beginnings partners facilitate connections between families and service providers.

System level action:

- **SA15.** 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.



Community physical and social aspects

Aim: To create the physical and social infrastructure in the community that enables families to care for their children.

Objective 1:

To improve access to housing.

System level action:

- **SA16.** Increase available housing supply by refurbishing vacant homes or building new stock subject to demonstrated need and available funding.

Objective 2:

To improve access to basic amenities that support child and family health.

Local level action:

- **LA31.** To co-design with youth a coordinated set of actions that promote engagement and re-orient their activities away from undesirable behaviours.

System level action:

- **SA18.** Provide a safe space for youth to engage with healthy recreational activities.
- **SA19.** Re-establish and refurbish the community store to be run by the community for the community.

Objective 3:

To increase family friendly public space and facilities to support child development.

System level action:

- **SA23.** Develop a community playground including barbecue area and seating.

³ Please note the numbering in this 'Plan on a page' is related to the Derby Early Years Community Plan which includes Derby, Mowanjum and Pandanus Park. This 'plan on a page' refers to Mowanjum only. The detailed Community Plan can be found at earlyyearspartnership.org.au.

⁴ The current approach used is '3a' – a set of evidence-based teaching and learning strategies for early childhood educators and parents to use with children from birth to five – <https://education.unimelb.edu.au/3a>