



West Pilbara
**Communities
for Children**

West Pilbara Communities for Children

Community Strategic Plan

1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026



An Australian Government Initiative



Introduction

This Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is developed by the Communities for Children Facilitating Partner lead - Regional Development Pilbara, the independent Committee, all Facilitating Partners and the community. It sets out a broad vision for the West Pilbara identifying community needs, priorities, and key outcomes.

It identifies the key strengths, needs and service gaps in the West Pilbara community, considers ways to improve coordination and collaboration, outlines priority areas and strategies to address need and improve outcomes for children and families, and identifies key community stakeholders.

The CSP builds on the extensive knowledge that the Facilitating Partners and their Committee has gained in collaborating with their communities, over long periods of time. It considers opportunities for everyone in the community to work together to achieve true change in outcomes for children and families. This includes community members, service providers, governments, non-government organisations, researchers and evaluators, and business.

The development of this CSP for the West Pilbara Communities for Children (WPC4C) program presents an opportunity to critically reflect on the strengths of local communities in the West Pilbara, as well as any opportunities, challenges, and emerging needs.

This CSP is a dynamic document that will be reviewed as new data becomes available, or as key stakeholders become aware of changing needs within the community.

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1.0 Communities for Children Facilitating Partner's details

Service Area Name	West Pilbara Communities for Children (WPC4C)
FP Name	Regional Development Australia Pilbara
FP Contact Name	Tony Simpson
FP Contact Title	CEO – Regional Development Australia
Address	Level 1, 18 Hedland Place, Karratha
State/Territory and Postcode	WA 6714

Community Strategic Plan

Date Communities for Children Committee agreed to Community Strategic Plan	29 November 2022
Name of Facilitating Partner Authorising Officer	Tony Simpson
Signature of Facilitating Partner Authorising Officer	

DSS Use

Date of Submission to DSS	
Date of DSS approval	
DSS Delegate Name	
DSS Delegate Position	
DSS Delegate Signature	

NB: Please note that the Community Strategic Plan template is provided by the Department of Social Services and the sub-headings highlighted in **orange** are guiding questions provided within the template.

2.0 Community Needs Assessment

- **What are the key outcomes you are aiming to achieve in your service area?**

Four priority outcomes have been identified for the WPC4C region as follows:

1. Improved early childhood developmental outcomes and support through a focus on educational transitions
2. Using a strengths approach to engage with children and families to ensure their voices guide support delivery and their need for self-determination is recognised.
3. Acknowledge and deliver safe and appropriate services to children and families recognising cultural, social isolation, mental health, or other needs
4. Children and family support services develop systems for enhanced collaboration and integration to better support children, families, and communities

- **What are the key needs of families at risk of poor outcomes in your service area and what evidence do you base this assessment on?**

The WPC4C region comprises of two Local Government areas (Shire of Ashburton and City of Karratha) with a combined population of 31,206 of which 10.4% are First Nations Peoples in the Shire of Ashburton and 11.7% within the Karratha region.¹ The two largest language groups within the region are the Ngarluma and Yindjibarndi peoples.

Other characteristics of the West Pilbara includes:

- A great disparity within the region with areas of high affluence and pockets of significant disadvantage
- High alcohol consumption which negatively impacts on resident's physical and mental health and increases the strain on services such as hospitals, child and family support and policing
- High suicide rates compared to the rest of WA and significantly higher for First Nations Peoples
- Regional statistics suggesting that 33% of all First Nations children experience long term health issues as do 65% of First Nations adults
- Significant numbers of people with culturally diverse backgrounds
- Both children and adults with disabilities experiencing lower levels of support compared to the rest of WA

AEDC data² in tables 1, 2 and 3 clearly indicates that substantial gains have been achieved to reduce the percentage of vulnerable children particularly across the domains of physical health and well-being *and* social competence in Karratha. However, the numbers of children identified as vulnerable in the Shire of Ashburton have increased significantly particularly across the physical health and well-being and language domains. Alarming, all the domains record numbers in 2021 for the Shire of Ashburton that are significantly higher than both the WA and Australian rates.

¹ [2021 ABS data for Karratha LGA, 2021 ABS data for Ashburton LGA](#)

² [2021 Australian Early Development Census](#)

Table 1 – AEDC data 2015-21 in the Shire of Ashburton for developmentally vulnerable children

TABLE: Ashburton

Legend: ■ Significant increase ■ No significant change ■ Significant decrease

Year	Physical	Social	Emotional	Language	Communication	Vuln 1	Vuln 2
Developmentally vulnerable in 2015 (%)	5.5	7.1	3.1	3.9	5.5	18.1	4.7
Developmentally vulnerable in 2021 (%)	11.4	11.4	7.9	14.3	7.9	21.4	13.6
2015 vs 2021 (%)	5.9	4.3	4.8	10.4	2.4	3.3	8.9

Table 2 – AEDC data 2015-21 in the City of Karratha for developmentally vulnerable children

TABLE: Karratha

Legend: ■ Significant increase ■ No significant change ■ Significant decrease

Year	Physical	Social	Emotional	Language	Communication	Vuln 1	Vuln 2
Developmentally vulnerable in 2015 (%)	13.6	15.7	12.1	14.0	9.1	28.0	17.6
Developmentally vulnerable in 2021 (%)	6.1	7.1	6.6	8.4	6.9	18.3	9.1
2015 vs 2021 (%)	-7.5	-8.6	-5.5	-5.6	-2.2	-9.7	-8.5

Table 3 – AEDC data 2021 in Australia and WA for developmentally vulnerable children

Geography	Physical ①	Social ①	Emotional ①	Language ①	Communication ①	Vuln 1 ①	Vuln 2 ①
Australia	9.8	9.6	8.5	7.3	8.4	22.0	11.4
Western Australia	9.4	7.6	7.8	7.2	8.0	20.3	10.2

The key needs of families at risk of poor outcomes include:

- ❖ Information, knowledge, and increased understanding regarding the critical importance of early brain development and adequately preparing children for formal schooling
 - ❖ An opportunity to feel empowered and in control of their destinies i.e., a sense of self-determination, so that engagement with services is a positive experience and more likely to be long term
 - ❖ Culturally appropriate and safe early childhood and family support services.
 - ❖ Consideration of isolation, mental health and disability needs of children and families
 - ❖ Recognition that for some children and families the basic needs of food, housing and safety are not being met and within that context it is very difficult to focus on the early education needs of children
- **What are the strengths, assets and opportunities within your service area that could be further developed?**

An asset is the seven (7) service providers currently funded to deliver services under the WPC4C program. During the strategic planning consultation process all these organisations demonstrated considerable engagement with and depth of knowledge of their local communities and shared a passion about the contributions they have and will continue to make.

The consultation process indicated a common desire from all service providers to explore opportunities to better collaborate and integrate their services which is a very powerful starting point.

3.0 Community Engagement

- **Who in the community will you engage with and why?**
 - ❖ **Early childhood and family support providers from across the West Pilbara** to ensure that high quality early education continues to be offered to all children in the region. The consultation process will be regular and ongoing to ensure that the WPC4C providers assist in issue identification and are involved in the development of solutions.
 - ❖ **Children and families from across the West Pilbara region** to ensure that their voices are heard and are used to directly inform the delivery of service and supports. Again, this consultation process will be regular and ongoing to ensure that the community assists in issue identification and are involved in the development of solutions.
 - ❖ **First Nations Peoples and culturally diverse communities** also need to be engaged and consulted in a safe and appropriate way. First Nations Peoples are a significant group within the West Pilbara region and culturally diverse communities are growing in both number and diversity. Given that children and families within these communities are some of the most disadvantaged, significant and substantial consideration needs to be given to their views
 - ❖ **WPC4C Facilitating Partners** also need to be engaged and consulted on a regular basis. Bi-monthly meetings have been established to ensure this communication occurs and the plan moving forward is to ensure that these meetings will happen regularly and with a well-developed agenda to ensure that quality engagement and consultation results.
 - ❖ Finally, there needs to be an engagement and consultation process with the **broader West Pilbara community**, probably on a biennial basis, to also ensure that they are aware of the successes of the WPC4C program and contribute to an understanding of emerging gaps and issues
- **How will you ensure their ongoing involvement and participation?**
 - ❖ All engagement and consultation processes and events will be organised and promoted well in advance to encourage maximum engagement
 - ❖ Where possible skilled facilitators will be engaged to assist with the process who will encourage balanced and respectful discussions and allow the opportunity for everyone who wishes to contribute to do so
 - ❖ Utilise expert advice and experience where available to ensure that the consultations are culturally safe and appropriate
 - ❖ Recognising that there may be some “survey fatigue” within the West Pilbara community, consideration will be given to a wide variety of approaches including focus groups, town hall meetings, clipboard/street corner conversations, radio talkback, and on-line consultations

- ❖ To encourage on-going engagement, it is essential that all groups who are consulted understand who has received their input and what has resulted from their contribution
- **Do you foresee any specific challenges or barriers in engaging with identified groups e.g., children? What strategies will you use to address these challenges?**
 - ❖ Children and young people will require specific age-appropriate approaches to guide engagement and consultation although there are quality online resources to guide this³
 - ❖ It is critically important to recognise that in the West Pilbara, and elsewhere, there are children and families whose basic needs are not being met e.g., regular food, shelter, and a safe environment. While engaging with these children and families is critically important, this must be undertaken with great care and consideration and expert assistance may be required
 - ❖ Similarly, significant consideration needs to be given to children and families who have experienced significant trauma. This may not be obvious when undertaking any engagement or consultation process, provision always needs to be made to provide on-site support to those who may be triggered by consultation questions.
 - ❖ First Nations Peoples and culturally diverse communities need culturally appropriate and safe approaches and there are a number of quality online resources to guide these processes⁴
- **Considering the impacts of Covid-19 and other local contexts (i.e., bushfires / flooding), will there be new or modified ways of engaging with the community?**
 - ❖ The community's greater use of on-line platforms such as Zoom and Teams will allow consideration of these approaches in certain circumstances

³ [Consulting with children - Save the Children](#)

⁴ [SNAICC – National voice for our children](#)

4.0 Service Area Vision

- **Vision**

Our West Pilbara community values inclusivity and diversity and involves children and families in the delivery of early education services that assist them to thrive by allowing them to feel safe, valued, and connected.

- **Development process**

Themes that emerged from the consultation process included:

- The essence of this program is the delivery of early education services for children and families and that should continue to be central to all activity
- There was also recognition of the need to hear the voices of children and families in terms of their needs, wants, views and feedback and to offer them real choices
- There was also reflection that some of the services funded under the WPC4C sometimes operate in silos and that an increased focus on collaborative opportunities and improved integration would result in better outcomes for children and families
- That given the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and those speaking a language other than English at home in the West Pilbara, cultural safety and cultural connection should be significant considerations
- It was also reflected that there is division in some communities between those families employed in iron-ore mining and those families who were not and that work on greater community connection and inclusivity would be useful

- **Future consultations**

It is recognised that the consultation process thus far has focused on the input of Communities for Children Facilitating Partner lead - Regional Development Pilbara, the independent Committee and all service delivery partners.

The next critical stage of this process is to undertake consultation processes with the children and family users of the Community for Children program as well as the broader West Pilbara community. It is noted the West Pilbara community is possibly suffering from “survey fatigue” and that consideration should be given to utilising other consultation approaches including:

- Focus groups
- Town Hall meetings
- Clipboard/street corner conversations
- Radio talkback
- On-line consultations
- Age-appropriate consultations with children and young people

This vision statement appropriately reflects the Communities for Children Facilitating Partners and Family and Children Activity outcomes as summarised below:

Communities for Children Facilitating Partners objectives:

1. To improve the health and well-being of families and the development of young children from before birth through to aged twelve
2. To create strong child-friendly communities that understand the importance of children and apply this capacity to maximise the health, well-being, and early development of young children at the local level

Families and Children Activity aims

1. Children and people thrive
2. Family relationships flourish
3. Adults are empowered
4. Communities are cohesive

5.0 Priority Areas

Priority Area One: *Improved early childhood developmental outcomes and support through a focus on educational transitions*

• Overview

The early years of a child's life lay the foundations for good health and development throughout adult life⁵. A child's brain develops rapidly from before birth and continues into early childhood. Although the brain continues to develop and change into adulthood, the first 3 to 5 years are critical to building a positive foundation for future learning, health, and life success. It is therefore essential that parents, extended family members, other caregivers and the broader community are aware of their critical role in shaping children's brains.

• Why was it chosen?

The AEDC data for this region show that while there have been improvements for children in the Local Government area of Karratha, developmental vulnerabilities in Ashburton are still greater than the WA and Australian averages. Anecdotal evidence reports on little understanding within some families and communities regarding the critical importance of adequately preparing children for formal schooling. Other consultation input has suggested that COVID has significantly impeded many families' access to specialist appointments for children where developmental delays are suspected. Community-based support and non-clinical strategies can be essential to not only support parents and families and lessen anxiety but also may be highly beneficial to these children and their families.

• Relationship to the Families and Children Activity Outcomes and Communities for Children Facility Partner's objectives

Families and Children Activity Outcomes:

- *Children and Young People Thrive*
 - *Positive mental health and well being*
 - *Positive development*
 - *Positive engagement in education and training*
- *Family relationships flourish*
 - *Positive parenting/caregiving practices*

Communities for Children Facility Partner's objectives:

- *To improve the health and well-being of families and the development of young children, from before birth through to age 12 years*
- *To create strong child-friendly communities that understand the importance of children and apply this capacity to maximise the health, well-being, and early development of young children at the local level.*

⁵ [The Science of Early Childhood Development](#)

- **What would success look like?**

- ❖ Decrease in the number of children in the AEDC vulnerable domains across both Local Government areas but particularly in the Shire of Ashburton
- ❖ Increasing numbers of parents, families and caregivers actively seeking knowledge and information on early childhood development
- ❖ Earlier identification of children with potential developmental issues and connection with appropriate supports and/or referral to specialist assessments where required
- ❖ Increased soft referrals between WPC4C facilitating partners to ensure children and parents receive the services and supports that are appropriate

- **What strategies will you use to achieve improved outcomes in this priority area?**

- ❖ Continue to provide funding support to high quality providers of evidence-based early education programs and service delivery practice in the West Pilbara
- ❖ Explore the provision of mobile early education services to both remote communities and/or those families with limited transport options (recognising that public transport is very limited in the West Pilbara)
- ❖ Explore the provision of a dedicated early education service (possibly as a part of a mobile early education service) to children with physical or intellectual disabilities, mental health issues and/or early developmental delays recognising that mainstream services sometimes struggle to meet their needs
- ❖ Explore the delivery of an advertising campaign using local radio, newspaper, and social media to share information regarding the critical importance of children's access to high quality early education
- ❖ Explore inviting early childhood specialist speakers to present at public forums to assist in facilitating community discussions on the critical importance of early education

- **What assets, resources and strengths can be used to address this priority area?**

A significant strength of the West Pilbara region is that it has a relatively small population and limited numbers of service providers. This means that almost all service providers in each of population centres i.e., Onslow, Karratha, Roebourne, and Tom Price in the early education space are known to each other. This will assist in inter-agency collaborative work and possibly greater opportunity to share information, resources, and strategies.

An asset is the seven (7) service providers currently funded to deliver services under the WPC4C program. During the strategic planning consultation process all these organisations demonstrated considerable engagement with and depth of knowledge of their local communities and shared a passion about the contributions they have and will continue to make.

- **Methods to collect information and measure change**

- ❖ Monthly registration forms, pre and post surveys, anecdotal notes and client reflections entered into the DEX portal by the Communities for Children Facilitating Partners
- ❖ Review of Aboriginal children's enrolments and attendance rates at primary school (Tom Price only)
- ❖ Numbers of public events delivered with an early education guest speaker and/or panel of local experts and numbers of community members who attended (including forums focused on Aboriginal approaches to early education)
- ❖ Numbers of articles, information, or discussion forums on early education via radio, newspaper or social media and the level of community engagement with such activities (including coverage focused on Aboriginal approaches to early education)

- **Who are the key stakeholders?**

- ❖ Children and young people
- ❖ Parents and extended family members
- ❖ Playgroups, preschool, childcare, family day care and other early childhood providers
- ❖ Support groups for parents
- ❖ NDIS
- ❖ Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)
- ❖ Aboriginal elders
- ❖ Primary and secondary schools
- ❖ Government Departments
- ❖ Local industry and businesses
- ❖ Regional Development Australia Pilbara
- ❖ West Pilbara Communities for Children Participating partners

Priority Area Two: Using a strengths approach to engage with children and families ensuring their voices guide support delivery and their need for self-determination is recognised

- **Overview**

The value of a strengths-based approach when engaging with families, including Aboriginal and culturally diverse families, is well documented^{6 7}. Families are much more likely to engage with services if their strengths are recognised and acknowledged rather than if their problems are the focus of attention. Once engaged, it is essential that the needs identified by the children and family are the focus of services delivered i.e., “nothing about us without us.” If families are empowered to feel in control of their destinies i.e., a sense of self-determination, they are much more likely to continue engagement with services and experience the full value of what is being offered.

This approach is reinforced by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that identifies that decisions being made about children should involve them (Articles 12 & 13)⁸.

- **Why was it chosen?**

Consultations undertaken with West Pilbara Facilitating Partners recognised both significant numbers of Aboriginal people and growing cultural diversity within the community. It was suggested that engagement with both groups could be improved if all service providers would adopt a strengths approach and used language that reflected this approach.

- **Relationship to the Families and Children Activity Outcomes and Communities for Children Facility Partner’s objectives**

Families and Children Activity Outcomes:

- *Children and Young people thrive*
 - *Greater participation in decision making*
- *Adults are empowered*
 - *Greater participation in decision making*

Communities for Children Facility Partner’s objectives:

- *To improve the health and well-being of families and the development of young children, from before birth through to age 12 years*
- *To create strong child-friendly communities that understand the importance of children and apply this capacity to maximise the health, well-being, and early development of young children at the local level.*

⁶ [First Peoples Child and family Review](#)

⁷ [Strong families around the world](#)

⁸ [United Nations Rights of the Child](#)

- **What would success look like?**

- ❖ Services for children and young people in the West Pilbara consistently adopting a strengths approach and using language that reflected this approach.
- ❖ Services for children and young people in the West Pilbara prioritising respectful engagement and consultation with children and families before planning service delivery approaches

- **What strategies will you use to achieve improved outcomes in this priority area?**

- ❖ Deliver training to all WPC4C facilitating partners on the strengths approach utilising local expertise where possible
- ❖ Develop common language approaches and shared messaging across all Facilitating Partners to reinforce this approach
- ❖ Share information on the strengths approach at community forums and via radio, newspaper or social media and demonstrate approaches within services for children and young people that embody this approach
- ❖ Consult with children and families to determine where they feel that their strengths are being recognised and where improvements can be made

- **What assets, resources and strengths can be used to address this priority area?**

An asset is the seven (7) service providers currently funded to deliver services under the WPC4C program. During the strategic planning consultation process all these organisations demonstrated considerable engagement with and depth of knowledge of their local communities and shared a passion about the contributions they have and will continue to make.

- **Methods to collect information and measure change**

- ❖ Monthly registration forms, pre and post surveys, anecdotal notes and client reflections entered into the DEX portal by the Communities for Children funded partners
- ❖ Number of training sessions delivered on the strengths approach and/or number of sector forums where this approach is discussed and attendance levels at such forums
- ❖ Outcomes of regular consultations with children and young people to determine if they are experiencing any changed approaches

- **Who are the key stakeholders?**

- ❖ Children and young people
- ❖ Parents and extended family members
- ❖ Playgroups, preschool, childcare, family day care and other early childhood providers

- ❖ Support groups for parents
- ❖ NDIS
- ❖ Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)
- ❖ Aboriginal elders
- ❖ Primary and secondary schools
- ❖ Government Departments
- ❖ Local industry and businesses
- ❖ Regional Development Australia Pilbara
- ❖ West Pilbara Communities for Children Participating partners

Priority Area Three: *Acknowledge and deliver of safe and appropriate services to children and families recognising cultural, social isolation, mental health, or other needs*

- **Overview**

Like most communities, the West Pilbara region has a wide variety of groups with quite differing needs. Services providers reported being united in their desire to be responsive to the varying needs of their communities including First Nations peoples, those with culturally diverse backgrounds, and those with mental health concerns. There was also recognition of the fact that some children and families were struggling to have their basic needs met including food, shelter, and safety.

- **Why was it chosen?**

Cultural diversity - according to 2021 ABS data, First Nations Peoples make up 10.4% of the population within the Shire of Ashburton⁹ and 11.7% in the Karratha region¹⁰ which compares to 3.3% across the rest of WA. While the percentage of First Nations Peoples in the West Pilbara is almost four times the WA figure, the region has slightly lower percentages of people speaking languages other than English at home with 17.1% in the Shire of Ashburton and 18.8% in the Karratha region compared to 21.2% across WA. Nevertheless, the culturally diversity of the region is significant and must be considered a priority for the delivery of culturally appropriate and safe early childhood and family support services.

Social isolation – according to ABS data Ashburton has 73.4% of its population within the working age group (15 to 64 years) while Karratha has 70.7% compared to 65% across the WA. Many of West Pilbara’s residents come from elsewhere – intrastate, interstate, and international localities to access employment opportunities within the iron ore sector. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many of these families experience isolation from their

⁹ [2021 ABS data for Ashburton](#)

¹⁰ [2021 ABS data for Karratha](#)

original place of residence, their friends and family and often from their culture. Even some permanent residents in the West Pilbara view their residency as temporary reflective of time-limited contracts and variability of the iron ore industry. These factors potentially result in some children and families feeling socially isolated and lonely with possible poor mental health outcomes.

Poor mental health – the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report 2022¹¹ reported that four of the five leading causes of total disease burden for children 5 to 14 years old were related to mental health conditions i.e., 1 – asthma, 2 – anxiety disorders, 3 – depressive disorders, 4 – conduct disorders, and 5 – autism spectrum disorders.

The 2021 *Speaking out survey* by the WA Commissioner for Children and Young People¹² reported that “mental health is a critical issue with a substantial number of students reporting poor life satisfaction, low self-esteem, high levels of stress and the feeling they can’t cope with life’s challenges”.

- **Relationship to the Families and Children Activity Outcomes and Communities for Children Facility Partner’s objectives**

Families and Children Activity Outcomes:

- *Children and Young people thrive*
 - *Positive mental health and wellbeing*
 - *Strong connection to culture*
- *Adults are empowered*
 - *Positive mental health and well being*
 - *Strong connection to culture*
- *Communities are cohesive*
 - *Communities understand issues facing children, young people, and families*

Communities for Children Facility Partner’s objectives:

- *To improve the health and well-being of families and the development of young children, from before birth through to age 12 years*
- *To create strong child-friendly communities that understand the importance of children and apply this capacity to maximise the health, well-being, and early development of young children at the local level.*
- **What would success look like?**
 - ❖ Specific consideration is given to the cultural, isolation, mental health and other needs of children and families in both the allocation of resources and development of delivery frameworks and approaches

¹¹ [Aust Institute Health & Welfare Report 2022](#)

¹² [WA Children & Young people survey 2021](#)

- ❖ Children, families, and communities have an increased recognition and understanding of specific and daunting challenges faced by many families
- ❖ Service providers have the tools, knowledge and understanding to assist children and families who need acknowledgment of their cultural perspectives, their social and mental health needs and other issues as identified
- **What strategies will you use to achieve improved outcomes in this priority area?**
 - ❖ Recognition that there are significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait populations within the West Pilbara and that consideration needs to be given to services programs and program that deliver culturally safe and appropriate supports
 - ❖ Recognition that there are substantial culturally diverse communities within the West Pilbara and that consideration needs to be given to services and programs that deliver culturally safe and appropriate supports
 - ❖ Consider exploring approaches that recognise and respond to the issues of social isolation and poor mental health in all services and programs
 - ❖ Consider accessing expert training and service delivery design support to ensure that all service providers understand these issues and have the skills and resources to design services and programs to adequately respond to these issues
- **What assets, resources and strengths can be used to address this priority area?**

An asset is the seven (7) service providers currently funded to deliver services under the WPC4C program. During the strategic planning consultation process all these organisations demonstrated considerable engagement with and depth of knowledge of their local communities and shared a passion about the contributions they have and will continue to make.

The consultation process indicated a common desire from all service providers to explore opportunities to better collaborate and integrate their services which is a very powerful starting point.

Other assets within the community include:

- Connect Paediatric Therapy Services
- Pilbara Mental Health and Drug Service
- Headspace Pilbara
- Mission Australia's regional integrated primary mental health care service

- **Methods to collect information and measure change**

- ❖ Monthly registration forms, pre and post surveys, anecdotal notes and client reflections entered into the DEX portal by the Communities for Children funded partners
- ❖ Decrease in the number of children identified as vulnerable in the AEDC data domains and in particular the social competence, emotional maturity and physical health and wellbeing domains

- ❖ The development and delivery of customised services and programs that directly respond to the cultural, isolation and mental health issues of children and families

- **Who are the key stakeholders?**

- ❖ Children and young people
- ❖ Parents and extended family members
- ❖ Playgroups, preschool, childcare, family day care and other early childhood providers
- ❖ Support groups for parents
- ❖ NDIS
- ❖ Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)
- ❖ Aboriginal elders
- ❖ Primary and secondary schools
- ❖ Government Departments
- ❖ Local industry and businesses
- ❖ Regional Development Australia Pilbara
- ❖ West Pilbara Communities for Children Participating partners

Priority Area Four: Children and family support services develop systems for enhanced collaboration and integration to better support children, families, and communities

- **Overview**

Consultation with WPC4C service providers suggested that there was opportunity for increased collaboration between agencies and the motivation to achieve this was strong.

- **Why was it chosen?**

All Facilitating Partners in the West Pilbara recognised that while they generally delivered different evidence-based programs, they also had different but complimentary skill sets within their staffing teams. They also recognised that each agency had differing physical resources and sometimes differing approaches to engaging with their communities. The consultation process clearly identified the desire and capacity to better share these resources.

Common reflections of the WPC4C Partner meetings suggested that they:

- were not held as regularly as they could be

- didn't provide an opportunity for information delivery on the mechanics of the WPC4C program e.g., priorities for funding rounds, priority for evidence-based programs but also opportunity for pilot/developmental programs that are not evidence based etc.
 - had an emphasis on information sharing which possibly encouraged a competitive rather than a collaborative culture
 - provided little opportunity for strategic discussions and consideration of how this program could drive change for children and families in the West Pilbara
 - didn't seem to connect well with the Committee with little information flow between the two forums
- **Relationship to the Families and Children Activity Outcomes and Communities for Children Facility Partner's objectives**

Families and Children Activity Outcomes:

- *Children and Young people thrive*
 - *Strong connection to social supports and community*
- *Adults are empowered*
 - *Strong connection to social supports and community*
- *Communities are cohesive*
 - *Services are accessible and appropriate*
 - *Services are safe and inclusive*
 - *Services work together to support families*

Communities for Children Facility Partner's objectives:

- *To improve the health and well-being of families and the development of young children, from before birth through to age 12 years*
 - *To create strong child-friendly communities that understand the importance of children and apply this capacity to maximise the health, well-being, and early development of young children at the local level.*
- **What would success look like?**
 - ❖ Services for children and families in the West Pilbara consistently work collaboratively and are continuously aiming for better integration so that children and families are appropriately supported
 - ❖ Rates of both hard and soft referral between agencies increase over time and there is less of an attitude of building client numbers for individual services but rather sharing children and families between services in a "whole of community" approach

- **What strategies will you use to achieve improved outcomes in this priority area?**

- ❖ Explore the development of approaches that enhance existing communications systems between service providers and influence positive practice by providing a platform for sharing successful innovation
- ❖ Promote and foster a “whole of community” approach to service provision with a strong focus on child, parent, and community connectedness
- ❖ Undertake a community mapping process across the West Pilbara region to identify communities with unmet needs that might be best provided by a collaborative across-agency approach
- ❖ Explore the delivery of joined up events and activities for specific communities with unmet needs that could be best provided by a collaborative approach as identified by a mapping process
- ❖ Establish agreed processes across all services for children and families that facilitate both informal and formal referral processes between agencies

- **What assets, resources and strengths can be used to address this priority area?**

An asset is the seven (7) service providers currently funded to deliver services under the WPC4C program. During the strategic planning consultation process all these organisations demonstrated considerable engagement with and depth of knowledge of their local communities and shared a passion about the contributions they have and will continue to make.

The consultation process indicated a common desire from all service providers to explore opportunities to better collaborate and integrate their services which is a very powerful starting point.

- **Methods to collect information and measure change**

- ❖ Monthly registration forms, pre and post surveys, anecdotal notes and client reflections entered into the DEX portal by the Communities for Children funded partners
- ❖ Evidence of improved communication systems between service providers and the provision of a forums to share successful innovation
- ❖ Evidence of a mapping process that has identified communities with unmet need
- ❖ Evidence of the delivery of joined up events or activities for specific communities as informed by a mapping process
- ❖ Evidence of an increased level of both informal and formal referral processes between agencies

- **Who are the key stakeholders?**

- ❖ Children and young people

- ❖ Parents and extended family members
- ❖ Playgroups, preschool, childcare, family day care and other early childhood providers
- ❖ Support groups for parents
- ❖ NDIS
- ❖ Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)
- ❖ Aboriginal elders
- ❖ Primary and secondary schools
- ❖ Government Departments
- ❖ Local industry and businesses
- ❖ Regional Development Australia Pilbara
- ❖ West Pilbara Communities for Children Participating partners

6.0 Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	How the stakeholder will be involved
<p>West Pilbara Communities for Children Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rose Barton (Chair) - Tony Simpson (RDA Pilbara rep.) - Bess Flanigan (Karratha Family Centre) - Jodie Swaffer (DLGSC) - Celeste Stephens (WACOSS) - Jodi Austin (Department of Education) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Communities for Children meetings • Participated in on-line consultation to inform Community Strategic Plan Nov 2022
<p>ABC Foundation Limited</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Community Partner meetings • Delivery of Ranger 4 Life program delivered in Tom Price • Participated in on-line consultation to inform Community Strategic Plan Nov 2022
<p>Empowering People in Communities Inc (EPIC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Community Partner meetings • Delivery of 1-2-3 Magic and Emotion Coaching in Karratha, Dampier, Roebourne, and Wickham • Participated in on-line consultation to inform Community Strategic Plan
<p>Karratha Community House Inc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Community Partner meetings • Delivery of Drumbeat and Parent-Child Mother Goose in Karratha primary schools • Participated in on-line consultation to inform Community Strategic Plan
<p>The Karratha Women's Place Inc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Community Partner meetings • Delivery of Circle of Security Parenting (outsourced to Connect Paediatric Therapy Services) in Karratha • Participated in on-line consultation to inform Community Strategic Plan

Stakeholder	How the stakeholder will be involved
Swan Districts Football Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Community Partner meetings • Delivery of <i>Friends for Life</i> (CBT program for 8- to 12-year-olds); <i>Parent-Child Mother Goose</i>; <i>Early Years Carers Group</i>; <i>Homework Club</i> and <i>Sports Fundamentals</i> in Onslow • Participated in on-line consultation to inform Community Strategic Plan
Karratha Central Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Community Partner meetings • Delivery of <i>West Pilbara Wellbeing Program</i> in Karratha and Wickham • Participated in on-line consultation to inform Community Strategic Plan
WA PCYC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Community Partner meetings • Delivery of <i>Roebourne safeSPACE</i> in Roebourne, Wickham and Cheeditha • Participated in on-line consultation to inform Community Strategic Plan

Appendix A - Communities for Children Facilitating Partners objectives

- To improve the health and well-being of families and the development of young children, from before birth through to age 12 years, paying special attention to:
 - Healthy young families — supporting parents to care for their children before and after birth and throughout the early years;
 - Supporting families and parents — support for parents to provide children with secure attachment, consistent discipline and quality environments that are stable, positive, stimulating, safe and secure;
 - Early learning — provide access to high quality early learning opportunities in the years before school; provide early identification and support for children at risk of developmental and behavioural problems; assist parents with ways they can stimulate and promote child development and learning from birth; and
 - School transition and engagement - support children and families to make a smooth transition to school and work with local schools to assist children and families with their ongoing engagement with school.
- To create strong child-friendly communities that understand the importance of children and apply this capacity to maximise the health, well-being, and early development of young children at the local level.

Appendix B - Data sources that may be useful when conducting needs assessments

This table lists a range of selected data sources that may be useful when conducting needs assessments.

Data source	Most recent	Author/Source	Smallest geographical area covered	Main topics covered	Website
National datasets					
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Community Profiles	2016	ABS	Postal area, suburb, local government area (LGA)	Social, economic, and demographic characteristics	https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/Home/2016%20Census%20Community%20Profiles
ABS Table Builder	2016	ABS	Postal area, suburb, LGA	Social, economic, and demographic characteristics	https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/about+tablebuilder
ABS Socio economic indexes by LGA	2016	ABS	Postal area, suburb, LGA	Socio-economic advantage and disadvantage	https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2033.0.55.001
.id community demographics	2016	.id	LGA (data not available for all LGAs)	Population, age, ethnicity, employment, income, disadvantage, family structure, housing	https://profile.id.com.au/
Dropping off the Edge	2015	Jesuit Social Services & Catholic Social Services Australia	Postcode, suburb	Disadvantage	https://dote.org.au/
Social Health Atlases of Australia	varies	Torrens University	LGA	Health, demographics, disadvantage, housing	https://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases
Primary Health Network (PHN) Area Profiles	varies	Commonwealth Dept. Health	PHN region	Health and demographics. Detailed information can be found on individual PHN websites	https://www1.health.gov.au/inter-net/main/publishing.nsf/Content/PHN-Home

Data source	Most recent	Author/Source	Smallest geographical area covered	Main topics covered	Website
Australian Early Development Census	2018	Australian government	LGA	Indicators of early childhood development	Australian Early Development Census (aedc.gov.au)
Mothers, Babies and Children report Supplementary table-Births	2018	Consultative Council on Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity	LGA (Tables 62-65)	Maternal, perinatal, paediatric mortality and morbidity, and birth outcomes	https://www.bettersafecare.vic.gov.au/publications/mothers-babies-and-children-2018
Data tables for Australia's mothers and babies	2018	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Statistical Area Level 3, PHN	Pregnancy, childbirth, and babies	https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/mothers-babies/australias-mothers-and-babies-2018-in-brief/data
Settlement reports	2020	Dept. Home Affairs	LGA	Demographics of people granted permanent or provisional visas	https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/8d1b90a9-a4d7-4b10-ad6a-8273722c8628
Australian open government data	varies	Federal, state, and local government agencies		A range of topics, including crime, domestic violence, and school attendance	https://data.gov.au
Longitudinal Data Sets	varies	National Centre for Longitudinal Data (NCLD)		Including Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Growing up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC), Footprints in Time: The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC), and Building a New Life in Australia (BNLA): The Longitudinal Study of Humanitarian Migrants)	https://www.dss.gov.au/national-centre-for-longitudinal-data-nclid/access-to-dss-longitudinal-datasets

Data source	Most recent	Author/Source	Smallest geographical area covered	Main topics covered	Website
State datasets					
VicHealth Indicators	2015	VicHealth	LGA	Health and wellbeing of Victorian adults	https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/programs-and-projects/vichealth-indicators-survey-2015
Victorian Population Health Survey	2018	Better Safer Care	Dashboard data at Dept. Health Region and PHN level	Health and wellbeing of Victorian adults	https://www.bettersafecare.vic.gov.au/reports-and-publications/vphs2018
Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS)	varies	Victorian Dept. Education and Training	Postcode for some indicators	Key outcome indicators for children and young people	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/vcamsindicator.aspx
Domestic violence (NSW)	2020	NSW Police Force	LGA	Domestic violence incidents	https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Pages/bocsar_pages/Domestic-Violence.aspx
School attendance (Queensland)	2019	Queensland Education Dept.	School	School attendance	https://qed.qld.gov.au/publications/reports/statistics/schooling/students
School attendance (South Australia)	2019	South Australian Education Dept.	School	School attendance	https://data.gov.au/dataset/ds-sa-6ace352b-1329-4054-a849-9ef26b88ce6f/details?q=school%20attendance
“Mapping the Potential: Understanding persistent disadvantage to inform community change”	2020	ANU Centre for Social Methods and 21 CSSA member project partners	SA2	Investigates four drivers of persistent disadvantage: economic, education, health, and social factors. Drivers drawn from a range of data sets.	https://mappingthepotential.cssa.org.au/