

Queensland Children's Wellbeing Framework

Giving all our children a great start



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This framework creates a common vision for the wellbeing of babies and children, from conception to eight years old, and the conditions needed to make sure every baby and child get a great start to life. All sectors and sections of the community that make decisions affecting children can use this framework to guide policy development, program implementation and service delivery.

All Queensland children healthy, resilient and succeeding

Queensland's children are our most precious resource, and we should invest in their childhood and their future. Nurturing children's wellbeing is the best way to give them a great start to life. When our children thrive, our communities thrive.

Growing up in Queensland offers a great start for our children. We have a vibrant environment and active lifestyle. We have quality places for learning, skilled health and medical services, open green spaces, and accessible libraries and cultural offerings.

Children have a strong, positive sense of wellbeing when they are happy and healthy, feel they are nurtured and belong, and have opportunities that allow them to grow and learn. To support our children's wellbeing, we must listen to their voices and take them seriously.

We want our children to be:

- strong in self and culture
- active and healthy
- happy and resilient
- learning and exploring
- capable and connected.

A child's wellbeing is founded in their family, kin and personal relationships, their community and culture, and the wider world in which they live, learn and grow. Parents and carers, families, communities and governments all play a role in nurturing children's wellbeing.

As Queenslanders, we want all our children to live in conditions that will nourish their wellbeing. We commit to ensuring they:

- have their fundamental rights and needs met
- are loved and nurtured
- are included and have opportunities to flourish
- have enriching experiences and challenges to reach their highest potential.

To give every child a bright future shaped by their hopes and ambitions, we must be mindful of the aspirations we have for our children and the shared commitments we make to support their wellbeing.

Our guiding values

The following values guide our aspirations and commitments for all children.

All children thriving

All children should be safe and able to overcome challenges in order to flourish and reach their full potential.

Attention to each child

Every child should be treated as an individual with their own strengths, personality and background, including culture. We recognise that individual children reach milestones at different times and in their own ways.

Keeping children visible

As communities, systems and service providers – in our considerations, policies and actions – we listen to children's voices and maintain a focus on their rights and wellbeing.

Equity for all children

All children, including those experiencing vulnerability, have an equal entitlement to wellbeing and access to positive environments, experiences and supports. To achieve our wellbeing aspirations, some children will benefit from extra or individualised support.

Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

We must encourage, promote and celebrate the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's connection to culture, land and kin, and ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations have every opportunity to positively influence outcomes for their families and children.

Caring for the carers

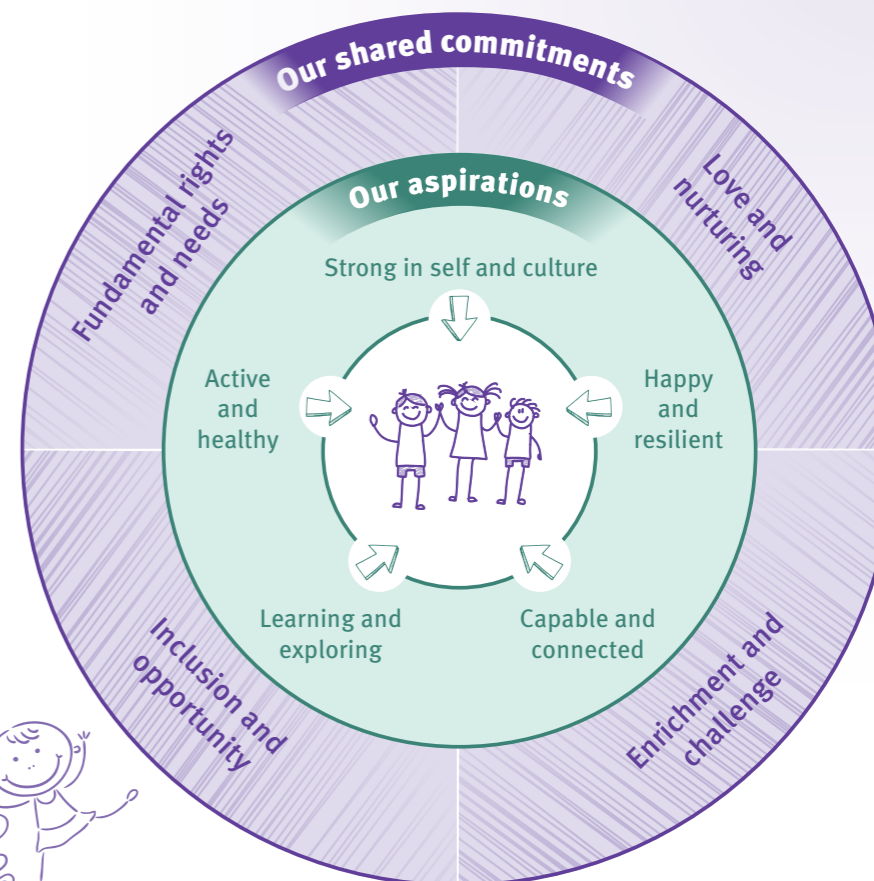
To support children's wellbeing, we must also sustain the wellbeing of those who help them as they grow. This includes parents, families, foster and kinship carers, as well as educators and health workers, volunteers, sports coaches and many other members of the community.



Our aspirations and shared commitments for all children

All aspects of children's wellbeing matter, and support each other.

All of our commitments work in harmony to contribute to children's wellbeing.



Measuring our progress

The Government's priorities to give all our children a Great Start



Increasing the number of babies born healthier



Increasing childhood immunisation rates



Improving wellbeing prior to school

Our aspirations for our children ...

Strong in self and culture

Children have their own identities and personalities, which grow rapidly in their early years. They develop a positive sense of themselves, their agency and autonomy.

Children’s sense of identity is grounded in their family identity, immediate community, and culture. Cultural identity and language are important for all children, especially those from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds, and have particular significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Children gradually learn to be more independent and self-aware. They become aware of their rights, and their own status as a person of value and importance to their family, kin and community.

Active and healthy

Our children are fit and healthy, and engage in physical pursuits to the extent of their ability, including play and games, outdoor activities, exercise, dance and sports.

Babies and children are nurtured, healthy and free from serious preventable illness. Parents’ health, wellbeing and community supports are essential factors in their children’s wellbeing.

Children thrive when they play. Play contributes to a child’s physical health, as well as their mental health, learning and social skills.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles and healthy diets, and how to apply them at their stage of life. They are aware of their own state of health and fitness, and have appropriate confidence in their physical abilities.

Happy and resilient

Children have a strong sense of their own worth and are loved, cared for and valued for who they are. Children with safe, secure and nurturing relationships learn to give love, empathise and accept love. They make friends and establish safe and trusting relationships. They develop a confident sense of self, learn how to manage their emotions and seek support when needed.

Children play and have fun. They are positive and hopeful about themselves, their lives and their futures.

Good mental health is essential to children’s wellbeing. Children learn how to be resilient in the face of challenges and disappointments, and contribute to their own mental and physical safety with self-protective skills and behaviours.

Learning and exploring

Children love to learn. They accomplish extraordinary feats of intellectual growth in their early years, which are a crucial time for brain development and lay the foundations for learning in later life.

Children also love to read and be read to, developing key literacy and language skills. As they grow, they build skills in line with their age and stage of development. They embrace the benefits of learning, talking, singing and playing – at home, in early childhood education, at school, in organised activities and through their experiences in the world.

With increasing maturity, children become more independent, critical thinkers. They develop analytical and creative abilities, and understanding of other perspectives and cultures. They develop into self-directed learners, able to understand their own growth, needs and learning paths.

Capable and connected

Capable children have the skills and knowledge to operate effectively within their community. They learn to interact with and influence their environment in appropriate ways.

Connected children engage with others and the wider world. They learn to contribute to their own “society” – first family and kin, then carers, early childhood education and school, then clubs and social groups. Gradually, they take more interest in society at large. Their voices are respected and contribute to inclusive, just and peaceful communities.

In their relationships, children show respect and consideration for others and embrace diversity and kindness. They take responsibility for their own behaviour, developing ethical awareness appropriate to their age and development.

Our shared commitments ...

Fundamental rights and needs

Children’s wellbeing at the most basic level depends on the necessities of food, clothing, shelter and safety.

Children have fundamental rights to practise their culture and use their language, and access education and health services. They also have special rights as children, set out in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which our society must acknowledge, respect and protect.

Children must be safe and protected from harm, whether physical, psychological or emotional, with parents, carers and families supported as their children’s first protectors and educators. Children should live in housing and communities with clean, child-safe and child-friendly spaces and amenities that support health, growth and learning.

Love and nurturing

Nurture in the earliest period of life from conception – for the first 1000 days – is essential for brain development.

Secure attachments and nurturing relationships with primary caregivers lay the foundation for healthy emotional and ethical skills development. We should support children’s growing independence, foster their resilience and encourage respectful relationships.

We must nurture all aspects of a child’s wellbeing – physical, mental, emotional, social, creative, spiritual and cultural. Giving love to a child means giving affection and emotional sustenance, acceptance and belonging. It also means providing reliable support, consistency and boundaries, and respecting their individual personalities and decisions. Children are entitled to increasing levels of privacy and autonomy, consistent with their age and stage of development.

Inclusion and opportunity

Queensland children are diverse in ability and background. They should have safe places to grow and specialised support to reach their potential.

We should provide opportunities to support children’s participation in choice and decision-making, and offer them growing roles in society, with regard to their individuality and need to practise their cultural beliefs, identity and religion.

Our formal and informal systems, such as early childhood education and care, schools, libraries and social organisations, should model fairness, with children valuing and receiving recognition for character, achievements and empathy.

Enrichment and challenge

All children, of all abilities, must be stimulated and challenged to succeed.

Children benefit from safe opportunities for intellectual, physical, moral, creative and artistic growth and expression, and time for relaxation and reflection. We should introduce them to music, dance, the arts, sports and recreation, and help them connect with the natural world.

Children thrive with access to rich and varied learning experiences including in their homes, in the community, in educational settings and in an increasingly online world.

We should support parents and families to inspire learning that offers cultural grounding and enrichment. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children should have time with Elders to learn cultural heritage, storytelling, language and dance.

We all play a part in fulfilling our shared commitments to children

Children themselves play a part in achieving their wellbeing, and are capable learners with their own voices.

Families, parents and carers play a primary role in fostering the wellbeing of their children and opening them up to possibilities and their individual potential.

Communities create safe and welcoming environments for children and families to flourish.

Practitioners, providers and governments play a role in caring for children and supporting families.

In every way in our interactions with children, we consider all aspects of their wellbeing and our commitments to them.

In all settings we meet our commitments in our families, in social groups, in children’s services, in child-friendly public spaces, and in community and cultural programs.

