

# Program guidelines for Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy

November 2014

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist service providers understand the broad parameters of the Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy (ACYFS) within the framework of Family and Community Services (FACS) contracting system.

## 2. Legislative framework

The primary legislation that underpins FACS provision of funding to non-government organisations through the ACYFS is the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* and the *Community Welfare Act 1987*, and the regulations associated with these acts.

Other legislation that impacts on FACS management of its funded programs include the *Public Finance & Audit Act 1983* and the *Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998*.

## 3. Policy directions and commitments

The ACYFS contributes to a number of NSW Government policy directions and commitments as outlined in various plans.

*NSW 2021* is the government plan that guides policy and budget decisions. ACYFS services are funded as a means of achieving:

- Goal 13 of the state plan *NSW 2021* that commits the state government to actions that ‘better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage’
- Goal 1 of the FACS 2012–2015 plan that states ‘fewer children and young people are vulnerable to abuse and neglect’.

Other policy commitments that shaped the development of ACYFS include:

- the national Closing the Gap Strategy – the commitment by all Australian governments to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians and, in particular, provide a better future for Indigenous children
- NSW Government’s Aboriginal Affairs Plan – Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment (OCHRE), launched in April 2013
- FACS Aboriginal Strategy 2013–15: Better Outcomes for Aboriginal People and Communities.

### **FACS reforms**

Over the next two years, community, early intervention and intensive programs will be undergoing reform, with a focus on local need and outcome measurement. There will be many opportunities for your organisation to be a part of that reform process.

Program reform will focus on how services delivered to children, young people and families can have greater impact, and reduce the incidence and prevalence of behaviours that put children and young people at risk.

Over the next two years, these program guidelines will be revised and will require you to address impacts and connections with NSW Government reforms including:

- NSW Child Protection reform – Safe Home For Life
- NSW Homelessness reforms including Going Home Staying Home
- FACS localisation, including the requirement to participate in district plans
- NSW family and domestic violence reform – It Stops Here
- development in other programs.

These reforms may lead to changes occurring during the contractual period. In this case, the existing agreement may be re-negotiated with services to reflect new policy and program requirements.

#### 4. Program description

The ACYFS is a prevention and early intervention strategy that aims to provide Aboriginal families with children the best start in life.

The strategy has a particular focus on supporting Aboriginal families expecting a baby or with children aged up to five years. This is underpinned by a strong body of evidence demonstrating the importance of the early years in a child's development and the long term effectiveness of supporting parents and children during these years.

The ACYFS works in close partnership with Families NSW and the NSW Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Strategy.

#### 5. Program scope and boundary

The ACYFS is one of a number of NSW Government programs that provide services for children and families.

Research evidence and data have shown Aboriginal people are disadvantaged on most indicators of health and wellbeing from pregnancy, early childhood and into adulthood. The ACYFS was established to address this entrenched disadvantage by making support available to all Aboriginal families with a child in the target age-range 0 to 5 years, or expecting a child.

The current scope of the strategy is:

- delivery of proven universal service models
- provision of strategies aimed at all Aboriginal parents of young children including mothers, teenage mothers and mothers in lower socio-economic areas – where evidence and data indicate that higher risk factors exist
- provision of support to families where vulnerability factors such as domestic and family violence, and mental health problems have been identified.

Aboriginal families access ACYFS funded activities and services by either self referral or referral from a local service.

## 6. Program results and outcomes

The ACYFS is expected to contribute to broad, high-level results for the NSW Aboriginal population as a whole. These results are:

1. Aboriginal children have skills for life and learning at school entry
2. Aboriginal babies are born healthy
3. Aboriginal children are physically well and healthy
4. Aboriginal children have social and emotional skills appropriate for their age
5. Aboriginal children have literacy and numeracy skills appropriate for their age
6. mothers have healthy pregnancies
7. parents are confident, connected to their community and its services, and equipped to support their children's development.

The ACYFS contributes to achieving these results by increasing the:

- a. number of mothers who receive antenatal care before 20 weeks
- b. number of mothers who have the information they need to adopt a healthy lifestyle
- c. early identification, referral and support for mothers with mental health issues
- d. number of children reaching social and emotional milestones
- e. number of parents who expose their children to early literacy activities
- f. number of families who are connected to other families, culture and community
- g. number of parents with skills in positive parenting
- h. number of parents with the ability to assess and recognise family needs, and know where to seek support and resources.

## 7. Service group objectives

In FACS funded programs system, the ACYFS forms part of the Universal Prevention and Early Intervention for Vulnerable Children, Young People and Families service group.

The programs in this service group are all geared to meet the needs of children, young people and families who have identified vulnerabilities. The shared, broad objective of these programs is to prevent the further escalation of issues that contribute to vulnerability.

The table below illustrates where this program is located within the FACS funded programs continuum of services.

### FACS continuum of service

Universal		Targeted							Statutory Intervention						
Prevention and Early Intervention									Child Protection			OOHC			
Community Builders	Families NSW	Aboriginal Child Youth & Family Strategy	Aboriginal Child & Family Centres	Integrated Domestic & Family Violence Services Program	Staying Home Leaving Violence	Child, Youth & Family Support	Getting it Together	Brighter Futures	Youth Hope	Strengthening Families	Statutory Child Protection Casework	Intensive Family Support/ Intensive Family Preservation	Intensive Family Based Services	OOHC Casework	OOHC Reform

## 8. Evidence base

Research shows early childhood development is affected by the environments and experiences that are encountered in a cumulative fashion, beginning early in the prenatal period and extending throughout the early childhood years.<sup>1</sup>

Research around early intervention emphasises that early childhood experience crucially determines health, wellbeing and the attainment of competencies at later

<sup>1</sup>Shonkoff J and Phillips D eds (2001) *Neurons to Neighbourhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. National Academy Press.

ages, and that investment in the early years will be reflected in improved education, employment and even national productivity.<sup>2</sup>

Prevention and early intervention strategies aim to influence children's, parents' or families' behaviours in order to reduce the risk, or improve the effect of, less than optimal social and physical environments. An important goal of prevention and early intervention is to change the balance between risk and protective factors so the effect of protective factors outweighs the effect of risk factors, thus building resilience.

Prevention and early intervention is intended not only to prevent the development of future problems such as child abuse, emotional and behavioural problems, substance abuse and criminal behaviour, but also to promote the necessary conditions for a child's healthy development in all areas.

ACYFS funds a range of universal and targeted prevention and early intervention initiatives for Aboriginal children, families and carers. This is because some services are known to be more effective when universally available, while others are known to be more effective when targeted towards particular sections of the community.

## 9. Target group

The target group for the ACYFS is Aboriginal children aged 0 to 5 years and their families, parents and / or carers.

In addition to services that work with individuals (i.e. children and their families), the ACYFS also funds services to work with other organisations (partnerships and networks services) that focus on the whole community (community capacity building services).

## 10. Service types or activities funded

ACYFS has five service activity descriptions (SADs or service models) that describe the result to be achieved and the specified activities and performance measures for each model.

The ACYFS SADs are as follows:

- SAD 1 – Aboriginal supported playgroups
- SAD 2 – parenting programs
- SAD 3 – Aboriginal family worker
- SAD 4 – community capacity building
- SAD 5 – partnerships and networks.

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<sup>2</sup> Keating D and Hertzman C (2000) *Developmental Health and the Wealth of nations: Social, biological and Educational Dynamics*. Guildford Press.

## 11. Performance measures and service results

ACYFS service providers enter into a contract with FACS to achieve certain results for participating families. The ACYFS results logic diagram (see page 17) shows the links between ACYFS results and performance measures and the service activities to which these results / measures apply.

The ACYFS uses the results based accountability (RBA) approach to performance measurement drawing on the results and interim results specified in the ACYFS results logic diagram. These results will be monitored using the following performance measures.

The service model has a service activity description that describes its results, interim results and performance measures. The model will seek information on project demographics, the quantity of activity and the quality and its outcomes.

### ACYFS Aboriginal supported playgroup service activity description (SAD 1)

ACYFS	Aboriginal supported playgroup
ACYFS results for this SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal children have social and emotional skills appropriate for their age</li> <li>Aboriginal children have literacy and numeracy skills appropriate for their age</li> <li>Parents<sup>3</sup> are confident, connected to their community and its services, and equipped to support their children's development</li> </ul>
Objectives <sup>4</sup> for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of parents who have positive relationships with their children</li> <li>Increase participants' knowledge and use of local services, resources or activities</li> <li>Increase the number of participants who expand their supportive social network</li> <li>Increase the number of children who engage in age appropriate play</li> </ul>
Client group for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents of Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> </ul>
Aboriginal supported playgroup activity overview	
<p>ACYFS Aboriginal supported playgroups provide an opportunity for parents to share experiences of parenting and for children to socialise, play and learn in a structured and positive environment. This opportunity is particularly provided for parents of Aboriginal children who may not otherwise attend a playgroup.</p>	
Aboriginal supported playgroup activities	
Service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use an holistic family focused and strengths-based approach</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> All references to parents include carers.

<sup>4</sup> These objectives contribute towards achieving the Key Objectives of the ACYFS.

Information and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information to parents / carers regarding their child's development, health, safety and hygiene</li> <li>• Provide information and advice about positive parenting</li> </ul>
Group or individual programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop exit strategies for families to transition from supported playgroups to community playgroups or other early childhood services, as and when appropriate</li> </ul>
Supported playgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide parents with opportunities to meet other parents and exchange ideas about raising children and to develop support networks</li> <li>• Provide a range of age appropriate play and learning activities to stimulate children's intellectual growth and support the development of early literacy and numeracy skills</li> <li>• Assist parents to use early literacy support strategies with their children</li> <li>• Support parents in the transition of children aged 0–5 years to school</li> <li>• Model play-based interactions, communication skills and behaviour management techniques</li> </ul>
Linkages to services and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a link between families and other health and community services</li> <li>• Provide an opportunity for engagement with the broader community</li> <li>• Establish and maintain specific and identified linkages within the local ACYFS child and family network with active referrals to and from this network</li> </ul>

#### **Additional supported playgroup activities<sup>5</sup>**

1. This service is provided as part of a Schools as Community Centre (SaCC) project
2. This service is operated wholly or in part as a mobile outreach service
3. This service provides Triple P (Positive Parenting Programs) to families with children aged 3–8 years with workers trained, accredited and provided with Triple P resources as part of the Families NSW roll out of Triple P across NSW
4. This project supports parents and / or children in transition to school
5. This project provides early literacy support to parents and / or children aged 0–8 years

#### **Performance measures**

##### **How much?**

- Total number of parents and children attending Aboriginal supported playgroups by outlet
- Number of optional activities e.g. early literacy, transition to school undertake
- Number of referrals made and received by the project

##### **How well?**

- Total number of children who regularly attended Aboriginal supported playgroup sessions for the year (i.e. attended more than 60% of sessions)
- Number of parents reporting satisfaction with the Aboriginal supported playgroup

<sup>5</sup>Additional activities should be deleted where not applicable.

### Is anyone better off?

- Number of children observed engaging in age-appropriate play
- Number of parents reporting improved relationships with their child(ren)
- Number of parents who report increased supportive connections and knowledge and use of local services
- Number of children where worker observes improvement in two or more of the following:
  - parent – warmth and empathy toward child
  - parent – initiation of play with child
  - parent – positive affirmation of child
  - parent – use of positive parenting behaviour management
  - child – uses parent as a source of comfort, praise, support, secure base

### ACYFS parenting program service activity description (SAD 2)

ACYFS parenting program	
ACYFS results for this SAD	Parents and carers are confident, connected to their community and its services, and equipped to support their children's development
Objectives for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of parents and carers who use positive parenting practices (g)</li> <li>• Increase the number of parents and carers who have positive relationships with their children</li> <li>• Increase participants knowledge of children's health and development needs</li> <li>• Increase participants knowledge and use of local services, resources or activities</li> </ul>
Client group for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal parents and carers with children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>• Parents and carers of Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> </ul>
ACYFS parenting program activity overview	
<p>ACYFS parenting programs provide parents with effective activities, information and coaching to assist them to build positive parenting skills.</p> <p>Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) is the NSW Government's endorsed parenting program, with significant funding allocated to rollout Triple P across NSW through the Families NSW strategy.</p> <p>Families NSW is also undertaking a small rollout of Indigenous Triple P.</p> <p>Wherever possible, parenting activities funded by ACYFS should support the rollout of Indigenous Triple P (e.g. support practitioners to provide the program to Aboriginal families through provision of childcare or equipment; assist practitioners to be trained in other aspects of Triple P that enhance the effectiveness of the program).</p>	
Parenting program activities	
Service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACYFS parenting programs use a relationship focussed approach and / or behavioural approach with families</li> <li>• ACYFS parenting programs can use either a group approach or individual approach to working with parents / carers</li> </ul>

Information and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information to parents / carers regarding their child's development, health, safety and hygiene</li> </ul>
Group or individual programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver parenting programs informed by evidence of best practice</li> <li>• Provide focussed short-term interventions, helping parents improve their relationship with their child</li> <li>• Work with families to change parenting practices, aspects of parental / family functioning and the child's emotional or behavioural adjustment, where appropriate</li> </ul>
Linkages to services and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and maintain specific and identified linkages within the local Families NSW child and family network with active referrals to and from this network</li> <li>• Collaborate with the local network of services regarding the delivery of parenting programs</li> </ul>

### **Additional parenting program activities**

1. Project is provided as a component of a Schools as Community Centre (SaCC) project
2. Project assists Aboriginal parents and carers to provide early literacy support to children aged 0–5 years
3. Project supports Aboriginal parents and carers in the transition of their children to school

### **Performance measures**

#### **How much?**

- Total number of parents and carers attending parenting programs per year
- Number of each type of parenting program that has been provided per year
- Number of referrals made and received by the project

#### **How well?**

- Number of parents and carers who completed the parenting program
- Number of parents and carers reporting satisfaction with the parenting program

#### **Is anyone better off?**

- Number of parents and carers reporting improved parenting practices
- Number of parents and carers who report increased knowledge of children's health and development needs and use of local services
- Number of parents and carers who report an improved relationship with their child since attending the parenting program

### **ACYFS Aboriginal family worker service activity description (SAD 3)**

#### **Aboriginal family worker**

ACYFS results for this SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal children have social and emotional skills appropriate for their age</li> <li>• Aboriginal children have literacy and numeracy skills appropriate for their age</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal children are physically well and healthy</li> <li>• Parents<sup>6</sup> are confident, connected to their community and its services, and equipped to support their children's development</li> </ul>
Objectives <sup>7</sup> for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of parents who use positive parenting practices</li> <li>• Increase the number of parents who have positive relationships with their children</li> <li>• Increase participants' knowledge of children's health and development needs</li> <li>• Increase participants' knowledge and use of local services, resources or activities</li> <li>• Increase the number of participants who expand their supportive social networks</li> </ul>
Client group for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents of Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>• Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> </ul>

### **Aboriginal family worker activity overview**

Aboriginal family worker projects work to improve the outcomes and wellbeing of Aboriginal families<sup>8</sup> with children aged 0–5 by providing support for parenting, facilitating informal support groups and access to appropriate services.

### **Aboriginal family worker activities**

Service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide flexible services in convenient settings, including the family home, in order to engage clients who do not ordinarily access services</li> <li>• Build trusting relationships with clients</li> </ul>
Information and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information in order to assist parents / carers to understand their child's development</li> </ul>
Group or individual programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in partnership with families to identify and achieve family goals</li> <li>• Model positive parenting practices</li> <li>• Support families develop practical life skills to assist them raising their children</li> <li>• Provide support to help parents build confidence in their parenting skills</li> </ul>
Support groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate informal support groups for parents – this may involve the provision of parenting information and / or advice</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> All references to parents include carers.

<sup>7</sup> These objectives contribute towards achieving the key objectives of the ACYFS.

<sup>8</sup> Two or more people who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering, and who are usually resident in the same household and where there is a child dependency relationship present in the family (child dependency relationship for the purposes of ACYFS is defined as including all children 5 years of age and under, whether related or unrelated to the family reference person). The basis of a family is formed by identifying the presence of a couple relationship, lone parent-child relationship or other blood relationship.

Linkages to services and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and maintain specific and identified linkages within the local ACYFS child and family network<sup>9</sup> with active referrals to and from this network</li> <li>• Assist families build connections with appropriate services, community supports and informal social networks with other families</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Aboriginal family worker activities</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project provides Triple P (Positive Parenting Programs) with families with children aged 3–5 years as part of the Families NSW rollout of Triple P (with workers trained, accredited and provided with Triple P resources)</li> <li>2. Project facilitates activities for groups of parents and / or children such as the provision of parenting related information</li> <li>3. Project provides early literacy support to parents and / or children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>4. Project supports parents and / or children in transition to school</li> </ol>	
<b>Performance measures</b>	
<b>How much?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of parents and children supported per year by activity type</li> <li>• Total number of activities by activity type</li> <li>• Number of referrals made and received by the project</li> </ul>	
<b>How well?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of families who remained involved with the service for the planned duration (as set out in an agreed case plan)</li> <li>• Number of parents reporting satisfaction with the service</li> </ul>	
<b>Is anyone better off?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of parents reporting improved relationships with their child(ren)</li> <li>• Number of parents who report increased supportive connections and knowledge and use of local services</li> <li>• Number of parents where worker observes improvement in two or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– parent – warmth and empathy toward child</li> <li>– parent – initiation of play with child</li> <li>– parent – positive affirmation of child</li> <li>– parent – use of positive parenting behaviour management</li> <li>– child – uses parent as a source of comfort, praise, support, secure base</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

<sup>9</sup> The ACYFS network includes Area Health Services, DEC, FACS, Local Government and NGO partners.

## ACYFS community capacity building service activity description (SAD 4)

<b>Community capacity building</b>	
ACYFS results for this SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents<sup>10</sup> are confident, connected to their community and its services, and equipped to support their children's development</li> </ul>
Objectives for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase parents, children and community's knowledge and use of local services, resources or activities</li> <li>Increase the number of parents, children and their communities who use community facilities, public amenities and open spaces</li> <li>Increase the number of parents, children and their communities who expand their supportive social networks</li> </ul>
Client group for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents of Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>Their communities</li> </ul>
<b>Community capacity building activity overview</b>	
Community capacity building enhances the ability of a community to address problems or challenges from within its own resources.	
<b>Community capacity building activities</b>	
Service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop initiatives and approaches that are culturally appropriate</li> <li>Undertake initiatives that enhance local social or physical infrastructure</li> </ul>
Community consultation and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop appropriate initiatives, programs and activities to meet community goals, such as community action, social planning, community-services partnerships and service networks</li> <li>Develop consultative and participatory mechanisms to involve or inform families, community members and local agencies regarding decisions that affect their lives</li> <li>Undertake active collaboration between commonwealth, state, local government, non-government agencies and the local community to build community capacity</li> </ul>
Linkages to services and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake initiatives that increase community engagement and build community connections</li> </ul>
<b>Additional community capacity building activities</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This project provides support for community groups, services and networks, such as approaches that seek to make services more relevant and accessible</li> <li>This project assists communities to provide early literacy support to parents and / or children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>This project assists communities to provide transition to school support to parents and / or children aged 0–5 years</li> </ol>	

<sup>10</sup>All references to parents include carers.

4. This project includes community events
5. This project includes the provision of information and resources such as the provision of parenting related information
6. This project includes volunteering programs
7. This project includes workshops and / or training sessions and community programs (i.e. community awareness programs)

### Performance measures

#### How much?

- Number of participants per activity
- Number of activities by activity type (e.g. community project, community event etc.)
- Number of government and community partners connected with project activities

#### How well?

- Number of activities provided on time and as planned
- Number of participants reporting satisfaction with the service per activity

#### Is anyone better off?

- Number of participants reporting increased supportive connections and knowledge and use of local services (social infrastructure)
- Number of participants who have increased their usage of community facilities, public amenities or open spaces as a result of the project (physical infrastructure)

### ACYFS partnerships & networks service activity description (SAD 5)

#### Partnerships & networks

ACYFS results for this SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mothers have healthy pregnancies</li> <li>• Parents are confident, connected to their community and its services, and equipped to support their children's development</li> </ul>
Objectives for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the participation and contribution of child and family service providers in the planning and delivery of best practice ACYFS services in their region</li> <li>• Increase the access and engagement of the client population with local child and family services</li> <li>• Embed the principles of prevention and early intervention into service delivery</li> </ul>
Client group for this ACYFS SAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service providers to parents of Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>• Service providers to Aboriginal children aged 0–5 years</li> </ul>

#### Partnerships and networks activity overview

Partnership and network projects:

1. support service providers work collaboratively to build capacity locally
2. improve prevention and early intervention approaches, and the local coordination of services to ensure optimal access, engagement and results for clients

### Partnership and network activities

Service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with service providers / agencies that work with parents of children aged 0–5 years and / or children aged 0–5 years</li> <li>• Bring together all the relevant ACYFS service providers, including government agencies and relevant child and family networks, in an area</li> </ul>
Service system development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support all child and family services to take a holistic and strengths-based approach in their work with children and families</li> <li>• Enhance linkages to improve transition between components of the service system</li> <li>• Support service providers contribute to consultation processes, planning, service development, delivery and evaluation of child and family services in their area</li> <li>• Facilitate the integration of prevention and early intervention principles into the service delivery of local agencies</li> </ul>
Linkages to services and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support members of the partnership or network establish and maintain linkages within the local ACYFS child and family network with active referrals to and from this network, where appropriate</li> </ul>

### Additional partnership and network activities

1. Project assists service networks to provide early literacy support to parents and / or children aged 0–5 years
2. Project assists service networks to provide transition to school support to parents and / or children aged 0–5 years
3. Project assists service networks to collaborate and coordinate in the delivery of parenting programs
4. Project co-ordinates professional learning and development opportunities
5. Project supports service providers contribute to the consultation processes, planning, service development, delivery and evaluation of child and family services in their area
6. Project facilitates interagency activities, building capacity and developing / supporting a coordinated and responsive prevention and early intervention service network

### Performance measures

#### How much?

- Number and type of organisations participating in activities
- Number of outputs (e.g. projects, seminars, agreements etc.)
- Increase in number of referrals made and received by participating organisations

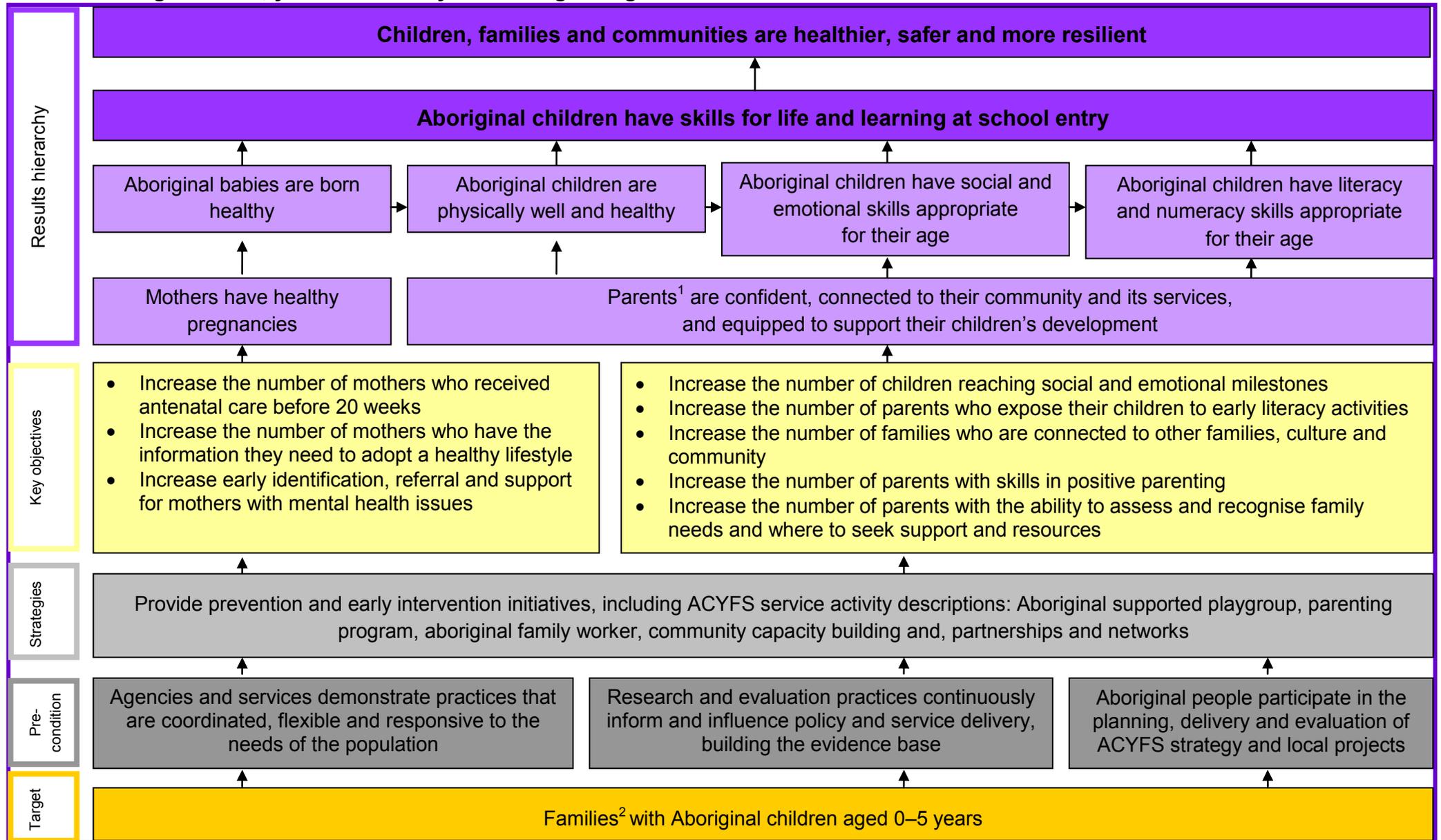
#### How well?

- Number reporting improved capacity and / or understanding of prevention and early intervention principles resulting from the partnership and network project
- Number of organisations reporting satisfaction with the project e.g. that it was well run and achieved its objectives

#### Is anyone better off?

- Number of organisations reporting improved client satisfaction with their services resulting from the partnership and network project activities

# Aboriginal child, youth and family results logic diagram



## **ACYFS results logic diagram – narrative**

This narrative provides background information and an explanation of the statements set out in the **ACYFS results logic diagram**.

### **What is a results logic diagram?**

A results logic diagram is an analytical tool used to show the causal linkages between strategy components and intended results. A results logic diagram includes a results hierarchy in which lower order results are preconditions for achieving higher order results.

### **What is the ACYFS?**

The ACYFS is a prevention and early intervention strategy that aims to provide Aboriginal children with the best start in life. This is achieved by supporting Aboriginal families expecting a baby or with children aged up to 5 years.

The ACYFS is underpinned by a strong body of evidence demonstrating the importance of the early years in a child's development and the long-term effectiveness of supporting parents and children during these years.

### **Why develop a results logic diagram for the ACYFS?**

The conceptual framework for results logic diagrams has been progressively introduced into NSW Government agencies over recent years. Ideally a results logic diagram is developed before a strategy commences in order to clarify the context, logic and purposes of the strategy. However, since the ACYFS began there have been a number of changes to the strategy. As a result, it became apparent that the results and objectives of the ACYFS needed to be articulated more clearly.

### **Purpose of a results logic diagram for the ACYFS**

The ACYFS results logic diagram will inform ACYFS planning and evaluation activities and provide a clear and consistent understanding of the strategy's results and objectives more broadly. The results logic diagram also includes the most meaningful elements or components of the ACYFS such as responsibilities under the NSW State Plan.

## **Explanation of statements in the ACYFS results logic diagram**

### **Results**

The results based accountability (RBA) Framework, developed by Mark Friedman, defines results as conditions of wellbeing for children, adults, families and communities.

### **Children, families and communities are healthier, safer and more resilient**

This is the overarching higher order result sought from the ACYFS.

### **Aboriginal children have skills for life and learning at school entry**

This result closely reflects the NSW State Plan priorities. Assisting children in NSW to develop to their full potential is a key priority for the NSW State Plan. The State Plan outlines the benefits for increasing the proportion of children with skills for life and learning including the:

- individual benefits both socially and economically
- nation benefits from increased skill and productivity in the future workforce
- state benefits from the decreased need for intervention by police, health services, child protection services and special education services
- local community benefits from decreased juvenile and adult crime.

### **Aboriginal babies are born healthy**

Babies that are born healthy have significantly better health outcomes in later life than babies born prematurely or with a low birth weight. Before birth, babies that haven't grown as expected have an increased risk of a range of poor health outcomes, including poor mental health, general health and academic performance both in the short and long term.

### **Aboriginal children are physically well and healthy**

The foundations of adult health and wellbeing are laid in early childhood. Poor physical health in early childhood is known to affect health outcomes in later life. Slow growth and poor emotional support are associated with poor physical health and reduced physical, cognitive and emotional functioning in adulthood.

### **Aboriginal children have social and emotional skills appropriate for their age**

Children with good emotional and social skills usually have good concentration, will often help other children out, and are eager to try new experiences and play well with other children. Poorer emotional and social skills are associated with aggressive, anxious and often impulsive behaviour.

### **Aboriginal children have literacy and numeracy skills appropriate for their age**

Proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics is essential for day-to-day living, educational opportunities and employment prospects. Education assists children in developing these skills so that they can participate fully and productively in society. Success in school is associated with success after school and not finishing school is associated with poorer outcomes in adulthood.

### **Mothers have healthy pregnancies**

Providing children with a good start in life means supporting mothers. Poor circumstances in pregnancy, including smoking, maternal stress, misuse of drugs and alcohol, and inadequate prenatal care are major risk factors for poorer outcomes for children and families both in the long and short term.

### **Parents are confident, connected to their community and its services, and equipped to support their children's development**

The child's environment, largely provided by his or her parents, is vital in the maturation process. Failure of the child's environment to provide the necessary support and stimulation in the early years will most commonly be expressed in behaviour problems as the child develops. Confident parents are more able to promote their child's development and communication skills, manage their child's behaviour and emotions, and build good family relationships.

## **Key objectives**

Objectives are what you think should happen in order for the results of the strategy to be achieved. They are concrete statements that describe what a project is trying to achieve and need to be clear and concise, measurable, relevant and achievable.

The objectives listed in the results logic diagram are the key objectives of the ACYFS and align with how the strategy will ultimately achieve results for children, families and communities.

## **Strategies**

A strategy is a statement of how you intend to achieve your objectives. It is how you plan to move to where you want to be. It provides a rationale for selecting the specific activities that will actually deliver your project. The process for developing a strategy is to work backwards from your project results and objectives to try to identify a route for achieving them.

To achieve its key objectives and ultimately results for Aboriginal children, the ACYFS funds and delivers a range of prevention and early intervention initiatives. Prevention and early intervention projects aim to influence children's, parents' or family's behaviour in order to reduce the risk or improve the effect of less than optimal social and physical environments.

## **ACYFS service activity description**

Based on research and practice in early childhood development, five service activity descriptions (SADs) have been developed as key strategies for use under the ACYFS. These are:

- Aboriginal supported playgroup SAD
- parenting program SAD
- Aboriginal family worker SAD
- community capacity building SAD
- partnerships and networks SAD.

Each of the SADs has been developed to identify the results which the project seeks to achieve, its target population, its key features and its performance measures.

## **Pre-conditions**

These are the necessary pre-conditions to the provision of prevention and early intervention initiatives under the ACYFS.

## **Target group**

This is the group of people targeted by ACYFS initiatives.

## 12. Data collection strategies

NGOs funded through ACYFS are required to report to FACS on the work they do with families (the ACYFS service activities). Reporting takes place through a web-based data reporting system, and generally covers the period of the standard Australian financial year (i.e. 1 July to 30 June).

ACYFS shares a reporting system with another FACS program – Families NSW.

Reports are made in two formats:

- electronic forms that are completed and submitted online – covering family data and project data
- paper-based surveys – gathering family, partner agency and service provider feedback.

As part of the reporting process, service providers must regularly offer clients an opportunity to complete a survey to capture their satisfaction with the service and demonstrate any positive outcomes that have happened in their lives as a result of getting the support they need. Surveys will appear on the tailored data collection portal and are an important way to understand how effective the services have been for clients.

The information that is reported to FACS will be used for four purposes:

- to assess each service's effectiveness in delivering the outcomes specified in the contract
- to measure the service's contribution to ACYFS objectives, FACS goals and the goals of the NSW state plan *NSW 2021*
- as part of the program's evaluation
- to provide feedback to service providers on their performance.

The detailed reporting requirements for ACYFS are set out in a separate document – the Families NSW Data Reporting Service Provider e-Learning Guidelines. This document is regularly updated and located on the data collection system.

The activities defined in the Program Guidelines and Service Delivery Schedule are aligned with results identified in the ACYFS result logic. In order to maintain program integrity, it is critical that these are the only activities funded within ACYFS. The data collection system is consistent with the outlined service activity descriptions. The data collection system aims to record a minimum set of data so that service providers are not recording unnecessary information that will not be utilised; this helps to reduce the administrative burden on agencies whose primary focus is service delivery with families.

## Type of services

The tables below outline the key activity types, service levels and service provider reach they will form the basis for contracting and appear in the service delivery schedule for all Families NSW and ACYFS funded programs. The detailed reporting requirements for the ACYFS are set out in a separate document – the *ACYFS NSW Data Reporting Service Provider e-Learning Guidelines (June 2013)*.

## Aboriginal supported playgroups

These services provide an opportunity for parents to share experiences of parenting and for children to socialise, play and learn in a structured and positive environment.

<b>How many unique Aboriginal families will your organisation support through the ACYFS funded Aboriginal supported playgroup SAD during the financial year? Service type (SAD 1)</b>	
<b>Type of activity</b>	<b>Quantity per year</b>
Outlet e.g. school, community hall, mobile / park based.	of sessions held # of families attended
Healthy living initiatives e.g. nutrition, breast feeding etc.	of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended
Child safety initiatives e.g. safety at home, road safety etc.	of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended
Parenting skills / child development initiatives e.g. importance of play for children's development.	of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended
Early literacy and / or numeracy support e.g. trips to the library, Paint the Town REaD groups, counting games etc.	of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended
Transition to school e.g. information session about being school ready etc.	of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended

## Parenting programs

Parenting programs provide parents with effective activities, information and coaching to assist them to build positive parenting skills.

<b>How many unique Aboriginal families will your organisation support through the ACYFS funded parenting program SAD during the financial year? Service type (SAD 2)</b>	
<b>Type of activity</b>	<b>Quantity per year</b>
Triple P – Positive Parenting Program	# of sessions held # of families attended

Non Triple P parenting program and information sessions	# of sessions held # of families attended
Early literacy and / or numeracy support	# of sessions held # of families attended
Transition to school support	# of sessions held # of families attended

### Aboriginal family worker

Aboriginal family worker projects work to improve the outcomes and wellbeing of Aboriginal families with children aged 0–5 by providing support for parenting, facilitating informal support groups and access to appropriate services.

<b>How many unique Aboriginal families will your organisation support through the ACYFS funded family worker SAD during the financial year? Service type (SAD 3)</b>	
<b>Type of activity</b>	<b>Quantity per year</b>
Information and referral	# of families referred # of families provided with information
Case management e.g. home visit, centre based visit, outreach, telephone support	# of families
Group based intervention e.g. support group, family counselling	# of families
Early literacy and / or numeracy support	# of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended
Transition to school support	# of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended

### Community capacity building

These projects enhance the ability of a community to address problems or challenges from within its own resources. While it is expected most ACYFS funded services will conform to one of these descriptions, there is flexibility for new types of services to be funded, where the need for these services is established.

<b>How many unique Aboriginal families will your organisation support through the ACYFS funded community capacity building SAD during the financial year? Service type (SAD 4)</b>	
<b>Type of activity</b>	<b>Quantity per year</b>
Volunteering program	# of sessions held # families attended

Community information session	# of sessions held # families attended
Community hub e.g. the hub can work with individuals, service providers and the community to improve access to and knowledge of child and family information and services.	# families reached by hub
Community events facilitated e.g. Family fun day, Kids week etc.	# of event/s # of families attended
Community consultation	of sessions held # families attended
Early literacy and / or numeracy support	# of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended
Transition to school support	of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended

### Partnership and network projects

Service providers work collaboratively to:

- build capacity locally
- improve prevention and early intervention approaches and the local coordination of services, in order to ensure optimal access, engagement and results for clients.

**How many unique organisations will your organisation engage with through the ACYFS funded partnership and networks SAD during the financial year?  
Service type (SAD 5)**

Type of service (SAD 5)	Type of activity (Initiative type)	Initiative (Specific project)	Quantity per year
<b>Partnerships and networks</b>	Interagency / network facilitation	Record information for each specific project e.g. agency may facilitate 3 interagencies, with data provided in 3 separate rows for each interagency.	# of interagency/ies facilitated # of meetings held # of unique organisations attended

	Annual planning / multi-agency work plan		# of plan/s developed # of unique orgs involved in development
	Network initiatives / multiagency partnership activities		# of initiatives # of unique orgs involved
	Professional learning & development e.g. workshop, training sessions		# of initiatives # of unique orgs attended
	Sector forums e.g. seminar / conference for service providers and agencies		# of initiatives # of unique orgs involved / attended
	Resource development e.g. newsletters, directories etc.		# of initiatives developed # of people reached
	Sector information session		# of sessions held # of unique orgs attended
	Parent coordination and networking		# of initiatives # of people reached
	Online network facilitation e.g. website dedicated to resourcing parents and families, Facebook, blogs etc.		# of initiatives # of people reached
	Early literacy and / or numeracy support		# of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended
	Transition to school support		# of initiatives / sessions held # of families attended

### 13. Partnership framework

The ACYFS works in close partnership with Families NSW and the NSW Aboriginal Maternal & Infant Health Strategy.

FACS districts are responsible for coordinating the local Families NSW strategy. This includes developing consultation strategies which may involve representatives of government agencies, non-government service providers and local councils. Through the funded facilitation projects, districts also establish practice or network groups that work to improve service delivery by facilitating development of a more integrated local Families NSW service system.

FACS enters into agreements with other government agencies to facilitate collaboration within the service system. An example of this is the 2013 memorandum of understanding between FACS and the Department of Attorney General and Justice regarding the regulation of minimum standards for men's domestic violence behaviour change programs.

Under this agreement, when providing referrals to domestic violence behaviour change programs, FACS funded service providers will only refer domestic violence perpetrators to behaviour change programs that meet the minimum standards. A list of approved providers can be found under 'Minimum standards for men's behaviour change programs' at [www.domesticviolence.lawlink.nsw.gov.au](http://www.domesticviolence.lawlink.nsw.gov.au).