



Barnardos  
Australia

**TOWARDS**

**2025**

**Strategic  
Directions**



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CEO Barnardos Australia

## A note from our CEO

Barnardos Towards 2025 Strategic Directions reflect our fundamental belief that children must be at the centre of everything that we do, and that if we all unite around a child, we can deliver the best outcomes. Towards 2025 builds on this principle, by ensuring we prioritise the voices and views of children and young people in our service delivery, innovations and strategic initiatives.

At Barnardos, we understand that vulnerable children and families need us during these difficult times and that our work must continue, so that children's futures are bright and prosperous. Whether children and families are in metropolitan or regional areas, we are focused on delivering our quality programs and services to where they are needed most.

We believe that intervening early, especially in early childhood can dramatically improve children's future well-being. Our work over the next 5 years will focus on reducing child abuse and neglect, strengthening child and parental mental wellbeing, improving parental and family learning, as well as increasing sense of belonging and relationship continuity for children. Our new practice and outcome frameworks will align to our wellbeing focus areas and will provide our workforce with the necessary knowledge, skills and tools to strengthen and connect our services to the needs of vulnerable children and their families.

Our strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and staff is woven throughout our strategy. We will continue to utilise the voices and expertise of our staff and community partners to connect Aboriginal children to culture and embed culturally sensitive practices. The theme of voice resonates throughout our initiatives. Listening to children, family members, parents, foster carers, volunteers and staff is integral to our inclusive approach. We champion collaboration and connection.

Our sustainability and success relies on the strong partnerships and relationships we create with our supporters and partners. Your amazing generosity and kindness ensures we continue to deliver the best possible outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

# Contents

<b>VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES</b>	<b>Pg 4-5</b>
<b>STRATEGIC OVERVIEW</b>	<b>Pg 6</b>
<b>TOWARDS 2025 COMMITMENT</b>	<b>Pg 8</b>
<b>WELL-BEING FOCUS AREAS</b>	<b>Pg 10</b>
<b>A CHILD-CENTRED APPROACH</b>	<b>Pg 12</b>
<b>2025 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS</b>	<b>Pg 14</b>





## OUR VISION

To empower every child in Australia to reach their full potential.

## OUR PURPOSE

We support vulnerable children to recover and thrive.

Together, we ensure they reach their brightest future.



# Our Values

## We never give up

We recognise the challenges that children face and put our shared wisdom and experience to work.

We don't give up because we know that we can empower children to achieve their full potential.

## We speak up

We listen, act and advocate on behalf of children, always showing compassion and inclusion.

## We aim higher

We learn, improve and innovate in everything we do to enrich the well-being of children and their families.

We demand excellence to inspire excellence.

## We stand with you

When we unite around a child in need, we prove that they do not have to overcome their challenges alone.

We champion collaboration and cultivate teamwork for the good of children, families and the community.

## We do what's right

We build trust with people, partners and our community by being ethical, transparent and accountable.

We take full responsibility and learn from our mistakes.



# Strategic overview

## who we are

### VISION

To empower every child in Australia to reach their full potential.

### PURPOSE

We support vulnerable children to recover and thrive.  
Together, we ensure they reach their brightest future.

### VALUES

We never give up. We speak up.  
We aim higher. We stand with you.  
We do what's right.

### COMMITMENT

We commit to supporting vulnerable children to thrive, through our effective evidence-informed and research-based programs.



## what we will do

### ENGAGE

**We listen to act with intent.**  
We actively involve, partner and consult with others to carry our voice.

### EMPOWER

**We equip to create opportunity.**  
We share wisdom, strengthen skills, and collaborate to create positive change.

### EXCEL

**We push ourselves to be outstanding.**  
We operate in ethical, sustainable and transparent ways to achieve effective outcomes and social impact.

### EVOLVE

**We are brave and adapt to change.**  
We promote a learning and innovation culture to inspire greater agility and resilience.



# Towards 2025 commitment



## OUR FUTURE IMPACT

Over the next five years,  
we commit to supporting more  
**vulnerable children to thrive**  
through our effective  
evidence-informed and  
research-based programs.





# Well-being focus areas

## Social Justice and Safety

Reduce child abuse and neglect

- Focus on prevention and early intervention pathways, whilst supporting children and young people who have experienced trauma
- Enable parents and caregivers to provide a safe, secure and stable environment for children
- Contribute to community development projects



## Social and Mental Well-being

Strengthen child and parental mental well-being

- Enhance and expand practice and programs that improve emotional resilience in children and caregivers
- Strengthen social relationships within families and develop connections with communities
- Develop partnerships with mental health providers to provide holistic support services



## Learning and Education

Improve parental and family learning

- Develop the capacity of caregivers to prioritise and value educational outcomes
- Provide a variety of learning pathways and options that address the diverse range of caregiver needs
- Support and motivate children and young people to embrace learning



## Identity and Connection

Increase sense of belonging and relationship building

- Maintain emphasis on the benefits of strong family and extended social networks
- Work in a culturally sensitive way with children to build and develop relationships that promote greater self-awareness
- Uphold self-determination principles with Aboriginal children and families to strengthen cultural connection and community bonds





# A child-centred approach



We put children and young people at the centre of everything we do.

**Every child.**  
**Every opportunity.**  
**Every time.**

We believe positive change is possible through stability, strong connections and secure relationships.





# 2025 strategic directions

## Our 5 year focus

Our strategic directions harness Barnardos' passion for action. We know that by being brave and taking action, even when it may be difficult to do so, we can have the greatest positive impact to the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families.

We value people. We know that a collective and collaborative response makes all the difference. Therefore, our strategic initiatives work to connect people to feel engaged, to be empowered, to strive to excel, and boldly evolve.



We listen to act  
with intent.

We actively involve,  
partner and consult  
with others to carry  
our voice.

# Engage







## How we will engage

We will talk to children and young people and listen **to their views** about what's important to them and how we work, so that we continue to improve the services we deliver to them

1

We will speak up and lead the **conversation nationally** on issues impacting children and young people to ensure their needs are heard, so that we influence government policies and legislation

2

We will encourage participation and build **culturally sensitive relationships** to create connections that are inclusive of the diverse range of cultures within our communities

3



## How we will engage

**We will provide more opportunities for new carers**

to access peer support channels and intense casework support to build their confidence and capacity as carers

1

**We will develop a holistic approach to engaging** and utilising the views of carers to improve what and how we support and train our carers to provide the best care for children

2

**We will promote the valuable, specialised and important role** carers have in the lives of children and young people to encourage people to become lifelong foster carers

3



## How we will engage

We will be inclusive and encourage staff and volunteers to be **ambassadors** and advocates of our work and vision to facilitate greater engagement and partnership opportunities

1

We will seek out the voices, expertise and contributions of **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff** in policy consultation and create culturally safe pathways that develop culturally competent practices and cultural decision making

2

We will match the knowledge and skills of **our volunteers with our activities** to provide valuable experiences and meaningful connections to our work with vulnerable children and families

3



## How we will engage

We will build lasting relationships that inspire and invite active participation from our partners and supporters

1

We will proactively work with a diverse range of partners, community and government to fund and deliver our quality services well into the future

2

We will establish modern ways of communicating and connecting with our supporters and prospective partners to share our stories and make them feel part of the life changing work we do

3





We equip to create  
opportunity.

We share wisdom,  
strengthen skills,  
and collaborate  
to create positive  
change.

# Empower





## How we will **empower**

**We will consistently involve children, young people and families in decisions** that directly impact our work with them, so that they have greater choice and independence over their lives

1

**We will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families** to seek and learn about their culture and build community connections, so that they create lifelong pride in their cultural identity and guide how their communities are supported

2

**We will work alongside parents to keep families together** by strengthening their knowledge and skills to create and maintain safe environments where children and young people can grow and thrive

3



## How we will **empower**

**We will provide greater clarity about the role and responsibilities of being a carer**, so that new carers better understand the landscape and requirements of fostering

1

**We will provide carers with opportunities** to be involved in decision making processes, and provide clear explanations when involvement is not possible to maintain stability of care

2

**We will develop pathways** that enable carers to be reflective about their strengths and areas of development to create greater awareness and build their capacity

3





## How we will **empower**

**We will utilise an outcomes framework across all of our services** to ensure we continuously monitor, reflect and improve our work with children, young people and families

1

**We will develop a practice quality framework that equips our staff with the skills and tools** they need to effectively support children, young people and their families to achieve their goals

2

**We will encourage safe, open communication** and provide more opportunities for staff to network , connect and yarn, so they can exchange ideas and creatively develop solutions that strengthen our practices

3



## How we will empower

We will work alongside our sector partners by keeping **the child's voice and needs central** to our work, so that we identify and address gaps in the services we offer children, young people and families

1

We will strengthen and seek **partnerships that directly fund our work**, so that we are in a strong position to achieve our child and family social impact goals, to ultimately benefit community.

2

We will rely upon relevant **research, evidence, and consultation** to support how we design and develop projects and programs that are inclusive, fit for purpose and deliver results

3



We push ourselves to be outstanding.

We operate in ethical, sustainable and transparent ways to achieve effective outcomes and social impact.

# Excel





## How we will excel

We will utilise our Aboriginal Cultural Unit to equip **our Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff** with the language, tools and resources they need to embed cultural practices, planning and research to their work with children and families

1

We will offer **quality integrated services** that match the needs of children, young people and families, so that we start by addressing the needs that are most important

2

We will **expand our services in rural and regional areas** to highlight our belief that everyone should have access to the same quality support services

3



## How we will **excel**

We will implement a consolidated carer recruitment and retention approach to ensure we attract and keep great carers; ensuring we are an 'organisation of choice' for carers

1

We will provide interactive opportunities that create long term connections between carers and caseworkers to unify how we can meet the needs of children and young people together

2

We will address the challenges carers face when providing care to develop solutions that support the wellbeing of carers to continue their vital caring role

3





## How we will excel

### **We will establish ourselves as an 'employer of choice'**

by motivating staff with meaningful work, clear reward, recognition and performance channels, so that we retain and attract talented people

**1**

### **We will offer more identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions and senior leadership opportunities**

to provide greater visibility to our strong commitment to Aboriginal people and communities, especially in areas of high Aboriginal populations

**2**

### **We will enhance communication pathways**

that support purposeful collaboration and information sharing across our workforce, so that we creatively address operational issues and reduce organisational risks

**3**



## How we will excel

**We will highlight our credibility and reputation**

through public advocacy and lobbying that demonstrates our social impact achievements for children, young people and families

1

**We will utilise tailored messaging**

that reaches our various audiences to strengthen public support, perception and our reputation as a leading provider of services to vulnerable children and families

2

**We will strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations**

(ACCO) and peak bodies to reinforce our commitment to connecting Aboriginal children and families with culturally safe services and expertise

3



We are brave and  
adapt to change.

We promote  
a learning and  
innovation culture  
to inspire greater  
agility and resilience.

# Evolve





## How we will **evolve**

**We will encourage and deliver learning and education programs** that spark excitement and joy in children, young people and parents, so that they develop a passion for lifelong learning

**1**

**We will utilise modern technology to reach and connect** with children, young people and families in need, so that they are able to actively participate in our work with them

**2**

**We will grow our early intervention services and our practice** to effectively respond to domestic and family violence from the child and young person's perspective

**3**



## How we will **evolve**

We will develop tailored learning programs that **support and strengthen carers** to feel proud, confident and motivated in their ability to provide ongoing care to children

**1**

We will strengthen our **foster care networks and forums** to encourage carers to be involved in shaping and adapting our carer networks, support tools and training curriculum

**2**

We will develop innovative **ways for existing carers** to interact, share and support the foster care journey of new carers

**3**



## How we will evolve

### We will build and mature our digital infrastructure capacity

to use data more effectively, as well as develop operating efficiencies to ensure staff have more face to face time with children and families

1

### We will improve workflows and procedures, especially

when highly complex and complicated process are identified to guide and empower staff with simple, clear and self directed ways of working

2

We will promote agile learning environments 'on and off the job' where staff can develop and grow their knowledge, skills and careers to build our capacity to inspire creative solutions

3





## How we will evolve

### **We will expand our fundraising engagement efforts**

because we take our community responsibilities seriously, so that we reach more children and effectively demonstrate the outcomes and impact of our practice, programs and protocols

1

### **We will build business partnerships that promote a digital innovation culture**

to better connect and exchange information with our internal and external stakeholders about the work we deliver

2

### **We will monitor closely what is happening locally and nationally**

to ensure we are ready to identify any opportunities where we can respond and advocate more effectively to the needs of children, young people and families

3



## Let's bring this to life!

We see Barnardos' strategic directions not as a 'set and forget' document but as a 'living' roadmap that guides and inspires us to deliver on our vision.

Its intent, initiatives and innovations underpin our interactions and operations, so that over time, we will clearly see the difference and positive impact our contributions have made.

Barnardos Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians  
of the land on which we live and work.

We pay our respect to past, present and future elders.



#BarnardosAustralia

[barnardos.org.au](https://barnardos.org.au)



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