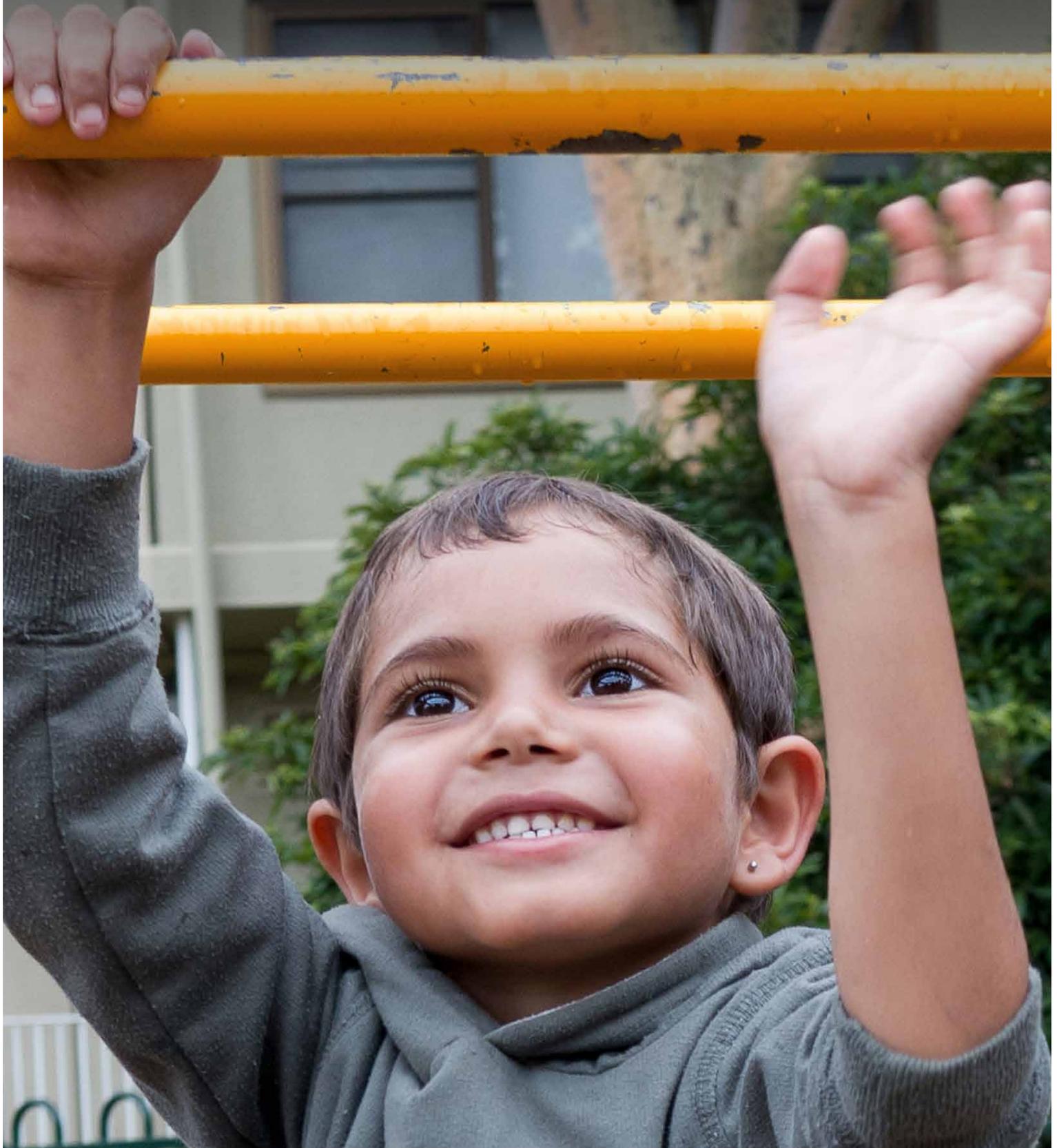




OzChild Strategic Plan 2020

New Frontiers



Message from the President



On behalf of the board and the leadership of OzChild I am very excited to present to you OzChild's 2020 Strategy. In this plan, we outline the future strategic direction for OzChild; a future that we believe will position us as a premier provider of services for children and young people in Victoria, and throughout Australia.

This plan represents the culmination of considerable

work and a rigorous process of consultation, analysis and review. It includes input from our carers, volunteers, staff and the OzChild Board as well as key stakeholders, and of course, children, young people and their families. We have asked ourselves the difficult questions, analysed our opportunities and have established a forward-looking plan that will set the foundations for OzChild beyond 2020.

This plan offers us challenges and gives us the tools to achieve something truly wonderful. It will position us to be the voice of the children, young people and their families, and to be the catalyst for industry-wide improvement.

We will continue to focus on the delivery of industry-leading programs, tailored to the needs of each child and developed from evidence-based programs and research. We will invest in innovation and technology solutions that will improve both the program outcomes as well as efficient and effective delivery. We will continue to recognise the wonderful work of all of our people, without whom we would not be the amazing organisation that we are, and which we will continue to be.

Please join us in supporting and celebrating this new direction for OzChild as we explore new frontiers solely for the purpose of dramatically improving the lives of children and young people.

Helen Maxwell-Wright

Summary from the Chief Executive Officer



This document sets out OzChild's strategic agenda for the next five years. It describes the organisation's vision, purpose and the key goals that will be implemented to ensure it has the capability to achieve its purpose and realise its vision.

What we plan to achieve

Our work has one purpose: to dramatically improve the lives of children and young people.

To achieve this, we will deliver

outstanding services that respond swiftly and effectively to the needs of the child, young person or family seeking our help. We support and advocate for children's rights, and work to bring significant and long-term changes in the policies and practices of governments to get better outcomes for our children and young people.

This strategic plan gives us a clear focus for our work by articulating four goals to change the lives of Australia's children and young people for the better. Developed in consultation with our carers, supporters, volunteers, staff and board, the plan will guide our work from the beginning of 2016 through to the end of 2020.

Two goals to change lives

 Strengthen our Impact  Grow our Reach

We believe the best way to achieve our vision is to strengthen our impact and to grow the reach of our services to a greater number of children, young people and their families. These goals focus on how we can extend our services throughout Victoria and Australia and improve outcomes for children, young people and families. As we grow, we will increase the awareness of OzChild as a recognised and trusted service provider, enabling us to attract new foster carers, volunteers, donors, supporters and partner with like-minded organisations.

Two goals to change how we work

 Integrate our Business  Develop and Nurture our People

These goals aim to improve our internal operations and the quality of our programs in order to increase the impact of our work.

For 165 years we have been there for children and their families. We believe all children are worth going that extra mile for and that they can achieve their full potential. Join us in making it happen.

Lisa Sturzenegger



All children and young people are safe, respected, nurtured and reach their full potential.

Our new vision would see a society in which all children, regardless of their background, religion, culture or socio-demographic, are living happily in a safe and caring environment. They are respected and supported, are part of a family and participating in their community. They have their needs met, have a home in which they are well cared for, well educated, and have the support that they need to be the best that they can be.

We believe that this is a society that we can all aspire to live in, and a vision that will continue to unite us.



OzChild supports vulnerable children and young people by providing healing, preventing abuse and neglect and strengthening families.

We believe that this purpose succinctly defines all that we do and everything we want to be in order to achieve our vision. It outlines not only that we want to prevent children experiencing abuse and neglect, but also what we do to support children, young people and their families to empower them to reach their full potential.



All of our services are underpinned by a robust and contemporary governance framework, based on risk identification and resource prioritisation.

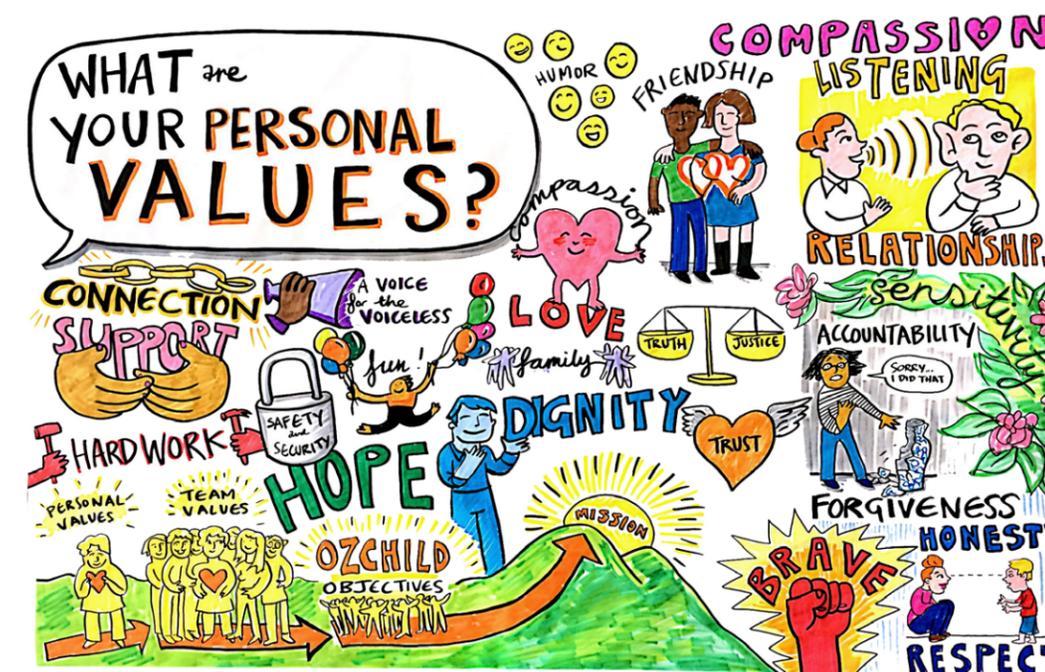
This statement represents a commitment from the board to staff, from the staff to the carers and volunteers, and from all of us to the children and their families we support. We will ensure that we remain a sustainable, honest and focussed organisation, true to our values and transparent in the determination of our decisions.

OzChild’s culture is an expression of our history, our daily interactions and relationships. Our culture conveys the meaning of belonging to all our people – employees, carers, volunteers and those we support.

We believe that when people are their whole integrated selves, they are at their best and can give their best. This comes through self-awareness, appreciation of our and others’ personal values and an openness to grow and improve as people. When an individual’s and a group’s values are continuously communicated and interpreted back and forth through dialogue, this generates mutual understanding, trust and meaning as a foundation for service and a healthy workplace.

We value an open culture underpinned by celebrating our strengths, living our values, working as a team and delivering for our clients. We come to work because we want to ensure our clients have access to the best possible range of services and supports to meet their needs.

As part of our strategic planning process, via large group exercises with our people we obtained a visual expression of the values present within OzChild. This illustration shows a range of the values that arose and continue to be an inspiration for all at OzChild. We value our people, for their capabilities, skills, passion, but mostly we value them for themselves.





Over 43,000 Australian children and young people[^] are currently in out-of-home-care due to abuse, neglect or violence.

The number of children in out-of-home care has risen every year over the past ten years.[^]

The number of children and young people at risk is increasing year on year by 6.6%[^] as the population increases and families face more complex challenges such as substance abuse, unemployment, financial problems, family violence, homelessness, and mental health issues. These factors mean more children will be removed from their parents for their own safety. The current \$2.2 billion spent by governments nationally is expected to continue to grow, as is the proportion (currently half) targeted towards family based care. In Victoria alone, there are 7,700 children in care, with \$400 million spent each year.

Since our establishment in 1851, OzChild has shown and continues to show leadership in the community services

sector with an enviable reputation for providing out-of-home-care, therapeutic healing for childhood trauma, pathways to education and supporting families at risk of breakdown – always upholding the rights of the child so they have the best possible outcome.

As an established and well-regarded not-for-profit organisation, OzChild plays a leading role in providing children, young people and families impacted by abuse, neglect and disadvantage with the support and care they need to have a better future.

“Over 43,000 Australian children and young people are in out-of-home care due to abuse, violence or neglect.”[^]

[^]Statistical Information is derived from the 2014 Report into Government Services



For 165 years, OzChild has provided support to over one million children, young people and families to ensure them a better future. OzChild is the longest continually-serving provider of care and support to vulnerable children, young people and families in Victoria.

OzChild’s ancestry involves a series of successful mergers with like-minded organisations, each of which has contributed to OzChild’s culture, values and its approach to supporting children, young people and families impacted by abuse, neglect and disadvantage.

The first of our antecedents began with the establishment of the Melbourne Orphanage Asylum in 1851 – the same year that the Gold Rush hit Victoria. While some prospered, many more people fell victim to destitution. As always, the most vulnerable were the children. Urgent help was needed and one of the three children’s agencies that would one day unite as OzChild responded, beginning their work in protecting children’s rights.

Over the next 100 years, through orphanages, family group homes, residential care facilities, foster care placements and the provision of family support, the care provided changed. OzChild grew by seed-funding three other agencies that all prospered in their own right, Mallee Family Care, Upper Murray Family Care and Windermere (formerly Dandenong Family Care).

During the same period, three other organisations, Family Action, Family Focus and the National Children’s Bureau of Australia amalgamated in 1993, realising that they shared a rich history and a vision to improve the quality of care and life opportunities for children. All of these organisations then came together as OzChild, to carry forward the legacy of creating a better future for Australian children.

Who We Are Today



Every night, OzChild finds a home for over 300 children and young people so they can sleep safely, free from the threat of violence, abuse or neglect and provides ongoing support so these children have a sense of belonging, self-respect and the opportunity to simply be a child.

OzChild works with children and families facing complex challenges. The circumstances for every family is unique and there are no easy solutions. We often work with children in the “too hard basket”. The problems are challenging so the response has to be comprehensive.

We believe that all Australians have a responsibility to protect and care for Australian children. We advocate on behalf of at-risk children at every level and seek to influence government policy, increase public and private funding and involve the community to become carers, respite carers, volunteers and supporters.

We continuously seek to improve what we do from the board to the front line service delivery.

We have restructured our organisation and created a lean and agile management team to support our front line services. In 2015 we appointed a new leadership team of board and executive members, all with the necessary skills and experience and a strong determination to build on the 165-year legacy and grow OzChild into the next decade.

“**Being a foster carer means providing a safe and welcome home for children who need it and providing opportunities for children to grow in a loving environment.**

OzChild Foster Carer



Our Future



Significant reform is taking place in the community sector at both the Federal and State level. A range of reviews, reforms and policy shifts over the past three to four years from multiple inquiries and Royal Commissions* to the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) mean that the composition of not for profit organisations operating in this sector has and will continue to change.

Government funding is shifting to outcome-based contracts. At the same time there is an increased appetite for services tailored to individuals and built on research and evidence. The sector will continue to grow as the population increases. Program funding will have to be used more innovatively to meet client needs, with the sector expected to provide more evidence based services and report on outcomes. Regulation will continue to increase, support for agencies decrease and the overall competition for government dollars will be greater than ever before.

The community sector, once considered restricted and relatively safe, is now open

to a host of innovative and cost effective multi-nationals with capital to spend. With the introduction of the NDIS and consumer choice, agencies like OzChild will be competing with these multi-nationals. Some smaller players will need to find niche markets to survive, join forces with like agencies, or submit to the dominance of larger operators.

Across all of this, OzChild will continue to support vulnerable children, young people and their families. We will always advocate for the rights of children and we will continue to employ and develop the best people in the industry. We will invest in innovation and research and continue to learn, adapt and redevelop our programs to ensure that they are competitive, and relevant against global benchmarks. We will seek new markets, help more children, and young people and support more families than ever before.

Why? Because we want every child and young person to be safe, respected, nurtured and reach their full potential.



By 2020 we will measure programs' success and impact through a strong evidence based methodology and reporting our client outcomes.



By 2020 we will have increased our footprint by 50% by extending our services, increasing our supporters and raising our profile.

What we will do > **Goal 1: Strengthen our Impact**

How we'll do it > By providing the highest quality services to improve the lives of children, young people and families.

We will continue to improve the services that we deliver to children, young people and their families. We will transition our performance measurement approach to an outcomes based methodology.

We will actively seek participation and feedback from our clients to improve service delivery and ensure child safety practices are embedded into everything we do.

We deliver the highest quality of programs that are designed according to the best available evidence from research, as well as our program and practice knowledge and experience. We will strengthen our capabilities to ensure that we are able to provide services across all diverse demographics.

Our services will:

- Be evidence based programs that are measured and evaluated.
- Be responsive to the needs of each child, young person and family through individualised planning.
- Honour Australia's first people and work actively towards reconciliation through knowledge, practice and by growing our partnerships with Indigenous agencies.
- Focus on achieving constructive outcomes through finalising our outcomes framework and measuring through our new client information management system.
- Engage our clients in active participation, using annual qualitative feedback to improve service delivery and design.

What we will do > **Goal 2: Grow our Reach**

How we'll do it > By extending our services to more vulnerable children, young people and families.

We believe that the best way to achieve our vision is to grow the reach of our services to a greater number of children, young people and their families.

We will be more vocal in our advocacy on the needs of the children, and work alongside other providers to champion sector improvement.

We will expand our services to reach more children and families across a greater number of communities. We will grow to a level that broadens our impact and strengthens our financial security by achieving the efficiencies that come with scale, enabling us to invest further in service, research and innovation. We will broaden our program and service offerings.

As we grow, we will increase the awareness of OzChild as a recognised and trusted brand in the provision of children, youth and family services, enabling us to attract new foster carers, volunteers, donors and supporters and partner with like-minded organisations.

We will extend our reach by:

- Seeking opportunities to provide services to more children, young people, families and communities across Victoria and nationally through tenders, mergers, acquisitions and partnering with other businesses and organisations.
- Actively encouraging discussions with like-minded organisations who may want to join forces.
- Ensuring broader access to our clients through innovation and collaboration
- Continuing the growth of our current services.
- Raising the profile of OzChild so more people are aware of our organisation, our services and how they can get involved.



By 2020 OzChild will have improved its financial sustainability to purposefully invest in the lives of children and young people.



By 2020 we will have increased our Indigenous collaborations and our people will reflect the diversity of our children and young people.

What we will do > **Goal 3: Integrate our Business Services**

How we'll do it > By engaging in effective business and fundraising activities that promotes sustainability, efficiency and productivity.

OzChild is a service delivery organisation that views everything through the lens of what is in the best interest of the children in our care. As a client-centric culture, everything we do supports this philosophy from front-line service delivery to business support services that enable the organisation to operate.

At OzChild, we recognise our success is enabled through the effort of both our front-line services and support staff.

Robust financial controls, information technology, infrastructure and business systems are all critical to the delivery of services to children, young people and families. Seeking income sources independent of government funding and a commitment to fundraise means we can develop new and adjunct programs or engage in research that enhances the services we currently deliver.

We will promote sustainability, efficiency and productivity by:

- Customising and integrating our business tools to support services by introducing Client Information Management Systems, Risk Management Programs and expanding our People and Culture System across carers and volunteers.
- Optimising our infrastructure and maximise the benefits of emerging technologies.
- Optimising our financial resources by sector benchmarking our unit costs and strong financial metrics.
- Investing in fundraising and developing income sources independent of government funding and increasing the number of donors, supporters, grants, trusts and community fundraising dollars.
- Extending our digital footprint throughout Australia and globally with increased website traffic and social media followers.

What we will do > **Goal 4: Develop and Nurture our People**

How we'll do it > By approaching our people in the context of their needs and the needs of our clients.

OzChild is a values-driven organisation. Everyone involved with us from our volunteers, to our board and our staff are driven by protecting and supporting vulnerable children. Our work is complex, challenging and relentless and we cannot do it without significant support. We will develop and utilise a strengths-based leadership style and values-based management practice to give our people the experiences and supportive culture needed for success with our clients.

At OzChild, we recognise that who we are, all we have achieved and everything we seek to be is derived from the people that came before us and the people of today. Respecting this legacy inspires us to do everything we can to provide access to the right support and the right services. This can only be achieved with the continued support and dedication of our people.

We will lead, develop and nurture our people by:

- Ensuring our people are highly attuned to the needs of the children, families and young people by providing multiple opportunities for learning and development.
- Strengthening our volunteer program to match our aspirations to extend our reach.
- Caring for our carers and listening and providing avenues for feedback.
- Supporting our people to foster accountable and healthy relationships between staff, carers, volunteers and clients.
- Creating an open culture that celebrates our strengths, lives our values, works as a team and delivers for our clients.
- Providing a flexible workplace that actively encourages diversity and respects each individual's needs.
- Ensuring child safety practices are embedded into everything we do.

Closing Remarks

This strategy represents the suggestions, input and analysis of a wide range of views from staff, stakeholders, carers, children and their families, the OzChild Board and management teams. We appreciate and thank everyone who made a contribution.

Senate Inquiries

- Violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings, including the gender and age related dimensions, and the particular situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability.
- Current levels of access and attainment for students with disability in the school system, and the impact on students and families associated with inadequate levels of support.

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement

- Inquiry into crystal methamphetamine

Victorian Inquiries

- Inquiry into abuse in Disability Services

Commissions

- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Victorian Commissions

- Royal Commission into Family Violence

South Australian Commissions

- Child Protection Systems Royal Commission

Queensland Inquiries

- Auditor-Generals report to Parliament 17: 2014-15, Managing Child Safety Information



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