Farewell to AES Fellow – Anne Markiewicz



Victoria 2015

Challenges in Evaluating Charitable & Philanthropic Pursuits

- Focus is on Charitable Goals and Impact
- Two key stakeholders: recipients and donors
- Evaluation of why and how as much as who, what and when (it is complex and contextual)



Philanthropy and Evaluation: What Gives?

Role of Evaluation in Philanthropy

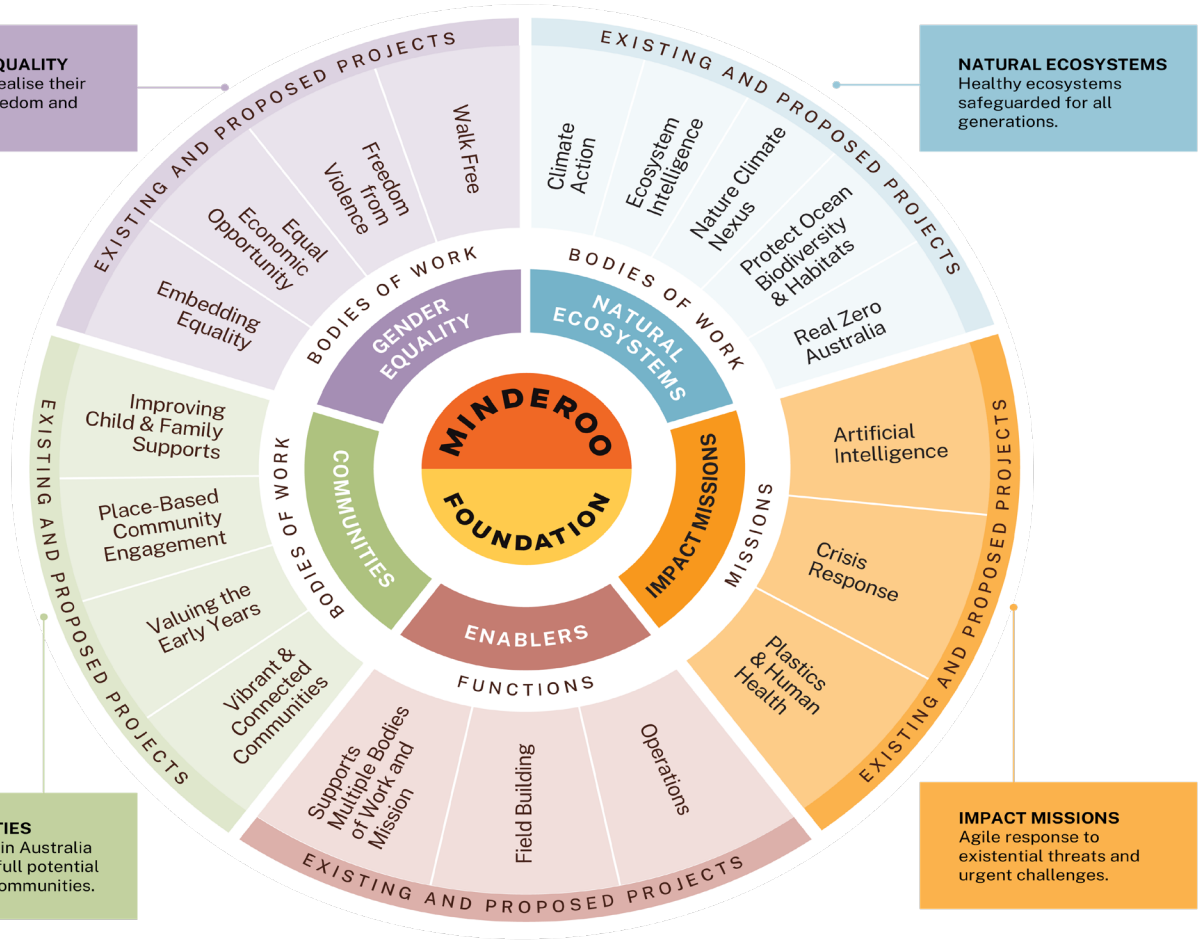
- Nicola Johnstone and Laurie Ball

17 September 2026

Minderoo Foundation – 2030 Strategy

GENDER EQUALITY
All people realise their inherent freedom and equality.

NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS
Healthy ecosystems safeguarded for all generations.



COMMUNITIES
All children in Australia reach their full potential in thriving communities.

IMPACT MISSIONS
Agile response to existential threats and urgent challenges.

A society that value
all people and natural ecosystems

In September 2026

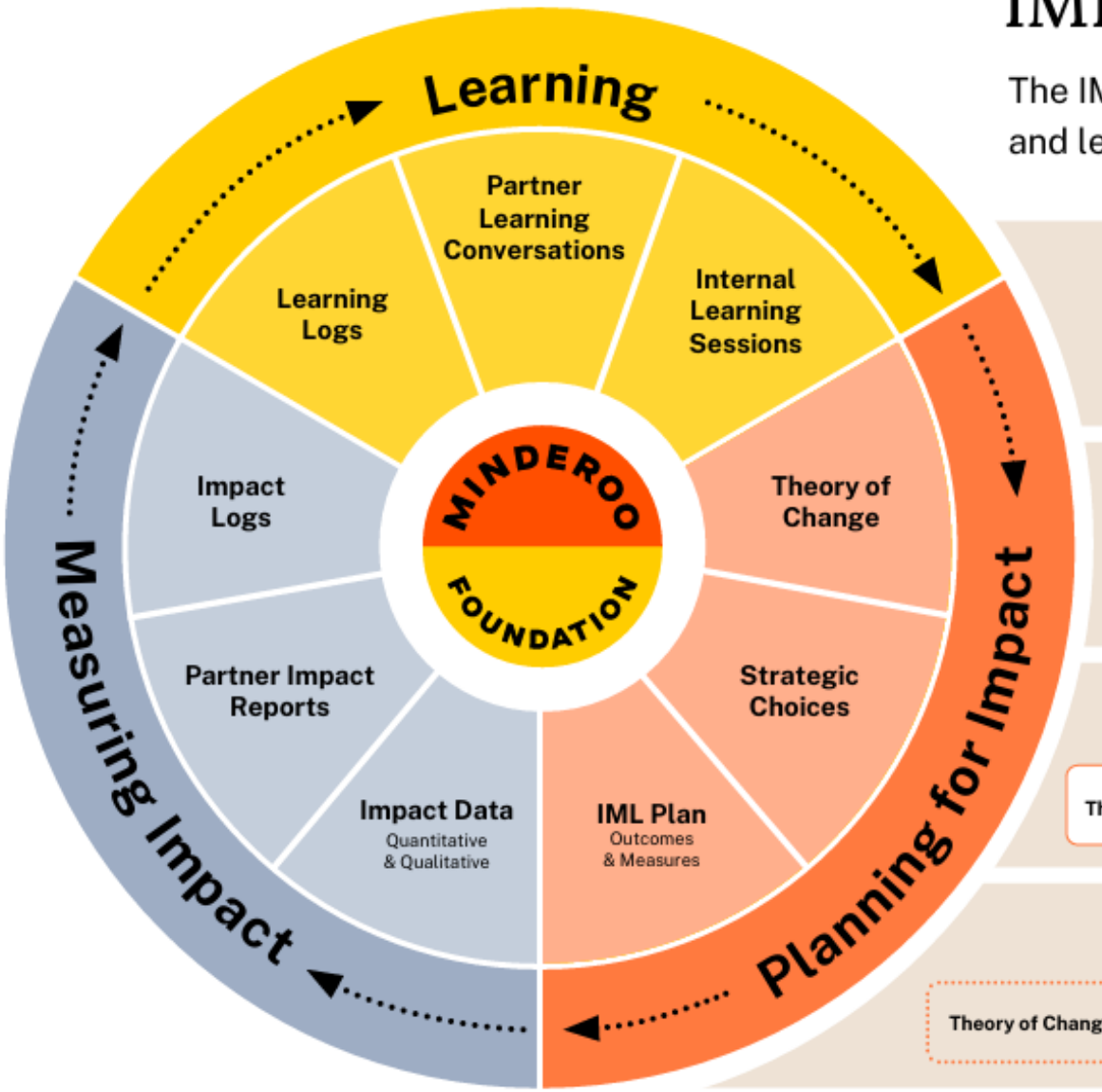
643	89	19
Collaborations	Projects	Bodies of Work or Missions

Partner → Advocate → Develop → Evidence

Australia → Asia-Pacific → Global

IML Framework

The IML Framework sets out the core elements we use to plan, measure and learn across Focus Areas, Bodies of Work, Projects and Collaborations.



FOCUS AREAS

Ultimate Outcome

BODIES OF WORK

Theory of Change | IML Plan | Outcomes | Measures

PROJECTS

Theory of Change | IML Plan | Outcomes | Measures

GRANT COLLABORATIONS

Theory of Change | IML Plan | Outcomes | Measures

Our approach in practice

Hifadhi Blu

ADVANCED CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

WIOMSA
Coasts Ocean and People
WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN MARINE SCIENCE ASSOCIATION





Challenges

- Systems change can be difficult to determine
- Partner and team member capacity and capability are limited
- The scale and diversity of Minderoo's portfolio
- Learning may not lead to adaptation

Learnings

Apply systems thinking early, accept emergence and adaption as part of the process.

Use a shared IML framework, but tailor and support teams and partners to ensure it is fit for purpose.

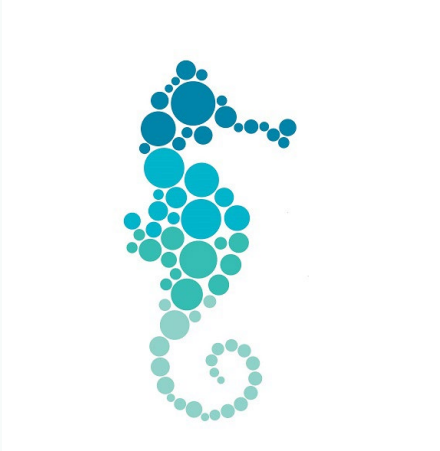
Prioritise a smaller number of meaningful measures and integrate stories of change to bring content to life.

Embed learning as a practice, with partners and within Minderoo, supported by leaders.

njohnstone@minderoo.org
lball@minderoo.org

The Ian Potter Foundation

A vibrant, healthy, fair and sustainable Australia





Questions to consider

01 Evaluating philanthropy
How is the funder turning up?

02 Supporting evaluative thinking
How can funding enable useful learning?

03 Evaluating grants or portfolios
What did this funding enable?

04 Direct evaluation of funded programs
What changed, for who and why?

05 Funding evaluations
What do we need to understand?





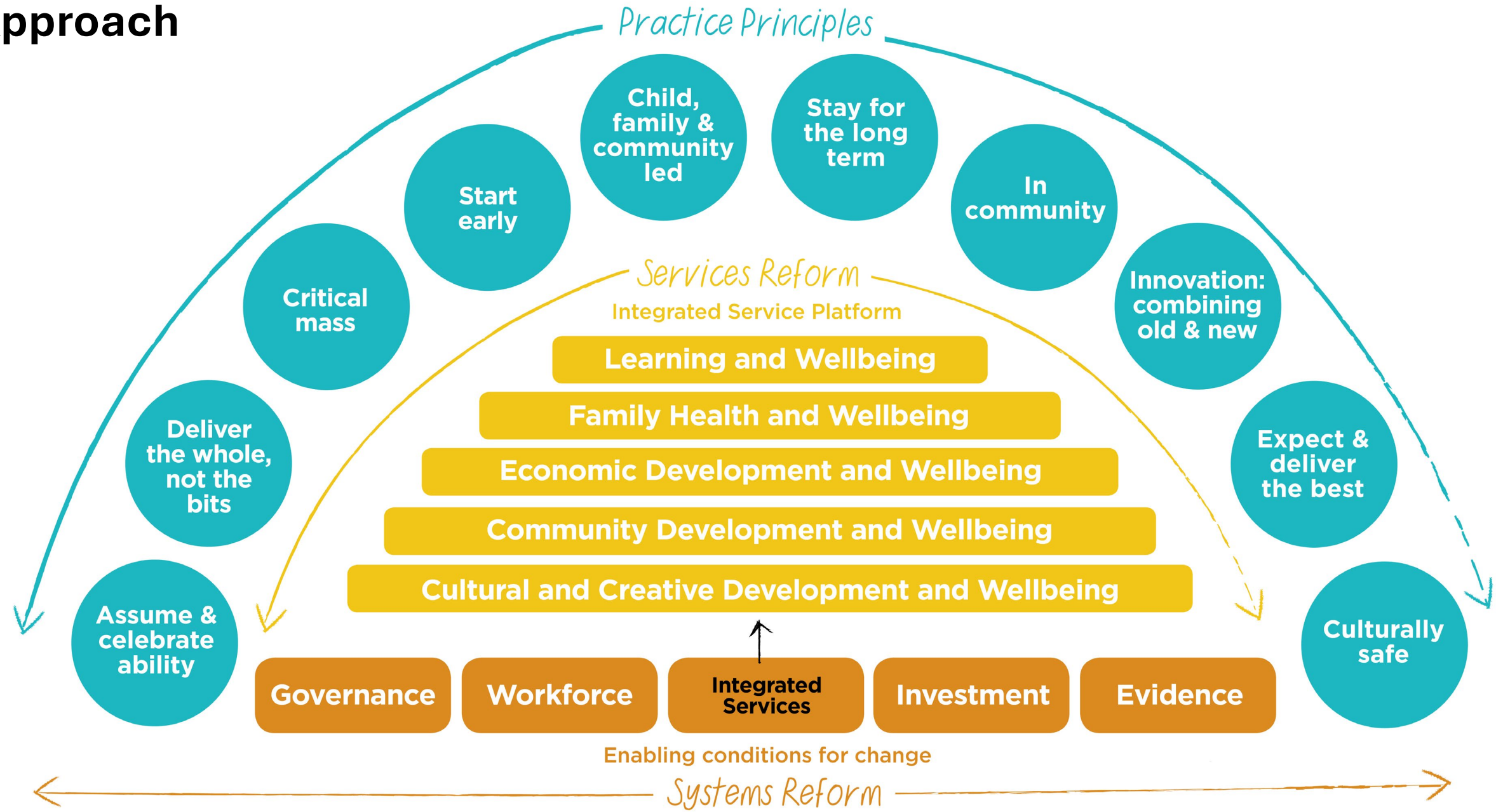
children's ground

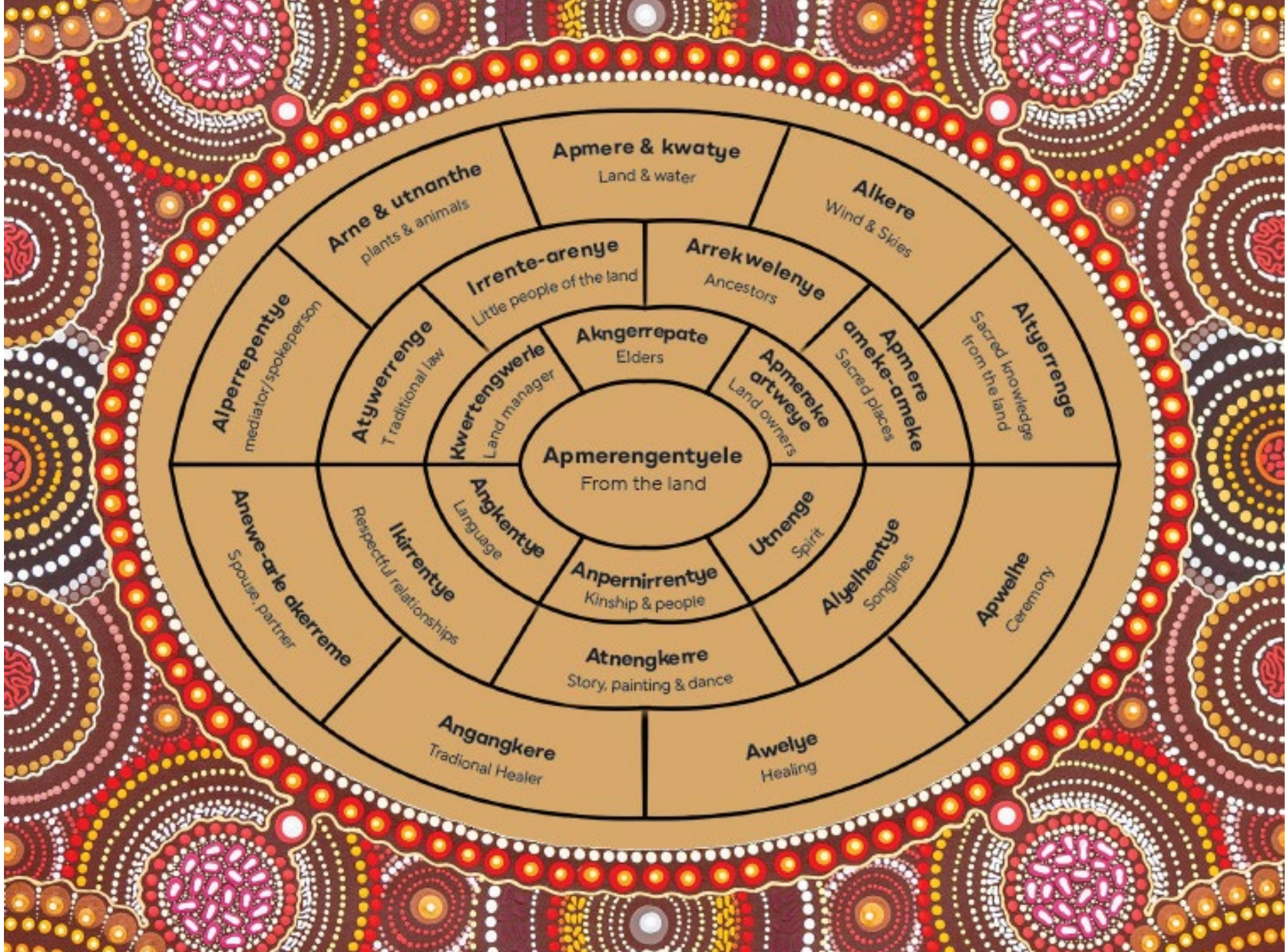
A quick introduction to Children's Ground




"Children's Ground is our organisation.
It was made by the people for the people."
William Tilmouth, Children's Ground Founding Chair
children's ground

The Children's Ground Approach



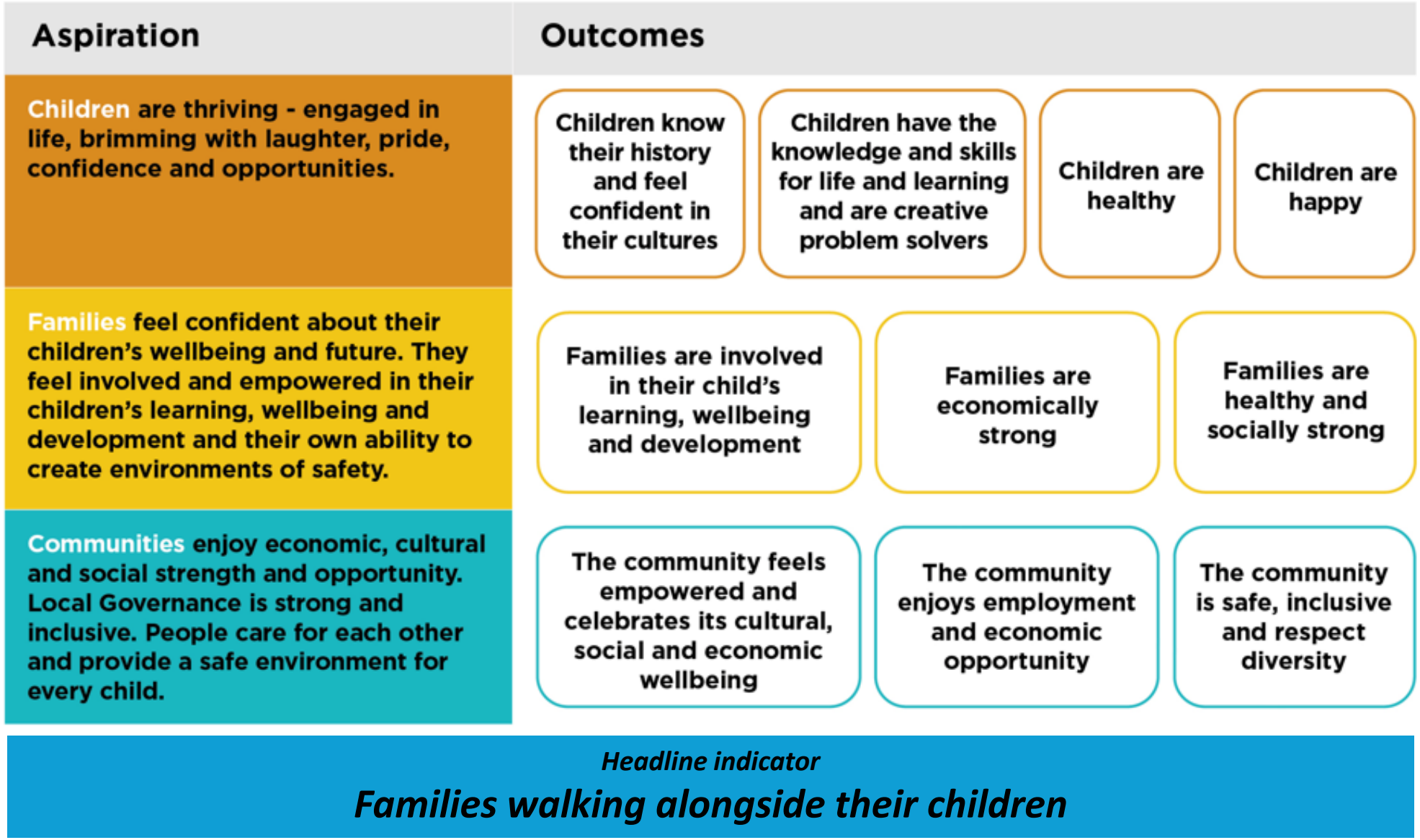

Apmerengentyele
From the land
Akngerrepate
Elders
Arrekwelenye
Ancestors
Irrente-arenye
Little people of the land
Apmere & kwatye
Land & water
Alkere
Wind & Skies
Arne & utnanthe
plants & animals
Alperrepentye
mediator/spokeperson
Atywerrenge
Traditional law
Kwertengwerle
Land manager
Apmereke artweye
Land owners
Apmere ameke-ameke
Sacred places
Altyerrenge
Sacred knowledge from the land
Angkentye
Language
Anpernirrentye
Kinship & people
Utnenge
Spirit
Alyelhentye
Songlines
Ikirrentye
Respectful relationships
Anewe-arle akerreme
Spouse, partner
Atnengkerre
Story, painting & dance
Apwelhe
Ceremony
Angangkere
Tradional Healer
Awelye
Healing

Western Evaluation Framework

25-year Longitudinal Outcomes Evaluation Framework

Measuring short, medium and long-term impact

Progress indicators over time







Cultural Community Evaluation Frameworks


131444



“We’ve been following government nearly all our lives – this is a new beginning. We are following a new path, our own path as First Nations people for the future of our children. At Children’s Ground, the community are taking the lead. We are very proud of that. We are the government of ourselves.”

M.K. Turner, OAM, Arrernte Professor, Elder, Law Woman. Ampe-kenhe Ahelhe Director Children’s Ground

Who we are


Parenting Research Centre
Turning evidence into better supports for families
MyTime
Supporting parents of children with disabilities
Parenting Today
Australia's largest national parenting survey
smalltalk
Raising Healthy Minds
Children's emotions, behaviours and wellbeing
Raising Children Network

Our R&E offerings…



2024

Evaluation of the Links to Early Learning program

A program by Uniting NSW/ACT

Evaluation funded by the Paul Ramsay Foundation

Parenting Research Centre

LIEN foundation

About Work News



DayOne

A mental health screening and support programme for parents at the challenging point of the child's diagnosis for developmental needs.

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH



Mission I'mPossible Two

16 preschools establish a new service model to identify developmental, growth and oral health needs in children from 2 months old. 3,500 children and 250 educators involved. Model to expand to more preschools starting 2026.

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

Rayner et al. BMC Psychiatry (2016) 16:169
DOI 10.1186/s12888-016-0861-2

BMC Psychiatry

Open Access

STUDY PROTOCOL

Take A Breath: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial of an online group intervention to reduce traumatic stress in parents of children with a life threatening illness or injury

Meredith Rayner[1*], Frank Muscara[1], Anica Dimovski[1], Maria C. McCarthy[2], Jackie Yamada[1], Vicki A. Anderson[1], Kylie Burke[3], Robyn Walser[4] and Jan M. Nicholson[5]

Abstract

Background: A substantial proportion of parents whose child is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, experience high levels of distress that can lead to long-term difficulties in mental health, family functioning and child adjustment. This study evaluates the efficacy of an Acceptance Commitment Therapy-based group intervention designed to reduce distress symptoms in these parents. The program is delivered using videoconferencing to overcome factors that prevent participation in traditional face-to-face therapy.

Method/design: The study is a randomized control trial of the Take A Breath group intervention for parents demonstrating elevated symptoms of acute stress, delivered via videoconferencing in six 90 min group sessions. Participants are the primary caregivers of children aged 0 to 18 years admitted for a life threatening illness or injury to the Oncology, Cardiology, Neurology or Intensive Care Departments of a tertiary pediatric hospital. Parents will be randomized to intervention or waitlist control 4–10 months after their child's diagnosis. Measures will be collected prior to and immediately post intervention for intervention and waitlist parents to assess program efficacy. Intervention parents will be followed up at 6 months to assess the maintenance of program effects. We predict that intervention parents will show fewer symptoms post intervention than waitlist parents (primary outcomes: traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, stress symptoms), reflecting improvements in the psychological skills addressed in the intervention (mediating factors). It is anticipated that reductions in mental health difficulties for intervention parents will be maintained up to 6 months post-intervention and will be associated with broader improvements in parents adjustment, child adjustment and child wellbeing (secondary outcomes).

Discussion: This study is unique in evaluating a group intervention delivered to parents of children affected by a

Ask AI Assistant

02

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE DO, WHY WE DO IT AND HOW IT WORKS, WE MUST FIRST UNDERSTAND THE THEORY OF CHANGE.

r many years of living in crisis, abuse and complex trauma, restoring self-worth is foundational for endence.

eve that through experiences that promote love and respect, we can spark and nurture a sense orth for those on the path of healing.



OUR THEORY OF CHANGE.

When she has **LOST HOPE FOR THE FUTURE** in the darkness,

we know that **DIGNITY + SELF-WORTH** is the way back to the light.

So we **SUPORT, EMPLOY + EMPOWER HER** through meaningful work,

So she can **HEAL HER SENSE OF IDENTITY** + live an independent, fulfilling life.

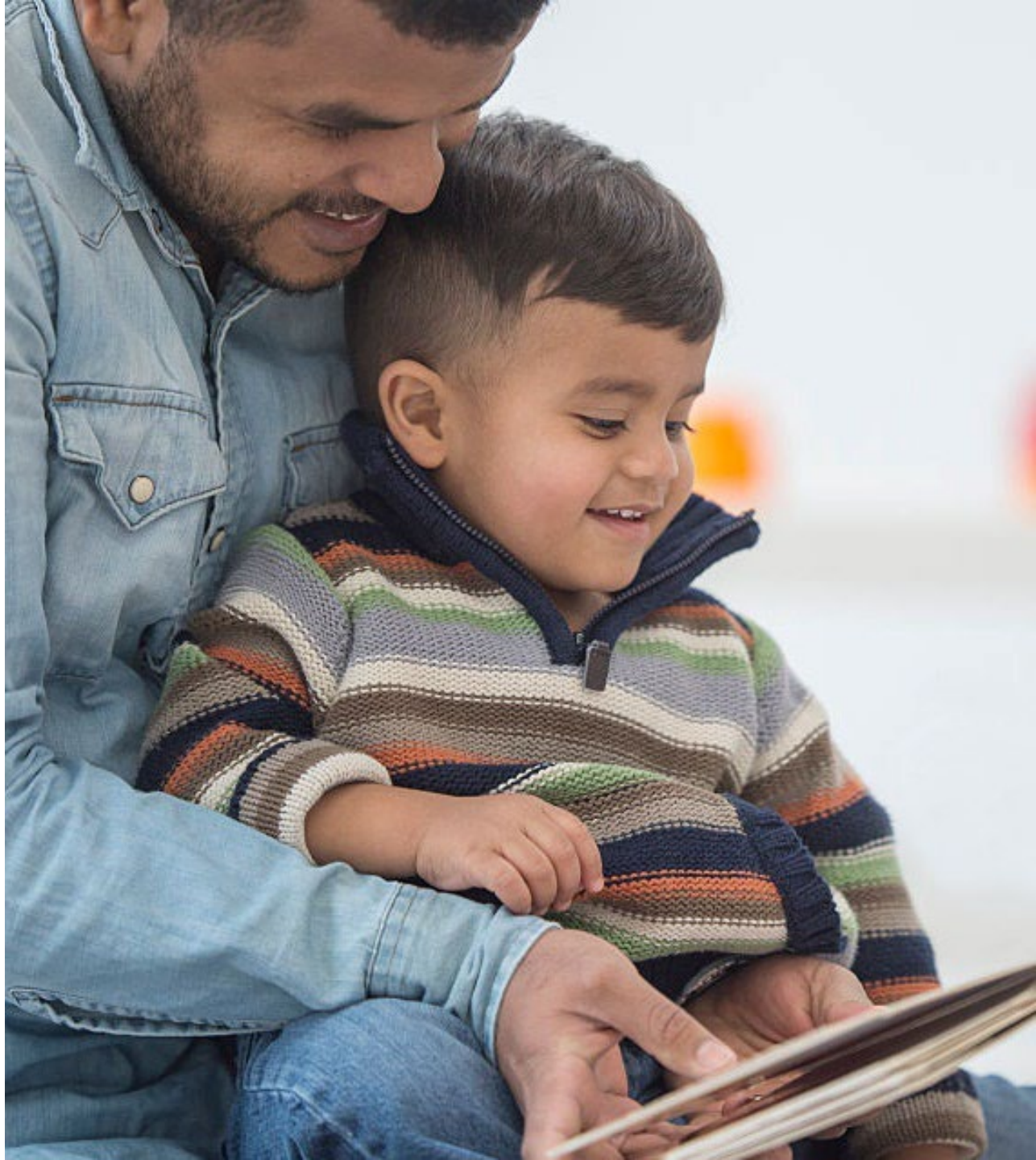
alannah & madeline foundation

Parenting Research Centre

Philanthropy in evaluation

- Relationships are key
- Trust will follow
- Rigour is possible within collaboration
- Partner with experts (e.g. in culturally safe evaluation, economic evaluation)
- Flexibility in funding & eval design
- Less formal accountability requirements

Parenting Research Centre



- **Dr Catherine Wade**
- M: 0407 941 056
- cwade@parentingrc.org.au

Parenting Research Centre

Clear Horizon | 20 years

Overview and Future Directions

Jess Dart
CEO, Clear Horizon

Audience Discussion

- What are some of the key issues/challenges for evaluating in the philanthropy space?
- What are some opportunities for evaluation innovation that arise when evaluating philanthropy programs?
- Is there some research needed to better understand evaluation and philanthropy? If so, in what areas?
- Is evaluating in the philanthropy area different than evaluation in other areas? If so, what are some of the differences?