



childaware Developing a Child Aware Local Plan

Child Aware Local Initiative is a capacity-building initiative which supports communities to undertake early intervention and prevention activities that contribute to keeping children safe and well.

Child Aware Local Initiative is a central priority under the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020* and the Second Action Plan 2012-15. Endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments, the National Framework represents an unprecedented level of collaboration between Australian, State and Territory governments and non-government organisations to protect children.

The Child Aware Local Initiative is implemented through partnerships between the community sector, Commonwealth, State and Territory governments.

The six supporting outcomes of the National Framework are key drivers to the initiative:

1. Children live in safe and supportive families and communities
2. Children and families access adequate support to promote safety and intervene early
3. Risk factors for child abuse and neglect are addressed
4. Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and well being
5. Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities
6. Child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support

Key messages of the Child Aware Local Initiative:

- Protecting children is everyone's business.
- Children have a right to be safe, valued and cared for.
- The best way to protect children is to prevent abuse and neglect from happening in the first place.
- Children and families should have a 'voice' in decisions affecting their lives.
- Governments, communities, organisations and individuals can work together to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and families.
- Children are usually best supported within their families.
- A 'one size fits all' approach does not work across Australia's diverse communities.
- Local solutions are required for local problems.
- Culturally diverse groups need culturally sensitive responses.

Child Aware Local Plan

What are our community's gaps/needs?

Community and service sector consultation conducted by the YWCA Northern Rivers in late 2014 found that there is a distinct need in the Lismore area for greater opportunities for:

- children and young people in Lismore to express their unique needs, experiences and perspectives in the public arena
- intergenerational dialogue, transfer of knowledge and role-modelling
- the community to come together to act collectively to tackle the key issues affecting children and young people

Who are the stakeholders we will draw together to build a Child Aware community?

- **Business leaders**
 - Lismore Business Panel
 - Local business / enterprise
- **Service Leaders**
 - Political leaders
 - Police
 - Lismore chambers
 - Health advocates
- **Aboriginal Community**
 - Organisational leaders
 - Elders
- **Community Leaders**
 - 'Everyday' leaders
 - Community advocates
- **Primary Schools** (children, parents, teachers)
 - Lismore
 - Goonellabah
 - St Joseph's Alstonville
 - St Mary's Casino
 - Kadina
 - Albert Park
 - Trinity

What is our vision for a Child Aware community?

Children and young people nurtured by a community that is sensitive to each child's unique perspective, experience and wellbeing.

How do we get there? What are we doing to realise our vision?

Convene a one day workshop/forum which brings together young people (primary school yrs. 5/6) from throughout the Lismore area to meet, share experiences and learn from local community leaders. The forum will be hosted by the YWCA in collaboration with noted political/social leader Anna Bligh and will include:

- Facilitated cross-generational discussion groups concerning issues of importance to children, focusing on healthy relationships, strong communities, and what constitutes a 'great leader'.
- Activities session exploring the impact of the online world on children's lives and how we communicate and relate to one another which aim to bring young people and leaders together to share and reflect on the types of communication that support responsible and respectful relationships.
- Shared discussion on the adolescent years – what young people experience today, what concerns them, what they are looking forward to – with an exploration of how these years can be a time to grow, become more independent and establish patterns that can support young people to have a healthy sense of self as they move into adulthood. '
- An 'Everyday Wisdom' session in which community leaders will respond to the children's concerns and share their life experiences and life lessons.

What organisations / agencies / businesses are supporting this initiative and what are their roles/commitments?

The YWCA Northern Rivers will coordinate the *Everyday Wisdom* event and the development and distribution of all associated resources. Coordination responsibilities will be undertaken in close collaboration with:

- Young Peoples Coordinating Committee (YPCC)
 - Facilitated by the YWCA Communities for Children In School Support program, the YPCC is comprised of Years 5/6 children currently participating in the ISS program at Goonellabah primary school. The YPCC is responsible for developing the *Everyday Wisdom* forum agenda.
- Community Leaders Coordinating Committee (CLCC)
 - Coordinated by the YWCA Communities for Children program, the CLCC is comprised of select community leaders from the Lismore area and is responsible for building on the *Everyday Wisdom* forum agenda developed by the YPCC. CLCC members are drawn from the following local organisations, agencies and businesses:
 - Lismore City Council
 - Lismore Business Panel
 - Business Zone representatives
 - Stella Network representative (Lismore Women in Business Network)
 - Rekindling the Spirit – Aboriginal Families
 - Federal Member of Parliament
 - Solid Mob Aboriginal Health
 - Bundjarlarms Netball representative
 - Lismore Child and Family Health Representative
 - Lismore Local Area Command (Police)
 - Lismore Child and Family Health
 - Lismore Chambers representative (barrister)
 - Lismore Community Leaders
 - Department of Education
 - Department of Family and Community Services
 - Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Additional support for the initiative from local businesses, organisations and agencies will be negotiated during the CLCC development process.*

How are we collecting and sharing our story/learning?

The story of the development of the Everyday Wisdom initiative and the learnings which arise from it will be collected through:

- Active Learning documentation which will track and record each stage in the development of the initiative and the activities, sessions, discussions and outcomes of the one-day forum.
- A professional produced video of the Everyday Wisdom initiative, including interviews and voxpop and recordings of general proceedings at the YPCC and CLCC development meetings and the Everyday wisdom forum. Children from the YPCC will be instrumental in the filming process, developing interview and voxpop questions and filming.

Together, the active learning documentation and Everyday Wisdom video will provide a resource to:

- distribute amongst local schools as a 'how-to guide' for convening smaller, localised Everyday Wisdom events
- promote the importance of Everyday Wisdom and Child Aware principles amongst the wider Northern River's region through mediums such as web, video and general awareness-raising material.

How will we sustain momentum into the future?

The Everyday Wisdom initiative is being proposed as an annual event. The leaders of the Young Peoples Coordinating Committee Community will be invited to return in 2016 to play a role in coordination of that year's event and to share their experiences concerning transition to high school. Members of the Community Leaders Coordinating Committee will, where relevant, be engaged in Lismore Communities for Children activity and will also be invited to participate in the 2016 Everyday Wisdom initiative.