Why are new approaches needed?

In response to a range of factors:

• changes in the conditions under which families are raising young children

• changes in the nature of the problems facing society

• the accumulation of new knowledge regarding the importance of childhood and adolescence and

• difficulties the existing service system is having in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable families
What are place-based approaches?

“…..stakeholders engaging in a collaborative process to address issues as they are experienced within a geographic space, be it a neighbourhood, a region, or an ecosystem” (Bellefontaine & Wisener, 2011).
How do place-based approaches ‘work’?

If we build a partnership with all stakeholders and gain a collective commitment to an agreed set of goals for the community,

and if we develop an action plan that improves the conditions under which families are raising young children, and provide families with direct services that address their needs,

and if we implement the action plan in partnership with the families themselves and in a way that continuously adapts to emerging child and family needs,

and if the strategies succeed in building the capacity of families and early childhood services to provide children with the care and experiences they need to flourish,

then we will see improved outcomes for children.
Examples of place approaches

- Child Aware
- Communities for Children
- Communities that Care
- Child and family Centres
- Child and Parent Centres
- Extended school service models
- Strong Start Bright Futures
- Children’s Ground
- Centrelink Place Based initiative
- Building Australia’s Future Workforce
- Opportunity Child
Understanding different place based approaches

Early years

Cradle-to-career

Small neighbourhood

Large district/state or country-wide

No community engagement

Community-owned

Focus on service system coordination

Focus on community support

Externally devised off-the-shelf

Adapted to local needs/setting

No

Yes

AGE SPAN

DEFINED GEOGRAPHIC AREA

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FOCUS

ADAPTED TO LOCAL NEEDS

USES MULTI-LEVEL APPROACH
The Nest action agenda
Improving the wellbeing of Australia’s children and youth
### Vision
All children and youth are loved and safe, have material basics, are healthy, are learning and are participating and have a positive sense of culture and identity.

Measured by Australia being consistently placed in the top third of OECD countries for comparable indicators of child and youth wellbeing, with the target of 50% of indicators in the top third by 2025 (currently 26%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loved and safe</th>
<th>Material basics</th>
<th>Healthy</th>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Participating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive, supportive family environment</td>
<td>Material wellbeing</td>
<td>Healthy birthweight</td>
<td>Early childhood education participation</td>
<td>Youth feeling able to have a say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive parenting practices</td>
<td>Income equality</td>
<td>Immunisation rates</td>
<td>Reduced early childhood development</td>
<td>Voting enrolment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive, trusted peer relationships and communication</td>
<td>Parental employment</td>
<td>Nutrition, activity and healthy weight</td>
<td>Developmental vulnerability</td>
<td>Use and engagement of technology and social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community safety</td>
<td>Youth in employment/training/education</td>
<td>Healthy physical development</td>
<td>Parental engagement in child learning</td>
<td>Involvement in organised activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children not placed in care</td>
<td>Internet access</td>
<td>Dental health</td>
<td>Performance in English, Maths and Science (at Year 4 and 15 years)</td>
<td>Membership of social, community, or civic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth not in detention</td>
<td>Educational possessions</td>
<td>Good mental health</td>
<td>School retention rates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing amenity and stability</td>
<td>Reduced injury deaths</td>
<td>Youth participation in education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positive sense of culture and identity

*The Nest Logic Model*(from Action Agenda)*
## The Nest Logic Model
*(from Action Agenda)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority directions</th>
<th>and how we can measure improvement in these</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improving early childhood learning and development</td>
<td>GOAL: Reduce percentage of children identified as developmentally vulnerable on the AEDI to 15% by 2020.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the educational performance of young Australians</td>
<td>GOAL: Make Australia rank within the top 5 OECD countries for educational performance by 2025.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the physical health of young Australians</td>
<td>GOAL: Make Australia rank within the top 5 OECD countries for physical health outcomes by 2025.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the social and emotional wellbeing of young Australians</td>
<td>GOAL: Make Australia rank within the top 5 OECD countries on the UNICEF measures for social and emotional wellbeing by 2025.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting the participation of young Australians</td>
<td>GOAL: Develop and formalise national structures and frameworks for implementing and evaluating children and young people’s participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing disadvantage arising from income disparity</td>
<td>GOAL: Ensure Australia ranks as one of the top 5 OECD countries with the lowest percentage of children (0-15 yrs) in relative poverty* by 2025.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunity Child

What is Opportunity Child?
Opportunity Child is a collective initiative that brings together local communities with national participants in a community-led learning system.

Our purpose is to support communities in building the enabling conditions they need to work together so children can thrive in learning and life.

“Enabling conditions” refers to the local capabilities and system supports required for a community to work together effectively in a complex environment.
Our bold goal

We envision an Australia where all children are thriving in learning and life.

This is an Australia where all children have material basics and are loved and safe, healthy, learning, culturally secure, and actively contributing to an aspirational community through engaged relationships with family and peers*.

To contribute to this future, Opportunity Child is committed to working with others across the system towards a 10-year bold goal:

We will measure our success using ARACY’s NEST framework.

To transform the childhood outcomes of 65,000 Australian children currently considered developmentally vulnerable.

* This has been informed by the anchor frameworks of ARACY’s NEST, AEDC, and “Child well-being in rich countries – A comparative overview”, UNICEF, Office of Research, 2013
Our focus: Collective Impact

We focus on testing and understanding the principles for Collective Impact, which may be a potentially valuable mechanism for helping communities unleash their potential to drive change for children.

While our focus is on Collective Impact as a means for change, we acknowledge the critical role of other methods for place-based change and social policy reforms in transforming outcomes children.

Our work is a contribution to this broader national agenda for change.
What we do

Over the next 10 years, Opportunity Child will focus on four interdependent Domains for Change:

1. **Build a learning system** that brings together local community backbones with national participants to focus on Collective Impact for children.

2. **Support a national portfolio of communities** (remote, regional and urban) to develop local capability for Collective Impact.

3. **Connect learning** across the Opportunity Child portfolio with other national and international learning systems.

4. **Share and scale** capabilities and learnings to contribute to systems change.
An ecological approach

Defining our focus group

Our specific focus is on improving outcomes for children who are:

- Pre-natal to 8 years of age
- Developmentally vulnerable
- Living across all Australian communities

Defining “community”

A “community” comprises residents of a defined population as well as the collective agencies and individuals engaged in the collaborative endeavour.

** The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation #turnoutward 2013
Our working model

Our collective initiative includes:

- The Opportunity
  Child Leadership Group
- The Opportunity
  Child Backbone Group
- Networked Action Teams
## Target outcomes (over 10 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain for change</th>
<th>Desired 10 year Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Build a learning system           | • Local Communities with a stronger positioning and ability to inform national practice, funding and policy  
• National practice that is better informed and more responsive to local community learning  
• A high impact Learning System that has demonstrated its value in informing the national body of knowledge around the enabling conditions to address childhood vulnerability |
| Support a national portfolio communities | • Improved childhood outcomes in the portfolio communities  
• Improved local collective impact capabilities that have helped communities shift outcomes for children |
| Connect learning                  | • Respected tools, resources and learning materials that can grow and further develop the field of practice of communities working together to improve outcomes  
• Widespread, cross-sector and inter-disciplinary agreement about what needs to be measured that can inform policy and practice  
• A tested body of knowledge and evidence around how collective impact principles can help build the enabling conditions communities need to change childhood outcomes across a diversity of contexts |
| Share and scale capabilities and learnings | • Broader understanding of, and agreement on, the policy, capital and institutional behaviour that enables Collective Impact to improve childhood outcomes  
• Local capability development in communities outside of the Opp Child community portfolio |