



South Australia's Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People

Every young South Australian counts

Acknowledgement

This Framework was developed in consultation with multiple stakeholders across South Australia in 2019 and reviewed in 2022-23. The Child Development Council thanks the children and young people who contributed their views about what makes a good life via an online survey, focus groups, forums, postcards and a Charter Summit, and acknowledges the parents, families and carers and all other stakeholders for their collaboration and input.

Acknowledgement of the Aboriginal peoples of South Australia

The Council acknowledges the diverse Aboriginal peoples of South Australia and respects their cultural and heritage beliefs and their elders past, present and emerging. This Framework is intended to guide services provided by state and local governments on the traditional lands of Aboriginal peoples and the Council acknowledges and respects their spiritual relationships with Country.

Recognition of Aboriginal data sovereignty

Data sovereignty is about story ownership past, present and future and refers to the right of Aboriginal peoples to control the collection, access, analysis and interpretation, and the use of data and information to inform strength-based narratives.

The Child Development Council acknowledges and supports the right of Aboriginal peoples to self-determination, autonomy¹ and ownership of their own intellectual property, including data and information.

The Council recognises that data and information about Aboriginal children and young people are inseparably connected to their families and communities. Aboriginal data and information are an integral part of cultural identity, and culturally appropriate narrative, for Australia's first peoples.

The Council is legislated to report outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people. The Council publishes a 'score card' of population-level outcomes under the Framework, to indicate areas of excellence and where effort is needed. The Council does not collect data, rather it uses secondary data, mainly from government (federal and state) sources, that are already publicly available. The Council proactively seeks to establish connection and liaison with data providers/custodians to address data gaps and pursue access to data which are publicly unavailable.

The Council analyses data and information and seeks to publish these in culturally safe and responsible ways to help improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people in South Australia. By collating and publishing data and information, the Council aims to empower communities for informed advocacy.

The Council's Aboriginal Reference Group advises on the use and publication of data and information regarding Aboriginal children and young people.

In support of the inalienable rights of Aboriginal peoples, the Council aspires to current best practice for the collection, ownership, and application of data and information about Aboriginal peoples, their lifeways and territories.²

¹ Article 4, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

² Indigenous Data Sovereignty Readiness Assessment and Evaluation Toolkit (2021), Copyright © Lowitja Institute 2021

Language and definitions

The term 'children and young people' is inclusive of all children and young people from birth up to the age of 18 years.

The Council uses the term 'Aboriginal' to refer to people who identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. This term is preferred by Aboriginal South Australians.

GPO Box 1152
Adelaide South Australia 5001

T (08) 8463 6429
E ChildrenSA@sa.gov.au
W www.childrensa.sa.gov.au

© Government of South Australia, June 2023

Author: Child Development Council. South Australia.

Title: South Australia's Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People

Edition: **2023**

Contents

1	Overview	5
2	Framework structure	7
3	Charter for Children and Young People	8
4	Framework dimensions, outcomes and indicators	10
5	Measures to provide the evidence	12
6	Monitoring progress	13
7	Reporting the outcomes	15
	Appendix 1 – Indicators and measures	16
	Appendix 2 – Assessment criteria for indicators and measures	24

1 Overview

This Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People supports the development and wellbeing of South Australians from birth to 18 years.

By adopting a long-term focus to track and improve the outcomes of all children and young people, the Framework seeks to guide the South Australian Government's work in relation to children and young people. It does this by targeting policy, legislation, funding and services to inform a cooperative, whole-of-government (state and local) approach to the setting of objectives or policies affecting children and young people.

A collective and sustained effort will enable children and young people in South Australia to start well, grow strong, engage and experience a good life, now and in the future.

Embedded at the core of the Framework, is the Charter for Children and Young People, with 20 conditions for children and young people to live a good life in accordance with their statutory, common law and international human rights.

The Framework:

- identifies the key dimensions of 'a good life' and the agreed outcomes for all children and young people in South Australia
- provides a systematic mechanism to track, monitor and report on agreed outcomes with indicators
- provides evidence of inequalities for specific communities of children and young people to identify where improvements are needed
- identifies emerging trends, and current and potential challenges
- provides evidence for decision-making for policy and other interventions to improve the lives of all children and young people
- requires cooperation and collaboration of state and local government authorities.

The development of this Framework was guided by the provisions of the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* (Act) and the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Regulations 2017* (Regulations).

In accordance with the specific legislated mandate to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people in South Australia, this Framework acknowledges the Uluru Statement from the Heart and accepts the invitation to walk together with Aboriginal Australians to build a better future for all.

2 Framework structure

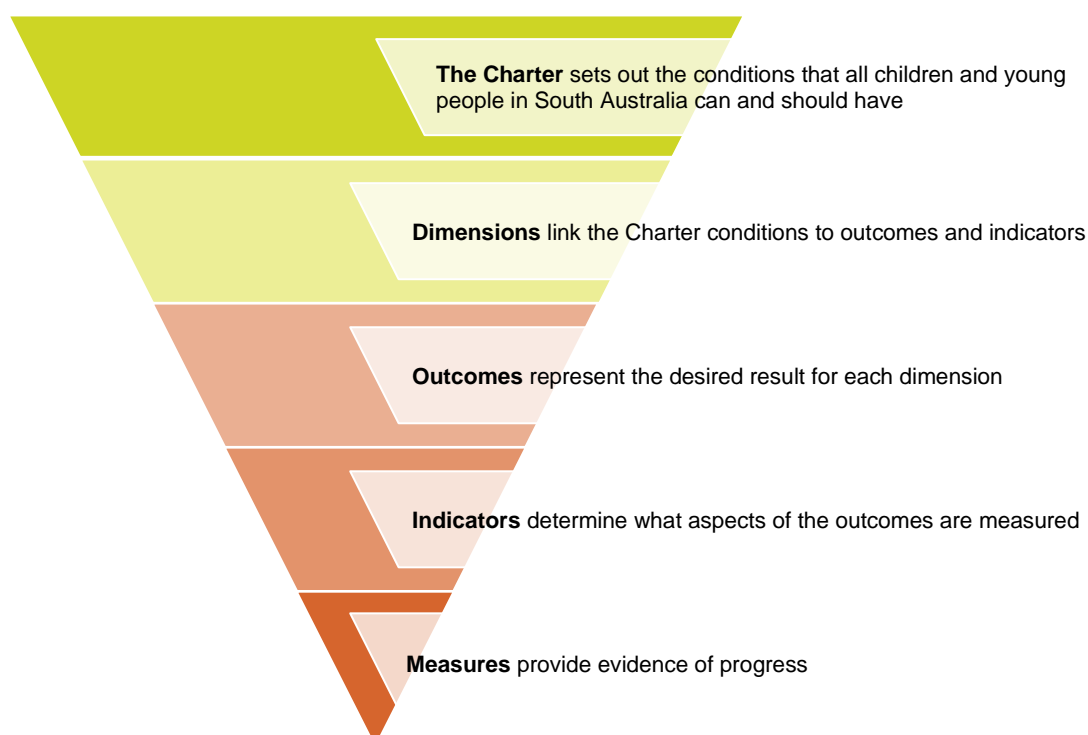


Figure 1 Structure of the Framework

To progress the vision of South Australia being a state where the conditions exist for all children and young people to thrive, the Framework is organised around the Charter for Children and Young People and five key life dimensions.

For each dimension there is a high-level outcome with associated indicators. Indicators reinforce outcomes and are interconnected. For example, having safe and stable housing is a key foundation for all five outcomes.

For each indicator there is a set of measures that allows progress to be tracked which provides a holistic view of the wellbeing and development of all children and young people.

The Framework's outcomes-based approach focuses on actual results and progress achieved, rather than systems and programs.

3 Charter for Children and Young People

The Charter reflects a commitment to work from a foundation of state, national and international children's rights including the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) and other human rights instruments.

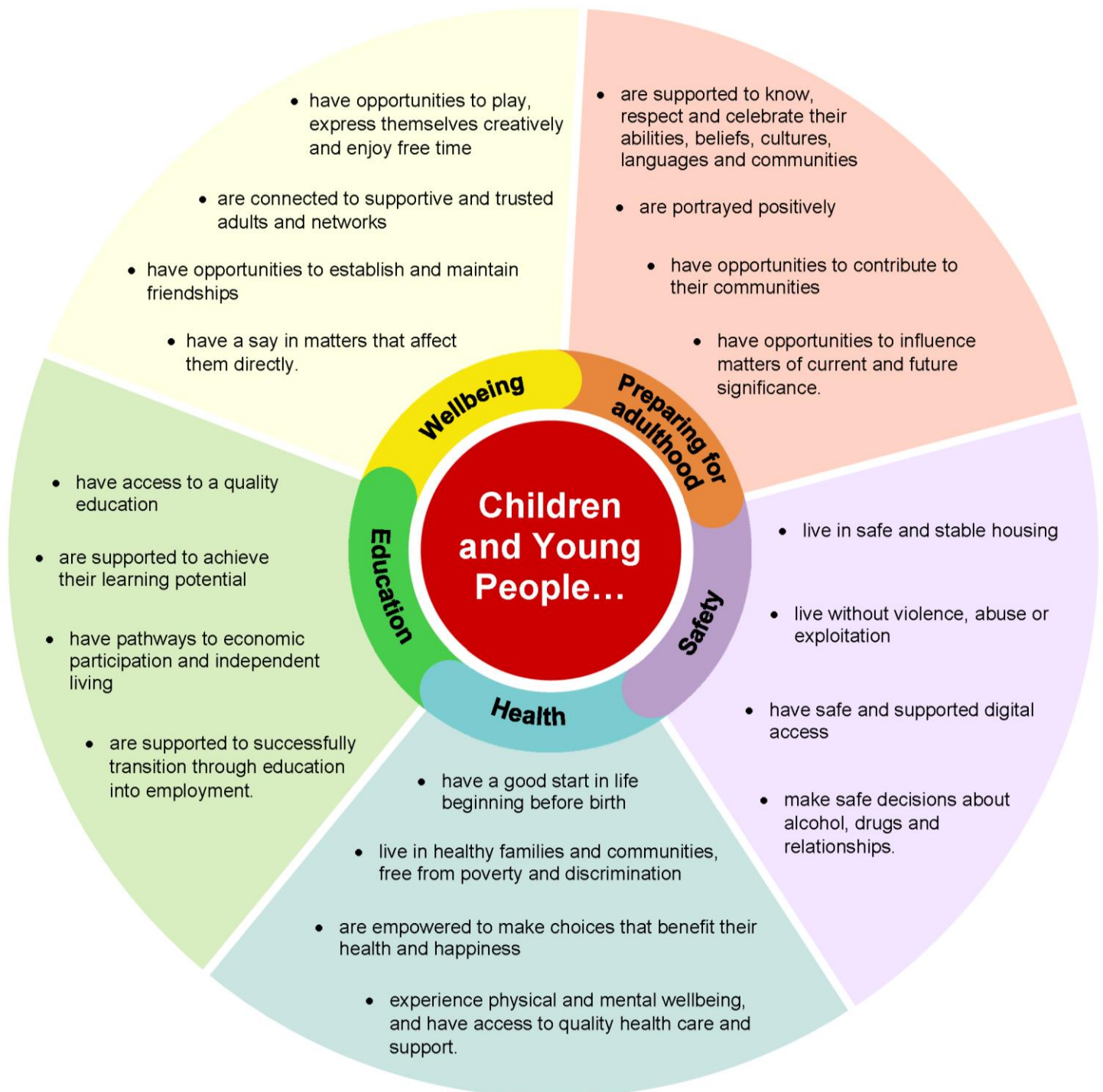
The statements in the Charter represent the voices of children and young people and reflect what is important to them – having a good home life, having support from trusted adults, being listened to, participating in decisions that affect them, opportunity for a quality education, employment and most importantly, being respected and valued.

Charter conditions

The Charter sets out the conditions that all children and young people can, and should, have. These conditions – the 20 Charter statements – apply to every child and young person in South Australia without discrimination.

The Charter conditions call on all South Australians to play an active role in improving the outcomes of children and young people, including children and young people themselves, parents, families and other caregivers, local governments, state government, the private sector, non-government organisations, Aboriginal communities, religious and cultural leaders, the media, and all who work with children and young people.

Charter for Children and Young People



4 Framework dimensions, outcomes and indicators

A set of five interrelated dimensions – health, safety, wellbeing, education and preparing for adulthood – provide the foundation for realising the Charter conditions.

Dimensions provide a 'line of sight', linking the Charter conditions to the outcomes and indicators.

The Framework identifies five key outcomes as measurable descriptions of success at the population level:

1. Young South Australians are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy
2. Young South Australians are safe and nurtured
3. Young South Australians are happy, inspired and engaged
4. Young South Australians are successful learners
5. Young South Australians participate actively in society.

The Framework provides a structured approach to determine how children and young people fare in each dimension, by providing the evidence that shows if improved outcomes are equally shared by all.

Outcomes are supported by 18 indicators that create an overall picture of development and wellbeing, and provide a holistic view of the impact of current policies and programs.

Indicators determine what is measured. They define the optimal state or direction of change needed to achieve the stated outcomes.

Each indicator has been evaluated for inclusion on the basis of a range of criteria, including practicality, transferability and the availability of data.

Data are reported with specific measures for each indicator.

Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People



5 Measures to provide the evidence

A set of measures provides objective and standardised evidence of progress and shows where action is needed to improve outcomes. The set is dynamic and responsive to emerging issues and priorities.

Each measure has been evaluated for inclusion using a range of criteria, including practicality, transferability, and the availability of data.

Wherever possible, a benchmark is set for each measure, and national and international comparisons are provided.

Data are disaggregated for identified cohorts:

- male and female
- Aboriginal children and young people
- children and young people with disability
- children and young people living in out-of-home care
- metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australian populations
- socioeconomic status.

The *Outcomes Framework Data and Technical Report* sets out the basis for reporting the evidence and includes the following information for each measure:

- rationale for inclusion
- measure details (including age range, and reporting time frame)
- definition of the data calculation (numerator and denominator) and relative frequency (rate, proportion and percentage)
- data sources (with embedded links)
- data availability (baseline year, frequency, age and next likely release date)
- data breakdown (disaggregated into sub-categories)
- benchmarking (potential comparability with state, national or international data)
- further information (where relevant).

6 Monitoring progress

The Framework connects dimensions, outcomes, indicators and measures as part of an integrated measurement and monitoring system. It provides a transparent approach to monitor collective efforts to safeguard the trajectories of all children and young people in South Australia.

The *Outcomes Framework Data and Technical Report* on the Council's website captures the latest available data from a variety of state, national and international sources to track progress.

Data sources include the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), government and accredited non-government surveys and reports.

Data are analysed regularly using a multi-dimensional approach.

Monitoring inequalities

The Framework adopts a universal approach by focusing on all children and young people in South Australia and provides a mechanism for monitoring and reporting inequalities between population groups.

To promote greater equality of outcomes for all children and young people and to identify and reduce inequalities, particular attention is given to groups at risk of marginalisation and/or disadvantage.

Aboriginal children and young people

The strong connections of Aboriginal children and young people to community, kin, family, country (land), culture, spirit and ancestry, and their bodies, including mind and emotions, form the foundation of strong identities and social and emotional wellbeing.

Traditionally, this has led to Aboriginal children and young people having unique obligations and responsibilities that further enhance their cultural connections. Knowledge about those obligations and responsibilities has sadly been compromised and for some Aboriginal communities, is presently sleeping.

There is hope that the knowledge will be awoken and revived, so that it may evolve within communities. This is important because the disconnection from cultural obligations and knowledge is compounding the intergenerational trauma that Aboriginal Australians experience, intensifying the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

It is well understood that Aboriginal children and young people experience poorer outcomes. A range of initiatives have been introduced across all levels of government to improve outcomes for this group of children and young people. Closely monitoring the effectiveness of these initiatives and reporting specifically on how well Aboriginal children and young people are faring will remain a priority focus.

7 Reporting the outcomes

A crucial part of the reporting process is to *engage* with, and listen to, children and young people about whether the Framework is meeting their needs. Their families and communities can also offer great insight about the progress that is being made.

Reports are prepared as needed to provide updates about trends and progress, or lack thereof.

Reporting population-level outcomes

How are they faring? South Australia's Report Card for Children and Young People, reports population-level outcomes for children and young people in the five legislated dimensions. It identifies excellence, inequality and priority areas for whole-of-state effort.

Reporting issues of concern including the preparation of policy briefs and dashboards

Policy briefs provide evidenced-based summaries about issues of concern that arise during the collection and analysis of data. Each brief succinctly summarises an issue, provides policy options and/or recommendation(s) to address the issue. Policy briefs may comprise both advocacy and objective briefs.

Dashboards visually portray the best available evidence for specified measures. Each dashboard provides data breakdowns and state, national or international benchmarking whenever possible. Dashboards are published on the Council's website and updated when new data are available.

Appendix 1 – Indicators and measures

HEALTH – Young South Australians are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy

Babies are born healthy

- Proportion of low birthweight babies as a proportion of all live births³
- Proportion of pre-term births
- Proportion of pregnant mothers smoking in the first 20 weeks of pregnancy
- Proportion of mothers under 20 years when giving birth⁴
- Proportion of women attending a first antenatal visit in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy.

Children have a healthy early life

- Rate of infant mortality per 1,000 live births⁵
- Proportion of children fully immunised at one, two and five years
- Proportion of children meeting developmental milestones at two and four years.

Children and young people have health-promoting behaviours

- Proportion of children and young people being reported as underweight, overweight or obese
- Proportion of young people smoking tobacco
- Proportion of young people vaping
- Proportion of young people consuming alcohol

³ The number of live births, of babies weighing less than 2,500 grams, as a proportion of the total number of live births, including premature and full term births.

⁴ This is a measure of infant and adolescent health.

⁵ The number of infant deaths under one year of age, per 1,000 live births.

- Proportion of young people with potentially unsafe or binge-drinking behaviour
- Proportion of young people taking illicit drugs.
- Proportion on young people with sexually transmissible infections.

Children and young people are thriving

- Proportion of children and young people with access to healthy food
- Number of children and young people with tooth decay
- Proportion of children and young people estimated to have an emotional, mental health or behavioural problem
- Number of presentations to hospital emergency departments involving children and young people with suicidal ideation or self-harming incidents or mental health concerns
- Proportion of children and young people with acute rheumatic fever and/or rheumatic heart disease
- Proportion of children and young people who had a free Indigenous health screen/assessment under the Closing the Gap health program/scheme
- Proportion of children and young people considering themselves to be in good or excellent health
- Proportion of 12-year-olds considering themselves to be in good or excellent health⁶
- Proportion of 16-year-olds considering themselves to be in good or excellent health.⁷

⁶ Age 12 is chosen as a specific important life stage.

⁷ Age 16 is chosen as a specific important life stage.

SAFETY – Young South Australians are safe and nurtured

Children and young people live in safe housing

- Proportion of children and young people feeling concerned about family conflict
- Proportion of children and young people living in households with financial hardship⁸
- Number of children and young people experiencing homelessness.⁹

Children and young people are safe from preventable injury

- Number of children and young people presenting to emergency departments with potentially preventable hospitalisations¹⁰
- Number of deaths of children and young people being attributed to preventable/unintentional injury
- Number of police cautions or fines issued for failing to safely restrain passengers under 16 years
- Number of children and young people 5-13 years attending a swimming safety program.¹¹

Children and young people are safe from abuse and neglect

- Number of children and young people being admitted to out-of-home care
- Number of children and young people with disability in out-of-home care
- Number of children and young people in home-based care
- Proportion of children twelve months old or under being notified to the child protection system¹²
- Proportion of children five years being notified to the child protection system.¹³

⁸ Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

⁹ Homelessness numbers are estimated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

¹⁰ Both preventable hospitalisations and preventable injuries are included.

¹¹ VacsWim age range includes 5-13 years. Other preventable injury programs have also been considered eg BurnSafe, bike safety, life education and road safety programs.

¹² A notification is recorded in the system when a report is made to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL).

¹³ A notification is recorded in the system when a report is made to the CARL.

Children and young people are safe from crime

- Proportion of children and young people feeling unsafe in their local area at night
- Number of children and young people who are victims of offences reported to police
- Number of arrests involving young people 10-17 years
- Number of police diversions involving young people 10-17 years.

WELLBEING - Young South Australians are happy, inspired and engaged

Children have early experiences that enhance their development

- Proportion of children attending playgroups before entering full-time school
- Proportion of children with special needs, birth to five years, attending approved childcare services
- Proportion and number of three-year-old Aboriginal children enrolled in a quality pre-school program¹⁴
- Proportion of children enrolled in a quality pre-school program in the year before attending full-time school.

Children and young people are connected to family, friends and culture

- Proportion of children and young people participating in cultural activities
- Proportion of children and young people attending cultural venues and events¹⁵
- Proportion of children and young people feeling connected to adults in their home
- Proportion of children and young people feeling connected to adults in their school
- Proportion of children and young people feeling connected to adults in their community
- Proportion of children and young people with one or more friends, in whom they can confide.

Children and young people play and participate in recreational activities

- Proportion of children and young people participating in organised activities outside of school hours¹⁶
- Proportion of children and young people participating in sport or recreational physical activities.

¹⁴ The Department for Education funds early access to preschool for three-year-old Aboriginal children.

¹⁵ Cultural activities include going to a public library, art gallery, museum, or a performing arts event.

¹⁶ Activities include sports, music, arts and craft.

Children and young people are leading satisfied lives

- Proportion of children and young people feeling optimistic about life
- Proportion of children and young people reporting a medium to high level of satisfaction with life
- Rate of suicide for children and young people.

EDUCATION – Young South Australians are successful learners

Children enter the school system ready to take advantage of the learning environment

- Proportion of children developmentally vulnerable in one or more of five domains under the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) when they enter school¹⁷
- Number of children receiving early childhood early intervention supports through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) or with an approved NDIS plan before entering school.

Children and young people's experience of learning is positive¹⁸

- Proportion of Year 1 students reading at an age-appropriate level or better
- Proportion of Year 3 students achieving at or above national minimum standard in reading, writing or numeracy
- Proportion of Year 5 students achieving at or above national minimum standard in reading, writing or numeracy
- Proportion of Year 7 students achieving at or above national minimum standard in reading, writing or numeracy.

Children and young people are engaged in school, further education, training or work

- Proportion of young people fully engaged in school, work or further education and training¹⁹
- Proportion of young people with disability, partially or fully engaged in school, work or further education and training
- Rate of attendance for students enrolled in school
- Proportion of young people completing a senior secondary certificate of education qualification or equivalent by 19 years.

¹⁷ The five domains of the AEDC are: social competence; emotional maturity; physical health and wellbeing; language and cognitive skills; and communication and general knowledge. Developmentally vulnerable refers to the proportion of children scoring in the lowest 10 per cent.

¹⁸ Data for the proportion of Year 9 students achieving at or above national minimum standards is reported under the 'Preparing for Adulthood'.

¹⁹ Young people employed full-time and/or in full-time study **or** working part-time and studying part-time.

PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD – Young South Australians participate actively in society

Children and young people develop skills for an independent life

- Proportion of young people 14-15 years that are literate
- Proportion of young people 14-15 years that are numerate
- Proportion of young people 15-19 years that are financially literate²⁰
- Proportion of young people 16-19 years with a driver's licence
- Proportion of young people 15-19 years satisfied with their level of independence
- Average hours of paid employment for young people 15-19 years
- Proportion of young people 15-19 years not currently living with their parents
- Proportion of Year 10 students achieving at or above proficient standard in the Australian curriculum civics and citizenship assessment.²¹

Children and young people participate in decisions that affect them directly and the wider society

- Proportion of children and young people feeling able to have a say on important issues
- Proportion of young people 18 years enrolled to vote.

Children and young people are engaged in community activities

- Proportion of children and young people participating in volunteering
- Proportion of children and young people participating in community support groups.²²

²⁰ Measured as part of the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey.

²¹ National Assessment Program Sample Assessment – civics and citizenship.

²² 'Community support groups' include service clubs, welfare organisations, education and training, parenting/children/young people, health promotion and support, emergency services, international aid and development, or other community support group activities.

Appendix 2 – Assessment criteria for indicators and measures

Dimension: [Health]									
Indicator [-]: [Title here]									
Measures		[-] 1.1	[-] 1.2	[-] 1.3	[-] 1.4	[-] 1.5	[-] 1.6	[-] 1.7	[-] 1.8
Assessment criteria	Policy relevant		[✓]						
	Practical/Pragmatic	Implementable							
		Scalable							
		Affordable							
		Low burden							
	Transferability	Culture							
		Language							
		Context							
	Reliable								
	Valid								
	Sensitive to change								
	Child friendly								
	Balanced to vulnerabilities and capabilities								
	Modifiable by policy and/or interventions								
	Presentable/actionable								
	Datasets	Local							
		Recurring							
		Global							

