

Progress Snapshot

August 2010

What's the current situation?

In Queensland, 1 in 7 children and 1 in 4.5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have had some form of contact with the child protection system. Increasing again from 2007-08, in 2008-09 - compared to non-Indigenous children - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were:

- 4.0 times more likely to be notified for alleged harm or risk of harm
- 6.5 times more likely to be substantiated for abuse or neglect
- 7.6 times more likely to be subject to a care and protection order
- 7.9 times more likely to be living away from home

Are the key indicators for the campaign on track?

The Combined Voices campaign was launched in August 2009. Progress against the campaign targets will begin to be measured from 2011 (examining data from the 2009-2010 financial year as the first year able to be affected by the campaign's actions).

What have Queenslanders done to support the campaign?

Once the facts are made clear, it has not been difficult to convince Queenslanders of the need for action. Over 400 'Individual Voices' have signed up to the campaign, and over 30 organisations have pledged support.

In a related e-mail campaign over 250 emails have been sent to Members of Parliament.

What has the Queensland Government done in response to the campaign?

Almost immediately after the campaign's launch in August 2009 the Queensland Government opened on-going conversations about addressing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system. This has led to:

- An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Safety Taskforce
- Formulation of a comprehensive plan for promoting the safety and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and reducing their over-representation within Queensland's child protection system

The 2010-11 state budget also delivered a \$55 million "Helping Out Families" initiative that included increased support services; enhanced domestic and family violence services; home visiting services; the already-announced changes to the Recognised Entities; and reallocation of funding to establish Indigenous Family Support Services to work with families.

What has the community sector done to support the campaign?

The community services sector is becoming more and more supportive of the campaign's aims. 'Organisational Voices' who've signed up to the campaign have grown from five to over 30. Other significant actions have included:

- Release of a new report: *Policy Monograph - Addressing the Over-Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Families in Queensland's Child Protection System* (28 January 2010)
- Holding an historic symposium in Rockhampton to focus on service delivery reform to reduce Indigenous disadvantage. It included concrete solutions for health, housing, unemployment and other areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders experience disadvantage (May 2010)

Three things you can do to get involved

- Sign up to the campaign and find out more by visiting www.combinedvoices.org.au
- Be active - use the TAKE ACTION link on the website to email Queensland Government Ministers and MPs
- Spread the word and encourage other people and organisations to join the campaign