



Domain 1
**Children,
family
& home**



Our shared commitment: 'All Aboriginal children and young people are safe, resilient, thriving and living in culturally rich, strong Aboriginal families and communities.'²



Goal 1: Aboriginal children are born healthy and thrive

Objective 1.1 Improve maternal and infant health

Objective 1.2 Children thrive in their first 1000 days

The first five years of a child's life are fundamental to shaping their future. Delivering better maternal and early childhood services means removing barriers, promoting genuine and effective partnerships and supporting Aboriginal families to access culturally safe services.

Ongoing investment in community-led responses to optimise maternal health and the development of Aboriginal children is an essential platform for Aboriginal self-determination, ensuring that all children have an equal chance to thrive and grow.

“We want healthy babies, so working with young women and educating young families to rear/grow up strong healthy children.”

Online survey respondent



Goal 2: Aboriginal children are raised by Aboriginal families

Objective 2.1 Eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in care

Objective 2.2 Increase Aboriginal care, guardianship and management of Aboriginal children and young people in care

Objective 2.3 Increase family reunifications for Aboriginal children and young people in care

Culture, language and connection to community and Country all support children and young people to thrive.² Despite this, Victorian Aboriginal children and young people remain vastly over-represented in child protection and care.

Community-led responses that focus on prevention and early intervention are critical for reducing the number of Aboriginal children and young people in child protection and care. For those in care, it is important they

remain connected to kin, culture and community, and have the opportunity to be reunited safely with their families. Where this is not possible, the transfer of responsibility for Aboriginal children to Aboriginal organisations is a key action in progressing Aboriginal self-determination.

We need to keep families together.

Community forum participant, Mildura



Goal 3: Aboriginal families and households thrive

Objective 3.1 Reduce the incidence and impact of family violence affecting Aboriginal families

Family violence has a disproportionate impact on Aboriginal people in Victoria, particularly women and children, regardless of whether they live in rural, regional or urban areas. Aboriginal communities in Victoria have consistently led the way in developing strategic priorities and actions to prevent family violence. This is demonstrated through strong whole-of-community engagement initiatives that bring together women, men, children and Elders to collectively break the cycles of violence.

The Victorian Government's Aboriginal 10 Year Family Violence Agreement 2018-2028, *Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families* articulates a vision for the future where Aboriginal people, families and communities live free from violence.

All parties need to be supported with community education and services to help break the cycles and foster safe family environments.

Community forum participant, Seymour



Objective 3.2 Increase income and housing security for Aboriginal households

In achieving true equity, the fundamental importance of both a stable home and a secure income must be recognised. Housing is a key social determinant of health and wellbeing for Aboriginal Victorians. Secure, culturally safe and coordinated housing and support services can break cycles of homelessness, facilitate family reunification and promote safety. Stable housing is essential for physical and mental health, maintaining social networks, and accessing education, training and employment. Home ownership for Aboriginal Victorians can also play an important role in tackling disadvantage and increasing housing security for Aboriginal households. Home ownership is further detailed in Domain 3: Opportunity & prosperity.

It always comes back to homelessness – if you don't have a home, you don't have anything.

Community forum participant, Robinvale

Economic factors play a part in school attendance and feelings of safety – for example not being able to send children to school with lunch or not being able to afford to go on the excursion.

Community forum participant, Shepparton