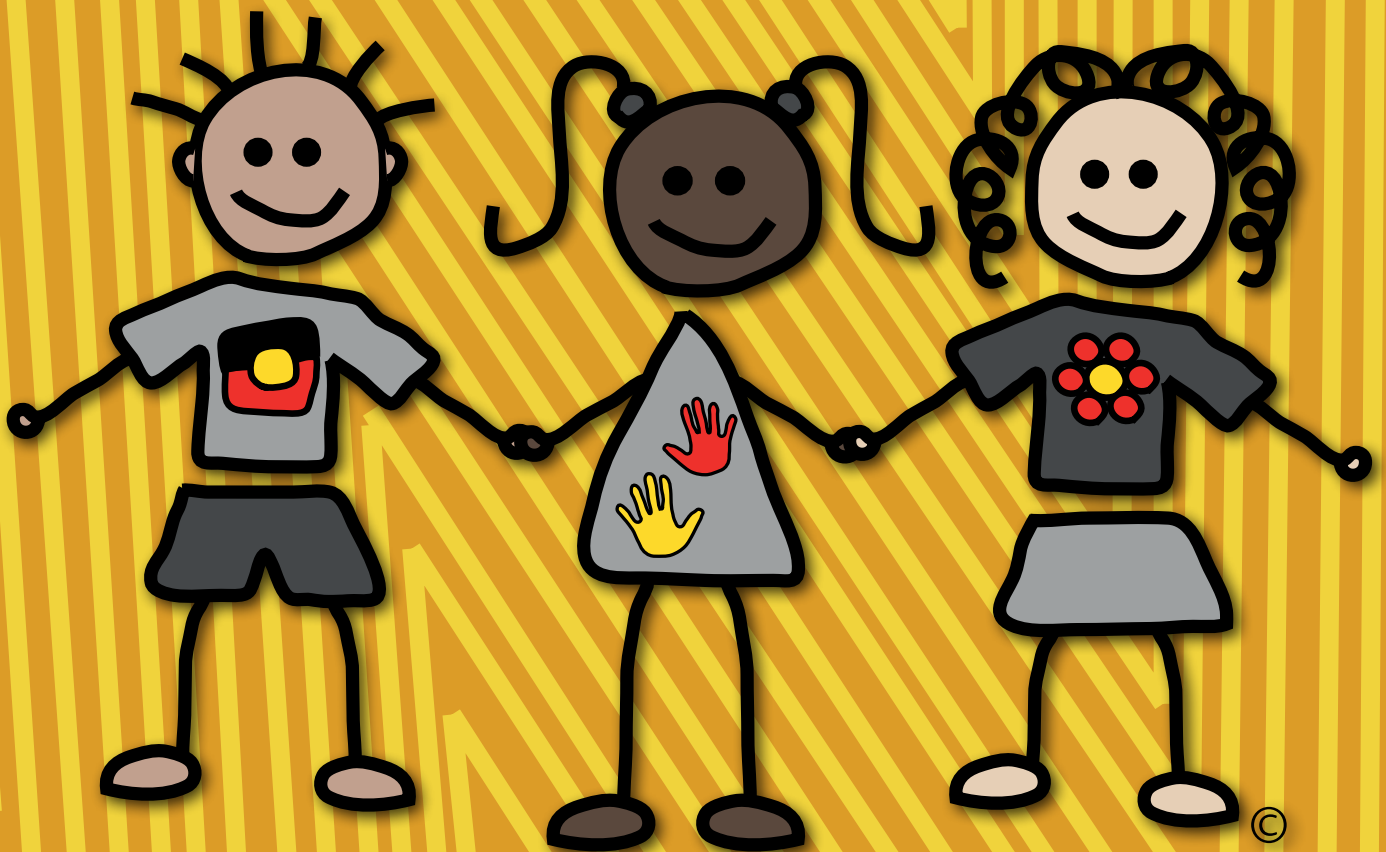


Strong Families, Thriving Children



Victorian Aboriginal
Children & Young
People's Alliance

Strategic Plan 2018-23

vaccho.org.au/policy-advocacy/vacypa



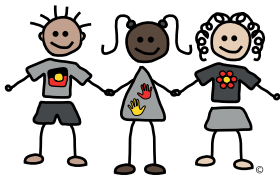
The Alliance logo

Strong Families, Thriving Children

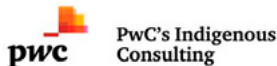
The Alliance logo reflects the aspirations of the Alliance members working together to achieve strong families and thriving children.

The logo was designed by digital artist Samantha Paxton (Way Wurru) with advice from Alliance member Karen Heap (Yorta Yorta).

The dots represent the 13 founding ACCOs of the Alliance and the band connecting these ACCOs represents ongoing communication and knowledge sharing. The unified and wrap-around approach by the services creates a collective voice around the responsibilities we have to children, young people, families and their communities.



The drawings of the children on Country represent the positive future envisaged by Aboriginal communities throughout Victoria for strong and happy children.



Acknowledgement of Price Waterhouse Coopers Indigenous Consulting for support and dedication to the Alliance and our children, families and Communities in the development of this strategic plan.



The Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation is the auspice agency for the Alliance. The Members entered into an agreement to formalise the operation of the Alliance. VACCHO will act as their sole and exclusive agent to make funding submissions, enter into agreements and to hold funds and make payments from time to time on behalf of the Members until such notice is provided otherwise.

About us

In 2013, during the development of a submission (*Koori Kids: Growing Strong in their Culture*), it was recognised for the need for a strong, collective voice to drive better outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people. Therefore in 2014, an in-principle agreement was formed by 14 of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) involved in providing out of home care services to form an alliance to advocate for, and positively influence the future of, Aboriginal children and young people in Victoria, thus creating the Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance (The Alliance).

The Alliance consists of 14 ACCOs and our purpose is to be the collective voice of Victorian Aboriginal communities working together to positively influence the future of Aboriginal children and young people. The 14 ACCOs are as follows:

- Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Dandenong & District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative
- Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative
- Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd
- Mallee District Aboriginal Services
- Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation
- Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative
- Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
- Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative
- Winda-Mara Aboriginal Co-operative

As a dedicated widely represented statewide body, the Alliance is the only unified voice to support, advocate and influence the future of Aboriginal children and young people. The Alliance has a crucial role in driving change to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people.

Our Vision

Aboriginal children and young people have every opportunity to thrive and be raised safely in Aboriginal families and communities.

Our Priorities

1. Embed and maintain a cultural model of care to ensure the delivery of culturally responsive, safe and appropriate responses and practices to Aboriginal children and young people.
2. Ensure all Aboriginal children and families are empowered to lead self-determining lives, and have the ability to set the precedence for the design and delivery of prevention, early intervention and out of home care services.
3. The Alliance establish itself as a state-wide body, funded to support and advocate on behalf of community controlled organisations in the Aboriginal children and families sector to provide informed knowledge and a unified voice.
4. Advocate for and participate in implementing a 10 year Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement with signatories from the Alliance, government (including bi-partisan agreement) and key agencies.
5. Adequately resource ACCOs to enable effective recruitment practices to respond to the requirements of an expanding workforce, as well as retain a robust and resilient workforce.
6. Better support Aboriginal carers, ensuring equitable access to support services that are responsive to their needs, adequately resourced, protected and connected to culture to support growth and to sustain the number of carers into the future.
7. Re-establish the Aboriginal Children's Forum as an Aboriginal led Forum operated by ACCOs.
8. Strengthen the collection of data, evidence and identification of research to inform policy, practice and evaluation of out of home care and diversionary options for Aboriginal children and young people.

Strategic Priorities into Action

5 Year Plan

KEY

Short	12 months	
Medium	2-3 years	
Long	5 years +	

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

1. Embed and maintain a cultural model of care to ensure the delivery of culturally responsive, safe and appropriate responses and practices to Aboriginal children and young people.

Actions	Priority
a. Develop an evidence base to support the concept of a cultural model of care, including evidence from within the sector and research from past cultural practices.	M
b. Develop a communication strategy to promote the cultural model of care and to generate an understanding amongst stakeholders.	M
c. Advocate for a cultural model of care to be recognised, accepted and adopted for all responses and practices with Aboriginal children and young people.	M
d. Advocate for the full resources required for ACCOs to develop and enable the implementation of cultural support plans for every Aboriginal child and young person in out of home care which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Return to Country cultural support worker › Cultural support persons/Aboriginal mentors › Access to genealogy records and services › Socialisation/recreational activities with other young Aboriginal people. 	S
e. Adopt and promote Aboriginal specific re-unification practices to inform DHHS, DOJR, Community Sector Organisations (CSOs) and ACCO practice.	S

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

2. Ensure all Aboriginal children and families are empowered to lead self-determining lives, and have the ability to set the precedence for the design and delivery of prevention, early intervention and out of home care services.

Actions	Priority		
a. Advocate for appropriate resources (including long term funding agreements of 5 years or more) to ACCOs to deliver prevention and early intervention initiatives to empower families and children.	S	M	L
b. Advocate for future growth support to ACCOs that wish to assume responsibility for Aboriginal children and young people under their care/ case management.	S	M	L

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

- 3. The Alliance establish itself as a state-wide body, funded to support and advocate on behalf of community controlled organisations in the Aboriginal children and families sector to provide informed knowledge and a unified voice.**

Actions	Priority
a. Investigate the identity [of the body], taking into consideration the options of a legal incorporated body or an auspicing arrangement.	S

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

- 4. Advocate for and participate in implementing a 10 year Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement with signatories from the Alliance, government (including bi-partisan agreement) and key agencies.**

Actions	Priority
a. Ensure the Alliance is a signatory to the 10 year Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement.	S
b. Monitor, participate and evaluate in implementing strategies in the Agreement.	S M L
c. Advocate for an Executive to drive the monitoring and reporting function of the Agreement.	M

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

- 5. Adequately resource ACCOs to enable effective recruitment practices to respond to the requirements of an expanding workforce, as well as retain a robust and resilient workforce.**

Actions	Priority
a. Advocate for a scoping exercise of the current workforce to identify skills, opportunities (including universities, local partnerships, training and work readiness supports) and areas to strengthen the existing workforce as well as opportunities to increase the supply of the Aboriginal workforce.	S M
b. Advocate for ACCOs to be adequately resourced for infrastructure to meet the expanding and increased workforce requirements and service demands in the Aboriginal children and young people sector.	S M L

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

- 6. Better support Aboriginal carers, ensuring equitable access to support services that are responsive to their needs, adequately resourced, protected and connected to culture to support growth and to sustain the number of carers into the future.**

Actions	Priority
a. Review and amend the placement criteria for out of home to align with Aboriginal community/cultural norms to increase placement options.	S
b. Develop and implement a sector wide strategy to grow, inform and support the pool of Aboriginal carers, including development of an Aboriginal carer network and access to specialist training for carers and kinship carers.	M L
c. Advocate for additional weighting on the base price and flexibility in funding available for Aboriginal out of home care placements to reflect the complexity of need, cultural responsiveness and service delivery.	S

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7

7. Re-establish the Aboriginal Children’s Forum as an Aboriginal led Forum operated by ACCOs.

Actions	Priority		
a. Review the Terms of Reference of the Aboriginal Children’s Forum to ensure Aboriginal communities are reflected in decision and policy making, as well enlisting support to secure funding and resources to establish a secretariat to the Forum.	M		
b. Advocate to increase the membership of the Aboriginal Children’s Forum to include the opposition government.	S	M	L

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 8

8. Strengthen the collection of data, evidence and identification of research to inform policy, practice and evaluation of out of home care and diversionary options for Aboriginal children and young people.

Actions	Priority		
a. Design a mechanism to capture stories of success, evidence based approaches and ‘promising stories’ through measures such as reunification, connectedness to ACCOs, with the intention to inform policy and practice.	L		
b. Design a central dash board report card to capture the ‘picture’ of Aboriginal children in out of home care in Victoria, including statistics such as the number of children in care, number of reunifications, number of Aboriginal carers, reasons for Aboriginal children entering care. Utilise the central dash board report card to contribute to an evidence base to inform targeted, tailored service responses and evaluation frameworks.	M		
c. Advocate for the identification of good practice evidence based community diversionary options for Aboriginal children and young people.	M		