

SDN Children's Services

Strategic Plan

2016–2018



sdn
children's services

SDN's Strategic Plan for 2016–2018

We have made great progress over the course of our last strategic plan (2013–2015) in becoming a more integrated organisation, delivering services for children and families in a more coordinated and connected way. We have called this way of working our Pathways Approach. And the benefits for families have been confirmed by external evaluation.

We also believe this approach is the best way we can enhance the wellbeing of children and ensure that children who face challenges have a place in the services we provide, support and advocate for.

We have chosen to continue to focus on children from birth because we know that what happens to children in their first five years is critical to their lifelong learning and wellbeing. We also know that families have the most significant impact on their children's lives, and that communities strengthen families. Children's wellbeing is directly influenced by those around them, so we value family and parenting, and always work with children in the context of their family and community.

To what end?

SDN has chosen 'children's wellbeing' as the outcome we hope and plan for in our 2016–2018 strategic plan. We know that children only experience wellbeing when they are safe, healthy, loved, have material basics, as well as opportunities to learn and to participate in the communities around them. This is what all our work collectively is aiming for.

We're also conscious that not all children start from the same place in life, and so we're particularly focused on making sure that the wellbeing of children who face challenges is enhanced in services we provide and support.

Through all of this we will continue to implement our Pathways Approach, which will deliver the practices, culture and systems that will allow us to offer integrated services.

Noting our external environment

We also need to respond to the issues we know we're facing.

Maintaining affordability of all of our services will be vital. Costs to deliver our early childhood education and care services will continue to increase while government policies change and shift focus. More families with children with disabilities or developmental delays will access the National Disability Insurance Scheme, bringing more choice within a user-pays framework.

There is significant change in all of the areas we work in. This means we have opportunities to grow our current services. And while some services may disappear, we

will have opportunities to create new services to meet the needs of children and families. To do this, SDN as an organisation needs to have solid information and organisational systems, skilled and committed staff, and strong connections within the sectors we work in.

And finally how will we know we're progressing?

We've also been asking ourselves what can we influence and by how much? And how can we measure that so we know we're on the right track?

Some of the measures we've developed may be aspirational, but we believe we need to challenge ourselves to do the best that we can for children, families, and the other services who rely on us. At the end of the day (and by 2018) we hope the world is a better, more equitable place because of our efforts and work.



Our planned outcomes for 2016–2018

Children who face challenges have a place in services we provide, support and advocate for; and the wellbeing of all children is enhanced

Outcomes for families

Families:

- ▶ recognise what SDN stands for, understand what SDN offers and choose SDN as their preferred provider.
- ▶ are able to access SDN through multiple pathways and have an excellent SDN 'Pathways' experience including opportunities to access scholarships and other programs to bridge fee gaps when experiencing financial hardship.
- ▶ are clear about how their child's wellbeing has been enhanced at SDN, and how their child is developing and learning; and are delighted with their child's experience of our services.
- ▶ have opportunities to engage in discussion about organisational, political, legislative or social policy issues and decisions that may affect them.

Outcomes for staff

Staff:

- ▶ provide an excellent experience for those who access our services aligned with the SDN Pathways Approach, using team approaches in an integrated way.
- ▶ have the skills, resources, leadership and systems they need to work flexibly, efficiently and safely.
- ▶ are aligned, engaged and accountable and have opportunities for career progression.
- ▶ have opportunities to engage in discussion about organisational, political, legislative or social policy issues and decisions that may affect them.

Outcomes for the organisation

SDN:

- ▶ responds to prospective and current customer expectations and needs and communicates clearly and responsively.
- ▶ recruits and retains skilled staff, managing staff costs responsibly and providing the infrastructure required to support service provision and staff wellbeing.
- ▶ is well regarded and supported by a range of funders, donors, individuals, foundations and companies.
- ▶ manages growth responsibly using well developed business models.
- ▶ is well informed about the political, legislative and public policy context and advocates for the wellbeing of children, families, staff and the sustainability of the organisation within this context.

...create pathways for families

...create pathways for staff

...create pathways for the organisation

To achieve our outcomes we will...

1 Seek and respond to sustainable growth opportunities

2 Address affordability of SDN services for families while maintaining the sustainability of our services

3 Maximise use of our assets and diversify revenue sources

4 Increase organisational capacity to be responsive, high quality and value for money

5 Influence and respond to the political, legislative and public policy context

Our outcome measures

How much will we do over the next three years?

4,250 children accessing SDN services each year

Proportion of children accessing SDN services, from the following groups:

- children identifying as refugees **0.1%**
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children **6%**
- children with a disability or delay in development **5%**
- children meeting SDN's criteria as Priority 1 (ie children who have been identified as being at risk of harm) **4%**

How well will we do it?

Number of positive external ratings that we are meeting a standard or better: **increasing** trend in numbers

Number of complaints relating to child wellbeing: **decreasing** trend in numbers

Number of incidents, injuries, illnesses of children when in SDN's care: **decreasing** trend in numbers

What difference will we make?

95% of feedback from families is neutral or positive

95% of feedback from children is neutral or positive

95% of feedback from external stakeholders is neutral or positive



Our vision for the world

We are working towards a better, more equitable world where:

The promise and potential of every child is realised.

Families and communities are strong and caring.

Children's services are valued and well resourced.



Our purpose

SDN is here for children from birth, and for their families and communities.

We're here for the wellbeing of children, now and for the future.

Our mission

We achieve our vision and fulfill our purpose by:

Providing high-quality, inclusive early childhood education and care from birth.

Strengthening families and communities.

Addressing inequalities faced by children.



Our values

In carrying out our mission we commit ourselves to being:

- ▶ trustworthy and reliable
- ▶ inclusive and respectful
- ▶ creative and innovative

SDN's philosophy

We believe that every person and every living thing has inherent worth, and is owed respect and care.

We believe that we live in an inter-dependent world, where we all belong and are enriched by each other's contributions.

We have always believed, since our beginnings in 1905, that the world can be a better and more equitable place, and that we can help to make it so.

We believe that potentials and possibilities are realised when everyone offers and experiences care, connection and challenge.

