Connecting Community for KiDS

OUR ROADMAP FOR CHANGE

TOGETHER WE CAN HELP OUR CHILDREN THRIVE!

woodside

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WHO WE ARE

Connecting Community for Kids is a collective impact initiative developed to empower parents, children and professionals in the communities of Cockburn and Kwinana to improve childhood outcomes. Working collaboratively with Government agencies, service providers and community groups; we aim to make a lasting difference in the lives of children pre-birth to eight and their families.

The ultimate goal of Connecting Community for Kids is for young children in Cockburn and Kwinana to have the same level of physical, social, emotional, communication and language development as the Perth Metropolitan Area by 2024, based on the outcomes of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).

A LITTLE HISTORY

In 2010, the Department of Premier and Cabinet founded The Partnership Forum to build stronger relations between State Government agencies and the not-for-profit community sectors. The Partnership Forum identified the early years as one of its four priority areas; recognising this development stage (0-8) as critical in the physical, emotional, psychological and social development of children. In 2014 The Partnership Forum Early Years Working Group (PFEYWG) was formed and endorsed an early years, place-based initiative in the Cities of Cockburn and Kwinana using a collective impact approach.

In 2015 PFEYWG conducted a feasibility study funded by the Woodside Development Fund and engaged WACOSS to manage community engagement. Thus, Connecting Community for Kids was conceived; raising awareness, harnessing support and identifying readiness for the notion of social change and collective working. It also assisted in building community capacity and encouraged ongoing active community representation, participation, engagement and commitment to improve outcomes for children pre-birth to eight in Cockburn and Kwinana.

In 2016, Connecting Community for Kids evolved; successfully gaining funding for five years through the Woodside Development Fund, building the governance structure and establishing the collective backbone team. The PFEYWG transitioned to the Joint Commissioning Committee (JCC) and the Joint Leadership Team (JLT) was formed to include service providers directly working in the communities of Cockburn and Kwinana.

Local service providers and community members were re-energised and Decision Making Groups formed. The collective team re-engaged with the community through hosting numerous Community Conversations, pop-up cafés and picnics, attending local community events and operating stalls at open days. We surveyed throughout both communities and asked the tough questions; why are **1 in 5** children within the City of **Cockburn** and **1 in 4** in the City of **Kwinana** still developmentally vulnerable in one or more AEDC domain? What are the contributing factors? Please refer to our Journey Map (Attachment One) and Data Story (Attachment Two) for further details.

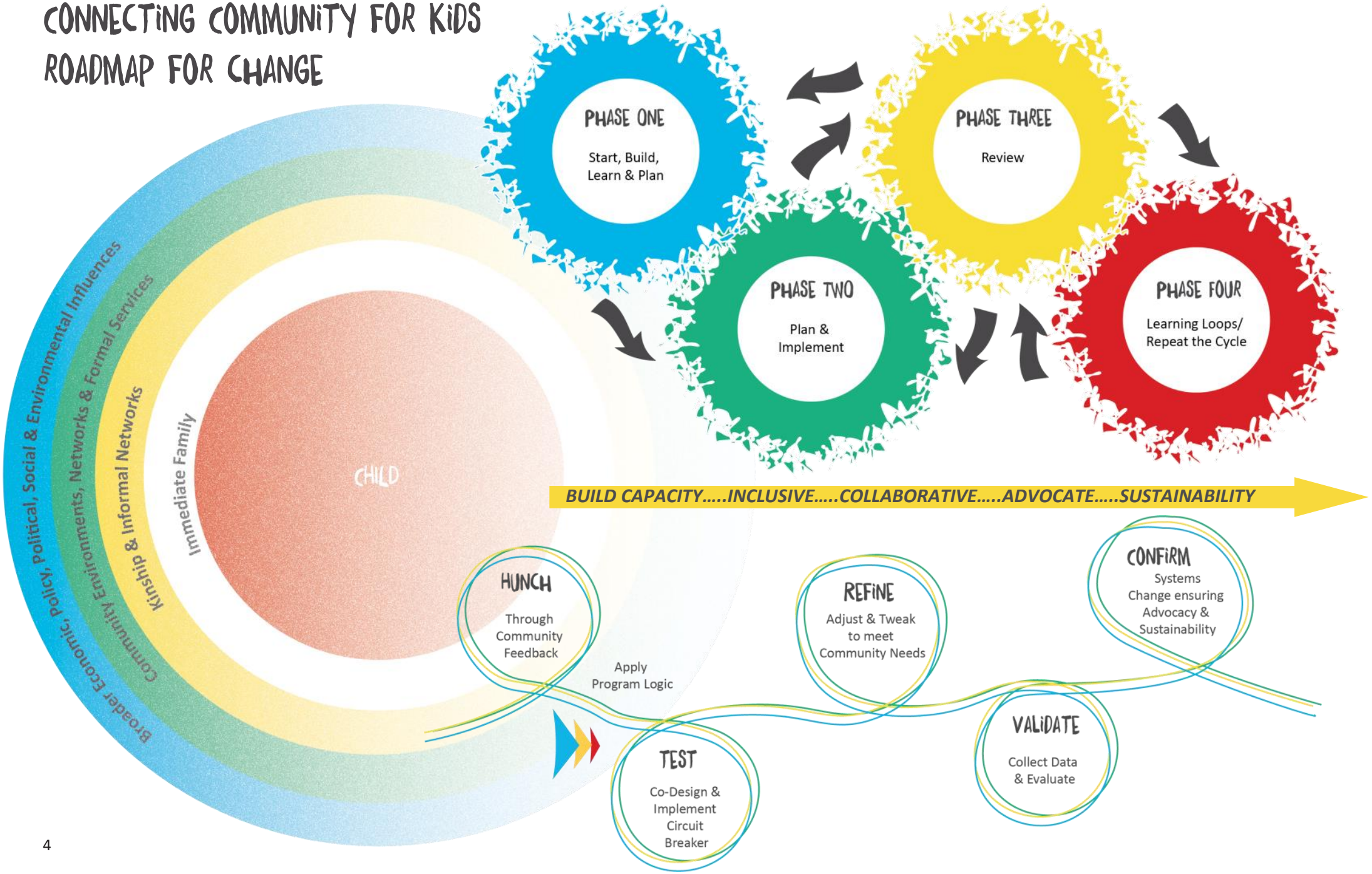
IDENTIFIED THEMES

Through continued lines of enquiry and consistent community engagement, we identified four common themes to address childhood vulnerability - health; isolation; financial strain; and safety. This Roadmap for Change will outline our approach to confront these societal issues and how we apply our Program Logic in identifying, co-designing and delivering circuit breakers for change. What we have learned, is that our road is not and will not be linear. Instead it will be a series of channels leading us to multiple ways to improve outcomes for children.

WHAT NEXT

We aim to harness community energy by focusing on the four identified themes. Through constant collaboration and community engagement, we will co-design multiple circuit breakers for change; ensuring our priorities are met by applying our Program Logic every step of the way. We will ensure our individual projects will build community capacity; create an inclusive environment; collaborate and engage community to co-design change; advocate for system change; and be sustainable.

CONNECTING COMMUNITY FOR KIDS
ROADMAP FOR CHANGE



OUR ROADMAP FOR CHANGE EXPLAINED

In creating our Five Year Implementation Plan in 2016, we developed an Operational Overview based on the Platforms Framework created by the *Murdoch Childrens Research Institute* and the *Royal Children's Hospital Centre for Community Child Health*. This followed 4 lineal phases—Start, Build, Learn & Plan; Plan & Implement; Review; with the addition of the Transformational Infinity Loop. What we have discovered since, is that our Operational Overview will not work in a linear fashion. Our four phases will always overlap, interweave and rotate, symbolising an always moving and evolving venture.

In addition to understanding the mechanism, we need to recognise the heart of our thinking and this is best represented by Bronfenbrenner's *Ecological Model of the Child.* Children, families and community are always at the centre of our Initiative and are considered in every approach we take.

To move forward in the Initiative, we apply Learning Loops to identify potential circuit breakers and actions required for change through each stage of our Roadmap.

Our 'Hunch' is founded by feedback from the community, identifying the areas of concern relating to child development. We then ask "Is there energy for this?" "Will there be community and service provider support?" Further synthesising of data reveals specific areas where the community is energised to change (refer to Attachment Two—Our Data Story). A 'Hunch' is established and our Program Logic applied to ensure it aligns with the Initiatives objectives.

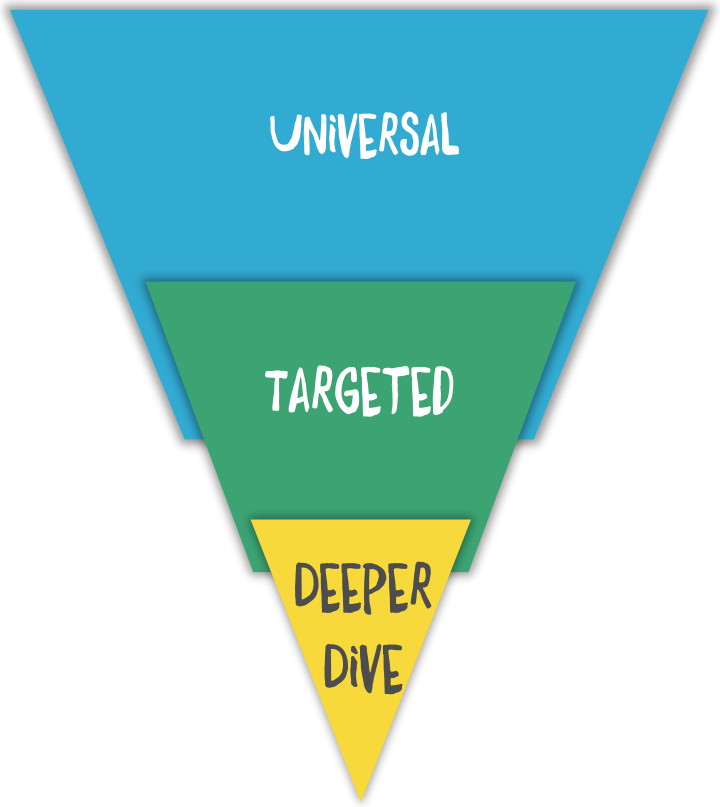
Once our 'Hunch' is considered a viable venture through our Program Logic assessment, community are engaged through our Regional Leadership and Decision Making Groups to co-design activities to 'Test' the proposed circuit breaker. Key stakeholders are engaged to provide support, baseline data and resources and the 'Test' is implemented.

Upon completion of the venture 'Test', our team reviews and assesses the process in conjunction with the stakeholder. The project is adjusted and tweaked to meet community requirements, moving through the 'Refine' stage.

Data and feedback is collected and compared to assess the effectiveness of the circuit breaker to 'Validate' the project.

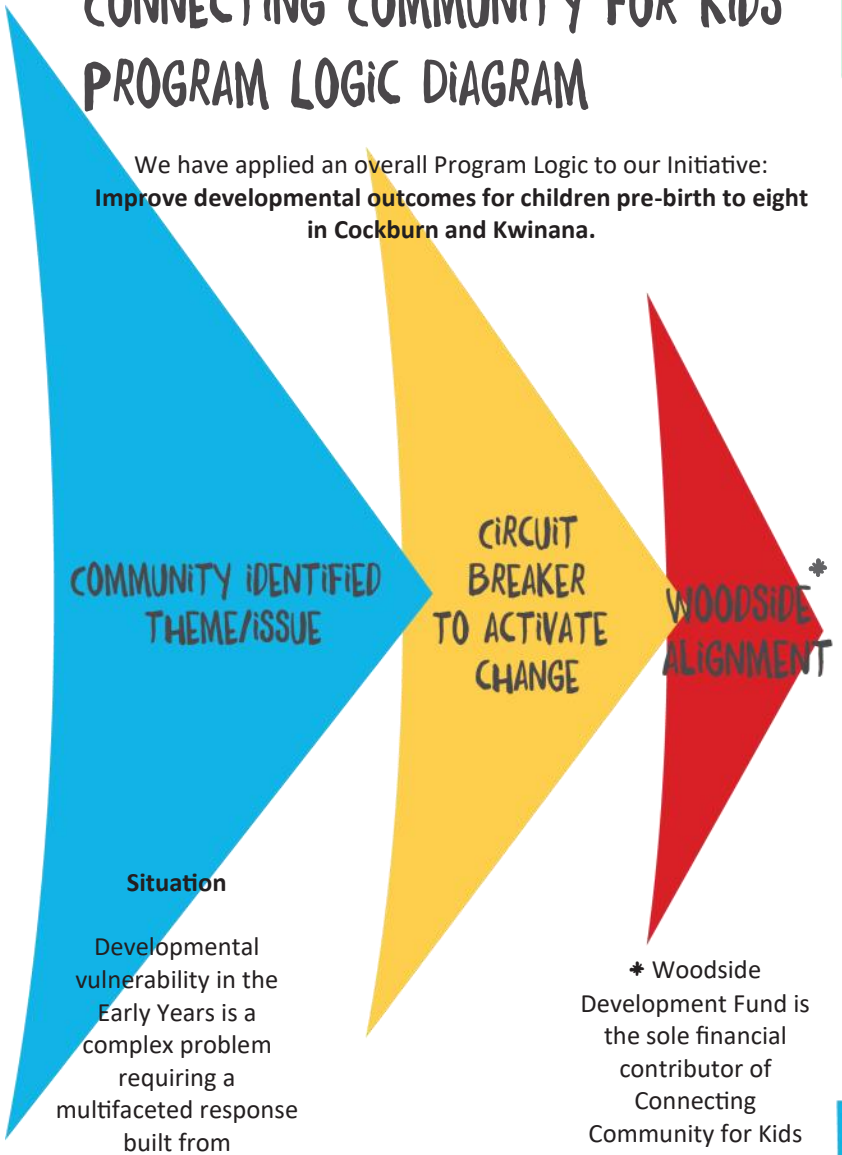
The project is 'Confirmed' once we determine it meets our organisational criteria of building community capacity; creating an inclusive environment; collaborating and engaging community to co-design change; advocating for system change; and encouraging sustainability. Where required, advocacy for systems change would be progressed through our JCC.

Circuit breakers need to support all families in Cockburn and Kwinana. We aim to improve developmental outcomes by identifying and implementing universal, targeted and deeply focused approaches.



CONNECTING COMMUNITY FOR KIDS PROGRAM LOGIC DIAGRAM

We have applied an overall Program Logic to our Initiative:
Improve developmental outcomes for children pre-birth to eight in Cockburn and Kwinana.



Situation

Developmental vulnerability in the Early Years is a complex problem requiring a multifaceted response built from interventions pre birth and through each stage, education, social and peer support.

* Woodside Development Fund is the sole financial contributor of Connecting Community for Kids and we align to their priorities of Energise, Collaborate, Advocate and Sustainability.

INPUTS

- Coordination among Federal and State agencies to address specific challenges.
- Support from all members of the Joint Commissioning Committee to advance aspirations of CCK communities through advocacy.
- Commitment from all agencies to undertake trials to test system change opportunities.

OUTPUTS/ACTIVITIES

- Identify options for modifying Government policies and practices to better support local child development efforts.
- Once plan is in place identify existing Government and private resources to help address unmet needs.
- Support local partnerships and Statewide strategic plans through structured peer to peer learning and alignment to known peers.

Local Outputs

- Develop community driven decision making groups and working groups.
- Co Design a Roadmap for change to improve child development outcomes.
- Implement Roadmap using data driven and evidence based practices.

OUTCOMES/IMPACT

Short Term

- Wider and more frequent involvement of community members in Early Years networks and decision making groups:
  - Improved coordination among partners implementing different strategies.
  - Increased adherence to data driven practices.

Medium Term

- Improved local capacity to access JCC resources to compliment local investments across Cockburn and Kwinana:
  - Improved effectiveness of funding to address childhood development as a result of modified policies and practices.

Long Term

- Sustained community wide strategy focussing on childhood development.
- Reduction in referrals to specialists at 4 year assessment due to mitigation and early intervention.
- Reduction in % of children who are vulnerable in physical, social or emotional domain.

ASSUMPTIONS

Multi disciplinary partnerships using data driven, evidence and placed based strategies have demonstrated the ability to effectively improve childhood outcomes.

Multiple city networks provide opportunities for peer to peer information sharing that can increase the use of effective approaches.

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Shifting political leadership at Local or Federal levels.

Structural, sociological, economic and demographic changes that may influence root causes of childhood developmental delay.

UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITY & ITS RHYTHMS

DATA FINDING THEMES

The Connecting Community for Kids collective team has spent many months engaging with community members in Cockburn and Kwinana to not only develop our Regional Leadership and Decision Making Groups; but to also gain information and feedback from a larger radius to build our Data Story.

We have continuously gathered information through hosting Community Conversations, with over 240 attendees over the period; visiting local children's programs in parks or at the Cities libraries (45), attending day cares, crèches and building relations in schools (47 day care meetings, 49 meetings with various schools), calling in on facilitated and parent-led Playgroups (32), meeting the community for a coffee and chat at pop up cafes and picnics (31) and conducting surveys (approx. 75 responses). This data collection has been used to inform lines of enquiry for continued community conversations and supports the development of circuit breakers and our Roadmap for Change.

Through all our data collection, we have identified four common themes to address childhood vulnerability that were common across both communities - health; isolation; financial strain; and safety. We are in the process of conducting brainstorming workshops for each identified topic to ensure each theme is thoroughly investigated, giving us a clear outline of the community's requirements.

These workshops also ensure we are continuing to work closely with community members and service providers to confirm concerns, ideas and circuit breakers for change are developed and implemented for the community, by the community. Where systems change is required, information is relayed to State Government level through our governance structure.

Please refer to our Data Story (Attachment Two) for an in-depth outline of our data collation from Cockburn and Kwinana.

COMMUNITY RHYTHMS

The Connecting Community for Kids collective team has also undertaken professional development through *The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation* to further understand the rhythms of both communities and determine where each sits in the *Five Stages of Community Life*.

Through this we have identified that Cockburn and Kwinana are at different stages of Community Life and will need distinctive approaches to energise and harness community will.

Cockburn has pockets of active engagement and community alignment; however overall is fragmented. Community discussion about challenges is infrequent and/or locally based rather than whole of community. People want to create change, but negative norms for public life or uncertainty of what is possible keep them locked into old patterns. This is known as the 'Waiting Place' and in this phase our best approach is to create forums for conversation and interaction where people feel they belong and crystallise concerns. We must ensure we connect community action with realities in peoples lives.

Kwinana has moved beyond this stage. Unlike in the Waiting Place, there is a sense of urgency in people's voices; people are tired of "waiting." But while people want change, they lack clarity about what to do. This stage is called 'Impasse' and our best approach is to let people share their concerns and discover common aspirations for something different. We need to work with community to identify actions that will pull people into small efforts.

HARNESSING THE ENERGY

In order to transition both communities to 'Catalytic' where energy is harnessed, we shall continue to create forums for conversation, build connections between service providers and community and establish an inclusive environment where all feel they can share their thoughts and ideas, regardless of the issue. Once we understand the stage of the community and the issues they are concerned about, we can co-design appropriate circuit breakers to test what it would take to create change. By harnessing community aspiration and energy and providing support to build capacity and advocacy where needed, we can create sustained meaningful outcomes for both communities.

WHERE IS THE ENERGY? A CASE STUDY ON SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ISOLATION

Acknowledging what we learned through engagement and our understanding of community rhythms, Connecting Community for Kids conducted a co-design with our Cockburn Decision Making Group and identified that school holiday play sessions could assist in combating social isolation. We applied our Learning Loops and Program Logic to determine whether this project was aligned with our outcomes and could be identified as a circuit breaker for change.

HUNCH

Early research in both Cockburn and Kwinana revealed family isolation as an area of concern. We created a survey to seek further information that was conducted online via Survey Monkey and face-to-face at Children's Week events, pop up cafes and coffee catch ups. 62 respondents completed the survey showing one third of families rated high for children not attending playgroups or other social engagements prior to attending school. During the September Community Conversations we delved deeper into social isolation and held a brainstorming session and further discussions with parents indicated a lack of activity during the school holidays. Many programs in both Cockburn and Kwinana run on a term basis, leaving families isolated and in need of engagement during the school holidays.

TEST

Connecting Community for Kids identified an existing service provider in the Cockburn area who was willing to trial a school holiday play session. Yangebup Family Centre co-designed and hosted sessions for 0-5 year olds during the October 2016 break, supported by Connecting Community for Kids and our foundation community members. Our Community Facilitator took the opportunity to meet with parents and carers to gain feedback on future activities that would assist in reducing social isolation. Two sessions were held at no cost to participants. 41 adults and 61 children attended the two play sessions.

REFINE

As a result of the feedback attained through the October play sessions, and through further conversations with community members, we found that families with a mix of ages (under and above school age) were still unable to attend events that only catered for the younger age group, or other school holiday activities that accommodated older children. It was decided to trial expanding the age group of participants to 0-10 years and continue with the play sessions for the January 2017 school holidays. A cost of $7 per family/per session was introduced to cover costs of the Facilitator. During week one, 11 families attended (18 children aged 0-10 : 5 aged 5-10) and week two had 12 families attend (21 children aged 0-10 : 6 aged 5-10).

The purpose of this refined program was to reduce social isolation and provide a low cost activity for families with children aged 0-10. It was also an opportunity to promote child development through play sessions as a means to improve social and emotional development, helping others, following instructions/routines/rules, helping clear mess, and self-control in various emotional states. Families were also presented the opportunity to develop peer to peer support networks, which is particularly helpful for families who are new to the area or country.

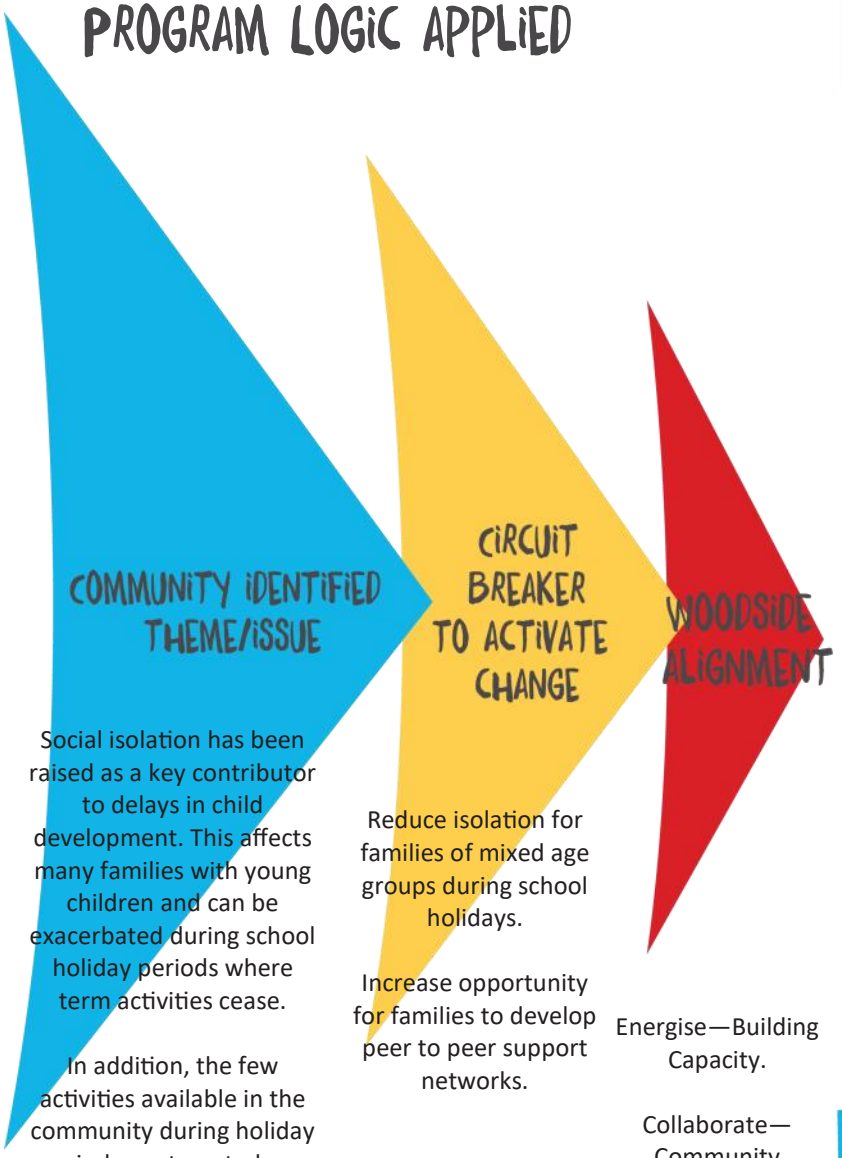
VALIDATE

With 4 play sessions delivered and well attended, it is evident that ongoing school holiday play sessions are needed. Extending the age enabled new families to attend and supported parents in networking and transition to school arrangements. Parents stated that they would prefer to pay a small fee than have the responsibility of taking on tasks and running a community led playgroup. Expanding the age of kids able to attend allowed new families access to the play sessions.

CONFIRM

Yangebup Family Centre has sustained the school holiday play sessions, conducting 2 sessions during the April 2017 school holidays. 14 families attended session 1 and 11 families attended session 2. This program now forms part of the regular activities provided by the Yangebup Family Centre and has become an additional, successful engagement opportunity for both the Centre and the local community.

PROGRAM LOGIC APPLIED



Social isolation has been raised as a key contributor to delays in child development. This affects many families with young children and can be exacerbated during school holiday periods where term activities cease.

In addition, the few activities available in the community during holiday periods are targeted age groups (0-3, 6-10 etc.) preventing families from participating.

Reduce isolation for families of mixed age groups during school holidays.

Increase opportunity for families to develop peer to peer support networks.

Energise—Building Capacity.

Collaborate—Community Engagement.

Advocate—Systems Change.

Sustainability.

INPUTS	OUTPUTS/ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES/IMPACT
• Connecting Community for Kids resources: - Marketing - Promotion - Facilitator for first trial • Data collection—pre and post trial.	• Co-design a strategy to identify and engage with families who are isolated and provide links to services. • Co design opportunities for families to participate in the community. • Implement strategy using data driven and evidence based practices.	**Short Term** • Improved coordination amongst services to communicate available services and activities/happenings in the community. **Medium Term** • Trial co-designed model for school holiday play sessions to understand take up rate, review, refine and implement ongoing model. Increased participation in playgroups/ community events / conversations. **Long Term** • Increased participation in playgroups and community events and peer support networks. • Increase in early intervention where social engagement may alert developmental delays. • Reduction in % of children who are vulnerable in physical, social or emotional domain.

ASSUMPTIONS

Increased engagement improves childhood outcomes.

Social networks reduce isolation.

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Structural, sociological, economic and demographic changes that may influence root cause of child development delays.

OUR NEXT STEP

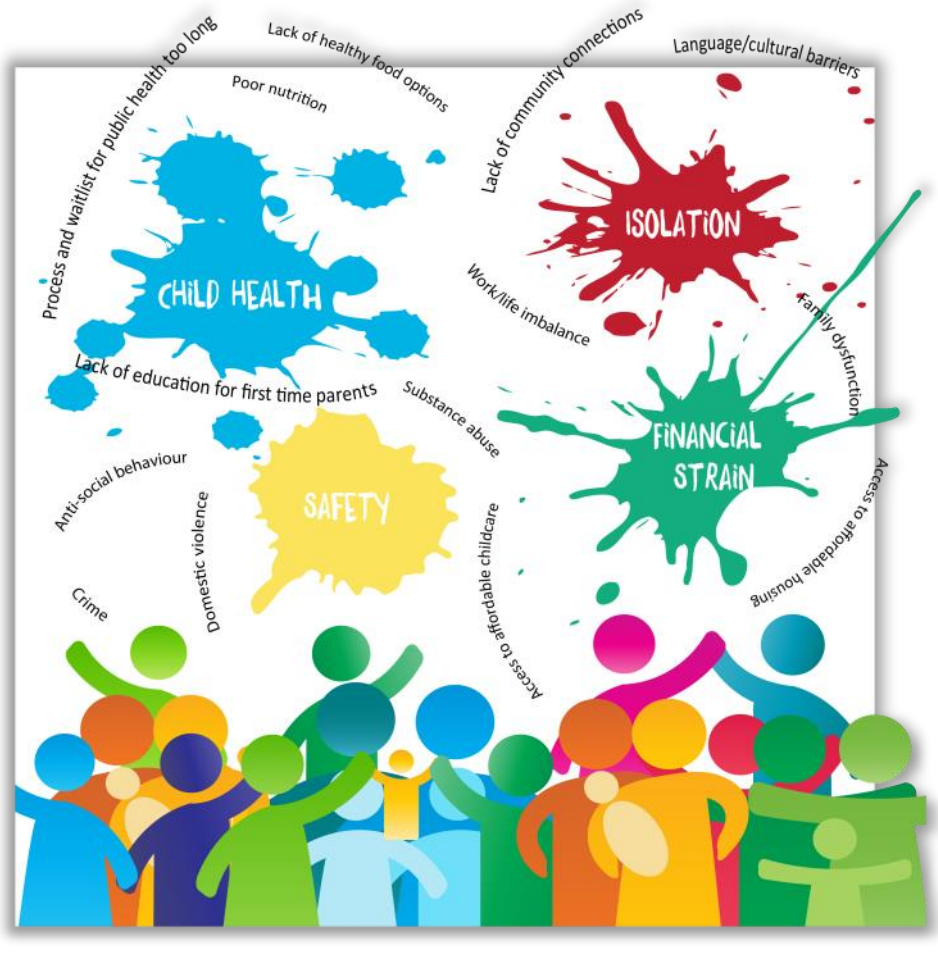
The Connecting Community for Kids collective team has a key role in keeping our community connected, informed and energised throughout the initiative.

OUR COMMUNICATION

We have developed and are growing a database of community members who have asked to stay informed on the Initiatives activities so that they can provide input along our journey. We do this in many ways. Our bi-monthly newsletter 'Community Chatter' is emailed to members and uploaded to our website. We have created a 'Quarterly Planner' for each community, providing a calendar of activities for families with children in their early years. We are increasing our social media presence with events created on Facebook and communicating with followers through Twitter and LinkedIn. We have created closed groups for both our Regional Leadership and Decision Making Groups so members can partake in discussions beyond our meetings. Minutes and upcoming events planned by these groups are also added to Facebook, our website and Quarterly Planners.

DECISION MAKING GROUPS

Both communities have formed Decision Making Groups comprised of community members, service providers and agencies who are keen to work together to identify, plan, design and test activities (creating circuit breakers for change) to improve childhood outcomes. These groups meet every 6 weeks in locations across Cockburn and Kwinana with the aim of actioning changes that will meet the aspirations for children in both communities. Both groups are currently involved in workshops addressing our four themes identified as being the largest contributors to developmental delay. Workshops are being conducted throughout April, May, June and July 2017 with all community members welcome to attend and provide input.



NEXT STEPS

As we continue to refine and synthesise our data through dedicated workshops, we are identifying key areas of focus within the already agreed themes of health; isolation; financial strain; and safety. The health workshop was conducted in Kwinana on 5th April, resulting in a much deeper understanding of issues and what it might take to create change. We are now working with our community groups using that data to co-design a range of circuit breakers to test in the area of child health. We will do this across all themes as we learn more from each dedicated workshop.

Throughout our development and co-design of circuit breakers for change, we will continuously apply our Roadmap for Change and Program Logic to always ensure our individual projects will build community capacity; create an inclusive environment; collaborate and engage community to co-design change; advocate for system change; and be sustainable. Where required, advocacy for systems change would be progressed through our JCC and JLT.