

AN AUSTRALIA WHERE EVERY CHILD
CAN REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL



22% OF CHILDREN IN
AUSTRALIA ARE DEVELOPMENTALLY
VULNERABLE.

THIS RISES TO **42.1%**
FOR INDIGENOUS CHILDREN.

Australian Early Development Census, 2015



Today there are 60,000 children in Australia considered developmentally vulnerable. That vulnerability makes it less likely that each of those children will start school with the foundations to achieve strong literacy and numeracy, health and social and emotional outcomes. The repercussions continue long into adulthood in the form of health problems, low education outcomes, increased crime and unemployment.

During 2014, the Minderoo Foundation launched a position paper encompassing its vision to see every child thrive. Under the banner of Thrive by Five and led by Nicola Forrest, Minderoo is advocating for a shift to greater investment in early childhood across Australia.

We believe a multi-faceted approach is needed to create a system that enables healthy, happy and thriving children. Our efforts include support for innovative models of service delivery, research partnerships and engagement with all levels of government on new policy initiatives.

As an independent organisation, Minderoo recognises its unique ability to provide a voice for those who are disadvantaged, including vulnerable children and families. We will bring together the community, families, clinicians, educators, government, researchers and other stakeholders to drive greater translation and application of evidence. Minderoo also recognises that government is unable to take risks with public money to prove new approaches to seemingly intractable problems. We therefore see our role as a partner with community to prove new ways of working that can be scaled by government.

“ *Thrive by Five represents Minderoo’s efforts to encourage a long term and evidence-based approach to the way Australia prioritises the wellbeing and future of children - Nicola Forrest* ”

BY ENSURING EVERY CHILD STARTS THEIR EDUCATION
WITH THE **SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL SKILLS** TO LEARN,
WE WILL BUILD A **STRONGER, CONNECTED AND MORE VIBRANT**
AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY.

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ADVOCACY

Providing a voice for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Minderoo recognises its unique ability to provide a voice for those who are most vulnerable. We are advocates for solution-focused change based on evidence, prevention and collaboration.

Our key early childhood messages include:

- 90% of brain growth occurs by the age of three years. Our education, health and social policy decisions must reflect this.
- Child development is multifaceted and requires an integrated approach encompassing education, child and maternal health and social services.
- We cannot rely solely on the child care system to reach our most vulnerable children and families in the critical early years.
- Services and policies must engage with parents and caregivers who have the most influence on a child's development.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Investment in partnerships that inform and underpin our advocacy, research and policy engagement.

Since 2012, Minderoo has invested in the Challis Parenting and Early Learning Centre in Armadale, Western Australia. The Challis integrated, place based model of early childhood and family service delivery has seen its children go from a position of disadvantage to exceeding the state average at the start of school, every year since 2012. The model has informed a number of policy initiatives including the Western Australian State Government Child and Parent Centres and the Federal Government's Connected Beginnings initiative.

POLICY

Demonstrating successful and scalable approaches to complex problems.

Minderoo engages with the government at all levels to share its experiences and perspectives from the community. Since 2014, Minderoo has been involved in the design of the Federal Government's Connected Beginnings initiative which was committed in response to the 2014 Creating Parity Review, authored by Minderoo Chairman Andrew Forrest. Connected Beginnings will be rolled out in an initial 13 communities around Australia.

RESEARCH TRANSLATION

Enabling the translation of research into effective policy, practice and service delivery.

Hosted by the Telethon Kids Institute and seed funded by the Minderoo Foundation, the Early Childhood Development and Learning Collaboration (CoLab) is led by Professor Donna Cross. CoLab will bring together the community, families, clinicians, educators, government, researchers and other stakeholders to:

- Provide accessible summaries of evidence in plain language, apps and other technology-based products to enhance access to services and information on early childhood development.
- Partner in demonstration projects, develop partnerships (e.g. shared initiatives and outplaced officers), conduct exploratory, evaluative and commissioned research, develop evidence syntheses and position papers, host think tanks and support capacity building.
- Provide policy briefs, evidence syntheses, position papers and host forums.

ENSURING EVERY CHILD IN AUSTRALIA
HAS THE BEST CHANCE TO REACH
THEIR POTENTIAL FOR TOMORROW.
