



National Centre for Action  
on Child Sexual Abuse

# Learning and Professional Development Plan

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2023

## Acknowledgements

The National Centre respectfully acknowledges and celebrates the many Traditional Owners of the lands throughout Australia and pay our respects to ancestors of this country and Elders past and present. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culture and lore have existed within Australia continuously for 65,000 years.

We acknowledge the ongoing leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia and those who have and continue to work tirelessly to address inequalities and improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice outcomes for children and young people. The National Centre is committed to ensuring that the voices of those whose lives are affected by the decisions governments make should fundamentally inform those decisions. First Nations voices must be heard, raised and amplified through a Voice to Parliament. It is time for genuine and significant reform to progress healing through the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

We honour the lived and living expertise of all victims and survivors of child sexual abuse, harnessing all ages, cultures, abilities and backgrounds and commit to substantially addressing the harm of child sexual abuse, now and into the future. We recognise that there are children and young people today who are experiencing sexual abuse and dedicate ourselves to doing all we can to facilitate their effective protection and care.

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## Executive summary

The vision of the National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse is a future in which children are safe and victims and survivors are supported to heal and recover from the trauma of child sexual abuse.

This Plan sets out the importance and role of learning and professional development to the National Centre's strategic goals. It outlines our direction and approach to build and strengthen the capability of workers and organisations in how they respond to and support victims and survivors of child sexual abuse through training, learning and development activities and knowledge exchange resources.

Learning and Professional Development broadly refers to the range of learning methods and activities people use and access to continuously build their capability. The National Centre assumes a holistic, iterative and dynamic approach to learning and professional development, which includes but also extends beyond formal training. We will connect people to knowledge through learning resources and activities that occur:

- through and with other people
- through and with different types and styles of resources
- through informal and formal educational experiences.

Our work will be achieved through four interrelated strategic objectives and related priorities:

1. Upskill individual professionals.
2. Develop organisation leadership, capability and service models.
3. Influence education and service systems to better equip professionals and organisations.
4. Understand need and context.

Victims and survivors seek support from a diverse range of mainstream and specialist organisations and services, which span multiple areas across government, non-government, private and not for profit settings. This landscape requires an inclusive and broad approach to how we conceptualise, categorise and define the makeup and context of the child sexual abuse workforce.

This Learning and Professional Development Plan signifies the National Centre's long-term commitment to resource, plan, support and partner in the provision of learning and professional development opportunities which facilitate meaningful individual, organisation and system level change and progression.

Our learning and professional development work will be guided by five key principles which are:

- inclusive and culturally safe
- participatory and collaborative
- translational and sustaining
- trauma- and healing-informed
- accessible and responsive.

This Plan outlines the broader workforce context, sets out our learning and professional development strategic objectives and principles and describes our priorities to build the capability of the child sexual abuse workforce.

## Introduction

### Background

The National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse (National Centre) offers a uniquely singular focus on child sexual abuse in Australia. Our vision is:

a future where children are safe, and victims and survivors are supported to recover from the trauma of child sexual abuse.

A key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission), the National Centre brings together three leading organisations, Blue Knot Foundation, Australian Childhood Foundation and the Healing Foundation to address three key areas of priority:

- raising community awareness and promoting destigmatising messages about the impacts of child sexual abuse ([Royal Commission recommendation 9.9a](#))
- increasing practitioners' knowledge and competence in responding to child sexual abuse ([Royal Commission recommendation 9.9b](#))
- supporting the development of better service models and interventions ([Royal Commission recommendation 9.9c](#)).

Child sexual abuse is a crime. It is common and can cause significant harm to survivors and their families.

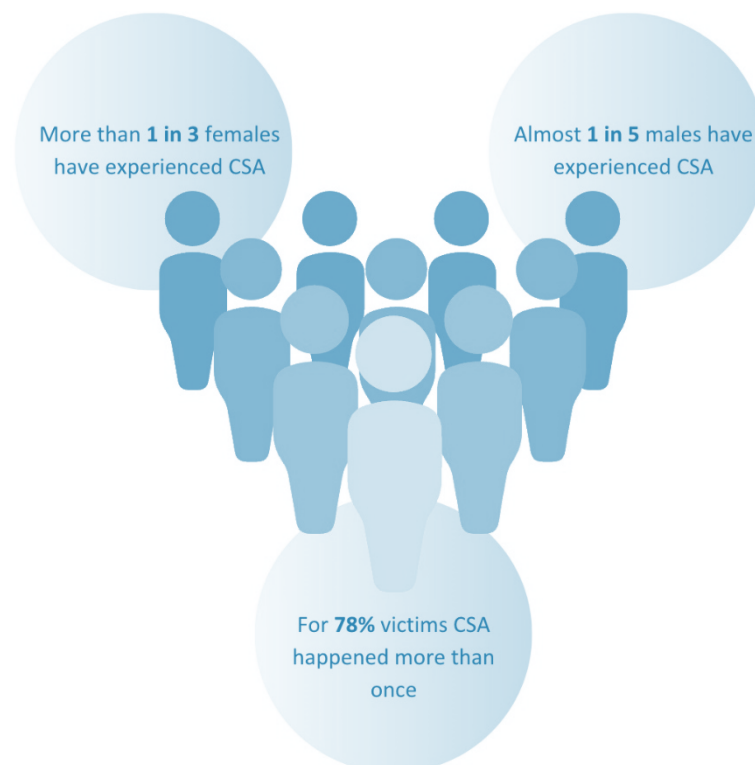


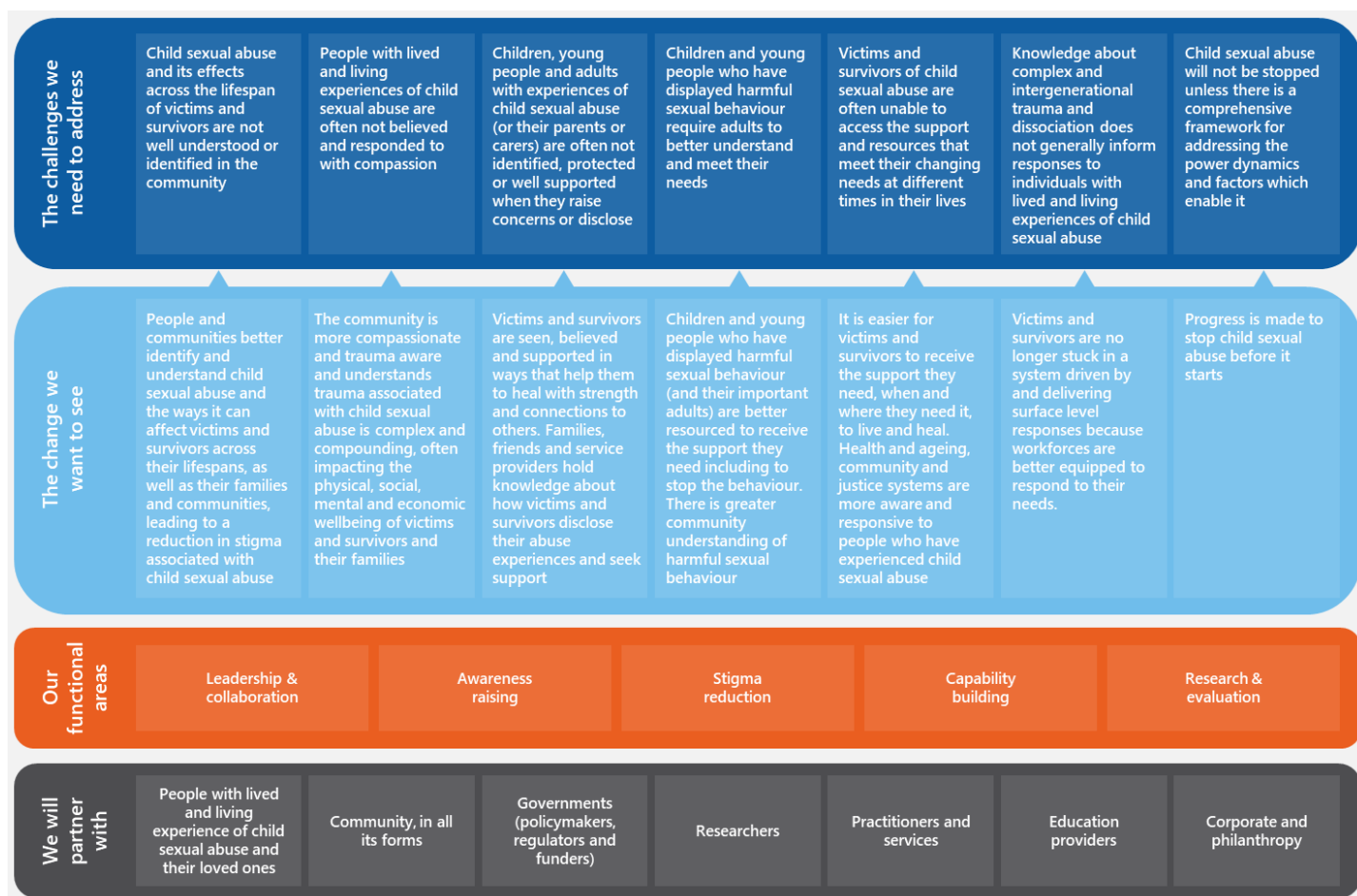
Figure 1: Prevalence Snapshot: Child Sexual Abuse in Australia<sup>1</sup>

Without the right responses, traumatic impacts can continue across a victim and survivor’s life course. These include mental and physical health impacts, self-esteem and relationship issues and impacts on a person’s education, employment and economic security.

To respond to these priority areas, the National Centre has identified seven key challenges and corresponding organisational goals (‘the change we want to see’). These challenges have been informed by the National Centre’s initial Scoping Study Series, the expertise of the founding partner organisations and consultations with a range of stakeholders including through its lived and living experience Colleges.

As outlined in Table 1, The National Centre has identified seven key challenges and corresponding organisational goals (‘the change we want to see’) to frame our work.

### Seven Key Challenges for Action on Child Sexual Abuse



### Learning and Professional Development Plan

This Learning and Professional Development Plan sets out the National Centre’s strategic learning and professional development objectives and priorities. These objectives and related priorities map against and contribute to the achievement of the National Centre’s seven key challenges.

The aim of the Plan is to outline the National Centre’s direction and broad approach to build and strengthen the capability of workers and organisations in how they respond to and support victims and

survivors of child sexual abuse through training, learning and development activities and knowledge exchange resources.

This Plan is informed by:

- the National Centre’s initial Scoping Study including a Workforce Capability Rapid Review
- the expertise of the National Centre Founding Organisations
- comprehensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders that occurred through the development of the National Centre’s Five-Year Strategy between August 2022 – January 2023
- a Learning and Professional Development Survey undertaken in November 2023 with a total of 1,400 responses from professionals across a range of sectors and settings.

The National Centre has a long-term commitment to resource, plan, support and partner in the provision of learning and professional development activities which facilitate meaningful individual, organisation and system level change and progression. Through this Learning and Professional Development Plan, we acknowledge and commit to working with other national, state and local bodies, initiatives and plans in the making or already underway that together contribute to a comprehensive workforce capability approach.

The learning and professional development activities of the National Centre extend beyond those which aim to strengthen the capability of workers, organisations and the services they provide to affecting change within the community and broader systems. However, that work is not the focus of this Plan and is unpacked in the National Centre’s Five-Year Strategy and associated plans.

#### A note on language

The term ‘professionals’ will broadly encompass all those who come into contact with victims and survivors of child sexual abuse during their work, including but not limited to: health workers, educators, law enforcement, justice officers, community workers, specialist practitioners, sport and recreation workers.

The term ‘organisation’ will refer to the broad group of services and agencies that in some way contribute to supporting victims and survivors, whether it be through advocacy, service provision, policy work or education.

For the National Centre, the ‘workforce’ includes the broad range of professionals that work in services that victims and survivors seek support from across multiple service areas. This includes mainstream, community and specialist services encompassing child and family welfare, child protection, health and mental health including primary care. It extends to policing, legal and justice, early education, schools and care, sport and recreation, as well as intersecting service areas such as aged care, domestic and family violence, alcohol and other drugs and disability.

## Learning and professional development context

### Professional and organisational landscape

Defining and framing the professional, organisational and broader workforce context is challenging as child sexual abuse impacts individuals their families and networks across their lifespan. Given this, it is difficult to estimate the true size of the workforce; however, based on a broad definition related to publicly available occupations data, it may include as many as 1.5 million people.<sup>ii</sup> This includes more than 11,000 First Nations people employed in healthcare.<sup>iii</sup> Of these, over 3,500 are employed by Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.<sup>iv</sup> This broad definition and publicly available data sets have limitations, such as the absence of nuance or context regarding the degree of focus on child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviour in roles within these professional groups.

Victims and survivors seek support from a diverse range of mainstream and specialist services which span multiple service areas across government, non-government, private and not-for-profit providers. There are different approaches to how to segment and categorise the workforce to understand its makeup. The Royal Commission segmented the child sexual abuse workforce into mainstream, community and specialist services. The National Centre will further define and categorise the workforce as part of its work and will include in its focus policing, legal and justice, early education, schools and care, sport and recreation, health and mental health including primary care, as well as intersecting practice groups in service areas such as aged care, domestic and family violence, alcohol and other drugs and disability. Importantly, different segments of the workforce do not necessarily represent homogenous groups and we recognise that there is a diversity of roles, interest, perspectives and goals which must be considered when designing learning approaches. The National Centre will include the unpaid volunteer workforce given the important role they play in supporting and working closely with children, young people and adults.

In addition to the size and diversity of the workforce, the Royal Commission outlined that:

- Services are often fragmented, difficult to navigate and poorly coordinated, lacking multi-agency collaboration and/or have limited capacity.
- Survivors' needs often vary over time, are interconnected and differ depending on a person's life stage.
- Different survivor cohorts have varying and unique needs which are currently underserved.
- Inadequate responses could lead to re-traumatisation and subsequent lifelong effects resulting in permanent disengagement from treatment.

The primary work that professionals and organisations do, where they work and the different groups they work with play a role in the capabilities that different professionals require. This includes:

- Work with children versus work with adult survivors of complex trauma related to child sexual abuse.
- Work with First Nations peoples, communities and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and other vulnerable priority groups such as those from LGBTIQ+ communities.
- Work in a specialised and targeted service as opposed to a more generalist support service.
- Work with people with a disability or children in out-of-home care environments.



## Education and training environment

The education and training landscape reflects the diversity and breadth of the workforce. Whilst further exploration, analysis, mapping and consultation is needed to inform a deep and comprehensive understanding of the training, education and learning landscape, results of early scanning provide some direction.

Related and relevant training and education is delivered by a range of providers. Peak bodies typically offer continuing professional development programs on general skills for supporting vulnerable children, their families and adults who have experienced child sexual abuse. State governments provide mandatory training related to child protection and mandatory reporting requirements for specific sectors, which differs across jurisdictions.

Within pre-service education offerings:

- Some professions such as social work, counselling and psychology offer electives on child protection with child sexual abuse/harmful sexual behaviour as a focus area.
- There are a small number of accredited courses and tertiary qualifications which focus on broader areas of child protection.
- There are a broad range of informal/continuing professional development short courses providing general skills, administering first responses and trauma informed practice.
- Training around therapeutic approaches and interventions for adult survivors and relationships-based interventions are offered to a lesser extent.
- Postgraduate qualifications related to child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviours are limited.

General trauma training has become highly accessible with many short and online courses available that provide a basic overview of trauma. Complex trauma training is typically delivered by a small number of not-for-profits.

Delivery modes for short courses and programs are largely through online, self-paced modules and short webinars and training costs vary depending on provider, course length and complexity.

Of note, there appears to be limited targeted training for professionals who work with specific groups including First Nations Peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people with a disability, children and young people in out of home care and people who have experienced child sexual abuse in online contexts. Additionally, there is limited professional development for operational or senior management and leadership roles that oversee services and staff that work with child sexual abuse or harmful sexual behaviours, or which foster trauma-informed cultures.

## Learning and Development Survey insights

In November 2022 the National Centre developed and distributed a learning and development survey to support the identification of professionals' most pressing self-identified learning and development needs, their preferred style of learning and any other key challenges and issues they face.

The survey had an extremely high response rate of 1,398 participants. Participants were predominantly female (83%), practiced in metropolitan areas (39%) and worked in an organisation that provided universal

services. i.e., characterised as services that engaged with victims and survivors of child sexual abuse as part of their work but not their primary business (59%).

Participants responded that they worked most closely with children and young people — 72%; followed by adults — 66%; First Nations communities — 44%; families and significant others — 42% and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds — 35%.



The findings provide rich insights on what is important for workers and organisations to provide timely and trauma-informed supports and services to children, young people and adults who have experienced child sexual abuse. These include:

-  **The importance of supportive organisational cultures, ensuring trauma-informed leadership applies to both service delivery and how organisations operate and support staff.**
- The need for non-burdensome training - cost, flexibility of delivery, access.** 
-  **The importance of the makeup of the workforce with a considerable percentage identifying as having a lived or living experience of child sexual abuse.**
- The need for better pre-service training (tertiary qualifications and pathways) within key practitioner groups.** 
-  **Direction on priority learning areas and themes, which were often concurrent and connected.**

Participants were asked to indicate their level of interest or need ranging from minimal to critical ('for my role') or not applicable for each of the 13 options provided.

Training and learning need	Critical N (%) greatest to least
1. Culturally appropriate approaches for healing and recovery from trauma	821 (68)
2. Using a trauma-informed approach when supporting victims and survivors of CSA	808 (67)
3. Understanding what works in the prevention of CSA	788 (66)
4. Managing your wellbeing when working with trauma	749 (62)
5. Leading in a trauma-informed child safe way (practice or organisation leadership)	746 (62)
6. Therapeutic approaches for working with complex trauma	743 (62)
7. Responding to disclosures by children and young people of CSA (including referring on)	738 (61)
8. Understanding harmful sexual behaviour including working with children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviours	704 (59)
9. Identifying signs of current CSA	686 (57)
10. Understanding CSA (scale and nature)	637 (53)
11. Responding to disclosures by adult survivors of CSA	608 (51)
12. Identifying possible presentations for adults with historical CSA	606 (50)
13. Working with adults who have experienced CSA	583 (49)

Table 1. Participants self-identified learning and development needs, National Centre Learning and Development Survey.

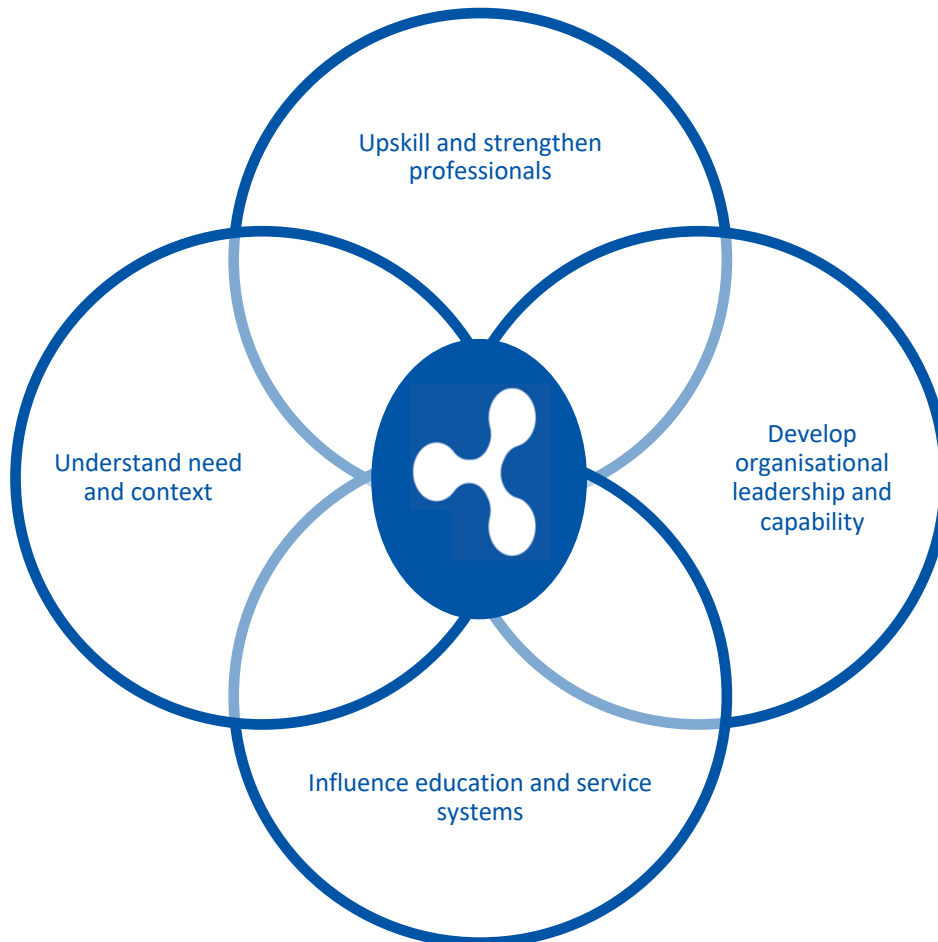
The response to the National Centre’s Learning and Development Survey also highlighted 31% of the workforce reported having a lived experience of child sexual abuse and only 9% of the workforce felt equipped through their studies to do this work.

It further informed us of workers’ preferred style of learning as well as other key challenges and issues which impede and impact on workers and organisations in delivering effective, timely and trauma-informed supports to victims and survivors.

The detailed findings of the survey are published on the National Centre’s website.

## Strategic objectives and priorities

Four strategic objectives frame the National Centre's Learning and Professional Development work.



### Strategic objective 1: Upskill and strengthen professionals.

The importance of an appropriately skilled workforce to protect children and young people and respond and support victims and survivors of child sexual abuse was highlighted by the Royal Commission.

Victims and survivors meet a broad range of professionals through the course of their life journey. A connected and tailored approach to upskill and strengthen the capability of different professionals is needed for victims and survivors to get the right support at the right time throughout their life course.

The National Centre will create, curate and deliver a suite of resources and learning and development activities for professional groups on child sexual abuse, harmful sexual behaviours and the associated complex traumatic impacts.

## GOAL

Professionals are more trauma aware, informed and responsive to victims and survivors throughout their life journey.

How this will be achieved:

### Priority 1

Educate and upskill professionals on child sexual abuse and complex trauma impacts across the lifespan and the importance of compassion.

National Centre  
Challenge  
1, 2, 6

### Priority 2

Educate and enhance the knowledge of professionals and organisations of harmful sexual behaviour, how it evolves and effective approaches to intervention.

National Centre  
Challenge 4

### Priority 3

Educate professionals on identification and disclosure of child sexual abuse, including the different responses needed for diverse communities and across the lifespan.

National Centre  
Challenge 3

### Priority 4

Use evidence and knowledge as it becomes available to educate professionals to understand the conditions in which child sexual abuse occurs and what this means for service delivery.

National Centre  
Challenge 7

## Strategic objective 2: Develop trauma informed organisational leadership and capability.

Beyond the individual professional, the organisation has an important role and responsibility in enabling trauma-informed leadership of programs, organisational cultures and operating systems. This is critical for the delivery of effective responses to victims and survivors across the lifespan and to respond to the health, safety and wellbeing needs of the workforce, being alert to and safeguarding against the risk and impact of vicarious trauma.

Supporting organisations to develop their leadership, organisational systems and service models is critical to minimise the risk of re-traumatisation for victims and survivors and ensure they can get the right kinds of supports where and when they are needed. The organisational landscape is diverse and complex and an understanding of operating contexts, opportunities and challenges is necessary to drive strategies which will change the outcomes and experience for victims and survivors.

### GOAL

Organisations will be more trauma-informed and culturally safe in the way they provide services and support and enable their staff and people.

How this will be achieved:

#### Priority 1

Build organisational and practice leadership to be reflective and trauma aware.

National Centre  
Challenge 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

#### Priority 2

Inform culturally appropriate approaches that promote healing and recovery for victims and survivors, families and communities.

National Centre  
Challenge 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

#### Priority 3

Use Lived and Living Experience knowledge and expertise to inform organisational approaches and focus on healing and recovery.

National Centre  
Challenge 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

### Strategic objective 3: Influence education and service systems.

To enable victims and survivors to receive the types of responses and approaches they need to heal, different professional groups need to be better skilled through their qualifications and education pathways.

The National Centre will work collaboratively with vocational and higher education partners to strengthen pre-service qualifications and pathways to embed child sexual abuse and complex trauma knowledge for priority practice groups. Short courses, micro credentialling and stand-alone qualifications will be explored to augment and complement existing and traditional training courses where gaps are identified.

The health and mental health delivery systems — including primary care, education, child protection, legal and justice service — have a significant role in responding to and supporting victims and survivors. There is a need for a more systematic approach to creating sustained change within these service systems. To do this, the National Centre will work collaboratively with key agencies to strengthen existing health, mental health, school, child protection and justice systems to be more trauma-informed in the way they engage with victims and survivors.

#### GOAL

Collaborate with higher and vocational education, peak bodies, government and other key partners to strengthen education pathways and key service systems to be more trauma-informed in the way they support victims and survivors.

How this will be achieved:

##### Priority 1

Enhance key qualifications and training pathways for priority practice groups, through the inclusion of content about child sexual abuse and complex trauma.

National Centre  
Challenge 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

##### Priority 2

Support early education and care and school based professionals and systems to embed practices which support children who experience child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviour.

National Centre  
Challenge 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

##### Priority 3

Influence the child protection and criminal justice systems so victims and survivors can proceed through survivor centric processes.

National Centre  
Challenge 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

## Strategic objective 4: Understand need and context.

The National Centre is committed to undertaking learning and professional development activities in a way that is flexible, tailored, rigorous and understands the multiple practice and audience groups and their needs.

A deep and evolving understanding of the complex practice and delivery landscape will drive our approach in how various audiences use knowledge to create fit for purpose learning activities and opportunities.

### GOAL

High quality education and learning resources and activities are underpinned by a deep understanding of need and how people adapt and learn.

How this will be achieved:

#### Priority 1

Develop and maintain a deep understanding of the learning needs for priority and generalist professional groups to drive capability strategies.

National Centre  
Challenge 3, 4, 5, 6

#### Priority 2

Establish a quality framework for learning content and resources to underpin our approach.

National Centre  
Challenge 3, 4, 5, 6,7

## Approach to building workforce capability

Victims and survivors need to be listened to, respected and supported to meet their diverse needs and recovery goals. For this to occur, services need to be trauma-informed, person-centred, culturally safe, accessible and flexible to best meet the unique needs of each victim and survivor when and where the person reaches out for support.

Workforce capability efforts must cater to large and varied workforces employed in a diverse range of roles that require varying levels of qualifications. Organisational and program level cultures need to be genuinely congruent with a trauma-informed approach. Strategies must consider organisational and service system contexts alongside initiatives to develop the skill and knowledge base of individual professionals.

The National Centre is one part of the collective response required to think and act broadly to equip the range of workers and organisations that victims and survivors connect with.



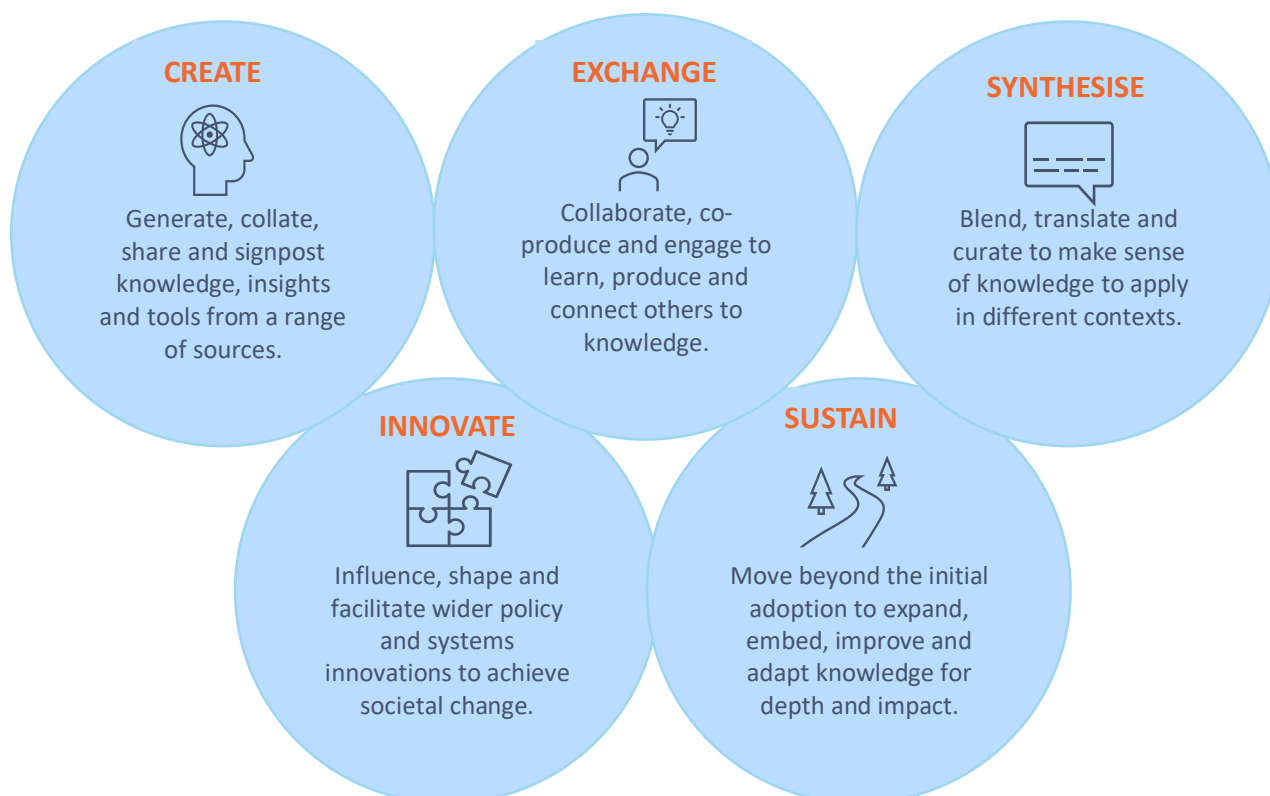
## Knowledge to impact

Knowledge mobilisation is core to who the National Centre is, what it does and how it does it. The National Centre’s approach to learning and professional development is nested within our broader Knowledge to Impact Framework which underpins all our work including research, community awareness and capability building.

Child sexual abuse is a complex, layered, nuanced and insidious societal challenge. To take real action requires an approach which reflects and pays attention to a complex systems perspective. For the National Centre ‘mobilising’ knowledge is how we generate and make it accessible, meaningful and useful for different audiences. Engagement, end-user participation and attention to raise awareness and prompt change at the individual, community, professional, organisation and system levels are key. Knowledge grows when it is used and loses its value when it’s not. Our learning and professional development approach seeks to create, synthesise and translate knowledge from different sources into usable, accessible and relevant resources, tools, training and learning activities. We aim to move beyond access to knowledge to embedding knowledge for change by understanding the right conditions for knowledge to be mobilised and tailoring our approach accordingly.

The framework has five interrelated, mutually dependent pillars — there is no linear progression or hierarchy between these pillars. No one pillar is more important than the other and each encompasses aspects of the other. They are, at their essence, systemically related.

### Five Pillars, National Centre’s Knowledge to Impact

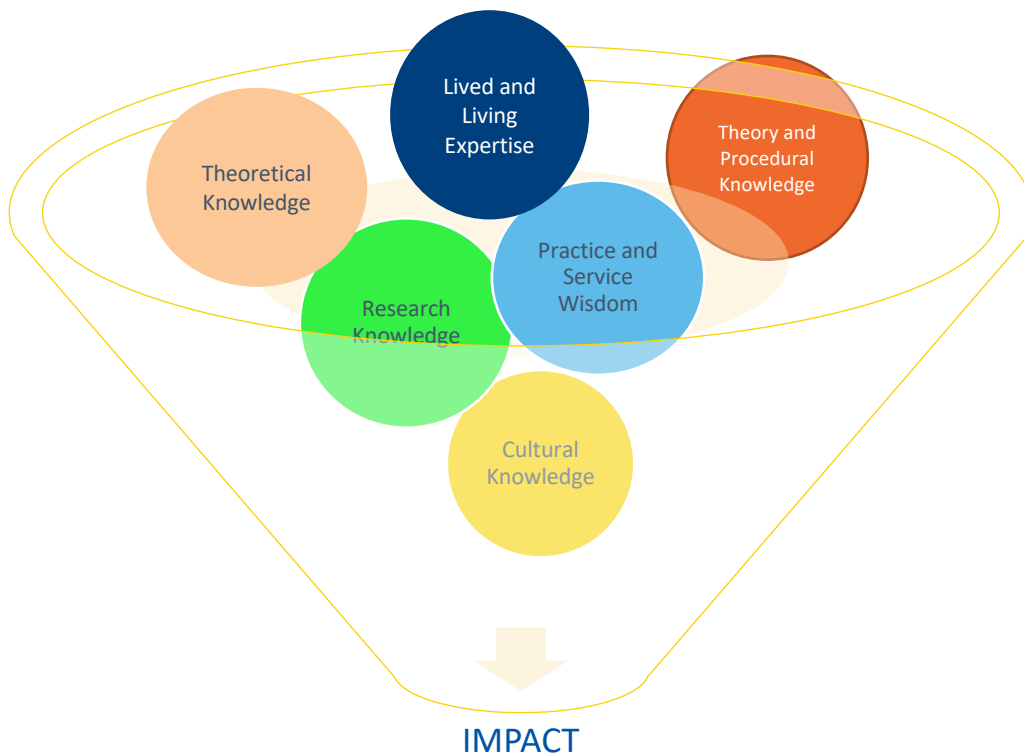


## Sources of knowledge

For the National Centre, knowledge is broad and includes expertise, evidence and experience from a rich range of sources where individuals can be both knowledge producers and users. This inclusive lens is critical within a layered and complex context where there is not always 'one right' way, definitive view or undisputed evidence base and that knowledge can at times be contested and in conflict.

Together, this collective making helps articulate complex ideas and contexts, gives voice and levels hierarchies, shares and elevates tacit knowledge and sparks ideas so the right conditions are created for change. The National Centre uses knowledge that encompasses the following forms (adapted from Thompson and West, 2013<sup>9</sup>):

- Lived and living expertise where the in-depth narratives, experiences, feedback and active engagement of victim and survivors is privileged.
- Cultural knowledge where the impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and loss and understanding ways of knowing unique to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are central.
- Research knowledge where empirical evidence is synthesised, integrated and interpreted within the context of wider evidence.
- Theoretical knowledge includes trauma theory, strengths-based theories of practice, theory about loss and grief and complexity theory.
- Practice wisdom where individual and service level experience and self-knowledge drive a depth of understanding and insight steeped in working with diversity.
- Procedural knowledge where a working knowledge of organisations, policy, guidance procedure and process requirements allow 'buy in' for new ways of working.



## Learning and professional development opportunities and initiatives

The National Centre will lead, partner and commission learning and professional development activities, resources and initiatives for professionals and organisations that work with and support victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviour. We acknowledge the importance of avoiding duplication and commit to responding to identified knowledge needs in a way which aims to complement and extend existing education and learning initiatives and activities.

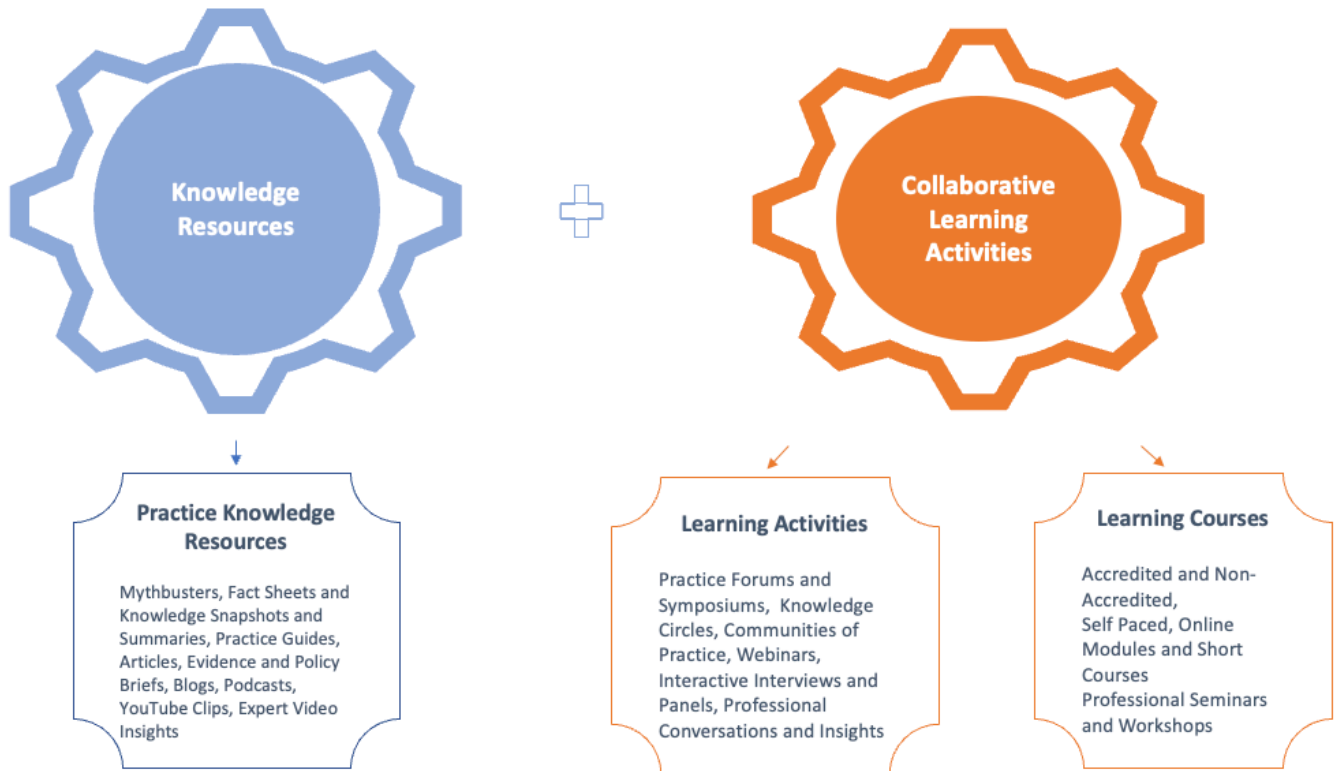
We will connect learners to knowledge through and with other people, through and with different types and styles of resources and through accredited and non-accredited educational and learning experiences. In doing so we assume a holistic, iterative and dynamic approach underpinned by a planning cycle where we:

- observe, listen and collect information on the learning needs of different workforce groups
- map and scan training, qualification and development offerings in relation to child sexual abuse, harmful sexual behaviours, and related traumatic impacts
- engage with stakeholders to further enhance our understanding of learning need and training and development gaps
- analyse and interpret information and data to determine opportunities
- design learning activities and resources to meet identified gaps

Content on child sexual abuse, harmful sexual behaviour and related traumatic impacts will be developed and packaged for accredited and non-accredited qualifications, pathways and as stand-alone professional learning activities. Flexible and scaffolded learning styles and delivery methods will be tailored to the topic, audience and learning objective. This may include self-paced modules; short courses; deep experiential dives on key topics; webinars; workshops and reflective learning initiatives (see National Centre Wheels of Knowledge). Informed by our planning cycle learning activities and resources will be targeted and tailored to general and specialist workforce groups and include the unpaid workforce.

In regard to accredited qualifications, courses and units the National Centre will work in partnership with academic institutions and registered training providers to develop and or enhance accredited vocational and tertiary qualifications and pathways. This will include partnering with higher education institutes and professional bodies to strengthen existing curricula in relation to child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviours within identified tertiary qualifications. The importance of this is emphasised in our Learning and Development Survey with only 9% of participants feeling equipped by their formal programs of study in understanding child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviours. A plan to respond must be determined in partnership with higher education providers, considering different administrative, program and financial conditions, measures and arrangements in place. Strategies to be explored may include micro credentials, specialist modules, units and or courses.

By targeting particular workforces the National Centre seeks to influence key service systems that victims and survivors engage and connect with to be more trauma informed and victims and survivor centric.



## Guiding principles

The following principles underpin the National Centre’s learning and professional development work.



What these principles mean within the context of the learning and professional development work led by the National Centre is outlined below.

### Principle 1: Inclusive and culturally safe

- Prioritise learning and resources which are culturally safe for victims and survivors and inclusive of diverse lived and living experiences, cultures and backgrounds.
- Promote inclusion of the broad range of professionals and organisations that play a key role in the lives of victims and survivors and those at risk of child sexual abuse.
- Value difference and diversity by tailoring approaches to learners from different and diverse backgrounds, including First Nations communities and people from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Build belonging by ensuring barriers to access for learning opportunities are mitigated.

### Principle 2: Participatory and collaborative

- Place learner outcomes at the centre of approaches and within a complex system where learners can be both a knowledge producer and a knowledge user.
- Prioritise context and relevance for learners using experiential, developmental approaches which value partnerships and collaborative processes.
- Complement, extend and leverage existing learning and development opportunities to maximise the reach and impact and ensure gaps are targeted to better meet the needs of victims and survivors.

### Principle 3: Translational and sustaining

- Use applied approaches to learning and development to better meet the needs of victims and survivors which emphasise practice, relevance and implementation.
- Cultivate an environment where audiences generate and contribute to learning that is sustained within a complex system.
- Acknowledge in planning and design that learning needs are often concurrent and connected.
- Continuously adapt, develop and evolve learning methods informed by continuous loops of feedback and insights.

#### Principle 4: Development-, trauma- and healing-informed.

- Elevate the lived and living expertise of victims and survivors as a critical frame.
- Develop learning opportunities and resources which are informed by an understanding of child development and attachment and are trauma- and healing-informed.
- Prioritise the psychological safety, mental health and wellbeing of learners in the way learning activities and opportunities are planned, hosted, facilitated and reviewed.
- Foster the agency, empowerment, well-being and participation of learners — understanding different contexts and triggers aligned to the principle of ‘do no harm’.
- Acknowledge that having lived experience and being a professional is not uncommon or mutually exclusive and ensure this knowledge is embedded in the approach to learning.

#### Principle 5: Accessible and responsive

- Prioritise access in the planning and design of learning activities considering hours, cost, technology requirements and platforms and availability.
- Tailor activities to different contexts by using different modes across the continuum of learning and suited to different and diverse audiences.
- Continuously assess and identify learner and workforce needs through strong engagement and connection points.
- Be sensitive to the intersection between trauma, disempowerment and disadvantage and how this plays out in a learning environment.

## Governance and oversight

Key Performance Indicators of the Learning and Professional Development Plan are to facilitate individual, organisational and system-level practice, as well as workforce change and improvement, so victims and survivors are better supported over their life course.

How the Plan will be implemented

The implementation of the Plan sits in alignment to the broader National Centre planning architecture, including its Five-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan.

To achieve the Plan’s aims, the National Centre will:

- forge strong relationships and partnerships with practice organisations
- continuously refine and evolve strategies through an iterative process as priorities evolve over time through broad-based consultation, engagement and discovery
- work collaboratively with key agencies to coordinate and minimise duplication of learning and development activities and responses across the spectrum of work being progressed at a state and national level.

- adopt a continuous improvement approach to how we develop, deliver, host and partner to facilitate education opportunities.

The Plan will be continuously refined and the delivery will be monitored annually to assess progress and identify adjustments.

Its implementation is supported by advice from a range of formal and informal advisory and engagement mechanisms including the National Centre's Practice and Systems Improvement Advisory Panel.

## References

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1. <sup>i</sup>Mathews B, Pacella R, Scott JG, et al. The prevalence of child maltreatment in Australia: findings from a national survey. *Medical Journal of Australia* 2023; 218. DOI: 10.5694/mja2.51873.
2. <sup>ii</sup>Figures are estimated from publicly available 2016 Census data and labour force surveys. Our broad definition is based on any ANZSCO occupation that is expected to provide Child Sexual Abuse/Harmful Sexual Behaviours-related responses and interventions at all degrees of specialisation.
3. <sup>iii</sup>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2020 summary report, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra, 2020.
4. <sup>iv</sup>About Us, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, 2022.
5. <sup>v</sup>Lester James Thompson & Deborah West (2013) Professional Development in the Contemporary Educational Context: Encouraging Practice Wisdom, *Social Work Education*, 32:1, 118-133, DOI: 10.1080/02615479.2011.648178