



National Centre for Action  
on Child Sexual Abuse

# Knowledge to Action Framework

2024

# Acknowledgements

The National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse (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 over 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 seek to 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 well 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 promote their effective protection and care.

In the development of this Knowledge to Action Framework we acknowledge expert advice received from consultants and collaborators of the National Centre. We acknowledge the expertise and foundational thinking of our Founding Members, in particular the Australian Childhood Foundation and the Centre for Excellence in Therapeutic Care.

## Our Commitment

The establishment of a national centre to raise awareness and understanding of the impacts of child sexual abuse, support help-seeking and guide best practice advocacy and support and therapeutic treatment was a key recommendation (9.9) of the 2017 Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission identified that ongoing national leadership is necessary to improve outcomes for victims and survivors of past child sexual abuse and prevent future child sexual abuse.

Established in late 2021, the National Centre is a partnership between three respected organisations with strong histories of leadership in responding to the child sexual abuse – Australian Childhood Foundation, Blue Knot Foundation and the Healing Foundation (each a Founding Member). The National Centre has an integrated governance structure that embeds the expertise of adults with lived and living experience of child sexual abuse, the rich strength of knowledge of First Nations Peoples and the voices of children and young people, as well as the expertise of researchers, practitioners, justice organisations, corporate entities, government and policy leaders.

At its core, the National Centre is a symbol of hope and an essential vehicle for action for many victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. Its vision is for a community where children are safe and victims and survivors are supported to heal and recover, free of stigma and shame – a future without child sexual abuse. To achieve its vision, the National Centre:

- ensures the knowledge and voice of victim and survivors of child sexual abuse is at the core of all of its activities
- commissions critical research
- builds the workforce capability of organisations working with victims and survivors of child sexual abuse
- strives to raise community awareness of the nature of child sexual abuse and how to prevent it.

# Background

The 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 heal from the trauma of child sexual abuse.

It is a partnership between three respected organisations - the Australian Childhood Foundation, Blue Knot Foundation and The Healing Foundation - with strong histories of leadership and mobilising knowledge to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse across the life span.

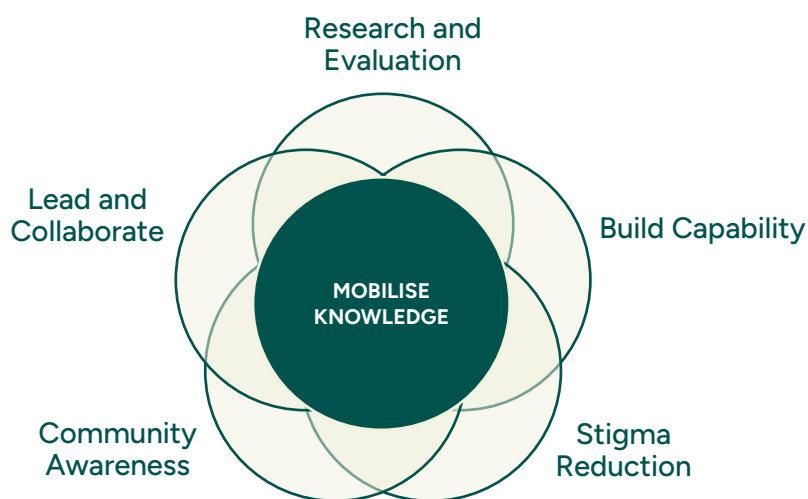
Child sexual abuse impacts every community, home and individual because we all have a role in keeping children safe, reducing stigma, and supporting healing from the trauma of child sexual abuse.

Knowledge grows when it is used and loses its value when it's not. How we leverage, create, share and activate knowledge from different sources in different ways is key to how we facilitate a world that is safer for children and better supports those who have experienced child sexual abuse.

The National Centre leads work across five functional areas underpinned by our [Theory of Change](#) and aligned to [Here for Change](#) Five Year Strategy which articulates seven critical challenges that represent our shared understanding of what must change.

1. Child sexual abuse and its effects across the lifespan of victims and survivors are not well understood or identified in the community.
2. People with lived and living experiences of child sexual abuse are often not believed and responded to with compassion.
3. Children, young people and adults with experiences of child sexual abuse (or their parents or carers) are often not identified, protected or well supported when they raise concerns or disclose.
4. Children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviours require adults to better understand and meet their needs.
5. Victims and survivors of child sexual abuse are often unable to access the support and resources that meet their changing needs at different times in their lives.
6. Knowledge about complex and intergenerational trauma and dissociation does not generally inform responses to individuals with lived and living experiences of child sexual abuse.
7. Child sexual abuse will not be stopped unless there is a comprehensive framework for addressing the power dynamics and factors which enable it.

Figure 1 – National Centre Functional Areas



The nature and dynamics of child sexual abuse, the domains in which it occurs, and the complex trauma impacts which can and often do result, mean that prevention strategies and victim and survivor support responses exist within a broad, complex and evolving landscape. It necessitates integrating the needs and feedback of multiple stakeholders including victims and survivors from varying cultures, contexts and geography, practitioners, organisations, multiple sectors and national, state and territory government agencies (often with differing child sexual abuse policy, varying availability of support services and legislative frameworks).

To navigate this complex landscape the National Centre uses an inclusive definition of knowledge that encompasses five broad sources of expertise, experience and evidence:

- Lived and Living Experience and Knowledge
- Cultural Knowledge
- Research and Theory Knowledge
- Practice and Service Knowledge
- Procedural and Systems Knowledge.

Through iterative and interactive processes, we mobilise knowledge using participatory action research, partnerships, collaborative and co-development approaches, engagement and exchange to build, shape and grow a shared body of usable and meaningful knowledge to positively influence beliefs, attitudes, practice and policy.

## What is Knowledge Mobilisation?

There are many terms used to describe knowledge mobilisation which include for example knowledge transfer, knowledge exchange, integrated knowledge exchange, and knowledge translation. It is defined in literally hundreds of ways in the literature. The common element among these different terms is a move beyond the simple dissemination of knowledge into activating knowledge. Knowledge creation (i.e., primary research), knowledge distillation (i.e., the creation of systematic reviews and guidelines) and knowledge dissemination (i.e., appearances in journals and presentations) are not enough on their own to ensure the use of knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

The theory and practice of knowledge mobilisation have been integral to the fields of medicine and primary health since the 1970s and has become more important in other domains as the demand for evidence informed policy and practice has increased. It commonly centres in action to make academic research accessible. Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) described the process of knowledge translation and exchange as the process of translating knowledge in ways that facilitate the uptake of evidence in policy and practice.<sup>2</sup> The Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) definition is as "a dynamic and iterative process that includes synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethically-sound application of knowledge."<sup>3</sup>

Knowledge mobilisation continues to be a dynamic and emergent field, particularly in relation to interpersonal violence, such as domestic and family violence, child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviours. The nature and dynamics of child sexual abuse require strategies to prevent and respond, that acknowledge, work within, and challenge the political, structural and practice challenges. It involves multi-agency interventions at different levels to address safety, health (including mental health), legal, and a range of other issues arising from the impacts of interpersonal violence.

Given this context and the remit of the National Centre, the term knowledge mobilisation while encompassing other terms such as knowledge translation and exchange is preferred, to signify knowledge moving between people, between organisations and moving in multiple directions ... the movement of ideas so that we can change hearts and minds.<sup>4</sup> 'Mobilising' implies a social interaction and an iterative process of co-creation of knowledge through a collaborative process.<sup>5</sup>

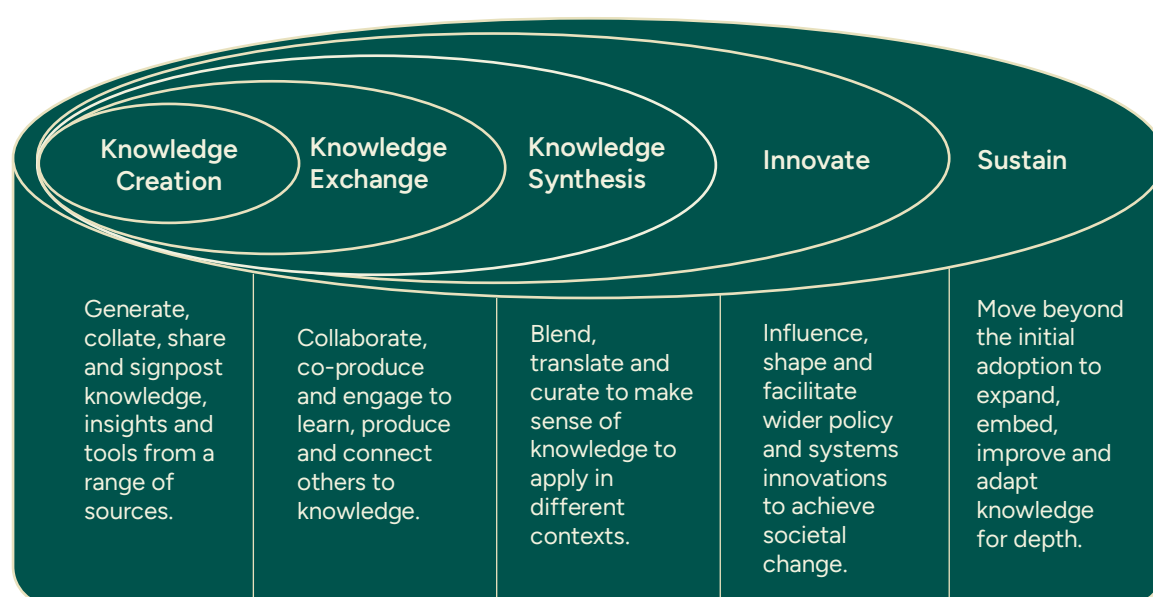
## Knowledge to Action

The National Centre draws on its *Knowledge to Action Framework* (K2A) to achieve its vision.

The K2A framework articulates five inter-related, mutually dependent domains that we will work across to disrupt, be creative, target multiple audiences and have impact at scale and at different levels - worker, organisation, community and service system level. There is no linear progression between the different domains and no hierarchy in terms of which one is 'better'. Instead, each encompasses aspects of the other – they are systemically related, represented as a series of nested ovals to highlight that there is a common origin for all of them.

Figure 2: National Centre Knowledge to Action

Adapted from Fisher 2012



The K2A framework assumes a holistic approach, recognising a complex systems perspective - informed by organisational, service, and community contexts and cultures - in which we operate to build and move knowledge to action. It seeks to build motivation to access the knowledge, resources, training and research generated - creating a 'pull-effect' by target audiences rather than relying solely on a distribution approach to knowledge mobilisation ('push-effect').

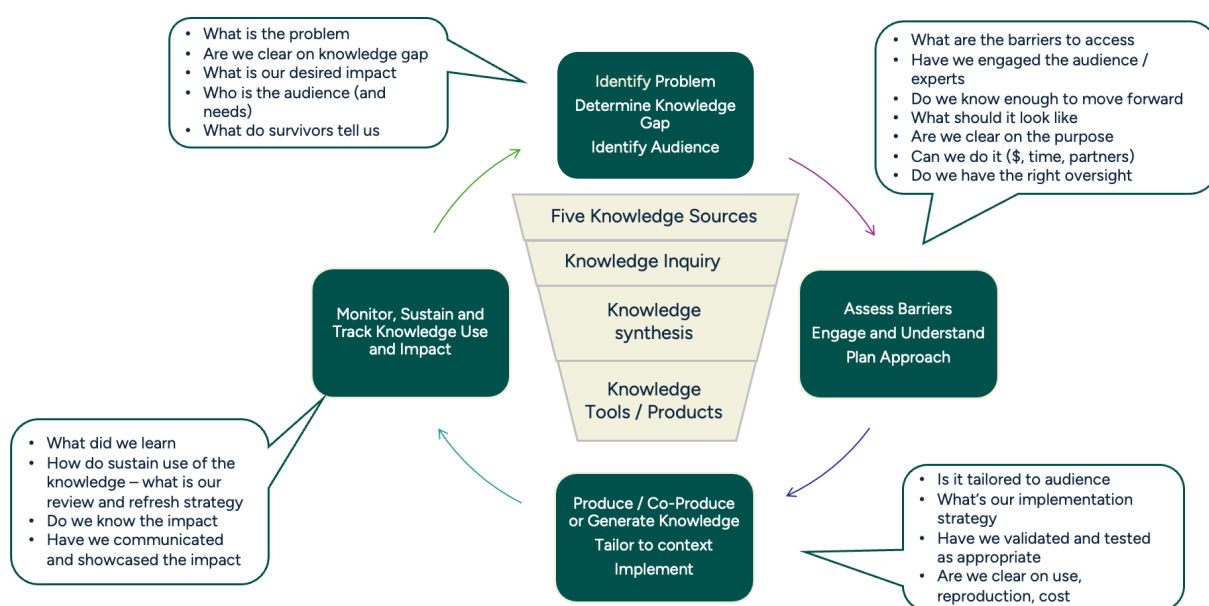
Working across these knowledge to action domains we will:

- create, collect and communicate ideas and information from different knowledge holders, users and sources so it is accessible, useable and can **inform** change
- improve **relationships** across and between victims and survivors, families, communities, organisations and systems to enable coproduction of knowledge and genuine dialogue
- work across the **system** and community to enable action that promotes an effective environment for sustainable innovation and change.

## Activating our Framework

The following cycle activates our Knowledge to Action Framework. It is underpinned by four core components which are explained below. Using an understanding of how practitioners, services and policy makers use knowledge, the National Centre will position victims and survivors, cultural leaders, practitioners, researchers and policy makers as active generators of new knowledge.

Figure 3 – Knowledge to Action Process



Adapted from Graham et al. (2006) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16557505>

## Five Knowledge Sources

Recognising diverse and interrelated knowledges helps the National Centre to hold different perspectives, articulate complex ideas, amplify voices and disrupt hierarchies of knowledge. Individuals, communities and organisations can be both knowledge producers and users.

Knowledge at the National Centre includes **expertise, evidence and experience** from five interconnected categories of knowledge, each with their own circle of knowledges. People can hold multiple types of knowledge simultaneously:

1. **Lived and living experience** of victims and survivors, learning from their in-depth narratives, experiences and active engagement. We value the practical knowing formed through those directly affected by child sexual abuse, which includes families and communities around a victim and survivor.
2. **Cultural knowledge** recognises diverse cultural backgrounds, the impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and unique and dynamic ways of knowing, being and doing that are central and unique to those from different cultural backgrounds and First Nations peoples.
3. **Research and theory knowledge** recognises the value of theory and empirical evidence that can be synthesised, integrated and interpreted within the wider context of knowledge.
4. **Practice and service wisdom** drawn from diverse experiences, traditions, sites and settings of practice and evolving practice frameworks embedded in different fields and modalities.
5. **Procedural and systems knowledge** to understand the conditions that enable, constrain and improve practice. A working knowledge of organisations, guidance, procedure and process requirements enable buy-in for new ways of working.

Figure 4 – Five Knowledge Sources

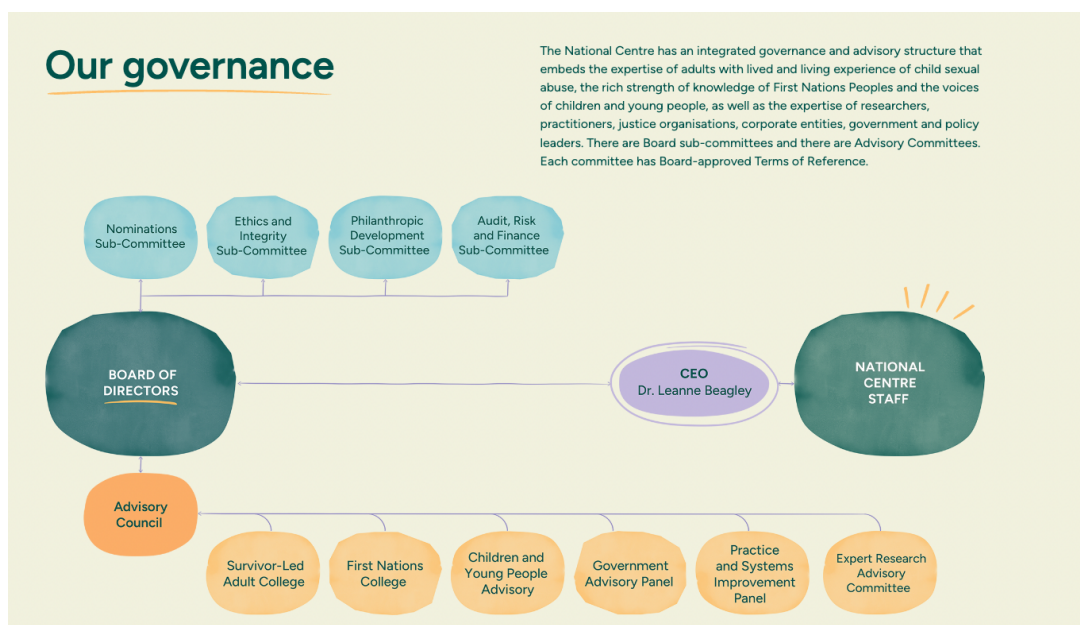


Knowledge flows in different ways and directions through mechanisms built into the National Centre's structures and approach. The knowledge flow is not linear, nor prescriptive but is dynamic and cyclical. Unique knowing is developed as a result of the discourse and interchange between different work and activities.



Formal and informal mechanisms support and facilitate engagement, contribution and connection with the five knowledge sources to inform and create the way knowledge is understood, used and disseminated. The National Centre will recognise and respect the time, relationships and different approaches required for this to be conducted ethically and accountably.

Figure 4 – Governance Advisory Mechanisms



## Knowledge Inquiry

It is important to distinguish between genuine knowledge gaps and a lack of access to existing knowledge. Ongoing and evolving scanning, mapping and analysis of available evidence and knowledge as needed in specific areas will assist to determine what empirical research is needed to address genuine gaps, and where evidence is currently available but needs to be synthesised and communicated. This includes drawing on outcomes and intelligence gained through continuous monitoring, evaluation, feedback loops, community tracking and cross sector surveys and studies.

Knowledge users have valuable information about the availability of evidence and genuine gaps: and they have a role in determining priorities for action in relation to evidence building, dissemination and strategies for implementation. Engagement with and involvement of knowledge users in different settings and the process of producing and communicating evidence will promote knowledge users' engagement and investment in knowledge resources and initiatives. Understanding what is required to enable an authorising environment and the challenges that exist in the organisational practice and policy landscape for evidence-based change and influence is part of knowledge inquiry.

## Knowledge synthesis

Knowledge synthesis is how we give weight to knowledge from different sources in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of different resources, learning, advocacy and policy initiatives designed to enhance the knowledge of different audience groups, influence systems and contribute to the broad evidence base.

Involving knowledge holders and stakeholders and integrating their knowledge in the synthesis process enhances the likelihood that resources and activities will be relevant, salient and achieve impact.



Knowledge synthesis may involve the National Centre commissioning, partnering and or leading multiple and coordinated projects and activities. It includes planning for the implementation, application and activation of the evidence, expertise and experience created. Knowledge created and produced through different activities ‘feed’ into other work to allow a scaffolding approach to our messaging, advocacy and influencing for maximum impact.

The way we think about knowledge synthesis centres on listening and being accountable to include different voices and perspectives. This involves identifying and valuing different lived experiences and including knowledge drawn from those who are marginalised and oppressed by the systems and structures we are trying to change (including for example characteristics such as disability, gender, sexuality, religion and race).

## Knowledge Tools and Products

Effective application of evidence, expertise and experience requires tailoring resources and implementation strategies for different knowledge users and systems. Multiple and coordinated strategies and activities will be used to respond to different knowledge needs and policy and practice contexts.

The National Centre will use a range of formats and mediums to communicate knowledge and influence for change including but not limited to:

<b>Training, Learning and Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o webinars, panel discussions, virtual workshops and classrooms</li> <li>o on demand self-faced online courses and recorded videos</li> <li>o knowledge circles, communities of practice and collaborative learning exchanges</li> <li>o seminars, lectures, conferences, forum and keynote presentations</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o blogs, podcasts, videos,</li> <li>o practice guides and tool</li> <li>o practice implications - expert insights and messages from researchers</li> </ul>
<b>Policy, Systems and Advocacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o policy coalition</li> <li>o public submissions</li> <li>o opinion pieces and media</li> <li>o strategic education partnerships to influence curricula and learning pathways</li> <li>o cross representative partnerships with key agencies and bodies to lead and contribute to systems change</li> </ul>
<b>Communication and Awareness Raising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o newsletters, LinkedIn/social media post</li> <li>o campaigns and public messages</li> <li>o awareness events</li> <li>o corporate partnerships</li> </ul>
<b>Research and Reports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o academic articles and journals</li> <li>o evidence summaries, insights and sense-making</li> <li>o seminars, lectures, conferences, forum and keynote presentations</li> </ul>

## Standard Operating Procedures

The National Centre plans, monitors and evaluates its activities and their contributions to the outcomes articulated in the National Centre's *Here For Change*, Five Year Strategy. Standard operating procedures identify respective process flow, engagement approach and approval points for different activities.

An independent evaluation of the National Centre will review the development, establishment, outcomes and impacts from implementation of the organisation's operational and business plan, 5-year strategy, and Theory of Change.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Defining Knowledge Translation <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2717660/>
- <sup>2</sup> Nancarrow, H. (2016, 23 February). ANROWS's Approach to Knowledge Translation and Exchange: What is it and how is it done? ANROWS Inaugural National Research Conference Melbourne.
- <sup>3</sup> Canadian Institutes of Health Research. (n.d.). About Us: Knowledge Translation - Definition. Author. Retrieved 02 February from <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/29418.html#2>
- <sup>4</sup> Wathen, C. N. (2021, 1-5 March). Mobilizing Knowledge for Wicked Problems: Lessons Learned from Gender-Based Violence Research ANROWS National Research Conference: Evidence in Action, Online. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8ff3laMnTU>
- <sup>5</sup> Knowledge Mobilisation Framework. The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre <https://preventioncentre.org.au/resources/knowledge-mobilisation-framework/>



# National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse

## Supported by



Australian Government  
Department of Social Services



Australian  
Childhood  
Foundation



**blueknot**  
Empowering recovery from complex trauma



**HealingFoundation**  
Strong Spirit • Strong Culture • Strong People

[www.nationalcentre.org.au](http://www.nationalcentre.org.au)