



Information Sheet

Developing an Action Plan

It is recommended that an Action Plan is completed once a Terms of Reference is endorsed by Network members. The Action Plan guides the Network's purpose and direction identifying key actions towards improving outcomes for local children and their families. Action Plans can be renewed annually to provide direction and focus.

The vision and mission statements provide the starting point for the Network's Action Plan.

The Action Plan is the practical 'roadmap' for the group. The Network uses the Action Plan to guide its regular meetings and steer the ongoing work of the group. The Action Plan should respond to the following questions on behalf of the Network:

- Where do we want to go?
- What steps do we need to take to get there?
- How will we know when we have arrived?

A good plan starts with being clear about what we want to achieve and setting an actionable set of objectives that are based on sound information about the situation.

When developing an action plan consider:

- What is the situation or identified need that we are trying to address?
- What is the scale of the issue? What do the Australian Early Development Census results show, including emerging trends? What factors may be contributing to the proportion and number of children who are developmentally vulnerable in the community?
- Is the need supported by the evidence? What supporting data and information do we have?
- What has already been implemented? What worked? What should continue and/or what needs to change?
- Who else in the community should be involved in the planning to bring about better outcomes for children?
- What do we expect to change for children and families as a result of the planned objectives?

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- Is the plan reasonable and achievable?
- Who will be responsible for the outcomes?

An Action Plan should be reviewed regularly with Network members to ensure that it remains current, reflects the needs of the community and the purpose of the Network.

The [Action Plan template](#) is designed to support an Early Years Network develop an Action Plan. The suggested headings and content are not intended to be prescriptive but are proposed as a guide. There is also an Action Plan Sample to provide ideas about projects and activities which might be suitable in your region.

Remember when setting KPIs and outcomes to use the SMART principles. Your goals should be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time-bound

For example, a goal might be “to improve the physical development skills of children”. A SMART goal would be “to see a 10% increase in the physical development index for our region by 2024, through the use of increased physical activity programs and enhanced physical development knowledge programs with parents”.

More information

To find out more about Early Years Networks, please visit our website or contact:

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