

**MacKillop  
Family Services**

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# **Collaboration from a CSO perspective**

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## MacKillop Family Services

- Established in 1997
- Western Sydney, Wollongong, NSW South Coast, Melbourne, Geelong, Warrnambool and Perth.
- Family Support, Home Based and Residential Care, Refugee Services, Disability Services, Youth Support, Education and Training, and support of women and men who as children were in the care of our founding agencies.
- 800 Staff and 420 volunteers
- 30 sites
- Budget \$70 million.
- The Sanctuary Model
- Focus on Partnerships and Collaborative models eg Child & Family Services Alliance (Child FIRST), Brimbank Melton Connect

# Policy Context

- Victorian Auditor General's Report (VAGO)
  - Original intent of Child FIRST was to provide broad range of support from brief episodic to complex intervention
  - HOWEVER in reality Child FIRST & IFS are struggling with the increased number and complexity of referrals and are spending most of their time at the higher end

## Key concerns raised by VAGO:

- Inadequate and reactive planning
- Inadequate partnerships and governance
- Inadequate performance and outcomes monitoring

## Brimbank Melton Child & Family Services Alliance

- MacKillop is lead agency
- Membership: 7 CSOs (including VACCA),  
Brimbank City Council, Melton City Council and  
DHHS
- Strong commitment by partners to work together

## Challenges for our Alliance

- Large number and complexity of referrals
- Engagement with large number of refugees / newly arrived migrants in Brimbank
- Dramatically increasing population in Melton
- Variable community and stakeholder understanding about what our service is and how it works
- Limited capacity to provide early intervention support which we know works

# Engaging Brimbank and Melton Families project

- Collaborative process including
  - Workshops with Executive and Operations members of the Alliance, and high level meetings with key stakeholders not formerly part of Alliance
  - Review of data from Councils, VACCA, DHHS and Child FIRST
  - Discussions around issues leading to prioritisation of areas of most need
- Model with an early intervention focus
  - Primary Schools & Aboriginal families in Melton
  - Maternal & Child Health Services and newly arrived migrants / refugees in Brimbank

# Engaging Brimbank Families Project

- Resourcing for 2 x 0.8 EFT “Family Worker” positions
  - Intake and brief episodic work
  - Engage with community and stakeholders about the role of Child FIRST, Family Services and Child Protection
  - Work alongside Brimbank Enhanced MCH services and at identified playgroups
  - Predominantly based at Brimbank City Council
- Framework currently being developed to measure outcomes

## What can you do?

- Meet with your local Child FIRST agency to better understand each others roles and external pressures
- Advocate to have council representation on Alliances
- Identify areas for working together
  - combined trainings
  - integrated meetings
  - Build relationships in a variety of creative ways