

2022–26

Stakeholder engagement and influence framework



QUEENSLAND
Family & Child
Commission



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1. Foreword

Every meaningful improvement for children and families begins with people working together.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission exists to influence positive change that improves the safety and wellbeing of Queensland's children and their families. While our statutory powers enable us to monitor systems, undertake reviews, generate evidence and provide independent advice, lasting reform is achieved through the relationships we build and the confidence others place in our work.

This Framework recognises that stakeholder engagement is not a supporting activity, it is fundamental to how the Commission fulfils its legislative responsibilities. Through trusted partnerships, meaningful participation, evidence-informed dialogue and accessible communication, we seek to ensure that our work reaches the people who can improve systems, services and outcomes for children.

As Queensland's safeguarding landscape continues to evolve, maintaining strong relationships across government, the community sector, research institutions, regulators, children and families will remain essential. This Framework provides a strategic approach to strengthening those relationships and ensuring our engagement continues to create value for Queensland.

“We seek to ensure that our work reaches the people who can improve systems, services and outcomes for children.”

2. Executive summary

Purpose

The Stakeholder Engagement and Influence Framework establishes the Commission's approach to building and maintaining trusted relationships that strengthen our ability to influence policy, practice and system performance.

The Framework recognises that meaningful improvements for children cannot be achieved by the Commission alone. Lasting change depends upon collaboration between governments, community organisations, researchers, practitioners, children, young people, families and the broader community.

The Framework provides a consistent approach to:

- identifying and prioritising stakeholders
- strengthening strategic partnerships
- guiding engagement activities across the Commission
- integrating digital and traditional engagement channels
- measuring the effectiveness of stakeholder relationships
- ensuring engagement contributes to improved outcomes for children and families.

Importantly, this Framework complements the Commission's existing strategic and operational frameworks. It provides the overarching approach through which engagement supports the Commission's statutory functions, strategic priorities and oversight activities. It is closely aligned with the Commission's Strategic Plan, Research Strategy, Oversight Forward Workplan and other supporting frameworks.

3. Why stakeholder engagement matters

The Commission's role is unique. Unlike service delivery agencies, our primary contribution is influencing the systems that affect children and families. We do this by generating evidence, identifying opportunities for improvement, amplifying lived experience, supporting public accountability and working alongside those capable of creating lasting change.

The effectiveness of this work depends on the quality of our relationships.

Strategic engagement enables the Commission to:

- better understand emerging issues affecting children and families
- ensure our oversight activities remain informed by lived experience and sector expertise
- strengthen the quality and relevance of our research
- increase awareness and uptake of Commission recommendations
- build confidence in the Commission as an independent and trusted oversight body
- contribute constructively to public discussion and policy reform.

Engagement is not an end in itself.

Every engagement activity should contribute to improving knowledge, strengthening relationships, increasing influence or supporting better outcomes for Queensland children and families.

4. Strategic context

The Commission operates within an increasingly interconnected safeguarding environment.

Government reforms, the commencement of the Child Safe Organisations framework, expanding research partnerships, increasing public expectations regarding transparency, and growing opportunities for children and young people to participate in decision-making all reinforce the importance of deliberate and coordinated stakeholder engagement.

The Commission has intentionally invested in strategic relationships across government, academia, community organisations, regulators and national networks. These relationships strengthen our ability to generate evidence, convene expertise, amplify findings and support implementation of reform.

This Framework sits within the Commission's broader strategic architecture.

It complements:

- Strategic Plan 2022–2026
- Research Strategy
- Oversight Forward Workplan
- Education and Capacity Building Strategy
- Community Engagement Framework
- Project and communications plans.

Together these documents ensure the Commission's engagement activities remain aligned with our statutory functions and strategic priorities.

5. Stakeholder engagement principles

The Commission's approach to stakeholder engagement is guided by seven principles that reflect our statutory role, organisational values and commitment to improving outcomes for Queensland's children and families.

These principles guide how we establish, maintain and evaluate relationships across government, community, research, regulatory and public settings.

Principle 1: Purpose before activity

Every engagement activity should have a clearly defined purpose and contribute to the Commission's strategic objectives.

We engage because it improves our understanding of issues, strengthens evidence, supports implementation, or increases the likelihood of positive system change. Engagement is never undertaken simply because it is expected.

What this means

- Engagement is planned and intentional.
- Stakeholders understand why they are being engaged.
- Activities align with Commission priorities and oversight work.
- We prioritise quality of engagement over quantity of activity.

Principle 2: Evidence earns trust

The Commission's relationships are strengthened through objective, evidence-informed advice.

Our independence and credibility depend upon the quality of our analysis, research and oversight. Stakeholders engage with us because they trust our evidence, our integrity and our commitment to improving outcomes for children.

What this means

- We communicate evidence clearly and accessibly.
- We distinguish evidence from opinion.
- We are transparent about methodology and limitations.
- We use data, research and lived experience together.

Principle 3: Relationships are strategic assets

Strong relationships enable stronger oversight.

The Commission deliberately invests in long-term relationships with government, children and families, community organisations, researchers, regulators and strategic partners because lasting reform depends upon collective effort.

We seek relationships that are built on mutual respect, trust and shared commitment to improving outcomes for children.

What this means

- Relationships extend beyond individual projects.
- We maintain regular engagement.

- We recognise and value stakeholder expertise.
- We invest in collaboration over transaction.

Principle 4: Children and families remain at the centre

Children, young people and families are central to our work.

Their lived experience strengthens our understanding of system performance and helps ensure recommendations are grounded in the realities experienced by Queensland families.

We actively seek opportunities to ensure their perspectives inform our oversight, research and engagement activities.

What this means

- Participation is meaningful.
- Diverse voices are included.
- Feedback is acknowledged.
- Engagement is culturally safe and trauma-informed.

Principle 5: Partnerships extend our impact

The Commission cannot achieve systemic change alone.

Strategic partnerships enable us to strengthen research, share expertise, increase reach, build capability and amplify evidence through trusted networks.

We recognise that many of our greatest achievements are realised through the collective efforts of others.

What this means

- We seek opportunities for collaboration.
- We share knowledge openly.
- We support partners to achieve shared objectives.
- We recognise contributions across the sector.

Principle 6: Digital strengthens engagement

Digital engagement enables the Commission to build relationships that are accessible, timely and responsive.

Our digital channels complement face-to-face engagement by making evidence more accessible, increasing transparency, supporting stakeholder participation and extending the reach of our work across Queensland.

Digital engagement is considered from the outset of projects—not as a communication activity at their conclusion.

What this means

- Digital supports every stage of engagement.
- Information is accessible and timely.
- Channels are selected based on stakeholder needs.
- Digital complements—not replaces—personal relationships.

Principle 7: We measure influence, not activity

The success of stakeholder engagement is determined by the value it creates.

While meetings, events and publications remain important, the Commission ultimately seeks to understand whether engagement has strengthened relationships, improved understanding, influenced decision-making, increased collaboration and contributed to better outcomes for children.

What this means

We evaluate engagement by considering:

- stakeholder confidence
- strength of partnerships
- reach and accessibility of our work
- uptake of Commission evidence
- contribution to policy, practice and system improvement.

Principle 8: We convene for greater impact

One of the Commission's greatest strengths is its ability to bring together people who would not ordinarily work together.

As an independent statutory body, we are uniquely positioned to convene governments, researchers, practitioners, regulators, community organisations, children, young people and families around shared evidence and common goals.

Our role is not only to contribute to conversations, but to create the conditions for collaboration, shared learning and collective action.

What this means

- We create opportunities for diverse perspectives to be heard.
- We bring together expertise from across systems and sectors.
- We facilitate constructive dialogue on complex issues.
- We use our convening role to accelerate learning, build consensus and support reform.

Our commitment

The Commission is committed to engagement that is:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| • Strategic | • Inclusive |
| • Independent | • Collaborative |
| • Evidence-informed | • Transparent |
| • Child-centred | • Measurable |

These principles provide a consistent foundation for engagement across all Commission functions and stakeholder groups.

6. Our stakeholder ecosystem

No single organisation can improve outcomes for children alone. Queensland's child and family system is complex, interconnected and influenced by the decisions, actions and relationships of many organisations and individuals.

Children and families interact with multiple systems throughout their lives, including health, education, child protection, youth justice, disability, housing, policing and community services. Improving outcomes therefore requires coordinated action across government, the community sector, researchers, practitioners, regulators and the broader community.

As an independent statutory body, the Commission occupies a unique position within this ecosystem. We do not deliver frontline services or determine government policy. Instead, we strengthen the system by generating evidence, undertaking independent oversight, convening expertise, elevating lived experience and supporting informed decision-making. This means our effectiveness depends upon the quality of our relationships.

Strategic engagement enables us to bring together diverse perspectives, strengthen collaboration and ensure evidence reaches those who can create meaningful change.

Figure 1: The Commission's stakeholder ecosystem



The Commission's stakeholder relationships are strengthened through a combination of organisational capabilities that enable consistent, purposeful and evidence-informed engagement.

These capabilities do not operate independently. They work together to ensure the Commission's evidence reaches the right people, at the right time, through the most appropriate channels, supporting collaboration, influence and system improvement.

7. Our engagement capability

Strategic stakeholder engagement relies on more than relationships alone. The Commission has intentionally developed a range of organisational capabilities that strengthen our ability to connect with stakeholders, translate evidence into accessible information, build trusted partnerships and influence positive change.

These capabilities work together to ensure engagement is coordinated, purposeful and aligned to the Commission's statutory functions.

Rather than operating independently, each capability complements the others to maximise the reach, relevance and impact of the Commission's work.

Partnerships

Partnerships are fundamental to the Commission's approach to improving outcomes for children and families.

The Commission deliberately invests in strategic relationships that strengthen evidence, increase capability, share expertise and expand the reach of our work. Partnerships also enable us to leverage the expertise, resources and networks of others, recognising that no single organisation can address complex child and family issues alone.

Our partnerships span government, universities, research institutions, community organisations, peak bodies and the private sector where there is clear alignment with our strategic priorities.

Our partnerships help us to:

- strengthen research and evidence generation
- co-design practical solutions
- increase sector capability
- expand stakeholder reach
- amplify evidence through trusted networks
- support implementation of reform.

Advisory groups and strategic networks

The Commission convenes and participates in advisory groups that bring together diverse expertise, strengthen governance and improve system understanding.

These groups provide critical advice, challenge our thinking and help ensure our work remains informed by contemporary practice, lived experience and multidisciplinary perspectives.

They also strengthen relationships across Queensland's safeguarding system by creating opportunities for shared learning and collaboration.

Key advisory mechanisms include the Collaborative Regulators Network, Cross-Agency Review Group, Child Death Review Board and national collaborative forums.

Commissioner leadership

The Commissioners play a unique role in building confidence in the Commission and strengthening relationships across the child and family system.

Through visible leadership, public speaking, strategic engagement and thought leadership, the Commissioners help elevate issues affecting children and families, strengthen stakeholder confidence and encourage evidence-informed discussion.

Their leadership extends beyond formal meetings to include conferences, forums, parliamentary engagement and digital communication.

Digital engagement

Digital engagement is a strategic capability that strengthens stakeholder relationships by improving accessibility, transparency, responsiveness and the reach of the Commission's work.

The Commission uses digital channels to make evidence more accessible, strengthen transparency, recognise stakeholders, encourage participation and extend the reach of our work across Queensland.

Importantly, digital engagement supports—not replaces—trusted relationships. It enables ongoing dialogue between the Commission and its stakeholders and ensures information is accessible regardless of geography.

Our digital capability enables us to:

- translate complex evidence into accessible information
- increase visibility of Commission research and oversight
- recognise stakeholder contributions and partnerships
- support implementation of reform
- strengthen engagement between formal interactions
- improve access to Commission resources.

Media engagement

Media engagement supports informed public discussion about issues affecting Queensland children and families.

The Commission seeks to provide timely, accurate and evidence-informed commentary that contributes constructively to public understanding while maintaining its independence and objectivity.

Media engagement also supports transparency and helps increase awareness of emerging issues, Commission recommendations and opportunities for reform.

Strategic sponsorships

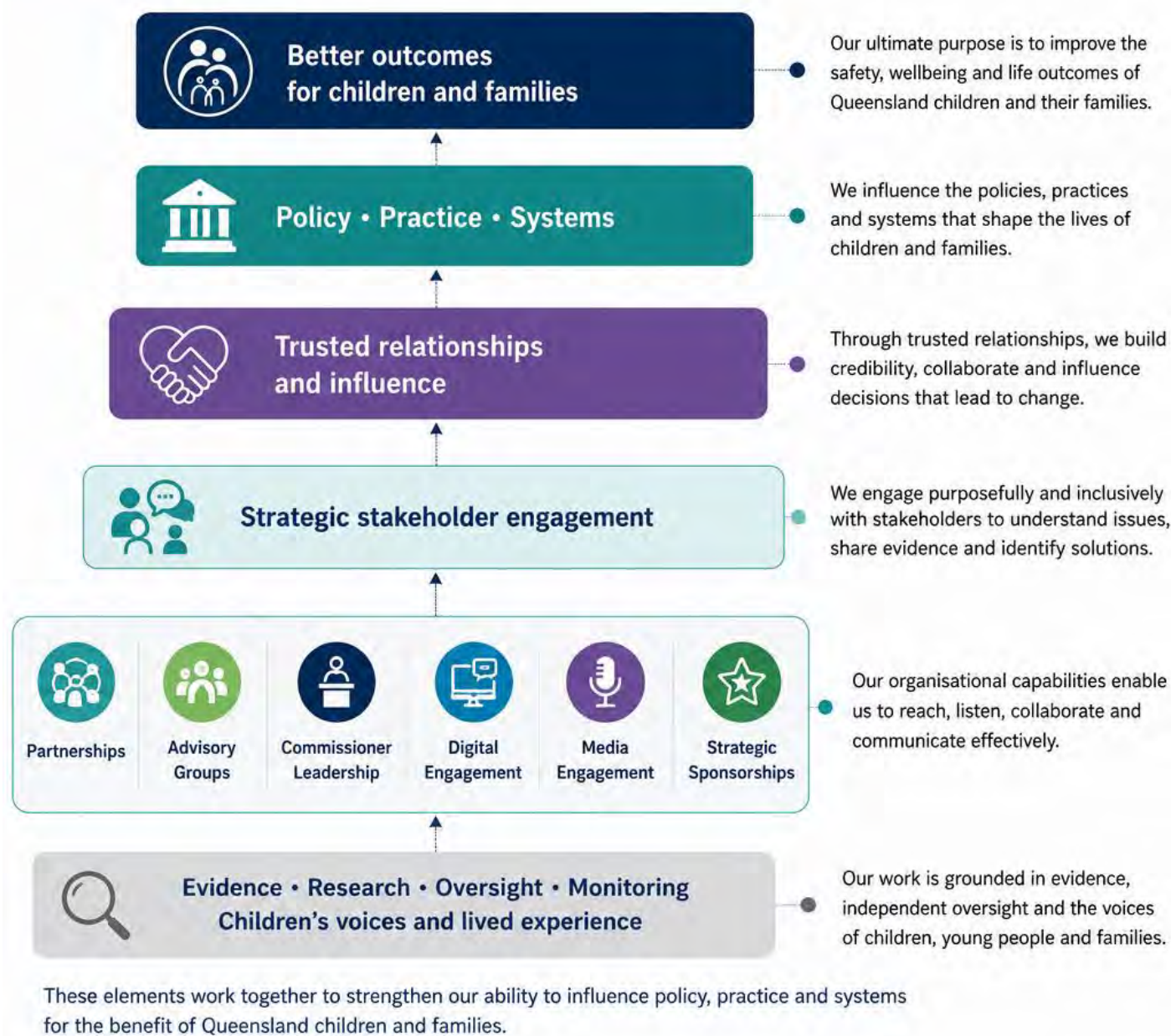
The Commission selectively partners with organisations through sponsorships and collaborative initiatives that align with our strategic priorities.

These investments extend the Commission's reach into communities and professional networks, create opportunities to share evidence and strengthen relationships with stakeholders who contribute to improved outcomes for children and families.

Strategic sponsorships complement the Commission's broader engagement approach by creating opportunities to connect with audiences, sectors and communities that align with our strategic priorities. They strengthen relationships, extend the visibility of Commission evidence and support collective efforts to improve outcomes for children and families.

Strategic sponsorships are assessed on their alignment with Commission priorities, potential public value and ability to strengthen stakeholder engagement.

Figure 2: How strategic stakeholder engagement creates influence



8. Performance framework

The Commission measures stakeholder engagement by the value it creates rather than the volume of activity undertaken.

While meetings, events, social media and publications remain important indicators of reach, they do not, on their own, demonstrate meaningful engagement or influence.

This Framework therefore adopts an outcomes-focused approach that considers the strength of relationships, the quality of engagement and the contribution stakeholder engagement makes to improving systems and outcomes for children and families.

Our success measures

Outcome	What success looks like
1. Trusted relationships	Stakeholders actively seek to collaborate with the Commission and recognise the Commission as an independent, trusted partner.
2. Evidence uptake	Commission evidence informs discussion, policy development, practice and research.
3. Strategic partnerships	Partnerships create shared value, strengthen capability and expand the Commission's reach.
4. Meaningful participation	Children, young people, families and stakeholders have genuine opportunities to contribute to Commission work.
5. Digital engagement	Digital channels improve accessibility, transparency and the reach of Commission evidence.
6. Influence	Stakeholder engagement contributes to improvements in policy, practice and system performance.

Performance Indicators

The Commission will monitor a balanced range of qualitative and quantitative information, including:

Relationships

- Stakeholder sentiment
- Stakeholder feedback
- Invitations to participate
- New collaborative opportunities

Reach

- Website usage
- Resource downloads

- Event participation
- Social media engagement
- Media reach

Partnerships

- New stakeholder partnerships
- Joint initiatives
- Research collaborations
- Sponsorship outcomes

Influence

- Uptake of recommendations
- References to Commission evidence
- Invitations to contribute to reform
- Requests for strategic advice

9. Governance

Ownership

The Stakeholder Engagement and Influence Framework is owned by the Executive Director, Strategy and Impact.

Responsibility for effective stakeholder engagement sits across the Commission, with all business areas contributing to the development and maintenance of trusted stakeholder relationships.

Review

This Framework will be reviewed every three years, or earlier if significant legislative or organisational changes occur.

Supporting delivery plans and annual outcomes reports will be reviewed annually to ensure stakeholder priorities remain aligned to the Commission's strategic objectives.

Continuous improvement

The Commission is committed to continuously improving the way it engages with stakeholders.

Insights from stakeholder feedback, evaluation activities, digital analytics, partnerships and emerging good practice will inform ongoing refinement of our engagement approaches.

Improving outcomes for Queensland's children and families requires shared commitment, trusted relationships and collective action.

The Stakeholder Engagement and Influence Framework provides a clear and consistent approach to how the Commission builds and maintains those relationships.

By engaging purposefully, partnering strategically and communicating evidence effectively, the Commission strengthens its ability to influence positive change and fulfil its vision that every Queensland child is loved, respected and has their rights upheld.



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