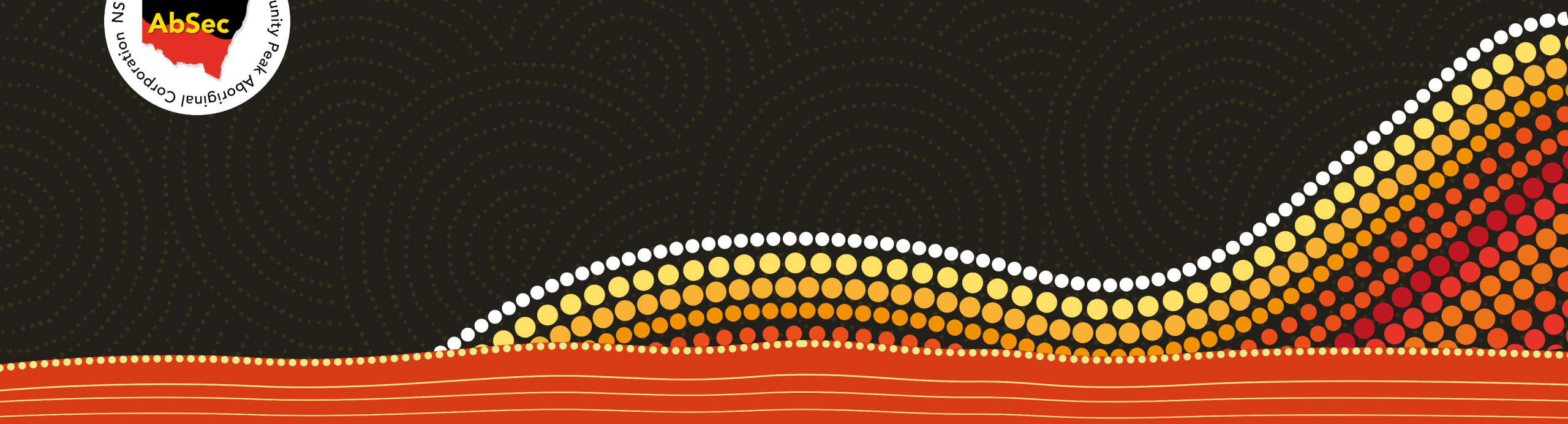


# ABORIGINAL VOICES IN FAMILY PRESERVATION

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Jade Lane, Project Manager, Growth & Partnership / Family Preservation



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



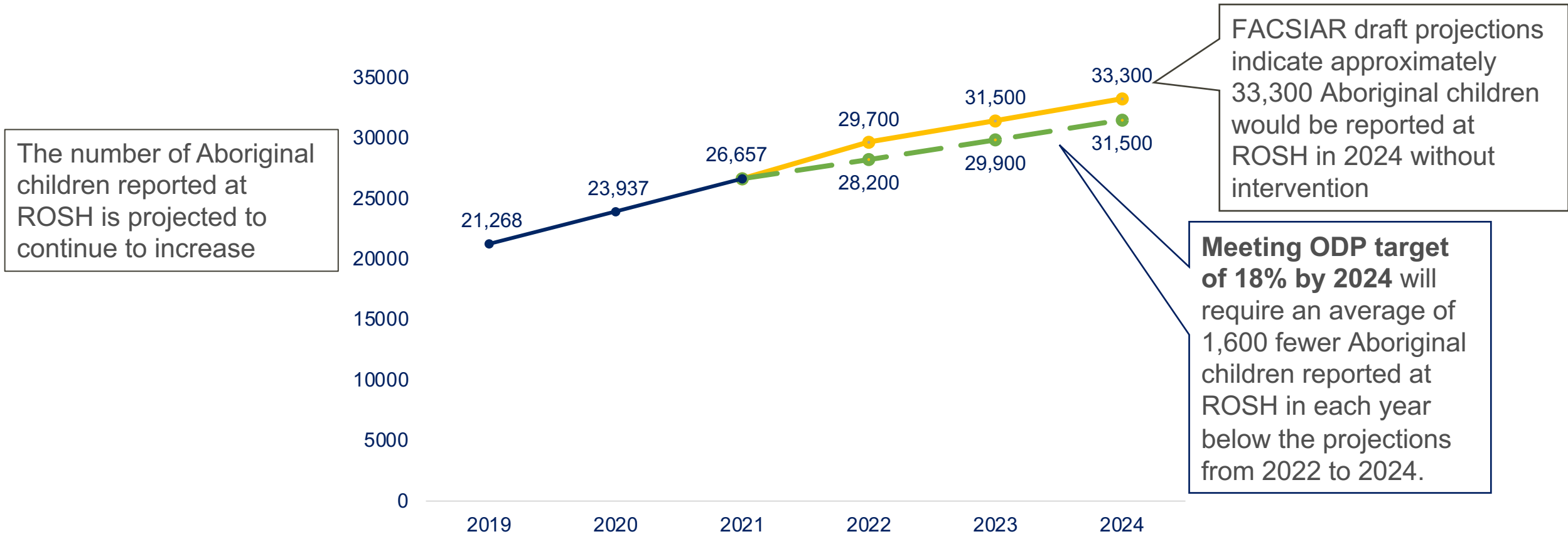
# INTRODUCTION - ABSEC & TEAM

- **Who is AbSec?** - AbSec is the peak organisation for Aboriginal children and families in NSW. We work to empower Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities impacted by the child protection system, as well as support a quality Aboriginal community-controlled child and family sector to deliver much-needed support to Aboriginal communities across the state.
- **Vision** - Reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people within the statutory system supporting Aboriginal children to remain safe at home and connected to their community and culture. Eliminate removal of Aboriginal children from their families by empowering aboriginal families and the broader communities. Acknowledging and celebrating the strength and resilience of Aboriginal families and the role community, culture and identity play in the wellbeing of a child. Highlight need for local and self determined models that move past traditional consultation practices, include indigenous governance principles, address power imbalance and truth telling.



# Report of Risk of Serious Harm

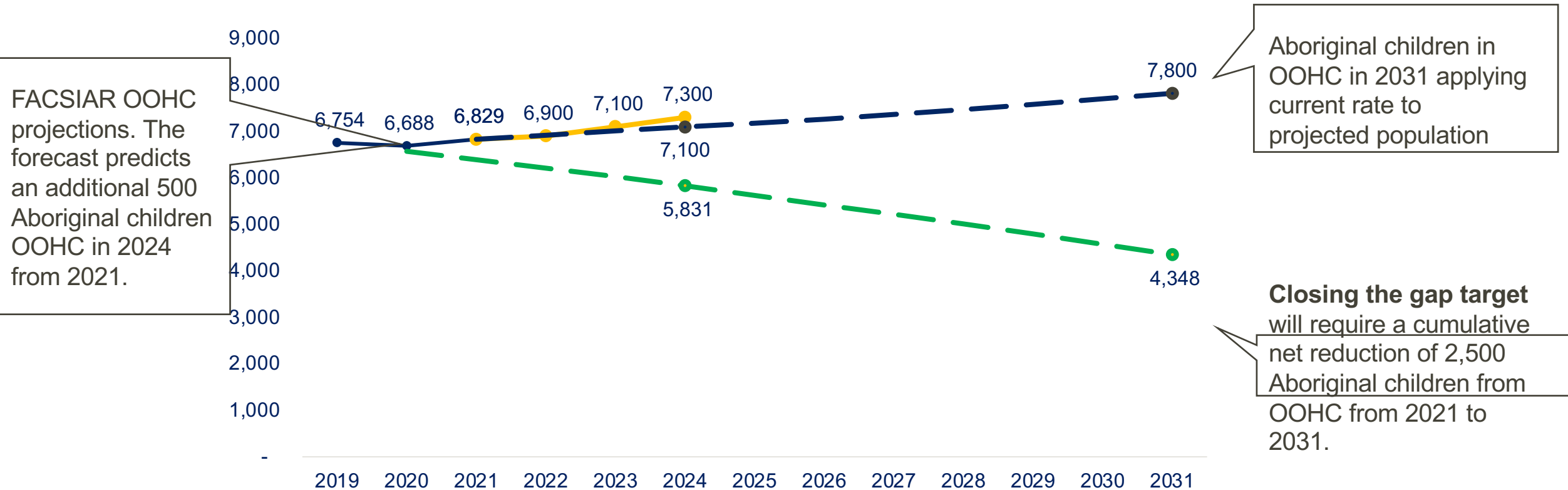
To meet the ODP target, we must reduce the number of Aboriginal children reported at ROSH by ~1,600 from what it would be otherwise



# The task ahead

To meet the target, we must reduce the number of Aboriginal children in OOHC by 250 each year from 2021 to 2031

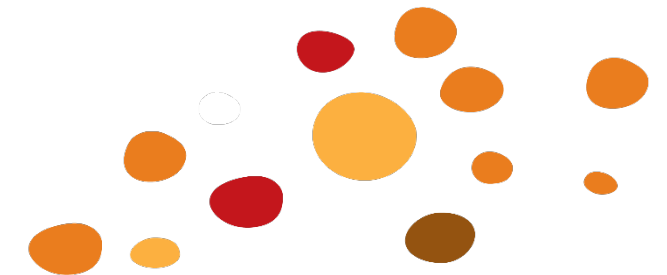
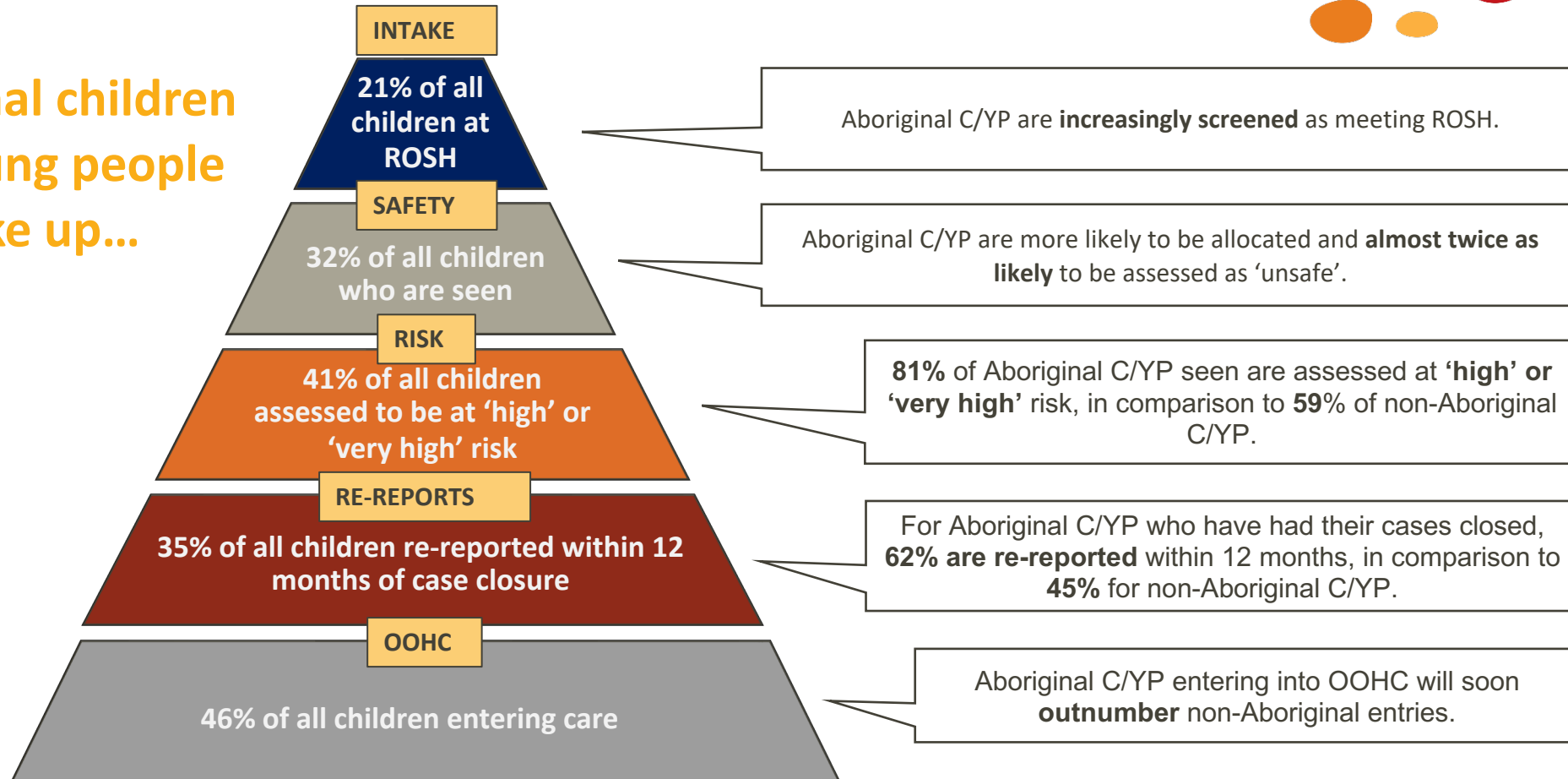
The target of 250 could be achieved through reducing entries, increasing exits and affecting the length of time in care and other characteristics of care





# The escalation of Aboriginal families in statutory child protection

Aboriginal children and young people make up...



# CLOSING THE GAP

- In March 2019, led by the Coalition of Peaks, the historic National Agreement on Closing the Gap was signed by all Australian Governments and the Coalition of Peaks.
- In NSW, Closing the Gap (CTG) is implemented in partnership between the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations (CAPO) and the NSW Government. AbSec – NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Organisation has shared responsibility with the Department of Communities and Justice on Socio-Economic Outcome 12 ('Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not overrepresented in the child protection system').
- Implementation will focus on these four key areas
  1. Pre-Contact
  2. Post Contact
  3. Post OOHC Entry
  4. Self Determination

*Target: By 2031, reduce the rate of overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in OOHC in NSW by 45% (baseline: 60.2 per 1000 Aboriginal children in 2018-19)*



### Focus area 3: Post OOHC entry –

Building the growth of ACCO sector to support the full implementation of the ACPP and ACMP; Aboriginal children and young people that cannot live with their families have improved permanency outcomes aligned with Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

**Intermediate outcome 5:** Reduce time spent in out-of-home care by Aboriginal children

**Intermediate outcome 6:** Sustained capacity building and investment in Aboriginal community-controlled organisations

#### Initiatives:

- Expand the Aboriginal Guardianship support model
- Investigate options to shift preservation investment from non-Aboriginal to Aboriginal service providers
- Aboriginal case management transfer to community-controlled organisations

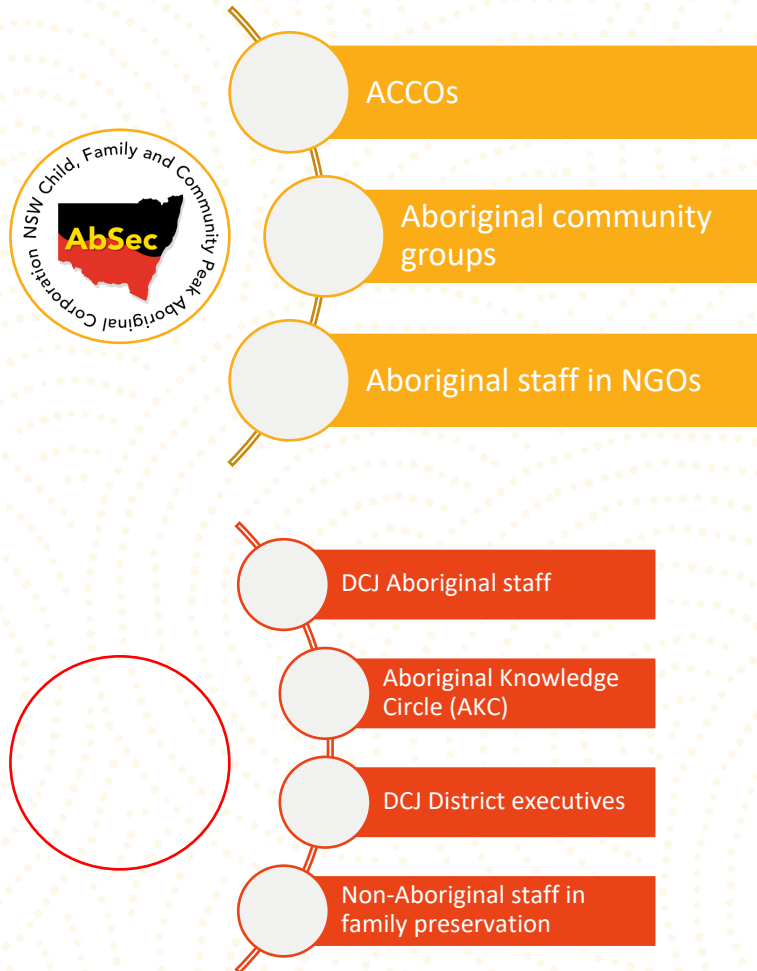


# WHAT WE HEARD



# Listen and Learn workshops: approach

Between August and October 2022, the Aboriginal Family Preservation (AFP) Framework project team, comprised of staff from Strategy, Policy, and Commissioning (Child and Family Directorate of DCJ), and AbSec, held 38 “Listen and Learn” workshops with a range of Aboriginal stakeholders and DCJ staff.



## Delivery

The **majority** of workshops were held **in person** and on **Country**. When that couldn't happen, online workshops were held.

In addition to face-to-face consultation, a **digital survey** captured responses from stakeholders **who were unable to attend**.

## Limitations

AbSec had challenges reaching some community and key stakeholder groups. AbSec will continue to work on engaging these groups throughout the development of the AFP Framework.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES



# Listen and Learn workshops: questions

Participants were asked about their experiences of family preservation and the child protection system, including services delivered by ACCO and non-ACCO providers, and their perspectives on what is needed to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and families.

What the term 'family' means in the context of family preservation

What currently works and does not work in the family preservation service system

What does an ideal Aboriginal family preservation service system look like?



# What We Heard: recurring themes

The AFP Framework project team grouped stakeholder feedback into themes. A number of themes had commonalities across stakeholder groups. They include:

## AbSec

System racism and barriers	Aboriginal-led service system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Racism in the child protection system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal-led family preservation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCJ practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic service delivery</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case work</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole of government</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk and safety</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal-led family preservation</li> </ul>	

## DCJ

System enablers	Service system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family-led decision making</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsive and accessible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holistic service delivery</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector investment and regional considerations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culturally embedded</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal and community-led</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole of government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCJ and ACCO relationships</li> </ul>



# What We Heard: AbSec only themes

AbSec stakeholders also identified themes that were specific to self-determination and culture. They include:

Self-determination and culture	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocacy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aboriginal governance</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Healing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cultural ways of working</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self-determination</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community development</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aboriginal families, kinship, and responsibility of care</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aboriginal data, evidence, and evaluation</li></ul>

# PUTTING THESE THEMES INTO PRACTICE



# CONTACT US!

E: [jade.lane@absec.org.au](mailto:jade.lane@absec.org.au)

M: 0438 706 777

