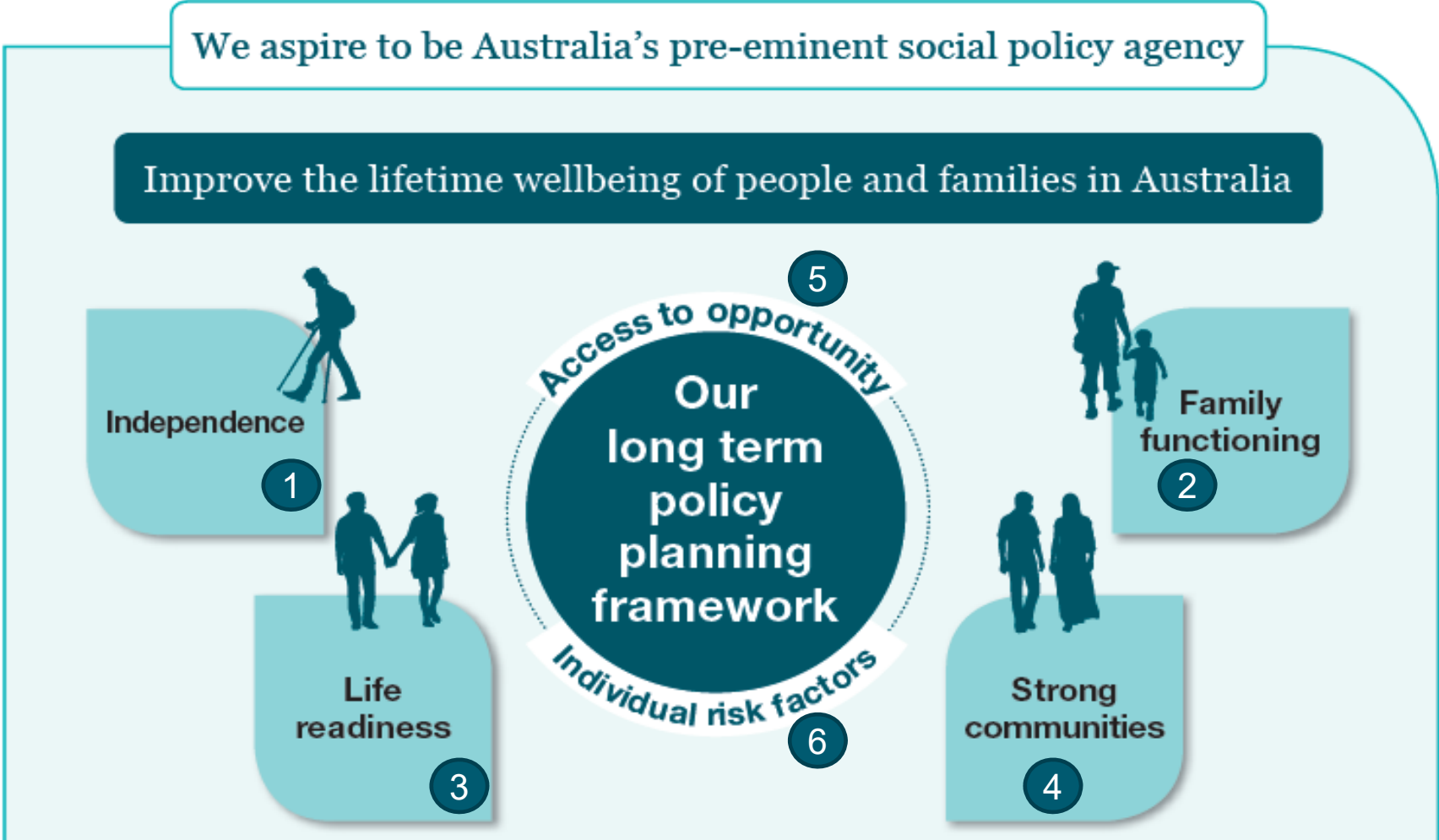**Australian Government**

Department of Social Services

Community Cohesion and Government Policy:
Through the lens of the Australian Department of Social Services
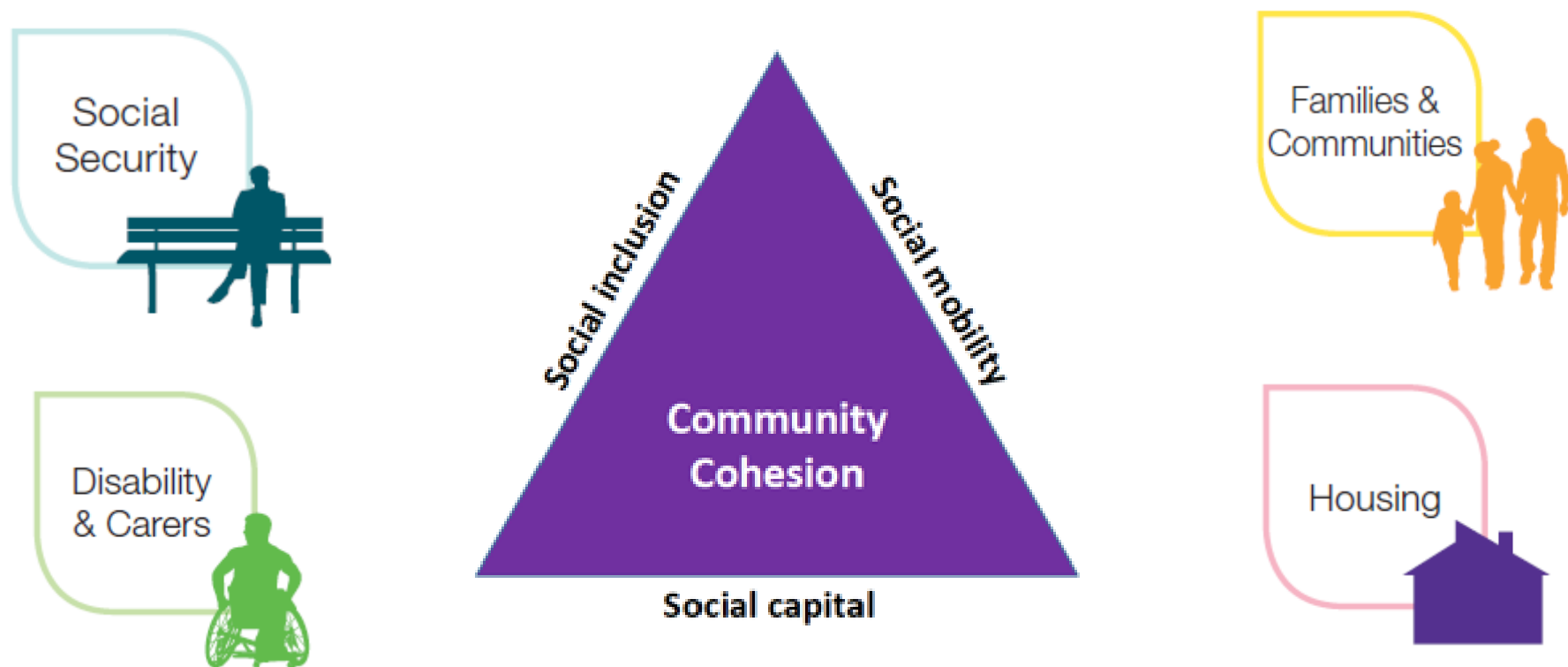
21 November 2017

Community Cohesion and the DSS Policy Approaches

We aspire to be Australia's pre-eminent social policy agency

Improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia

Access to opportunity

Our long term policy planning framework

Individual risk factors

Independence **1**

Family functioning **2**

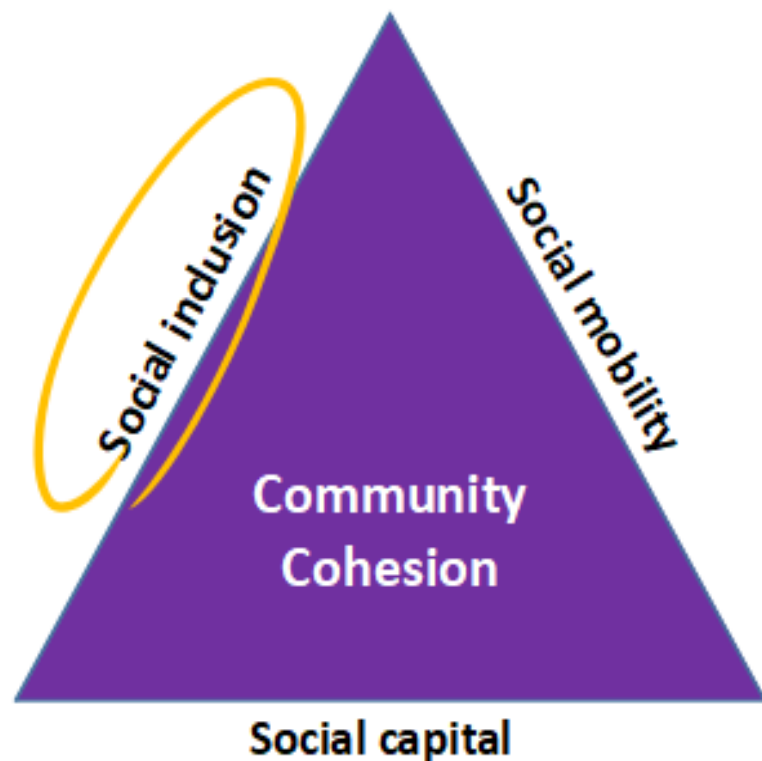Life readiness **3**

Strong communities **4**

5

6

Community Cohesion is one of the long term policy priorities for DSS

1. Greater **welfare independence** and improved **social mobility**

2. Greater **self-provision** and **intergenerational equity**

3. Improved **quality of family functioning**

4. Strengthened **community cohesion** for communities at risk

5. Better **service delivery models** for the future

Three elements of *community cohesion* and DSS' policies and programs (cont.)

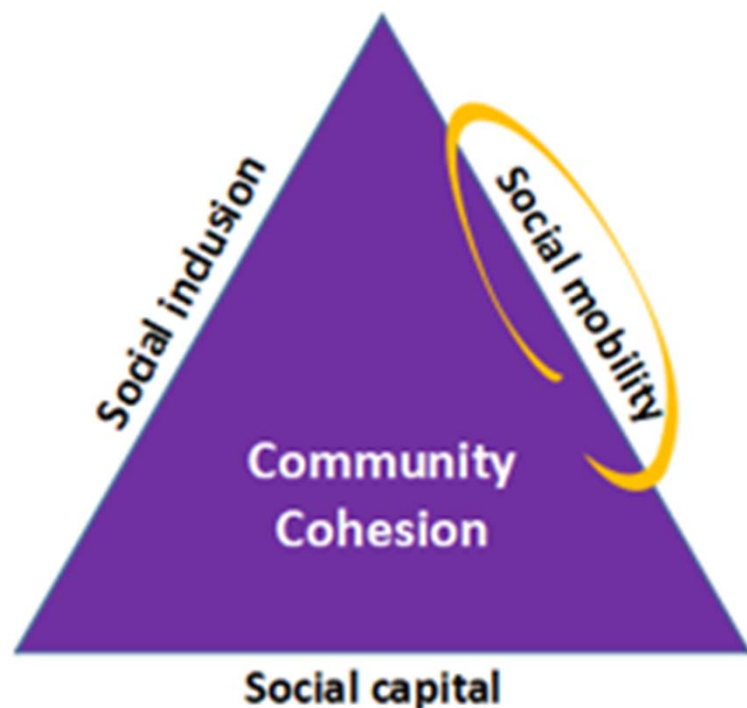# *Social inclusion* and DSS' policies and programs

A state of inclusion exists when people are able to participate fully in the **social and economic life** of their community, and have a good **network of relationships** with family, friends and the wider community.

Social inclusion and DSS' policies and programs (cont.)

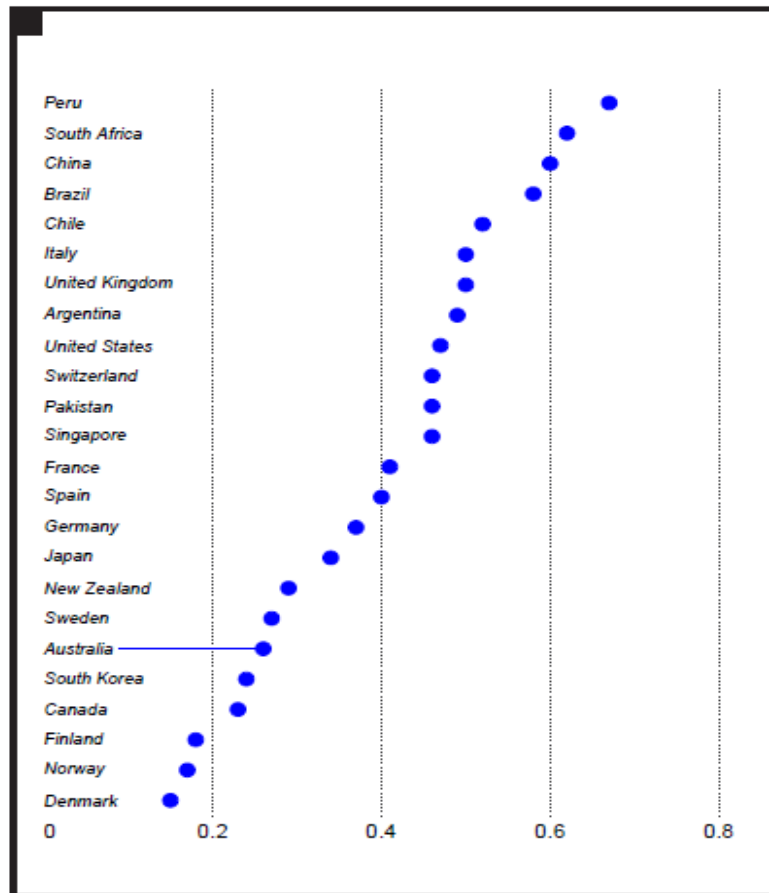**DSS policy levers and social inclusion – examples**

Social mobility and DSS' policies and programs

Defined as the ability of individuals or groups to **move upward or downward in status** based on wealth, occupation, education, or other social variables.

Social mobility and DSS' policies and programs (cont.)

Moving from rags to riches is harder in more unequal countries

The Great Gatsby Curve

#	Country	Score
1	Sweden	98
2	Portugal	91
3	Norway	90
4	Germany	86
5	Canada	81
6	Finland	80
7	Denmark	79
8	Netherlands	73
8	Estonia	73
10	Spain	72
11	South Korea	71
12	New Zealand	67
12	USA	67

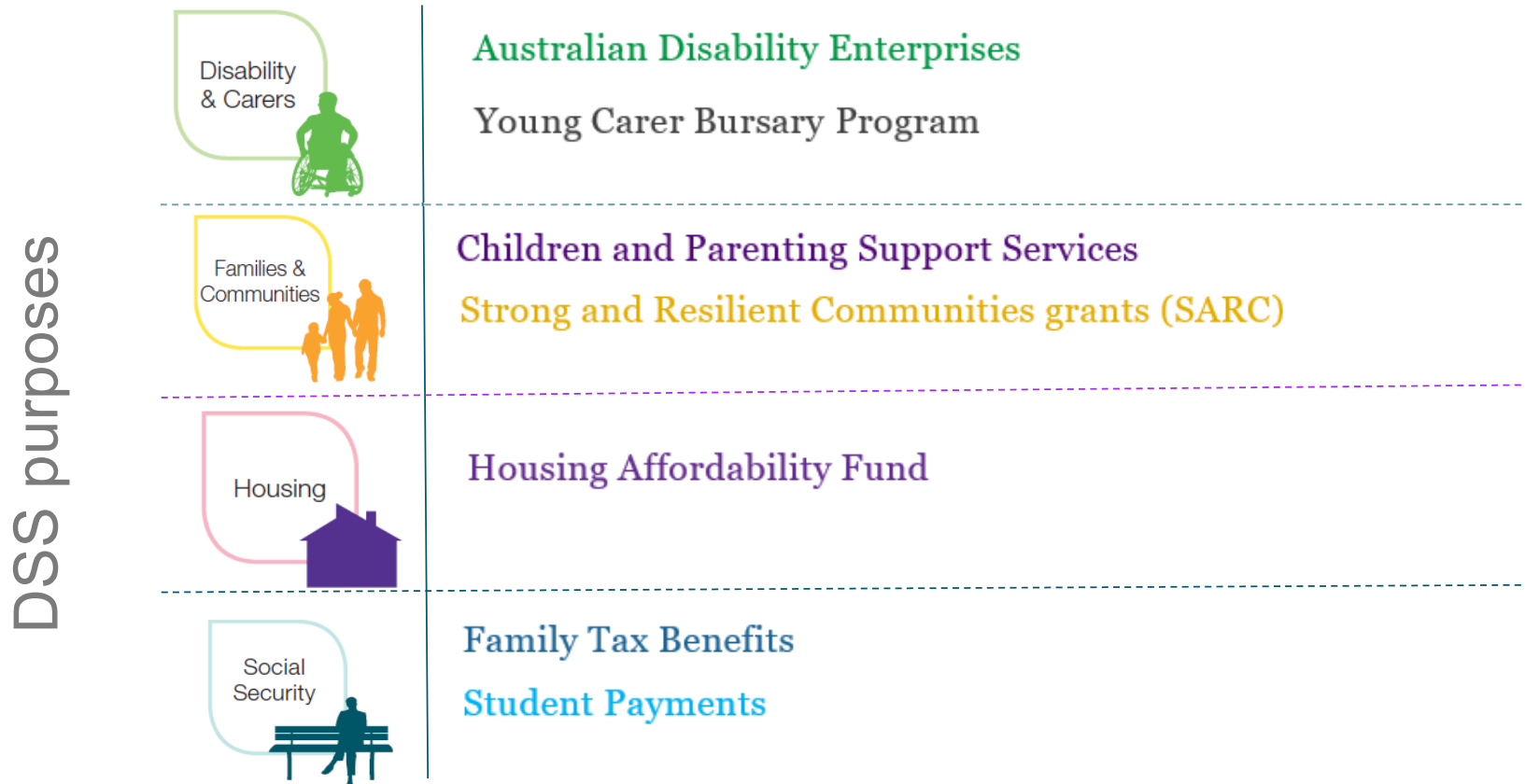| #	Country	Score
14	Italy	66
15	Japan	65
16	Belgium	64
16	Austria	64
18	Switzerland	59
19	Australia	58
20	Romania	57
21	United Kingdom	56
22	Greece	55
23	France	54
23	Croatia	54
25	Czech Republic	52
26	Iceland	51

The Migrant Integration Policy Index

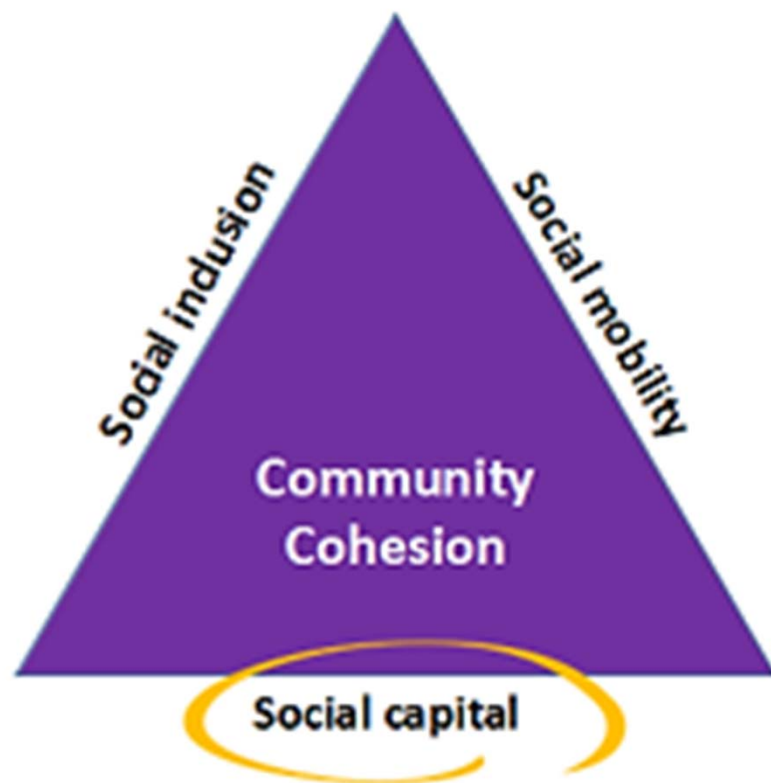# *Social mobility* and DSS' policies and programs (cont.)

1. Greater **welfare independence** and improved **social mobility**

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4. Strengthened **community cohesion** for communities at risk

5. Better **service delivery models** for the future

Social mobility and DSS' policies and programs (cont.)

DSS policy levers and social mobility – examples

DSS purposes

Disability & Carers
Australian Disability Enterprises
Young Carer Bursary Program

Families & Communities
Children and Parenting Support Services
Strong and Resilient Communities grants (SARC)

Housing
Housing Affordability Fund

Social Security
Family Tax Benefits
Student Payments

Social capital and DSS' policies and programs

Micro level

- Individual wellbeing

- Family wellbeing

Macro level

- Democracy

- Economic growth

- Community cohesion

Social capital and DSS' policies and programs (cont.)

DSS policy levers and social capital – examples

Three elements of *community cohesion* and DSS' policies and programs

Policies/Programs	Social inclusion	Social mobility	Social capital
NDIS	⬤	⬤	⬤
Reconnect		⬤	⬤
Australian Disability Enterprises		⬤	⬤
Community Hubs	⬤	⬤	⬤
Settlement Services	⬤	⬤	⬤
Children and Parenting Support Services	⬤		⬤
Harmony Day	⬤		⬤

DSS and place-based approaches to building community cohesion

Proposed DSS definition of place-based approaches

"A place-based approach is a collaborative, flexible response to local disadvantage in which the **community is the primary driver of change**, and where data and evidence are used to guide practice and innovation.

The goal is long term, large scale change and the development of the approach is **shared between the community, governments and other stakeholders**, and recognises the value of local knowledge and the primacy of social relationships."

DSS and place-based approaches to building community cohesion - examples

LOGAN together

Collective impact framework

Long-term collaborative partnership

Government	Local businesses	Community organisations
Educational facilities	Service providers	Faith organisations

Common Agenda
- Keeps all parties moving towards the same goal

Common Progress Measures
- Measures that gert to the TRUE outcome

Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Each expertise is leveraged as part of the overall

Communications
- This allows a culture of collaboration

Backbone Organization
- Takes on the role of managing collaboration

www.logantogether.com.au

DSS and place-based approaches to building community cohesion - examples

Community hubs
Connect. Share. Learn.

Four key areas of focus:

Engagement

English

Early years

Vocational pathways

Positive impact on:

- children's readiness for school

- schools' readiness for children

- capacity of families and communities to provide the opportunities, conditions and supports needed to optimise school readiness, especially for vulnerable children.

www.communityhubs.org.au

Guiding principles

- Take a systems approach

- Focus on data, evidence and outcomes

- Know and engage the community

- Partner with others

- Take a targetted, needs-based and place-based approach

- Long-term investment

- Early interventions

- Evaluate and share outcomes

Thank you

Evan Lewis
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Multicultural, Settlement and Communities
Department of Social Services