



Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor

TASMANIA

Office of the Implementation Monitor

First quarter update



Standing up, seeing change

Several months into 2026, and the year is already off and racing! We hope everyone had a safe and restful Easter holiday period. At the Office of the Implementation Monitor, our second year is building steadily on our early establishment phase in 2025.

Last year we bedded in our ways of working, established relationships and laid out Tasmania's child safety reform landscape through our first Annual Report. We also consulted widely and by year's end we published our Implementation Framework. The Framework outlines in detail a guide to our work over the 10-year lifespan of the OIM, designed to drive transparency.

In 2026, we are standing it up.

What does this mean?

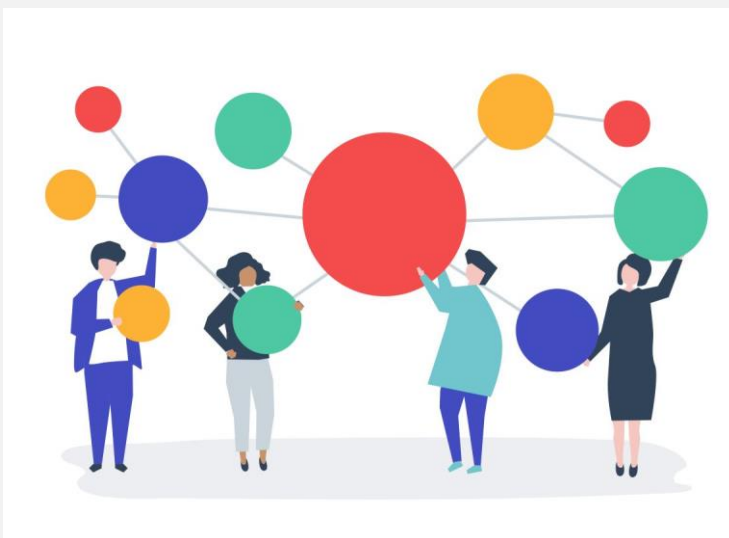
This year we will issue two appraisal notices to government agencies responsible for reform implementation, to collect data to inform our 2025-2026 Annual Report. The first wave relates to recommendations reported as completed or closed. Appraisal work is underway, and we have now issued notices for the second wave, including for all other child safety inquiry in-scope recommendations the OIM has oversight of.

The Implementation Framework outlines a series of indicators. An indicator is a single measure used to track progress towards a reform outcome, such as compliance with timelines, or feedback or corrective actions. The rollout of the full suite of indicators contained in the Framework is to occur in phases, linked to short, medium and long-term reform outcomes:

- Laying the Foundations (0 – 2 years)
- Embedding and Strengthening (3-5 years)
- Consolidating and Sustaining (6-10 years)

Indicators selected for publication in this year's 2025-2026 Annual Report will be OIM appraisal-based, and as the reform program evolves for future reporting, the OIM will increase consultation on indicators with key stakeholders in the broader community.

Stakeholder engagement



Another key focus for the OIM this year is developing our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, to engage with purpose and clarity for the longer term.

The OIM wants to ensure that the voices of people with lived experience – especially victim-survivors, children, young people and Aboriginal people are safely, respectfully and meaningfully considered in our work, to align with the principles and domains underpinning the Framework.

While this is an evolving space and new stakeholders will emerge, where possible the OIM will tap into existing groups or mechanisms in relation to stakeholders with lived experience. This is to ensure the most appropriate safeguards are in place for participants.

The OIM also engages with the broader community sector, other oversight bodies and experts, Ministers and Parliamentarians, and of course government agencies that are responsible for implementing child safety recommendations.

Our engagement will help inform oversight, strengthen accountability, support cultural change and build trust.

Stakeholder mapping is continuing, ahead of publication of the Strategy.

We thank everyone willing to engage with the OIM.

Introducing our team

The Implementation Monitor is supported by a small and dedicated team. This edition, we introduce:



Kath Cooper, OIM Director

Kath is the Director and founding member of the OIM team, leading the establishment of the office and building the team from the ground up. Kath has over 30 years-experience in the Tasmanian public service and public sector administration. Prior to her appointment in the OIM, Kath has worked in a variety of roles, most recently leading programs of work in the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Department of Health.

Since the Office's inception in December 2024, Kath has taken on a key leadership role in this new statutory office, working closely with Robert Benjamin and Glenn Roberts to establish the foundations.

Reflecting over the Easter break on what was a very busy 2025, Kath says:

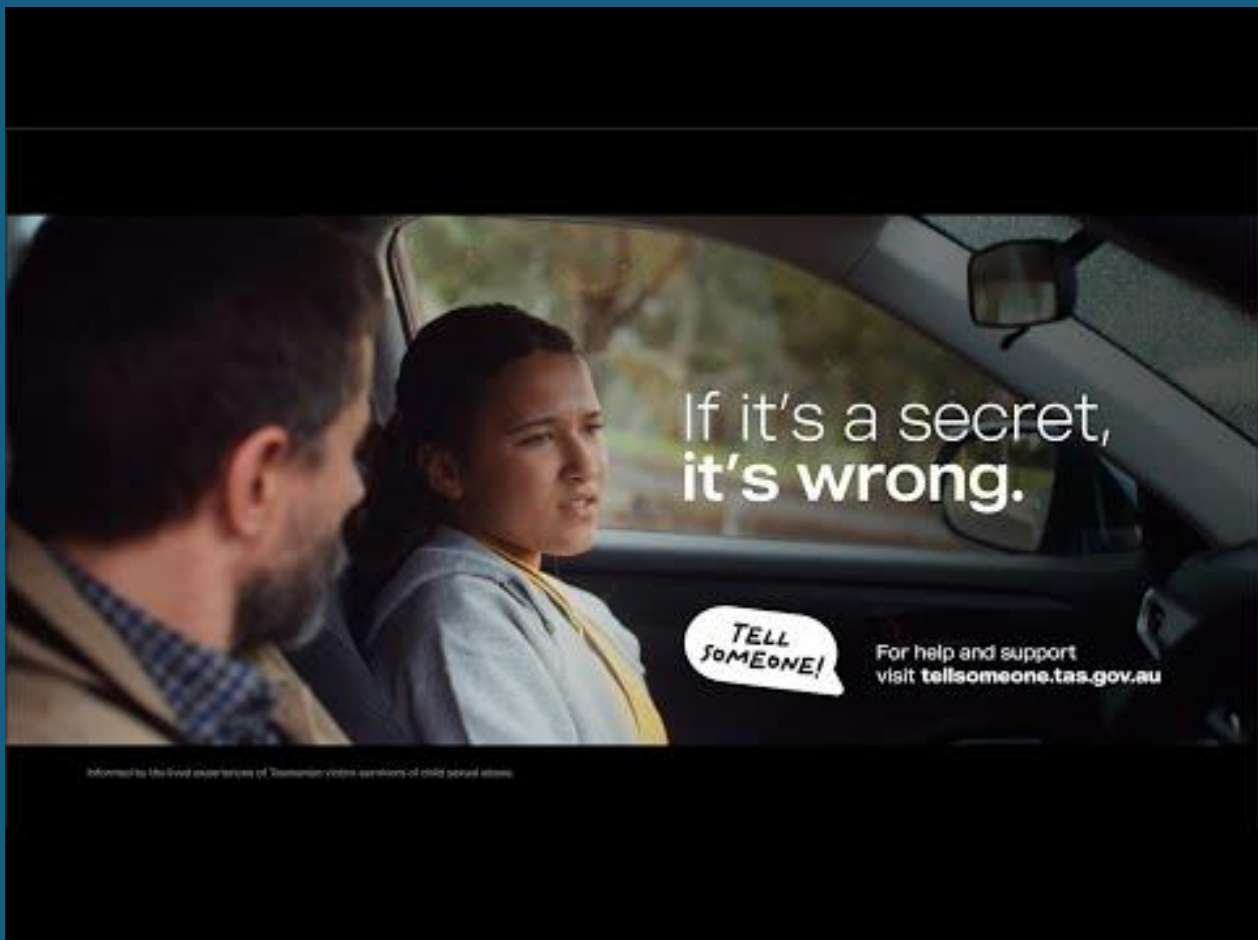
"It is truly amazing what a small team can achieve, and I am very proud of the work the office has delivered so far. Establishing the team, systems and processes while also delivering our first annual report and developing the framework to guide our ongoing work has been no small task. With a full team in place this year, I am really excited about what our office can do to contribute to the groundswell of work by Agencies, community sector organisations and advocates across Tasmania who are striving to make our institutions safer for children and young people."

Outside of work, Kath is looking forward to taking a break in May and—while summer is her favourite season—plans to stay home this winter to enjoy all that Tasmania has to offer during the colder months. With the foundations now in place, Kath is looking forward to the year ahead and the impact the growing team can make together.

Policy reform and legislation

- ❖ The *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2025* was passed by Parliament in December, and recruitment for the new Commissioner for Children and Young People (the Commissioner) is underway. Importantly, young Tasmanians aged 16-21 have also had the chance to be involved in a Youth Selection Panel to help select the new Commissioner.

You may have recently seen the 'Tell Someone' advertisements running on social media, television or other online platforms. They are part of an expanded campaign to help adults and children recognise the signs of child sexual abuse and help break the silence. The Tell Someone website has also been redesigned to be more accessible for young people.



- ❖ The development application for the new Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility was approved by the Southern Midlands Council and is now subject to appeal before the Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (TASCAT).

The Model of Care for the facility is out for public consultation. As Deputy Secretary of DECYP Peter Whitcombe explains below, the new model represents a major change in how Tasmania supports young people in the youth justice system and adopts a therapeutic 'child first, offender second' approach, including tailored support and integrated care.

It is open for public comment until Friday 17 April 2026.



- ❖ The new North West Arch centre opened in Burnie in March, and [the independent review of the Arch model pilot](#) was released. It was a pleasure to be able to attend the event in Burnie and hear about how important the new centre will be for victim-survivors of sexual abuse and violence in the region, including for children. It is great to see that the review is now published.
- ❖ More major legislative reform is on the horizon, with the reviews into the *Youth Justice Act 1997*, *Teachers Registration Act 2000*, *Family Violence Act 2004* ongoing.

This year will see the Commission of Inquiry's Phase 2 timeline lapse. A number of significant reforms are currently due for completion, including the new child sexual abuse prevention curriculum in government schools, a new Model of Care for children living in care and the Chief Practitioner and Harmful Sexual Behaviours Unit, to name a few.

- ❖ As with all interested parties, the OIM awaits the outcome of the Tasmanian Government's May budget to see what impact it may have on the reform process.



“We often say our system is designed to protect children, but in protecting them we don’t tell them, and in not telling them we exclude them from the process.”

– Robert Benjamin speaking on the X-Examination podcast, about his background taking care of children through the law



Podcasts

Listening to the voices of children in matters that affect them is a theme that has followed Robert Benjamin throughout his career, as a solicitor, Justice of the Family Court, COI Commissioner and now Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor. Robert caught up with barrister Giles Stapelton on the X-Examination podcast recently, to talk about his work and why children must be included in the process of protecting them from harm. [Listen here.](#)



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Education

Robert joined UTAS Associate Professor in Communities and Social Justice Catherine Robinson in February, to record a discussion on ‘reforming child protection systems’ for second and third year students of the Social Work/Criminology unit: Children, Protection and Justice. It is one of a series produced for students this semester. You can [listen to a snippet of the conversation here.](#)

Public statements

Volunteer training



The importance of compulsory child-safety training for volunteers to ensure our institutions are safe for children and young people, is a foundational recommendation of Tasmania's Commission of Inquiry.

Under child and youth safe legislation introduced after the Commission of Inquiry, volunteers must complete the training to retain their positions, by law.

Many public servants, including volunteers have been required to do two hours of this training, designed to improve the culture of organisations and equip adults to better protect children.

It is crucial to avoid the type of trauma experienced by children and young people, as was exposed in the Commission of Inquiry.

Such training requests and need for change must be communicated sensitively, to encourage participation.

[Read more](#)

AYDC closure timelines



With events at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre in the news again early this year, the Monitor has spoken up about his concerns on further delays to timelines for its closure.

Central to this is progression of the planned therapeutic youth justice facility at Pontville.

While the Southern Midlands Council approved the facility development application for the site, that decision is now being appealed against.

The Monitor has noted it has been five years since former Premier Peter Gutwein pledged to close AYDC within three years.

Click on the link below to read Robert's statement, made in February.

More recently he has [made a submission](#) to Parliament's Public Works Committee looking into the new youth justice facility, and in late March [appeared before that Committee](#).

[Read the statement](#)

IN PHOTOS: Out and about

A crucial part of the work of the Implementation Monitor and our team is engaging with our stakeholders, in the broader Tasmanian community. It is important to see, hear and contribute to what is happening on the ground. One way we can do this is by attending events and having conversations. Another is by taking part in discussions on child safety reform for different audiences. We thank the University of Tasmania, Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal and Arch facilitators for having us along and making us feel welcome.



Photo captions (clockwise from top left): Associate Professor in Communities and Social Justice Catherine Robinson and Robert Benjamin record a conversation on reforming child protection systems for 'Child, Protection and Justice' students at UTAS' The Forest; a pleasure to attend the opening of Arch North West in Burnie to hear how it will support victim-survivors of child sexual abuse; panel discussion at a recent TASCAT training day for Tribunal Members on COI recommendations, with (left to right) TASCAT President Malcolm Schyvens, Judge Liesl Kudelka, vicarious trauma specialist Robyn Bradey and Robert Benjamin.

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge all victim-survivors of institutional abuse, including those with lived experience of harm in institutional settings, and those who are no longer with us. We pay tribute to you.

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people, as the original and continuing custodians of the land, seas, waterways and skies of Lutruwita/Tasmania.

We approach this task of better protecting all children in Tasmania with commitment, compassion and hope.



Follow us

You can also follow us on social media, on Facebook or LinkedIn. Search on your favourite platform for Child Safety Reform Implementation Monitor.

As with our other outputs, please note these accounts refer to matters relating to child sexual abuse, and reader caution is advised.

