



A community focused approach to improving
the wellbeing of children and families on the
Southern Moreton Bay Islands

Foundational Stage Report

July 2019



“Nothing about us without us”

SMBI community member

Over 2018/19, Brisbane South PHN has been undertaking foundational work to establish a place-based, community-driven initiative on the Southern Moreton Bay Islands (SMBI), which includes Karragarra, Lamb, Macleay and Russell Islands. The aim of the initiative is improving the health and wellbeing of SMBI children 0-8 years and their families.

The approach to this initiative is strongly community driven to ensure the sustainability of resulting solutions. To achieve this, a combination of two approaches are being applied; the Collective Impact Framework and the Harwood Approach.

Collective Impact Framework

The Collective Impact Framework is designed to tackle complex social problems requiring systems change and innovation by bringing many diverse partners together around a common goal.

The Harwood Approach

The Harwood Approach is a community strengthening and empowerment methodology that enables the community to drive change in their environment and circumstances in collaboration with the service sector. This approach strengthens the Collective Impact Framework by effectively empowering community within the process.

Foundations of the initiative

The foundational work to date has focused on beginning to establish the enabling conditions required to take this initiative forward and collecting the information to understand the lived experience of SMBI children and families.

Community conversations and empowerment

Brisbane South PHN commissioned Bay Islands Early Learning and Care (BIELC), the early childhood education centre on Macleay Island that services all four SMBIs, to undertake community conversations and empowerment processes in line with the Harwood Approach. Over one thousand community conversations have been undertaken with a diverse cross section of the SMBI community (approximately 17% of the population) and themes drawn from these conversations. In addition, small empowerment projects to build trust and ownership in the community have been initiated and existing and emerging community leaders have been identified and engaged to be part of the next steps of the initiative. The BIELC team have been coached by a Brisbane South PHN mentor experienced in the Harwood Approach.

“My kids so enjoyed the activities and sharing about what they love about living on the Islands and the little gift bags that they got to take home with them. I have followed SMBI families ‘We are Listening’ on Facebook to choose other community activities to take the children too that will be low or no cost”

SMBI community member

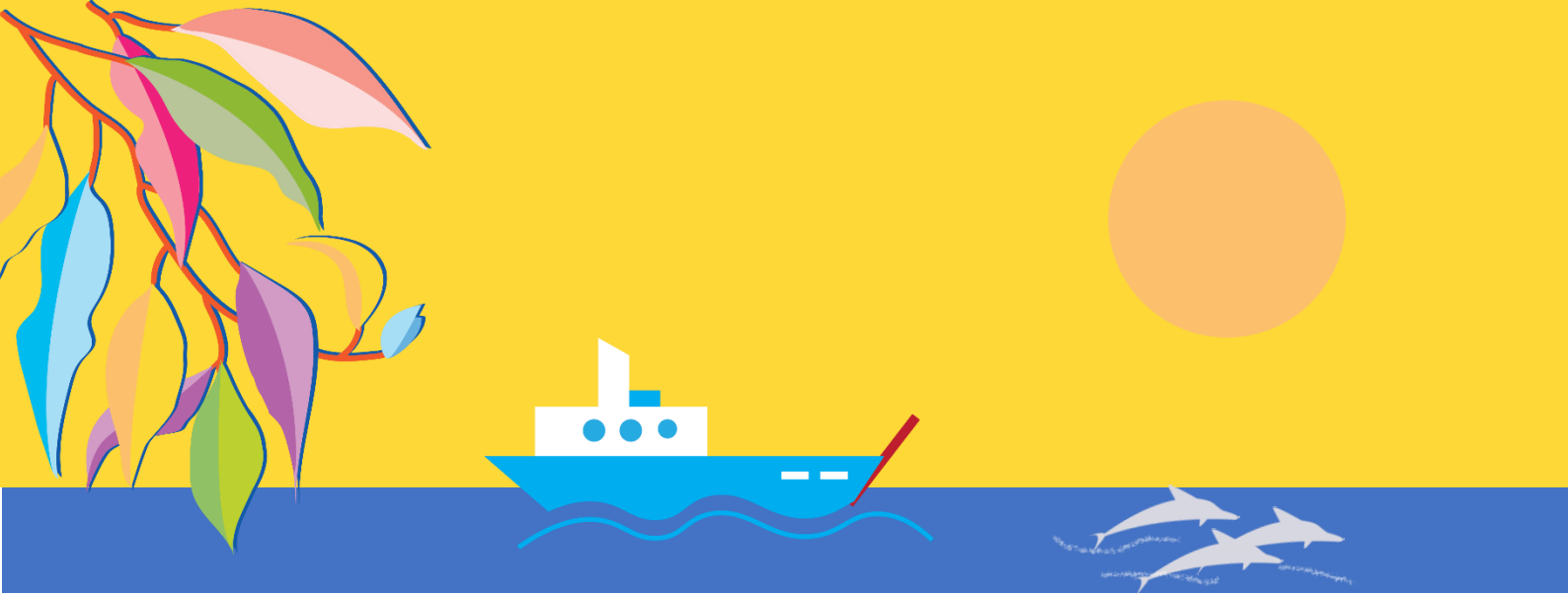
Government and service sector conversations and mapping

Over 2018/19 Brisbane South PHN have engaged with the government and service sector organisations at an executive and operational level including providers directly engaging with the SMBI community. The purpose was to obtain high level endorsement to partner and bring their perspectives to the initiative as well as begin mapping services available to the SMBI community.

Baseline data set

Brisbane South PHN is working with a statistician experienced in place-based data analysis and measurement to produce a baseline data report for the Southern Moreton Bay Islands. This will show relationships between key data sets from different agencies. The second phase of this work will include support to gain access to comprehensive SMBI data sets not publicly available, and more comprehensive data analysis to show relationships between indicators. Other data sets will include domestic and family violence, child safety data.





Southern Moreton Bay Islands

Population:	6154*
Children 0-8 years:	383 (6.3%)
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people:	214 (3.5%)
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children 0-8 years:	25 (6.5%)
Couple families with children:	285 (9.9%)
Single parents with children:	340 (11.9%)

**“Community spirit
on Islands is wonderful –
we have something
the mainland hasn’t”**

SMBI community
member

**Anecdotally, population is estimated to be closer to 10,000 due to transient population*

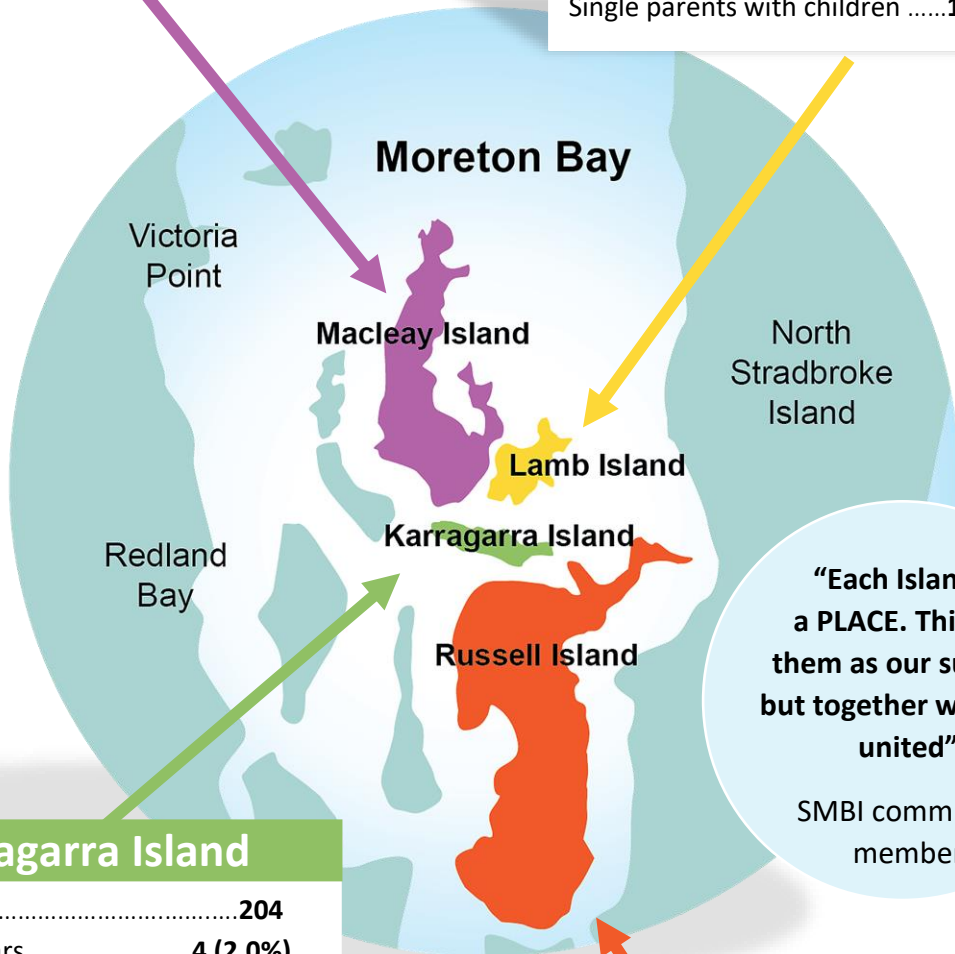
Source: Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Macleay Island

Population**2679**
 Children 0-8 years**161 (6.0%)**
 Couple families with children.....**118 (9.4%)**
 Single parents with children.....**151 (12.0%)**

Lamb Island

Population**435**
 Children 0-8 years**23 (5.3%)**
 Couple families with children....**15 (7.0%)**
 Single parents with children**17 (8.0%)**



Karragarra Island

Population.....**204**
 Children 0-8 years **4 (2.0%)**
 Couple families with children.....**6 (5.9%)**
 Single parents with children...**12 (11.9%)**

Russell Island

Population**2836**
 Children 0-8 years**188 (6.6%)**
 Couple families with children ...**146 (11.2%)**
 Single parents with children.....**160 (12.3%)**

Source: Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Journey map

The last 3 years



July 2017

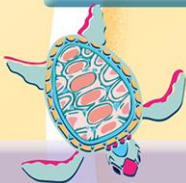
Brisbane South PHN, Children's Health Queensland and Metro South Health identify this initiative as one of a set of priorities based on external consultancy report

February – July 2018

Scoping the foundational work required to establish initiative

August – September 2018

Brisbane South PHN approach to foundational work finalised in project plan



October – Nov 2018

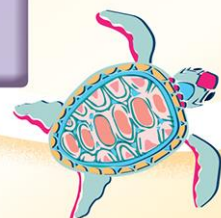
Initial discussions and commissioning of BIELC for community conversations and empowerment projects

November 2018

'SMBI families: We are Listening' website and Facebook page established

November 2018 onwards

Ongoing coaching and mentoring of emerging community leaders and relationship building with existing community leaders

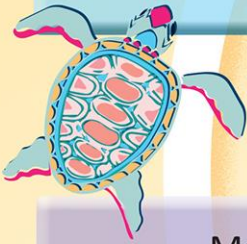


June 2019

BIELC agree to continue supporting SMBI community involvement in the initiative

June 2019

Recruitment of Project Coordinator to develop and drive community action plan



July 2019

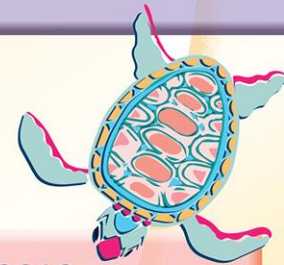
Establishment of 'backbone'- Project Coordinator and BIELC staff members to facilitate the initiative

July 2019

Workshop with community leaders to understand how to support community engagement in the Governance Group and broader initiative

May – June 2019

Community members vote on empowerment projects to take forward and confirm key themes ('Have we heard you right?')



May – June 2019

Interviews with government and service sector to gain perspectives

July 2019

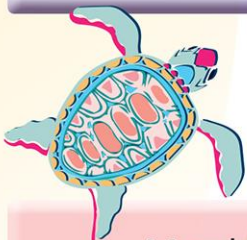
Key themes drawn from sector interviews

April – May 2019

Key themes drawn from community conversations

July 2019

Foundational Report developed



March – July 2019

Executive level representatives provide endorsements to partner and to participate in the Community Governance structure

July 2019

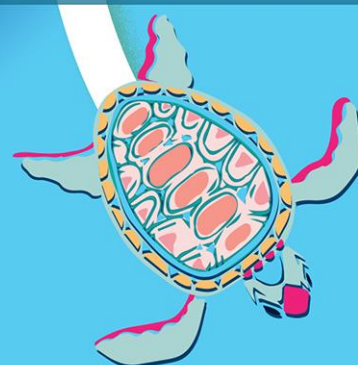
Establish membership of 0 – 8s Community Governance Group

August 2019

First 0 – 8s Community Governance meeting

December 2018 – March 2019

BIELC undertake community conversations with a diverse cross section of the SMBI community

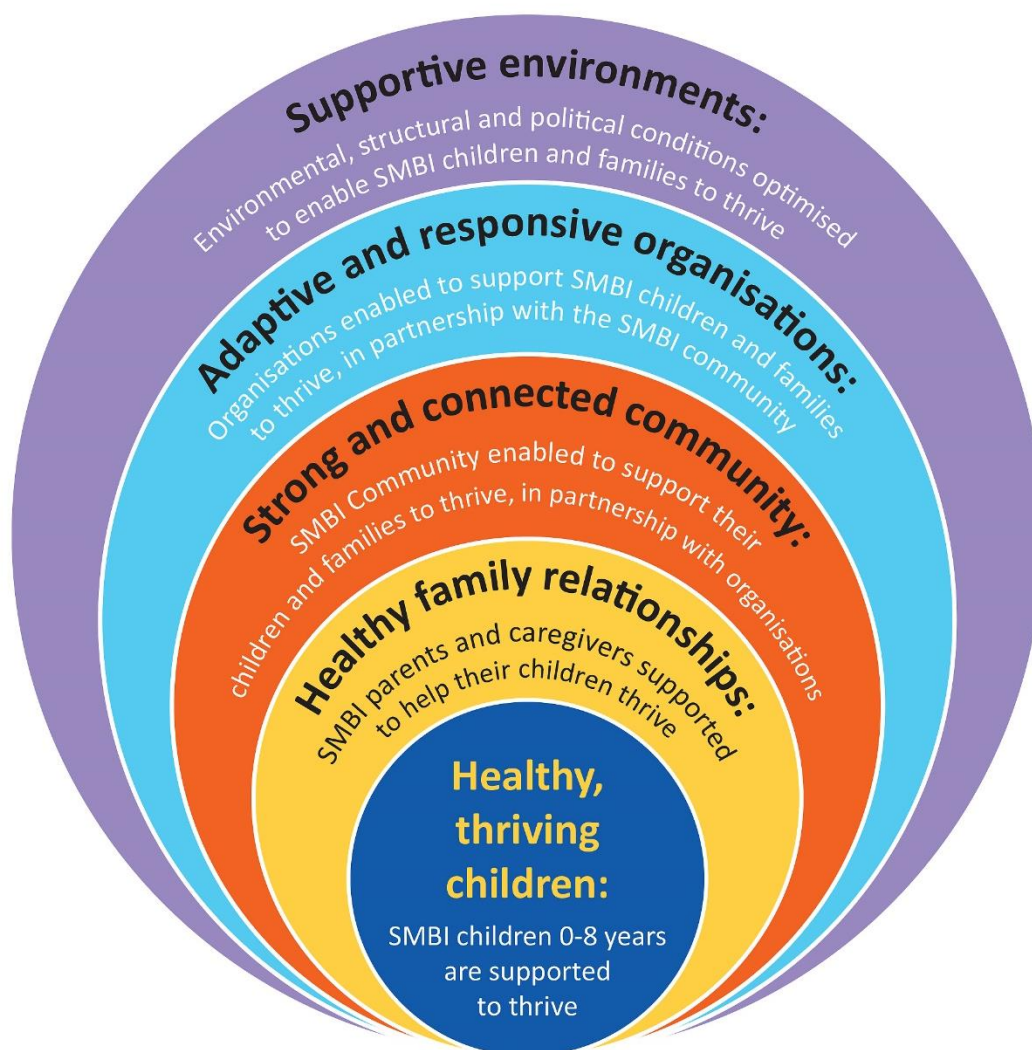


The interrelationship between SMBI children 0-8 years and their environment

An analysis of the three streams of information (community voice, government and service sector voice and statistical data) gathered in the foundational phase of this initiative have been mapped across the following model. The model demonstrates the layers of influence required to ensure the wellbeing of SMBI children and families.

A more detailed presentation of this information is represented in the sections below. As the initiative progresses, information will be further detailed and refined through identification of key collective priorities.

Layers of influence on wellbeing of SMBI children 0-8 years and their families



Healthy, thriving children:

SMBI children 0-8 years are supported to thrive

The SMBI community and the government and service sector share a common goal: to support SMBI children to thrive.

The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth’s *The Nest*¹ outlines six wellbeing domains for children and youth, shown in the diagram below. This provides a useful framework to consider the factors that enable children to thrive and potential areas for action of this initiative.

One of the key data-sets in understanding how children are tracking is from the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). AEDC data across a six-year period is outlined below for children who are developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains (physical health, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication skills).

Although numbers of children are low, the application of percentages of vulnerability (which have not shifted in six years) to the total population of children 0-8 years on SMBI (n=383) shows that there is a significant number of children not meeting developmental milestones.

A practical approach to improving the wellbeing of children and families



	Vulnerable ² on one or more domain(s)						Vulnerable on two or more domain(s)					
	2012		2015		2018		2012		2015		2018	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
QLD	15 217	26.2	16 220	26.1	15 954	25.9	8 001	13.8	8 713	14.0	8 576	13.9
Redland	401	23.0	141	22.9	380	22.7	188	10.8	202	11.2	203	12.1
Macleay Island and surrounds	15	42.9	13	46.4	7	41.2	5	14.3	7	25.0	4	23.5
Russell Island	6	23.1	9	42.9	7	31.8	4	15.4	5	23.8	1	4.5

Table 1: Number and percentage of children developmentally vulnerable in one or more/two or more domains – Southern Moreton Bay Islands 2012-2018

Source: Redland Community Profile, AEDC, 2018

¹ https://www.aracy.org.au/publications-resources/command/download_file/id/329/filename/Second_edition_The_Nest_action_agenda.pdf

² **Developmentally vulnerable** children are facing some significant challenges in their development. It is desirable to see the percentage of children who are 'vulnerable' decrease across time points.

“All we want is for our children to grow up in a positive community”
SMBI community member

Healthy family relationships: SMBI parents and caregivers supported to help their children thrive

Foundational community conversations found that SMBI families want to be enabled to support their children to thrive. They want to:

- have a choice of easily accessible services and supports that are delivered in a way that suits their family's needs, without judgement or stigma. This theme was common across several life stage and service areas including maternity (pregnancy and birthing), child health and development, parenting supports and Early Childhood Early Intervention (NDIS) services. It also includes areas such as childcare, early childhood education and recreational services.
 - be able to easily navigate their journey within the service system. They want to have a coordinated and supported journey from maternity services to child health services when their babies reach six weeks old and have a clear pathway when child development services and supports are needed.
 - have suitable supports available for families affected by domestic and family violence, substance abuse and mental illness that can provide a timely response in crisis situations
 - be enabled to provide for their family's needs through local employment and training opportunities and access to financial assistance when needed. This includes being able to attend appointments in convenient locations.
-

The government and service sector want to support SMBI families to help their children thrive. They want to:

- Be a trusted source of support for SMBI families
 - Better understand gaps in support systems on the islands and how best to address them.
-

Table 2 below shows that the bulk of families on SMBI are living well below the poverty line³. A higher percentage of SMBI families' income is going toward their rent than mainland families. The median rent Macleay Island residents are paying makes up one third of their total weekly income, while in the Redlands LGA, this makes up just over 20%. Table 3 also shows the number of families that have no parent employed which makes up over 25% for couples and over one third for single parent families.

Table 4 shows the rate of domestic violence protection order breaches per 100,000 people. The rate on Macleay Island was 3.5 times higher than in the broader South Brisbane district in 2017/18 and the rate on Russell Island was 4.2 times higher in the same period.

From a maternity perspective, although there was an average of only 41 births per year across SMBI from 2011, over 20% of women are not obtaining the recommended level of antenatal visits (>6) across SMBI. This is four times the state average. The very high smoking rates on all four islands is especially noteworthy, Lamb Island and Russell Island particularly.

There is a strong statistical relationship between the following perinatal risk factors: smoking during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy; low total number of prenatal visits; and having no prenatal visits until the third trimester.

“My aspiration is to be the very best parent I can for my children. We don't have a lot, but we have each other”

SMBI community member

³ <https://www.acoss.org.au/poverty/>

Table 2: Median total weekly income compared with mortgage/rent costs for families on SMBI

	Median age	Ave household size	Median total family income (\$/weekly)	Median mortgage repayment (\$/monthly)	Median rent (\$/weekly)
QLD	37	2.6	\$1 661	\$1 733	\$330
Redlands LGA	41	2.6	\$1 815	\$1 950	\$386
Karragarra Island	59	1.7	\$1 325	\$1 209	\$235
Lamb Island	59	1.8	\$744	\$867	\$200
Macleay Island	59	1.9	\$796	\$888	\$245
Russell Island	55	1.9	\$797	\$975	\$230

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, General Community Profile

Table 3: Number of children in SMBI families with no parent employed

	Count of children (0-9 yrs) in couple families with no parent employed	Count of children (0-9 yrs) in one parent families with no parent employed
Karragarra Island	0	0
Lamb Island	10	10
Macleay Island	18	51
Russell Island	39	64

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, General Community Profile

We love our Island life we just need a helping hand from time to time – help us to help our community”
SMBI community member

Table 4: Number and Rate of Reported Breach Domestic Violence Protection Order

	Number		Rate per 100,000 persons	
	2016/2017	2017/2018	2016/2017	2017/2018
South Brisbane District (includes 21 divisions)	2134	2082	265	254
Macleay Island Division	17	25	611	886
Russell Island Division	16	32	541	1061

Table 5: Perinatal Risk Factors - SMI

Suburbs	N	% Smoking during first 20 weeks	% Smoking during 2 nd 20 Weeks	% Low number of ante-natal visits (0 - 6)	% Overweight and obese mothers (BMI>24)	% Mothers Aged under 20	Average % at risk
Queensland (2013-14)		15.1	12.6	4.90	42.4	5.1	-
SMI (2011-19)	332	51.2	43.6	20.7 (<6)	48.0	10.8	29.4
Karragarra Island	2	100	100	50.0	0.0	0.0	nc
Lamb Island	19	73.7	63.2	33.3	52.4	0.0	37.2
MacLeay Island	160	46.5	40.0	14.8	54.2	12.5	29.6
Russell Island	151	52.7	44.0	24.6	40.6	10.6	28.8
Total (all suburbs)	332	51.2	43.6	17.5 (<5)	48.0	10.8	29.4

Source: Perinatal Data Collection, Health Statistics Branch, Qld Department of Health. Data are for 2011-2019.

Suburbs	N	% Premature babies (% under 37 weeks)	% Low birthweight (% under 2500 grams)	% Low APGAR 5 score (0-8)
Queensland (2014)		9.3	6.6	
SMI (2011-19)	332	1.5	10.3	9.9
Karragarra Island	2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lamb Island	19	0.0	15.8	15.8
MacLeay Island	160	0.0	12.5	11.3
Russell Island	151	3.3	7.3	8.7
Total	332	1.5	10.3	10.3

Source: Perinatal Data Collection, Health Statistics Branch, Qld Department of Health. Data are for 2011-2019.

Strong and connected community:

SMBI community enabled to support their children and families to thrive

The SMBI community want to come together to support their children and families to thrive.

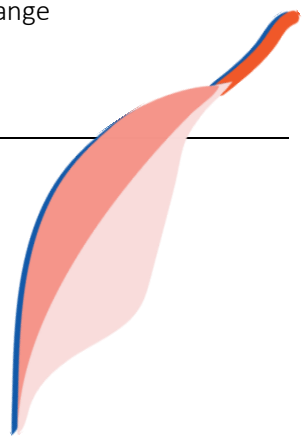
They want to:

- Have opportunities for social connection
- Create informal support networks for families
- Embrace their unique island culture and provide their children with a positive sense of their 'Islander' identity
- Enable external organisations to understand their island culture and how best to work with the SMBI community
- Be empowered to create enabling conditions for change across the SMBI, in partnership with government and engaged organisations.



The government and service sector want to partner with the SMBI community to support children and families. They want to:

- Understand island culture and how best to work with the SMBI community
- Collaborate with the SMBI community to create enabling conditions for change
- Be a trusted partner of the SMBI community.



Adaptive and responsive organisations: Organisations enabled to support SMBI children and families to thrive

The SMBI community want to work with the government and service sector to develop solutions that will enable SMBI children and families to thrive. They want to:

- Have a choice of services and supports that are accessible and appropriate for their needs and preferences – right service, right place, right time.
 - Have a trusted source of information about the range of supports and services available to them
 - Confidentially access the services and supports they need without judgement or stigma
 - Be able to easily navigate their journey within the service system
 - Act as a connector for organisations so they can reach the most vulnerable members of the SMBI community
 - Have local SMBI people’s knowledge, skills and expertise utilised rather than always opting to have outside resources brought in for delivery of services and supports.
-

The government and service sector want to work with the SMBI community to develop solutions that will enable SMBI children and families to thrive. They want to:

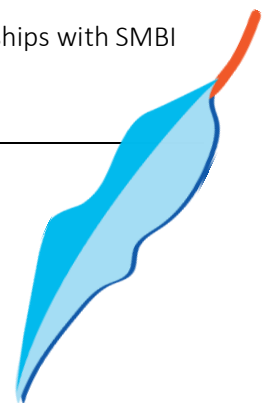
- Be enabled to holistically support SMBI children and families in partnership with other engaged organisations and the SMBI community
 - Have a connected system of supports for SMBI children and families and to understand their place in this system
 - Be adequately resourced for the additional cost and time required to provide support to the SMBI community
 - Be authorised to step out of ‘business as usual’ and deliver services and supports in a manner that best suits SMBI children and families
 - Have time and resource outside of usual service delivery to build trusting relationships with SMBI children and families.
-

“How are people going to know what is happening? It’s great that services are committed to coming over but if they don’t share when and what they are doing how can we help spread the word and connect families that don’t know”

SMBI community member

“Upskill our locals to support better access for families to support services”

SMBI community member



Supportive environments

Environmental, structural and political conditions to enable SMBI children and families to thrive

The SMBI community and the government and service sector want to work together to optimise conditions on the SMBI so children and families can thrive. They face many of the same environmental, structural and political challenges in their attempts to access or provide supports for children and families: transportation; island infrastructure and natural environment; economic development; and geographical classification of SMBI.

Transportation

One of the most significant challenges for both groups is transportation. This includes transport to, from and between islands, on to other mainland locations and on the islands. The main issues are the cost of transportation, the time taken and limited transport options on the islands.

Travel cost

- The cost of the passenger ferry can be significant for (\$5-18 return) families on limited budgets that are frequently having to travel to the mainland.
- The high cost of the vehicle ferry (\$106 return for SMBI residents) prevents many families from using this service. Families that are able, keep a car on both the island and the mainland, but others must rely on the passenger ferry and public transport to get to mainland locations.
- Many organisations are not able to cover the cost of the vehicle ferry within their budgets (\$148 return), leaving them without a car if they do not have a permanent vehicle available on the islands. Even if they do have vehicle on the islands it is costly (\$37 one way) and time consuming to move the vehicle between the islands.
- The passenger ferry is generally seen as an affordable option within organisational budgets (\$5-18), however this limits movement on the islands as there is no public transport available.

Transport time

- Travel time to mainland appointments can be significant for families, particularly those that rely on public transport.
- Organisations must factor in significant portions of travel time into their days on the islands, limiting the number of appointments they can offer.

Transport options

- There is no public transport on the islands making it difficult for families and organisations without vehicles to get around the islands.
- There is a taxi service on Macleay and Russell Islands. A new private SMBI Bus, has been established on Macleay Island offering a scheduled and on demand bus service.
- Community organisations have come together to 'activate' the larger islands on certain days with buses from these organisations running a service from the ferries to community hubs on the islands so service providers and community can come together.

“Government departments are not listening. There are not realistic expectations around travel time for us to attend appointments in their time-frames”

SMBI community member

- Local services and amenities on Macleay and Russell Islands are mainly clustered on the end of the island where the ferry stop is located. This includes much of the consultation space available for organisations visiting the islands. This can mean 8 km journey for families on the opposite end of the island (where housing costs are often lower) to access these services.
- Organisations without a vehicle have difficulties doing home visits or getting to locations further away from the ferry stop that may be more accessible to families. In addition, there are safety risks associated with providing home visits without a vehicle as staff cannot easily exit out of potentially dangerous situations.

Island infrastructure and natural environment

- Internet connectivity and availability on the islands can be limited. This creates challenges for using technological solutions to provide supports, such as video link appointments with mainland services. It also limits the SMBI communities' ability to access informal supports and information online.
- Some of the service sector have had difficulties gaining access to appropriate and affordable consultation space on the islands.
- The SMBI community reported a lack of appropriate infrastructure to support children's participation in recreational activities on the islands, including the difficulties for families to access existing facilities on other islands (e.g. pool on Russell Island and Skate Park on Macleay Island).
- The natural environment is a core part of the SMBI community's islander identity and lifestyle but the ocean also is a barrier to them accessing facilities, services and supports on the mainland and other islands. Each of the four islands see themselves as very distinct and unique communities. Providing a service or support on one island does not necessarily mean there will be uptake from the other island communities.

Economic development

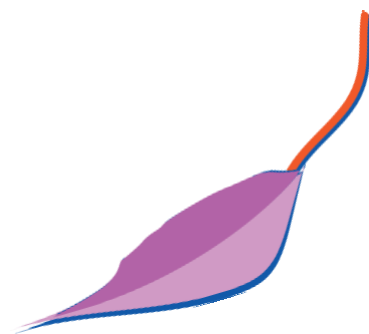
- Both community and the government and service sector recognise the need for initiatives to support economic development on the islands. This would provide more opportunities for employment and pathways to employment, such as training and volunteering, for the community

Geographical classification

- Using the Australian Bureau of Statistics Remoteness Area classifications, the population on Macleay Island is classified as living in an Inner Regional Area, the residents on Karragarra, Russell and Lamb Islands are classified as living in an Outer Regional Area and nearby communities on North and South Stradbroke are classified as Remote. This is despite all islands facing very similar challenges to accessing services and supports.
- These classifications have an impact on the island communities' ability to access government services and funding.

**“Not forgotten
Islands but
communities who are
safe and valued”**

Local SMBI Pastor

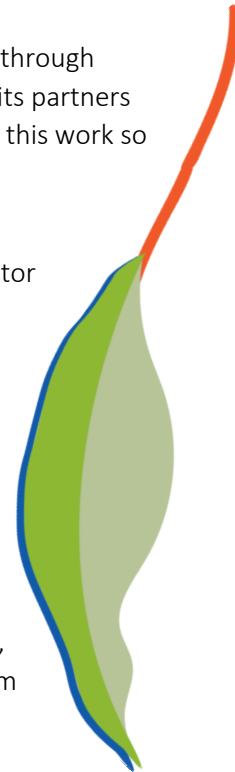


Next steps

This report provides a summary of the key themes identified through extensive foundational discussions. Brisbane South PHN and its partners would like to thank everyone for their time in contributing to this work so far.

From here, work will occur in the next two months to further understand and identify synergies across the community, sector and baseline data sets. Presentations will be made to the Community Governance Group overseeing the initiative and SMBI community to identify key priorities for collective work going forward.

As well as developing a Community Action Plan to drive the key priorities for change and establish shared ways of working, a 'backbone' team will continue to work with community leaders to further empower the community to get involved. The 'backbone' team will work with community, sector and government to move the priorities into action from October 2019.



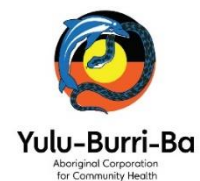
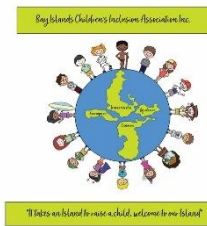
**“It’s time for
community members to
BE BRAVE, feel empowered
and supported to be a voice
for our community”**

SMBI Community
member

**“We need leaders to be
accountable and share
community voice, hold
people accountable to
move into action instead of
more roundtables, it’s time
for action**

SMBI Community
member

Partners



For further information about this project please contact:

Craig Cunningham

Brisbane South PHN, Project Coordinator – SMBI Community Impact Project

E: ccunningham@bsphn.org.au | P: 07 3864 7511

