

## The impact of the Royal Commission on child- and youth-serving organisations

### Some observations

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### Progress

- Pronounced increase in attention, resources, and effort directed to the problem
- Recognition of RC recommendations, national guidelines, state regulations etc
- Redoubling of efforts to comply with regulatory requirements
  - Especially employment screening and incident reporting
- Many organisations seeking to go beyond government-driven compliance requirements to develop internal strategies
- New organisational networks/coalitions seem to have emerged (we're all in the same boat)
- Increased engagement with external expertise

### Challenges

- Greatest effort/resources directed to regulatory compliance (esp employment screening & incident reporting)
  - Much less focus on clear, internal, context-specific prevention strategies
- Especially in large organisations, significant gaps between leadership groups and those most involved with children and YP
  - Limited local analysis/strategy (who, what, where, when, how)
- Sexual abuse still widely thought of as a unique and mysterious (and frightening) problem
- Responses organised around adult male perpetrators
  - Less attention to peer-peer abuse / female perpetrators (e.g. schools)
- Many responses at odds with 'child's interests'
- Researchers, practitioners and advocates focused on outcomes of sexual abuse, not on its causes
  - Organisations need to know how abuse starts, not how it ends
- How to make use of external expertise?

### Moving forward

- Making room to focus on prevention
  - Primary aim to prevent abuse before it might otherwise occur (better for everyone!)
  - Context-specific strategies, focused on risky activities and situations rather than on risky individuals
  - Local analyses / strategies needed
- Need to create child safe, child *friendly* organisations
  - Preventing abuse should serve superordinate goal of promoting healthy psychological and social development
  - Need to consider unintended as well as intended consequences
- Recognise gravitational pull to after-the-fact responses, and to serving adults' interests
- Prevention-focused research and practice needed
  - How, where, when and why organisational abuse happens for the first time