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### **Tasmania *Together* welcomes release of inaugural report on outcomes for young children**

The Tasmania *Together* Progress Board welcomes the innovative report on outcomes for young in children released today by the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation (TEYF).

*Outcomes in the Early Years: The State of Tasmania's Young Children 2009* outlines the Foundation's framework for monitoring key indicators of wellbeing for Tasmania's children – specifically those in the 0-5 age group.

The Chair of the Tasmania *Together* Progress Board, Bob Campbell, congratulated the Foundation's Chair, Dr Sue Jenkins on the release of the report.

“This report represents some impressive work in a relatively short space of time by Dr Jenkins and her team. Not only has TEYF pulled together a comprehensive set of indicators, but they have produced a report highlighting local level data that pinpoints areas of inequality throughout the state.

“Under our partnership, the Progress Board will be working closely with the TEYF to develop new benchmarks on family functioning and childhood obesity.

Mr Campbell said he was impressed with a number of aspects of the report:

- The clearly stated emphasis on *outcomes* rather than just reporting dollars spent of program throughput;
- The anticipated inclusion of data from future *Child Health and Wellbeing* surveys (undertaken by the Department of Health and Human Services); and
- The innovative use of reference maps and reporting by local government areas.

The Progress Board has previously voiced its concerns over poor performance against a small number of important benchmarks in Tasmania *Together* – one of which is the number of children on care and protection orders.

“The TEYF framework identifies six indicators around child abuse and neglect and this report provides a clear picture of those areas of the state where programs and services are most needed, said Mr Campbell.

Whilst Tasmania *Together* did not originally have much content relevant to the 0-5 age group, amendments following the first five year review of Tasmania *Together* saw the addition of certain benchmarks that overlap with indicators in the TEYF framework.

Mr Campbell said the Progress Board’s online benchmark reports contain information on childcare availability, child abuse and neglect, the Kindergarten Development Check, as well as other measures around various costs of living for low-income families and community safety.

“The Progress Board signed a partnership with TEYF and were represented on the Foundation’s Research Committee from the outset, in the establishment of the Framework to improve measurement and reporting of outcomes for young children in Tasmania, and in doing so, to provide an important resource for future policy development and decision making in this crucial area, he said.

Mr Campbell said that all Tasmania *Together*’s partners were committed to progressing key benchmarks under the community’s plan for 2020.

“TEYF are uniquely placed to foster targeted activity by a range of stakeholders that will improve outcomes for Tasmania’s young children. By providing a comprehensive measurement framework that includes local level data, the Foundation not only provides a snapshot of how things are, but makes clear where things need to change.”

“As Tasmania *Together* approaches the half-way point in its 20-year schedule, it is pleasing to see complementary initiatives such as the TEYF outcomes framework providing better reporting to support better decision-making for our state’s young children.

I sincerely hope the value of TEYF’s work in the development of both the framework and this 2009 report will be recognised and supported by government and non-government decision-makers with an interest in achieving better future outcomes for our young children.

More detailed information about the Tasmania *Together* benchmarks is available from the Online Benchmark Reports ([www.ttbenchmarks.com.au](http://www.ttbenchmarks.com.au)), Tasmania *Together*’s up-to-date benchmark reporting system.

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