

**HEALTHY  
NORTH COAST**

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An Australian Government Initiative

## Summary of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework

Resilient Kids Program  
September 2024

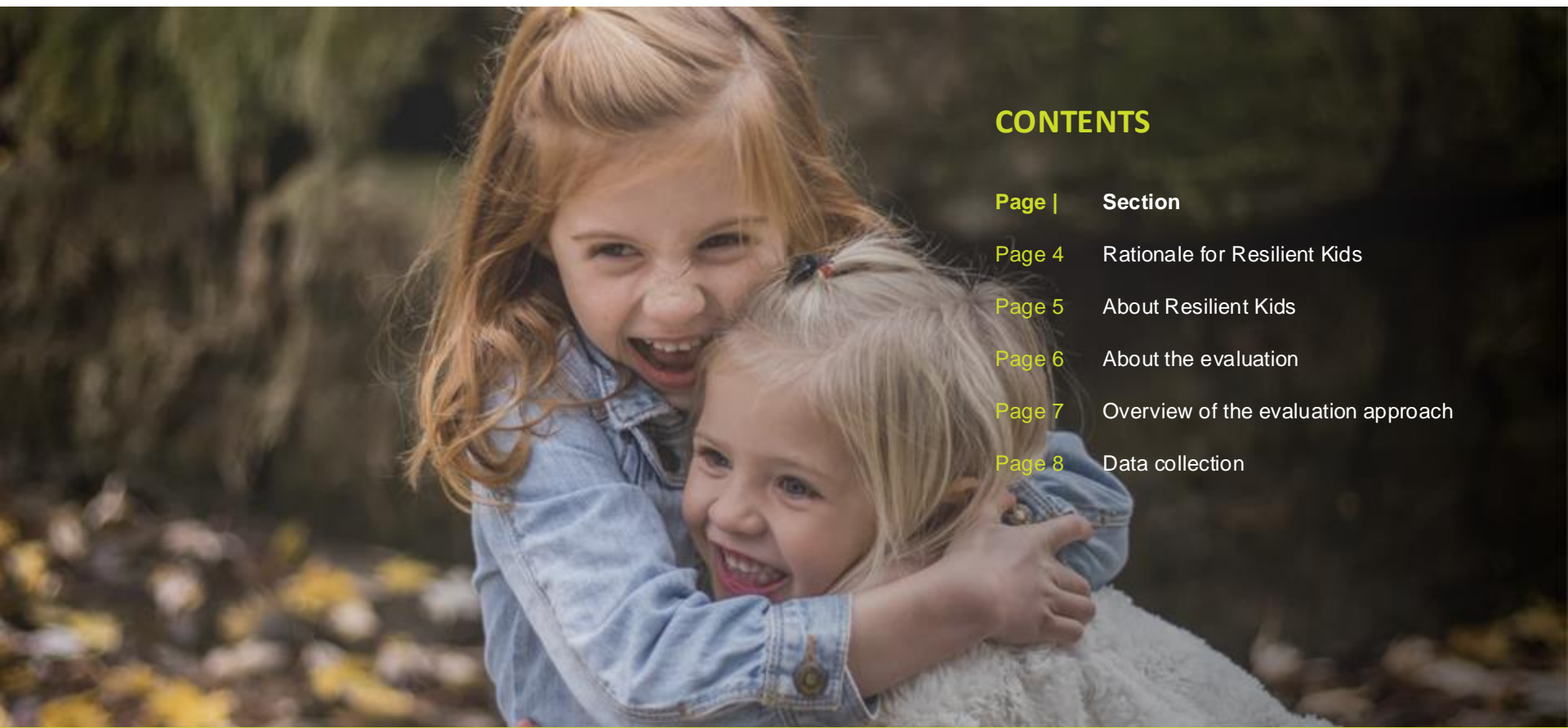


The Resilient Kids Program is funded by Healthy North Coast through a grant provided by the Australian Government. We acknowledge and thank the students, teachers, principals and staff of participating schools for their contribution to the 2022 Northern Rivers Resilience Survey. The Resilience Survey and the information in this summary report were delivered through our research partnership with Resilient Youth Australia Pty Ltd and the University of Adelaide.

**For more information, visit [hnc.org.au/resilient-kids](https://hnc.org.au/resilient-kids) or contact [resilientkids@hnc.org.au](mailto:resilientkids@hnc.org.au)**

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands across our region, and pay our respect to Elders past, present and on their journey. We recognise these lands were never ceded and acknowledge the continuation of culture and connection to the land, sky and sea. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Land's first peoples and honour the rich diversity of the oldest living cultures.



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Children are one of the most vulnerable groups during and after climate disasters. Exposure to disasters may negatively impact long-term social, psychological, emotional, cognitive and physical development. Trauma responses in children can include anxiety or depression, behavioural problems, decline in academic performance, interpersonal difficulties and other symptoms.

In February and March 2022, the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales experienced severe weather and flooding — the Lismore, Richmond Valley, Tweed, Ballina, Byron, Kyogle and Clarence Valley Local Government Areas experienced catastrophic impacts.

As part of the recovery response, Healthy North Coast (HNC) received a \$10 million grant from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to develop and deliver the Resilient Kids Program over four years from 2022-2025.

Resilient Kids recognises the effects climate disasters can have on the mental health and wellbeing of school-aged children and aims to address the trauma and mental health impacts that may have arisen from the 2022 flooding events as part of the community recovery.



## About Resilient Kids

The goal of the Resilient Kids Program is:

*“A more resilient population of young people who have improved mental health and social and emotional wellbeing and are willing and able to seek and receive help when required.”*

The Resilient Kids program consists of initiatives that support children and young people to recover from trauma, reduce long-term mental health impacts of climate disaster, and promote social and emotional wellbeing. The program is available to children and young people aged 8 to 18 years and includes targeted support for First Nations children and young people living with intellectual disability or autism.

## Resilient Kids includes several streams of support, including:

### Stream 1: education and skill building, school-based supports:

- disaster resilience education
- social and emotional wellbeing education
- parent and carer support

### Stream 2: community resilience building through six wellbeing hubs and youth participation activities:

- counselling services for children, young people and their families
- education and skill building for children and young people
- opportunities for peer-to-peer connection
- spoke service (across more isolated regions)
- collaboration and learning circles with schools
- connection with other mental health and wellbeing services
- brokerage fund for small scale events
- youth participation fund for targeted support for children and young people with a disability and for non-binary and transgender children and young people.

### Stream 3: First Nations initiatives

- culturally sensitive youth mental health support and case management
- safe spaces
- brokerage to deliver culturally safe recreational and educational community-led activities
- training to build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Workers and other local stakeholders
- Community of Practice to foster integration and collaboration of local agencies.

Through these streams of support, the Resilient Kids Program aims to improve outcomes for children, young people and broader communities in the Northern Rivers region, including:

Improved resilience, mental health and social and emotional wellbeing	Increased health literacy and help-seeking behaviours
Feeling more disaster-prepared with more agency to affect climate change	Increased social connection within communities including more youth-led activities
Communities are more disaster-resilient	Increased evidence base for what works in building resilience for children and young people in the disaster context

## Purpose of the Evaluation

Demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement, a comprehensive external evaluation of Resilient Kids is taking place alongside the delivery of the program.

As an external evaluation partner, Beacon Strategies has been engaged by HNC to design and deliver the evaluation of the Resilient Kids Program in collaboration with key stakeholders. The evaluation includes:

- developmental approach — ensuring new information is incorporated into the program's ongoing delivery as well as the overall evaluation
- formative evaluation — analysing emerging findings and results, identifying barriers and enablers and identifying lessons learnt to inform the program's success
- impact evaluation — assessing the program outcomes and impact at an individual and community level, with a final report collating all of the program's findings, implications and future considerations.

## Ethics approval

The evaluation of the Resilient Kids Program has been approved by the North Coast New South Wales (NCNSW) Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Obtaining ethics approval ensures that evaluation activities are done in accordance with sound ethical principles when it comes to the collection and use of data relating to children and young people.

## Evaluation scope

The scope and focus of the evaluation covers the appropriateness, effectiveness, implementation, impact and sustainability of the Resilient Kids program.

A set of evaluation questions have been developed to outline the scope of the evaluation.

## Evaluation questions

- ▶ Suitability of service approaches and settings for reaching children and young people in the region
- ▶ Meeting the needs and expectations of children, young people, and their parents and caregivers
- ▶ Improved awareness and access to support for children and young people
- ▶ Increased capacity of adults to effectively support children and young people
- ▶ Program was delivered as intended
- ▶ Children, young people and other relevant local stakeholders in planning and governance
- ▶ Enablers and barriers to implementation
- ▶ Change in resilience of local communities to support children and young people in disasters
- ▶ Partnerships and activities are strengthened and sustained
- ▶ Key learnings for building the resilience of children and young people in a disaster resilience context

# Overview of the evaluation approach

**Oct '23 to Feb '24**

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework

Development of the MEL Framework through a series of workshops with the Evaluation Working Group and approval of Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

**From October 2023**

## Ongoing collection and analysis of data

Ongoing collection of data by program providers and the evaluator.

**From January 2024**

## Quarterly data snapshots + learning loops

A visual summary of analysed quarterly provider performance report data provided to the Evaluation Working Group to inform learning loop discussions.

**October 2024 & July 2025**

## Formative evaluation reports

Interim findings and learnings for the 2024 and 2025 calendar years, which will provide recommendations to improve future service delivery of the Resilient Kids program.

**April 2026**

## Impact evaluation report

A comprehensive evaluation report that provides detailed findings from the entire implementation period, alongside a discussion of the results and recommendations for the future.

**June 2026**

## Develop other evaluation reporting products

Other reporting products will be developed to publicly share and communicate the findings of the evaluation, which may include sector/conference presentations and journal publications.

The evaluation uses a mixed methods approach to collect data from a range of sources. Data collection methods being used for the evaluation of the Resilient Kids Program includes:



#### Program and client data:

Program providers will routinely collect and manage data relating to program participants, self-reported participant outcome (SDQ and Adjusted SCORE) and satisfaction measures (Satisfaction SCORE), and the program activities they deliver. This data will provide insight into the types of activities being delivered as part of Resilient Kids, who is accessing these activities and how participants engage with them.



#### Quarterly performance reporting:

Resilient Kids service providers will complete and submit a quarterly performance report to HNC that covers a set of agreed key performance indicators and qualitative reflections around what's working well and the challenges relating to program implementation, which will be shared with the evaluation team for analysis.



#### Quarterly learning loops:

Learning loops with the Evaluation Working Group will involve a review of a data snapshot from the previous quarter and facilitated conversation to explore reflections and learnings that can inform ways to strengthen the design and delivery of the program.



#### Focus groups, interviews and online surveys:

Qualitative engagement will explore and capture data relating to the experiences, perspectives and/or outcomes reported by stakeholder perspectives. Stakeholder perspectives to be captured includes children and young people, parents/caregivers of children and young people, Resilient Kids service provider staff, youth representatives involved in the program's design/delivery, and local stakeholders and services working with children and young people. Qualitative engagement, including the questions and ways that children and young people can engage has been designed to be age and developmentally appropriate.



#### Community Disaster Resilience Assessment:

The Community Disaster Resilience Assessment will engage diverse perspectives to understand the concept of resilience at the community-level and measure changes observed in the resilience of children and young people for future disaster events. The assessment will be administered with local representatives in several Northern Rivers communities and will assess community-level disaster resilience across four domains (community connectedness, risk and vulnerability, planning and procedures, and available resources).



#### Desktop research:

The evaluation team will undertake a desktop analysis of a mix of internal program documentation to outline how various program activities were planned and delivered, as well as other policies and evidence that help to provide a broader context to position the findings of the evaluation within.





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