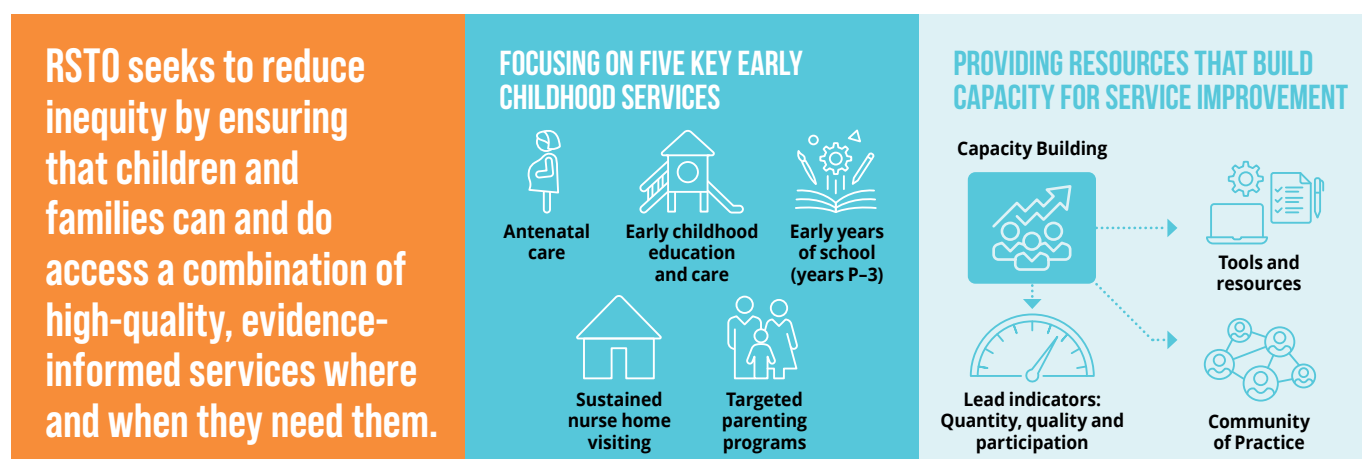


# RESTACKING THE ODDS

The rapid development in a child's earliest years (0-8) provides the foundation for lifelong health, development and wellbeing. Establishing the conditions that children need to thrive during this critical time provides immediate and lasting benefits for individuals, families and communities.

Currently however, the effects of inequities and early disadvantage continue to span generations. Restacking the Odds (RSTO) seeks to help redress this by ensuring that children and families can and do access a combination of high-quality, evidence-informed services where and when they need them. By supporting 'stacking' and the implementation of evidence-based early years programs and services, RSTO contributes to creating the conditions that enable all children to thrive.



## BETTER EVIDENCE, STRONGER PRACTICE

RSTO's unique approach uses evidence to focus on HOW to work differently to improve outcomes for children, families and communities. It aims to develop the skills and knowledge of service providers and community-based early years initiatives for collecting, understanding and using data to enable them to answer key questions including:

- **Quantity:** Are sufficient services available?
- **Quality:** Are we delivering high-quality services?
- **Participation:** Who is accessing our services?

RSTO supports the collection, understanding and use of data to inform decision making and improve service availability, quality and participation.

The project supports communities and service providers to use evidence-based lead indicators for effective and equitable service delivery. Currently in Australia, these indicators are inconsistently collected and rarely used to inform early years services. RSTO is addressing this gap by providing resources, tools and learning opportunities for service providers and communities to enable them to optimise data for better services and better outcomes.

## STACKING FOR CHANGE

There is no single solution to the challenges faced by many children, families and communities. Improving children's health, development and wellbeing requires combining or 'stacking' multiple effective evidence-based strategies across the early years (0-8 years) and implementing them concurrently and continuously.

RSTO focuses on five services to boost children's health development and wellbeing: **antenatal care, sustained nurse home visiting, early childhood education and care, targeted parenting programs and the early years of school.** Together these five services:

- contribute to improved early childhood outcomes
- focus on children AND parents
- run throughout childhood
- are available in many Australian communities
- can be targeted to those with the greatest needs.

Through RSTO, service providers and communities will be better placed to:

- respond to the needs of children and families in their community, especially those experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage
- provide more effective and efficient services (and avoid wasting time, money and effort on approaches that fail to deliver results)
- learn and share with others striving to improve children's outcomes
- capture evidence for insights, innovation and advocacy.

## QUANTITY, QUALITY AND PARTICIPATION

Participation in quality early childhood services helps to ensure children are on the right path to fulfill their potential. But when services are underused, unavailable or vary in quality, they can't fully meet the needs of children or families. By enabling service providers and communities to optimise service participation, quality and quantity, RSTO can amplify the benefits of services for children and families.

## PARTNER WITH US

Currently in Australia, one in five children begin school experiencing developmental vulnerability. The physical, behavioural, social or language vulnerabilities that they experience undermine their learning, health, wellbeing, and development. This inequity is unfair, unacceptable and preventable. It is also costly. But with timely action and a focus on prevention, we can avoid the complex and costly solutions needed when problems are entrenched.

RSTO is committed to working in partnership with communities, service providers and governments to generate and share knowledge about what works to make a difference for children and families.

We welcome the opportunity to work with and learn from those who share our goal so together we can accelerate efforts to reduce inequity and improve children's health, development and wellbeing.

### For more information

RSTO is a collaboration between the Centre for Community Child Health at MCRI, Bain & Company, and Social Ventures Australia.

Visit: [www.rch.org.au/ccch/research-projects/Restacking\\_the\\_Odds](http://www.rch.org.au/ccch/research-projects/Restacking_the_Odds)

Contact: Olivia Hilton, General Manager: [olivia.hilton@mcri.edu.au](mailto:olivia.hilton@mcri.edu.au)

RSTO focuses on five key early childhood services available in most communities.

Services cannot meet the needs of children and families when they are unavailable, underused or inconsistent in quality.

Existing childhood inequity is unfair and avoidable.

RSTO provides services and communities with tools to improve to children's health, development and wellbeing – particularly those experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.