



# WORKING WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER FAMILIES: PROVIDING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICE



*SUPPORTING GOOD PRACTICE*

Child and Youth Protection Services

September 2019



**ACT**  
Government

Community Services



## OUR PRACTICE STANDARDS

‘We will work respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and partner with them in making decisions.’

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The ACT Government acknowledges the traditional custodians of the Canberra region, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and contribution they make to the life of this city and its surrounding region.

# THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

**The purpose of this guide is to provide Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) staff, and its partners, with information about what it means to be culturally responsive, and how to embed this standard in day-to-day practice when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.**

Specifically, this guide will tell you about:

- > the full scope of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP)
- > what is meant by ‘active efforts’ and ‘culturally responsive practice’
- > core considerations when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- > what culturally responsive practice looks like across various CYPS processes
- > connections with legislation, national principles and CYPS practice standards.

By providing this information you will be better equipped to understand, recognise and implement effective practice through a cultural lens, and in turn provide stronger outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

This guide has been informed by various publications, but most notably by:

- > SNAICC, (2017). *Understanding and Applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle*.
- > Curijo, (2018). *Implementing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) into casework practice*.

## READING THIS GUIDE

In reading this guide, the terms ‘child’ and ‘children’ also refer to ‘young person’ and ‘young people’. The term ‘children in care’ refers to ‘children in out of home care’. The term ‘parent’ also refers to a person who holds daily care or long-term parental responsibility. The term ‘Act’ refers to the *Children and Young People Act 2008*.

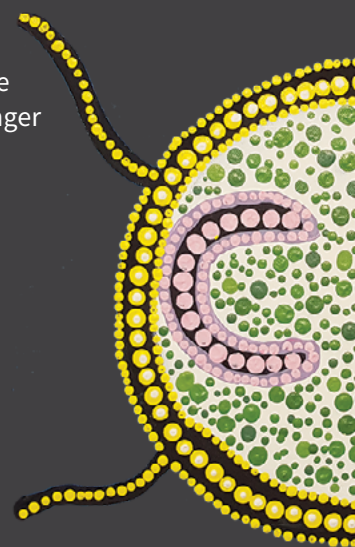
## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

In reading this guide, an ‘Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person’ means a person who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. They are generally:

- > a descendant of an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander person, and/or
- > accepted as an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander person by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.

CYPS recognises the impact colonisation has had on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and understands some children may not know they are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. Some families may choose not to identify their cultural background to CYPS. As such, we acknowledge and respect a person’s **right to privacy** and **choice** to identify or not as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

**Self-identification** by a child or the child’s family is the **only** requirement for you to begin applying the ATSICPP in your work with children and families.



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## COVER ARTWORK

The Aboriginal artwork incorporated on the cover and throughout this guide was created by local Aboriginal Yuin woman, Marilyn Kelly-Parkinson. Child and Youth Protection Services extends its thanks to Ms Kelly-Parkinson for her time in producing this artwork and allowing CYPS to feature it in this guide. The full artwork is featured here.



# OUR COMMITMENT IN WORKING WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER FAMILIES

**We commit to use culturally responsive practice and active efforts to help us strive for cultural proficiency. We will work respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and partner with them in making decisions.**

In a context where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continue to be significantly over-represented in the child protection, youth justice and out of home care systems, it is critical we acknowledge that the **impact** of past government policies and intergenerational trauma, particularly in relation to the removal of Indigenous children, is **strongly** reflected in the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today. It is important to be sensitive to this history and focus our efforts on building trust and rapport with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities and seek to address the **underlying** causes of social disadvantage.

‘Culturally responsive’ practice **values** cultural differences, **seeks** to become culturally informed and **demonstrates** this in action. It seeks to assure the safety and wellbeing of children, while recognising cultural diversity may be reflected in differences, such as the concepts of family and kinship, and child-rearing and parenting practices.

As CYPS staff, you are expected to use a **culturally appropriate lens** when assessing the strengths and needs of families. This includes addressing potential barriers to relationship building and engagement and seeking the advice and assistance of people knowledgeable in the person’s culture and language, including the CYPS Cultural Services Team and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Leader.

# WORKING IN CONTEXT

When working with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children and families, your work **must** be guided by:

- > the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle
- > our CYPS practice standards
- > legislation
- > active efforts.

When considered in tandem, these principles enable you to effectively embed culturally responsive best practice case management into your daily work.

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## THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILD PLACEMENT PRINCIPLE

The ATSICPP recognises the importance of connections to **family, community, culture** and **country** in child and family welfare legislation, policy and practice, and asserts **self-determining** communities are central to supporting and maintaining those connections.

The ATSICPP aims to:

- > ensure an understanding that culture **underpins** and is **integral** to safety and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and is embedded in policy and practice
- > recognise and protect the **rights** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, family members and communities in child welfare matters
- > increase the level of **self-determination** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in child welfare matters
- > reduce the **over-representation** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection and out of home care systems.

Adoption of the ATSICPP in legislation, policy and practice across Australia's states and territories has been recognised as *'the single most significant change affecting welfare practice since the 1970s'* (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Bringing Them Home Report* (1997)). The ATSICPP was established in 1984, as a result of years of activism by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOS) and others. Their focus was to

address the growing disproportionate rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being adopted by or placed in care with non-Indigenous carers, and to prevent past practices from continuing or being repeated.

The ATSICPP is **not** simply about where or with whom a child lives if placed in care. The history and intention of the ATSICPP is about keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children **connected** to their family, community, culture and country. The ATSICPP includes **five inter-related elements**, being:

- > **Prevention**
- > **Partnership**
- > **Placement**
- > **Participation**
- > **Connection.**

These five 'core' elements combine to create the overarching element of **Identification**. Each element is described below.

### PREVENTION

The Prevention element acknowledges each Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander has the right to be brought up within their own family and community. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's sense of identity is **preserved** and **enhanced** when raised within their family, kinship group, community and culture. This element recognises the concept of 'family' within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is **broadly** defined, extending beyond the immediate family and embracing a more **collective** approach to child-rearing.

## PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership element acknowledges the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives, external to the statutory child protection system, is required in **all** child protection decision-making – including intake, assessment, intervention and placement and care, as well as judicial decision-making processes. The participation of community controlled and led organisations recognises the **best interests** of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child are met by drawing on the experience and knowledge held **only** by family and community. It promotes the building of trusting relationships with the family and improves communication between the family and the statutory system.

## PLACEMENT

The Placement element acknowledges that where the separation or removal of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child from their family is unavoidable (a decision requiring participation of community representatives), the child's continuing connection to their family, community, culture, country and identity development is the **priority**, as is limiting any disruption for the child. Further, placement of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child in care must be prioritised in the following way:

1. With Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander relatives or extended family members, or other non-Indigenous relatives or extended family members.
2. With Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander members of the child's community.
3. With Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander family-based carers.
4. With a non-Indigenous carer or in a residential setting – only if the preferred options above (1-3) are not available.

If a child is **not** placed with their extended Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander family, they **must** be cared for within close geographic proximity to their family.

The above priority order applies to **all** care placement types – respite, emergency, short and long-term.

## PARTICIPATION

The Participation element acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, parents and family members are entitled to participate in **all** child protection decisions affecting them regarding intervention, placement and care, as well as judicial decisions. Involving family members reflects their **important** role in child-rearing practices generally and increases the likelihood and mechanisms for identifying supports and options to address any care and protection issues. This is also a matter of **natural justice**, where in the administration of law, a fair process is one that affords those affected by it an opportunity to participate in the making of related decisions.

## CONNECTION

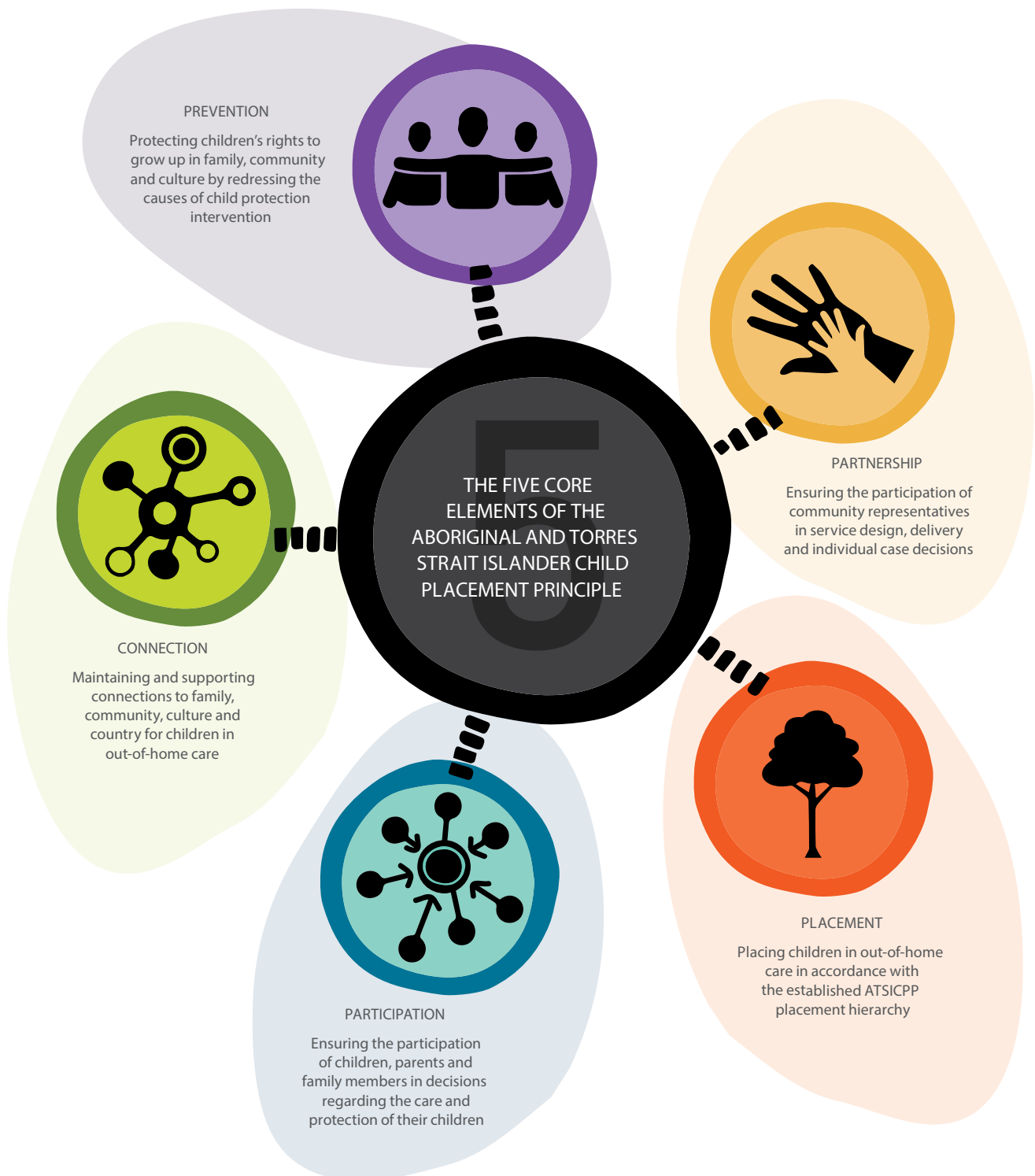
The Connection element acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care are supported to **maintain** connection to their family, community, culture and country, especially children placed with non-Indigenous carers. The best way to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care today do **not** endure the same sense of loss of identity and dislocation from family and community as the Stolen Generations, is to **actively** support them to maintain or to re-establish their connection to family, community, culture and country. The best interests of a child are generally inextricably linked to their family and community, which means for some children, there are **multiple** connections to Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and/or non-Indigenous family and community that require ongoing attention.

## IDENTIFICATION

The Identification element encompasses all five core elements of the ATSICPP – Prevention, Partnership, Placement, Participation, Connection. It acknowledges all children and families, including **maternal** and **paternal** extended family members, where appropriate, are asked if they are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background.

Without **correct** and **early** cultural identification, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are at risk of being deprived of culturally safe supports, case planning and placements. Identification seeks to enable access to culturally appropriate services in response to the **specific** needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

## The five core elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle



Source: SNAICC, (2017). *Understanding and Applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: A Resource for Legislation, Policy and Program Development*



## OUR CYPSS PRACTICE STANDARDS

Our practice standards translate the legislation and principles that guide our work into expectations about what it means when we work with children and their families, carers and other agencies. They guide our daily work and it is important to consider our practice standards in conjunction with this guide.

Throughout this guide you will notice this leaf symbol. It represents a direct link between the guide's information and our CYPSS practice standards, alongside the active efforts that will help you embed our practice standards into your work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.



Our practice standards are:

Practice standard	Description
Child and youth-centred practice	> We will ensure the best interests of children and young people are at the centre of our practice.
Relationship-based practice	> We will build relationships to create change.
Holistic assessment and planning	> We will respond holistically to a child or young person's situation, appreciating the complexity of their situation and the context.
Collaboration	> We will work collaboratively to address the complex needs, safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
Sharing risk	> We recognise sharing of risk leads to better decision-making.
Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	> We will work respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander families and partner with them in making decisions.
Culturally responsive Practice with culturally and linguistically diverse communities	> We will ensure our practice is culturally responsive and recognises culture as a source of strength and resilience.
Critical reflection and supervision	> We are committed to creating an organisational culture grounded in supervision and reflection.
Practice expertise and leadership	> We are committed to ongoing learning to underpin our practice and ensure the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families.
Documentation in casework	> We will be accountable for, and responsible with, the information we keep.

## LEGISLATION

The *Children and Young People Act 2008* (the Act), is the law that governs child protection and youth justice in the ACT and provides CYPS, and others, with the **legal framework** to carry out our responsibilities to ensure the care, safety and wellbeing of children.

Under this Act, sections 8 and 9 outline the **best interests** of children must be at the centre of all decisions (s8), and the **principles** to be considered when making such decisions (s9). In addition, **section 10** relates specifically to making decisions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and outlines you must act in ways that:

- > maintain a child's connection with the lifestyle, culture and traditions of their community
- > consider submissions made by or on behalf of any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person or organisation identified by CYPS as providing ongoing support services to the child and their family
- > maintain the traditions and cultural values (including kinship rules) as identified by the child's family, kinship relationships and community with which the child has the strongest affiliation.

Under **section 513**, the Act also provides specific guidance on the **priority order** of who should care for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child, if the child is to come into care. It states you must, using the priority order, place the child with the first carer:

- > available
- > whom the child does not object to
- > who is consistent with the child's Cultural Plan (if already developed).

The priority order is:

- > a kinship carer
- > a foster carer who is a member of the child's Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community and is in a relationship of responsibility for the child according to local custom and practice
- > a foster carer who is a member of the child's community
- > an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander foster carer
- > a non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander foster carer who you believe on reasonable grounds to be:
  - sensitive to the child's needs
  - capable of promoting the child's ongoing contact with their family, community and culture
  - living near the child's family or community if family reunion or continuing contact with the child's family, community or culture is a consideration in their placement.

In addition to the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, your work must also be consistent with the *ACT Human Rights Act 2004*. Specifically, **section 27** outlines:

- > **anyone** who belongs to an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority must not be denied the right to enjoy their culture, declare and practise their religion, or use their language
- > Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people hold **distinct** cultural rights and must not be denied the right to:
  - maintain, control, protect and develop their:
    - cultural heritage and distinctive spiritual practices, observances, beliefs and teachings
    - languages and knowledge
    - kinship ties
  - have recognised and valued their material and economic relationships with the land, waters and other resources they have a connection with under traditional laws and customs.

## ACTIVE EFFORTS

'Active efforts' are an important part of our practice. They are **purposeful, thorough** and **timely** efforts supported by policy and procedure to secure the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

To successfully implement active efforts, they must be underpinned by practice that is **culturally safe, child-centred, trauma-informed, relationship-based** and **dignity driven**.

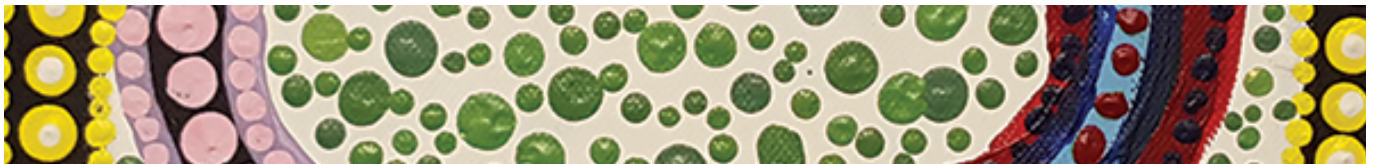
Active efforts must **always** be made to enable an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child to remain in the care of their biological family and cultural community.

## CORE CONSIDERATIONS WHEN APPLYING ACTIVE EFFORTS

When applying active efforts, four core considerations guide our work. These represent the overarching principles you must **keep front of mind** when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

The core considerations are:

- > Connection to culture and community
- > Family, kinship and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting practices
- > Self-determination through decision-making
- > Culturally appropriate communication.



### Connection to culture and community

Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander cultures are not individualistic but **collective** and **inclusive** of family and community. They have their own cultural values, practice rights and knowledge that must be considered and valued as a parenting strength.

Cultural identity and connection to culture is a **fundamental right** for every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person. Maintaining connection to traditional country and communities, as well as gaining cultural knowledge of the community the child resides in, is essential for the development and belonging of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Past government policies and practices in child protection have not been positive for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and for those reasons some families may not identify initially as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. It is important to understand, if a child identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait

Islander person, their rights and voice must be valued as they have a **right** to know their cultural history and to develop their cultural identity.

Cultural expertise is necessary when delivering child protection and youth justice services to mitigate the long-term effects of past practices on children, families and communities. Using culturally safe support services, such as the CYPs Cultural Services Team, in a genuine and sincere manner can support a culturally responsive approach to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

When referring to external community services ensure they are culturally safe for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. **Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations** can provide culturally safe support options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and should be a consideration when referring.



## Family, kinship and parenting practices

Family involvement is the key to the development of culturally safe working relationships to support positive outcomes for children and families. Understand in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, different family members play various roles in the raising of children in the community. This could include family members playing cultural roles such as men's and women's business when sharing family and cultural knowledge.

It is **best practice** to work with family through collaboration to allow them to provide information for the child from the family's perspective. Both **maternal** and **paternal** family information is significant. It is important to speak to both sides of the family to gather a clear picture of the kinship structures, as some family members may not be currently involved in the child's life but could potentially provide kinship support and cultural knowledge.

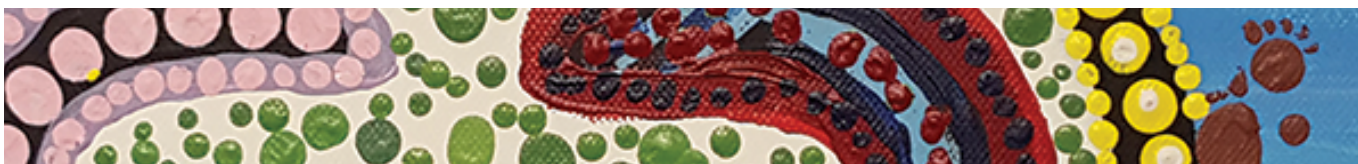
It is important to recognise **searching for family never ends**, and must be active, consistent and ongoing even after a placement is made. Relying only on the information recorded can be detrimental to family finding as it may not be up to date or inclusive of information from everyone involved. Family finding for an

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child is to be conducted consistently and regularly throughout a family's involvement with CYPS.

Families can provide input as to how the child will engage with family, community, culture and country. They can help to identify who the significant family members are, as well as cultural details of the family's language groups, totems and cultural protocols that need to be considered when working with family. This is inclusive of family participation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and the levels of engagement with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

It is important to understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' view of **attachment** is different to the western view of there being only one or two primary carers. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting and caring practices are diverse, and many are based on **collaborative** caring and often shared amongst several members within family and extended family. These parenting practices are culturally appropriate behaviours and need to be **valued** as traditional knowledge and considered a **parenting strength**.





## Self-determination through decision-making

Self-determination underpins the way effective communication and decision-making is achieved. For self-determination to be achieved, it must be guided by the family, as **all** families can make decisions and identify solutions for the safety and wellbeing of their children. Families are aware of their struggles and their strengths. By having the opportunity to discuss matters and ask questions, a family's voice can be heard.

By using the ATSCPP core elements, informed decisions can be made based on evidence and facts and not on assumptions. This must be a consistent approach where the child's safety needs are at the centre of all planning.

It is vital to **celebrate** small and large successes, achievements and improvements with all

involved, and ensure this information is clearly documented and easily accessible to continue to build on. Be conscious of the shame some families may experience if they feel they have failed because one option did not work, and continue to motivate them to try other ways.

Focus on building a trusting relationship between everyone involved and how these can be facilitated and supported. It is important to outline who is responsible for maintaining the relationships and how, and what supports are required to do this. This may be inclusive of a financial commitment, for example, providing bus tickets to make appointments.



## Culturally appropriate communication

Ensure all communication with parents and families is **clear, concise** and **culturally safe** so they fully understand their rights, responsibilities, involved processes and available supports. It is important to ensure the outcomes discussed are appropriate and achievable.

Communicate thoughtfully, both verbally and in writing, in a way the family understands, being mindful of literacy and language (jargon) barriers. Use culturally sensitive, strength-based dialogue with an understanding of the impacts of poverty and cumulative disadvantage.

Maintain ongoing support for everyone involved in implementing a child's plans using strength-based and culturally safe communication. Include formalised meetings at key points with a focus on best interests and child-centred principles. Have a clear understanding of the expectations of everyone involved (especially the child's) when developing and implementing plans.

Invite families to have a support person or advocate attend with them.

# IN PRACTICE

Culturally responsive practice is **many** things and relevant to **all** CYPS processes. This section provides practical information about how you can **embed** such practice into the various tasks you perform. It will guide you in:

- > understanding which elements of the ATSI CPP specifically relate to certain CYPS processes
- > connecting our practice standards to the tasks required within the specific process
- > reflecting on active efforts that demonstrate culturally responsive practice relevant to the specific task.

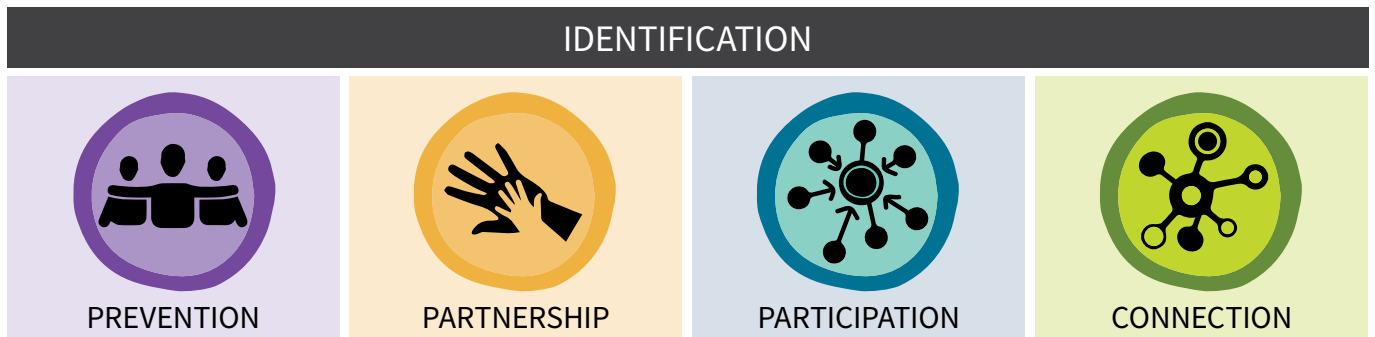
## INTAKE

Intake is the initial point of contact where we receive and analyse information to determine the best way to respond to concerns about a child. The intake process is also used to assist young people involved with the youth justice system.

During this phase we make a record of a child's situation and promptly gather information from various sources to assess risk and need and determine appropriate next steps.

### CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSI CPP relevant to **intake** are:



## PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPS practice standards most relevant to our intake process and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



Practice standard	Active efforts – <i>Intake</i>
<b>Child and youth-centred practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Use a culturally appropriate interview style and activities to engage with the child and family and use a cultural lens when assessing the family and the child’s safety needs. It is important to not make assumptions or jump to conclusions.</li> <li>&gt; Be respectful of extended family dynamics and include anyone who the child or parents view as important to the child’s upbringing and wellbeing. Remember the Aboriginal child-rearing process: ‘it takes a village to raise a child’.</li> <li>&gt; Consult with our CYPS Cultural Services Team before approaching the family.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship-based practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Make every effort to understand the impact of historical and current power imbalances between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and statutory authorities. Think about how this would feel for the family and act to broaden your knowledge of past relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and the statutory child protection system.</li> <li>&gt; Provide the child and family with information and contact details of the key contacts within CYPS and other services involved.</li> <li>&gt; For young people in Bimberi, communicate with their parents and family in a clear and culturally safe manner that enables them to fully understand their rights, processes and available supports. Parents and family should be provided with information about CYPS processes, requirements and expectations.</li> </ul>
<b>Holistic assessment and planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Apply a strengths-based, culturally appropriate lens to the identification and documentation of current and past family history of trauma.</li> <li>&gt; Identify the child and family’s healing needs and strengths, as well as the child’s safety needs.</li> <li>&gt; Gather information from all relevant sources to assist in a comprehensive assessment of the child’s circumstances. Include, for example, significant others involved with the child or family, extended family, schools and community services.</li> <li>&gt; Engage in honest and respectful communication with the family. Discuss what they think works and doesn’t work for them. Talk about times when everything was going well in the family and what was different about the situation then.</li> <li>&gt; Be flexible with support options. Should a child or family identify difficulties working with a support person, service or program, work with them to identify other options.</li> <li>&gt; Include our CYPS Cultural Services Team in all Wreck Bay planning and support meetings to include cultural input for this community.</li> </ul>

**Practice standard****Active efforts – Intake**

<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Provide opportunities for the child and family to participate in all decision-making by empowering them with the knowledge of processes, requirements and expectations of the child protection or youth justice systems.</li><li>&gt; Where a case conference or Family Group Conference is used, ensure the family has an opportunity to identify any community members, ACCO representatives or members of our CYPS Cultural Services Team they would like to attend. Ensure the timing of meetings accommodate the needs of those involved.</li><li>&gt; Actively assist the child and family to access the necessary supports and services in the community, including financial and transportation assistance.</li><li>&gt; Seek information from relevant representatives from our CYPS Cultural Services Team and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (including ACCOs) to support an accurate assessment of a child’s circumstances.</li></ul>
<b>Sharing risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Use a family-led, decision-making model, such as offering the family referrals to Family Group Conferencing involving all key stakeholders and the child’s family and kin.</li><li>&gt; Make sure decisions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are made in the context of a Care Team or a case conference that involves all key stakeholders and the child’s family and kin.</li><li>&gt; Identify if supports can be used within families and community wherever possible.</li><li>&gt; Provide the family with information on the culturally safe supports and services available in their local area and share the risk through referral to external family preservation services.</li><li>&gt; Provide the family with information about the Australian Red Cross Birth Family Advocacy Support Service and provide copies of the relevant ‘Working Together for Kids’ guides.</li></ul>
<b>Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Always ask the child and family, including maternal and paternal extended family members, where appropriate, if they are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background.</li><li>&gt; Gather as much information as possible by asking questions about:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• who their mob or people are</li><li>• close and extended family members’ last names</li><li>• where the family’s traditional country is and where the family currently lives</li><li>• what they understand about their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage</li><li>• who holds the family knowledge?</li></ul></li><li>&gt; Use an appropriate manner, language, support and knowledge (including cultural aspects, routines and environment) when asking questions.</li><li>&gt; When referring to external services, ensure they are culturally safe and consider the available supports provided by ACCOs.</li></ul>

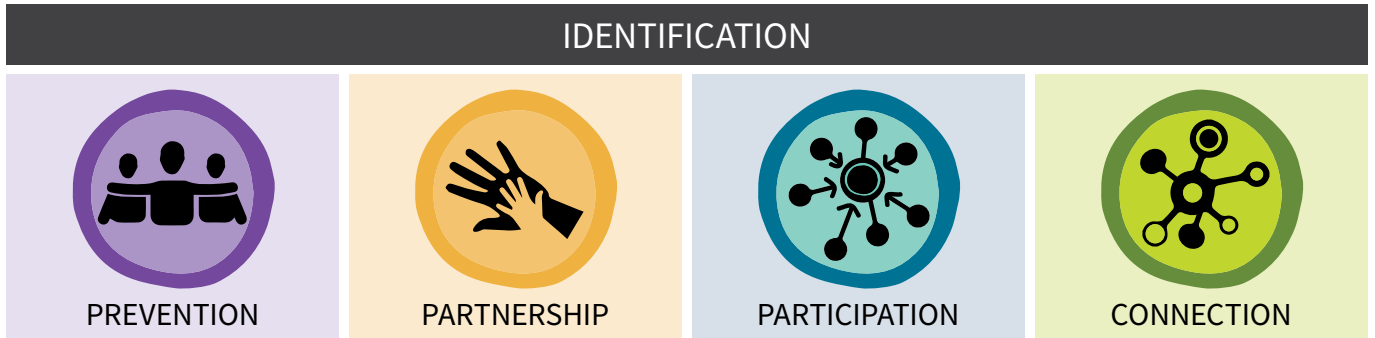


# APPRAISAL

An appraisal is one of a range of options available to CYPS when responding to a Child Protection Report. It is a process of investigation to determine if a child is experiencing, has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing abuse or neglect (including exposure to family violence). The decision to conduct an appraisal and how to conduct it, **must** be done in accordance with our CYPS Risk Assessment Framework.

## CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSI CPP relevant to **appraisal** are:



## PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPS practice standards most relevant to our appraisal process and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



Practice standard	Active efforts – <i>Appraisal</i>
<p><b>Child and youth-centred practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Meet or speak with the child to hear and record their views, wishes and needs through a cultural lens to ensure the child’s voice is heard.</li> <li>&gt; Use a culturally appropriate interview style and activities to engage with the child and family and use a cultural lens when assessing the family and the child’s safety needs. It is important to not make assumptions or jump to conclusions.</li> <li>&gt; Be respectful of extended family dynamics and include anyone who the child or parents view as important to the child’s upbringing and wellbeing. Remember the Aboriginal child-rearing process: ‘it takes a village to raise a child’.</li> <li>&gt; Consult with our CYPS Cultural Services Team before approaching the family.</li> <li>&gt; Make every effort to gather cultural guidance and support before and during the appraisal process.</li> <li>&gt; Ask the family if they would like a support person present or a representative of our CYPS Cultural Services Team or an ACCO.</li> <li>&gt; Ask the family if there is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation or community member who would like to make a submission on behalf of the child or family to inform the appraisal assessment. Ensure you follow through with the request.</li> </ul>

**Relationship-based practice**

- > Invest time in developing trust with the family. Build relationships over time through consistency, honesty and working with respect for difference. Don't make assumptions. Do ask questions and take the time to understand the family's perspective.
- > Make every effort to understand the impact of historical and current power imbalances between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and statutory authorities. Think about how this would feel for the family and act to broaden your knowledge of past relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and the statutory child protection system.
- > Provide the child and family with information and contact details of the key contacts within CYPS and other services involved.
- > Facilitate a greater level of participation by the family by:
  - identifying transport/travel needs
  - considering the timing of contact visits – for example, the day before payday may make it difficult for the family to attend due to lack of financial resources
  - considering the location of contact visits – for example, make every effort to meet the family in larger rooms to allow for extended family members and for everyone to feel comfortable. Ensure rooms used have visual cultural resources available to support cultural connection as well as resources for children to play with.
  - involving staff who have demonstrated culturally responsive practice and are able to use a well-developed cultural lens.
  - using culturally safe language.
- > Be flexible with support options. Should a child or family identify difficulties working with a support person, service or program, work with them to identify other options.
- > Support the family to develop a concise Family Plan or Safety Plan, using family language and clearly identifying the support people and services to be involved. Outline achievable actions and timeframes and clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all involved.
- > Communicate to parents and family in a clear and culturally safe manner that enables them to fully understand their rights, processes and available supports. Parents and family should be provided with information about CYPS processes, requirements and expectations.

**Holistic assessment and planning**

- > Engage in honest and respectful communication with the family. Discuss what they think works and doesn't work for them. Talk about times when everything was going well in the family and what was different about the situation then.
- > Conduct a holistic assessment of the child's needs by assessing the relationships in the family and extended kinship network. Take the time to ensure everyone is comfortable and can share their views.
- > Gather information that assesses strengths and supports, not just deficits in the family. Focus on solutions to support child safety and determine what the family has been doing to be protective so far, being mindful to include extended family supports.
- > Undertake a Family Group Conference to engage early in the life of a problem. Identify actions that respond to the child's safety needs and prevent escalation in CYPS involvement.
- > Engage the family with the Child and Family Centres for primary prevention and early support opportunities.

**Practice standard****Active efforts – Appraisal**

<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Seek advice from our CYPS Cultural Services Team and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Leader.</li><li>&gt; Use culturally appropriate communication to ensure information provided to family and services involved is clear, explains the family’s rights and responsibilities, as well as the expectations of CYPS.</li><li>&gt; Ask the family if they have any family members or support persons they would like involved to assist them through the appraisal process.</li><li>&gt; Actively engage and be inclusive of incarcerated parents in the family decision-making process, unless there is significant reason not to.</li><li>&gt; Provide the family with the appraisal’s outcomes and outline what the next steps will be, both verbally and in writing.</li></ul>
<b>Sharing risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Understand sharing responsibility for a child and their safety is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting practice and many families invoke a communal approach to raising children.</li><li>&gt; Use a family-led, decision-making model, such as offering the family referrals to Family Group Conferencing involving all key stakeholders and the child’s family and kin.</li><li>&gt; Make sure decisions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are made in the context of a Care Team or a case conference that involves all key stakeholders and the child’s family and kin.</li><li>&gt; Provide the family with information on the culturally safe supports and services available in their local area and share the risk through referral to external family preservation and restoration services.</li><li>&gt; Be clear with the family about what CYPS requires to ensure their child’s safety, without using jargon, and help the family identify what is important to them regarding their child’s needs and safety.</li><li>&gt; Provide the family with information about the Australian Red Cross Birth Family Advocacy Support Service and provide copies of the relevant ‘Working Together for Kids’ guides.</li></ul>
<b>Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Revisit the child’s and family’s cultural heritage as some families do not identify as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander at initial contact with CYPS.</li><li>&gt; Gather as much information as possible by asking questions about:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• who their mob or people are</li><li>• close and extended family members’ last names</li><li>• where the family’s traditional country is and where the family currently lives</li><li>• what they understand about their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage</li><li>• who holds the family knowledge?</li></ul></li><li>&gt; Consult with our CYPS Cultural Services Team prior to conducting an appraisal. They may be able to provide previously gathered cultural and family information to assist the appraisal, including previous family finding information or refer you to other support services.</li><li>&gt; Plan with our CYPS Cultural Services Team to attend visits and meetings with family and service providers, and to review the appraisal information to ensure a cultural lens has been applied.</li></ul>

## Practice standard

## Active efforts – *Appraisal*

### Critical reflection and supervision

- > Use supervision to regularly reflect on the use of active efforts in your practice.
- > Use live supervision opportunities to improve and reflect on your current practice.
- > Ask our CYPs Cultural Services Team or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Leader for advice and feedback on your interactions and how you can improve engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
- > Reflect on what went well, and what could be improved when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

### Documentation in casework

- > Record information factually and without cultural bias or assumption. Be conscious the child can request a copy of their file in the future and it is important to present information in a way that is respectful to them and their family and culture.
- > Create eco-maps and Cultural Plans in collaboration with family and update them regularly.
- > Make a clear record of all consultations with our CYPs Cultural Services Team and ensure their recommendations are clearly recorded and followed up.

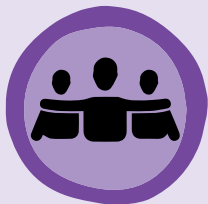
## SUPPORT RESPONSE

A support response is where CYPs works with parents assessed as **willing** but **not able** to protect their children from harm. It is used in specific circumstances where an appraisal is not appropriate, for example because the child's need for safety is posed by the child themselves, or child-to-child sexual abuse.

## CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSCPP relevant to **support response** are:

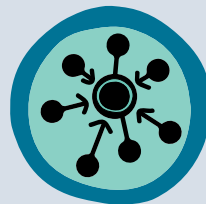
### IDENTIFICATION



PREVENTION



PARTNERSHIP



PARTICIPATION



CONNECTION

## PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPS practice standards most relevant to providing a support response and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



Practice standard	Active efforts – <i>Support response</i>
<p><b>Child and youth-centred practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Meet or speak with the child to hear and record their views, wishes and needs through a cultural lens to ensure the child’s voice is heard. This is central to the support response.</li> <li>&gt; Use a culturally appropriate interview style and activities to engage with the child and family and use a cultural lens when assessing the family and the child’s safety needs. It is important to not make assumptions or jump to conclusions</li> <li>&gt; Consult with our CYPS Cultural Services Team before approaching the family to determine what cultural support is available.</li> <li>&gt; Ask the family if they would like a support person present or a representative of our CYPS Cultural Services Team or an ACCO.</li> <li>&gt; Identify family history and past trauma to support healing options for the child and family, such as referrals to culturally appropriate, trauma-informed services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relationship-based practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Invest time in developing trust with the family. Build relationships over time through consistency, honesty and working with respect for difference. Don’t make assumptions. Do ask questions and take the time to understand the family’s perspective.</li> <li>&gt; Make every effort to understand the impact of historical and current power imbalances between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and statutory authorities. Think about how this would feel for the family and act to broaden your knowledge of past relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and the statutory child protection system.</li> <li>&gt; Provide the child and family with information and contact details of the key contacts within CYPS and other services involved.</li> <li>&gt; Facilitate a greater level of participation by the family by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identifying transport/travel needs</li> <li>• considering the timing of contact visits – for example, the day before payday may make it difficult for the family to attend due to lack of financial resources</li> <li>• considering the location of contact visits – for example, make every effort to meet the family in larger rooms to allow for extended family members and for everyone to feel comfortable. Ensure rooms used have visual cultural resources available to support cultural connection, as well as resources for children to play with</li> <li>• involving staff who have demonstrated culturally responsive practice and are able to use a well-developed cultural lens.</li> <li>• using culturally safe language.</li> </ul> </li> <li>&gt; Identify and use culturally appropriate family support services and programs for a coordinated approach, including ACCOs such as Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service, Gugan Gulwan and our Child and Family Centres.</li> <li>&gt; Maintain open, clear and transparent communication throughout to gain trust with the family.</li> <li>&gt; Communicate to parents and family in a clear and culturally safe manner that enables them to fully understand their rights, processes and available supports. Parents and family should be provided with information about CYPS processes, requirements and expectations.</li> </ul>

## Practice standard

## Active efforts – Support response

<b>Holistic assessment and planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Clearly communicate to the family that a support response is about addressing the child’s safety needs and is not an assessment of the parents or family.</li><li>&gt; Conduct a holistic assessment of the child’s needs by assessing the relationships in the family and extended kinship network. Take the time to ensure everyone is comfortable, can share their views and discuss how they can support the child.</li><li>&gt; Focus on solutions to support child safety and determine what the family has been doing to be protective so far, being mindful to include extended family supports.</li><li>&gt; Undertake a Family Group Conference to engage early in the life of a problem. Identify actions that respond to the child’s safety needs and prevent escalation in CYPS involvement.</li><li>&gt; Engage the family with the Child and Family Centres for primary prevention and early support opportunities.</li><li>&gt; Be flexible with support options. Should a child or family identify difficulties working with a support person, service or program, work with them to identify other options.</li><li>&gt; Support the family to develop a concise Family Plan or Safety Plan, using family language and clearly identifying the support people and services to be involved. Outline achievable actions and timeframes and clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all involved.</li></ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Seek advice from our CYPS Cultural Services Team and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Leader.</li><li>&gt; Refer the family to collaborative, information-sharing forums such as Family Group Conferencing and case conferences to ensure everyone involved can contribute to the development of the Family and Safety plans and share information.</li><li>&gt; Ensure relevant support services are offered to the child and family, and ensure those services are involved in relevant case planning.</li></ul>
<b>Sharing risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Understand sharing responsibility for a child and their safety is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting practice and many families invoke a communal approach to raising children.</li><li>&gt; Use a family-led, decision-making model, such as offering the family referrals to Family Group Conferencing involving all key stakeholders and the child’s family and kin.</li><li>&gt; Identify local support services being used and/or available and provide choice for the family to share the risk to minimise child safety concerns.</li><li>&gt; Be clear with the family about what CYPS requires to ensure their child’s safety, without using jargon, and help the family identify what is important to them regarding their child’s needs and safety.</li><li>&gt; Help the family identify appropriate supports that will meet the needs of their child and family and address the safety concerns held by CYPS. This could include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• individual therapies for the child</li><li>• Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare, Uniting, Karinya House</li><li>• Gugan Gulwan, Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service</li><li>• other culturally safe services and programs.</li></ul></li><li>&gt; Provide the family with information about the Australian Red Cross Birth Family Advocacy Support Service and provide copies of the relevant ‘Working Together for Kids’ guides.</li></ul>

## Practice standard

## Active efforts – Support response

### Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

- > Revisit the child’s and family’s cultural heritage as some families do not identify as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander at initial contact with CYPs.
- > Consult with our CYPs Cultural Services Team to provide advice and assist with planning. They may be able to provide previously gathered cultural and family information to assist with support options, including previous family finding information or refer you to other support services.
- > Develop and maintain strong relationships with culturally safe services through regular and open communication and working with integrity.

### Documentation in casework

- > Document and record all communication (both verbal and written) in a clear and factual manner about the child’s and family’s progress.
- > Make a clear record of all consultations with our CYPs Cultural Services Team and ensure their recommendations are clearly recorded and followed up.

## FAMILY PRESERVATION

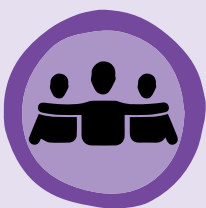
Family preservation is used by CYPs to stay involved with a family after an appraisal – its goal is to **keep the family safe together**. It does this by working to **strengthen** elements of family functioning that might be vulnerable or need extra support to ensure the child’s safety needs are met.

In family preservation, CYPs works with the **agreement** of the family on a family-led plan to increase support and address unmet needs the child or parents have. This might be where family violence exists and safety planning is required, or where cumulative harm exists caused by the accumulation of risk over time. At times, family preservation may lead to a Family Assessment, although it may also lead to case closure. Family preservation should be used where families are at risk of involvement with the ACT Childrens Court and the family is motivated to make positive changes.

## CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSI CPP relevant to **family preservation** are:

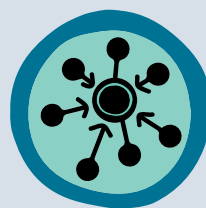
### IDENTIFICATION



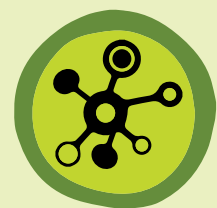
PREVENTION



PARTNERSHIP



PARTICIPATION



CONNECTION

## PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPS practice standards most relevant to family preservation and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



Practice standard	Active efforts – <i>Family preservation</i>
<b>Child and youth-centred practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Meet or speak with the child to hear and record their views, wishes and needs through a cultural lens to ensure the child’s voice is heard. This is central to the family preservation response.</li> <li>&gt; Use a culturally appropriate interview style and activities to engage with the child and family and use a cultural lens when assessing the family and the child’s safety needs. It is important to not make assumptions or jump to conclusions.</li> <li>&gt; Ask the family if they would like a support person present or a representative of our CYPS Cultural Services Team or an ACCO.</li> <li>&gt; Identify family history and past trauma to support healing options for the child and family, such as referrals to culturally appropriate, trauma-informed services.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship-based practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Clearly communicate to the family that a family preservation response is underpinned by the belief families want to change for the sake of their children. Let them know it is a voluntary arrangement based on a relationship of trust where the family agrees to work with CYPS over a period of time to reduce the child’s safety needs.</li> <li>&gt; Make every effort for the family to participate in the preservation response. Provide them with the information and knowledge held by professionals, and the opportunity to identify solutions within a supportive, familial and community context with the right to family-led decision-making.</li> <li>&gt; Make every effort to identify supports where family violence is occurring, including both individual and family-level services and programs, such as the Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) and Room for Change (DVCS).</li> <li>&gt; Consider the power and influence different family members have and how this can impact on discussions. Certain family members have decision-making responsibilities for the family and can offer a plan of action to bring the family together to carry out responsibilities.</li> <li>&gt; Make every effort to understand the impact of historical and current power imbalances between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and statutory authorities. Think about how this would feel for the family and act to broaden your knowledge of past relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and the statutory child protection system.</li> <li>&gt; Communicate to parents and family in a clear and culturally safe manner that enables them to fully understand their rights, processes and available supports. Parents and family should be provided with information about CYPS processes, requirements and expectations.</li> </ul>



**Practice standard****Active efforts – *Family preservation*****Holistic assessment and planning**

- > Create the opportunity for the family to demonstrate what is best to meet their child’s safety needs and assist them as the experts in their family to identify:
  - their own safety needs
  - what needs to change
  - how they would like their family to function.
- > Undertake a Family Group Conference or case conference to identify solutions and develop a Family Plan to ensure wrap around supports, services and programs for all family members – including pre-natal, family support and kinship respite options. This might be very informal and include only services and individuals the parents agree to invite. Use these meetings to keep the Family Plan on track and encourage the family to celebrate their progress toward agreed goals and/or acknowledge where progress has not been made.
- > Conduct a Family Assessment (as appropriate). Seek and consider the family’s history/story, trauma needs and experiences, and strengths and achievements. Consult with our CYPS Cultural Services Team for advice and recommendations. Those recommendations should be valued and implemented into your assessment plan.
- > Be flexible with support options. Should a child or family identify difficulties working with a support person, service or program, work with them to identify other options.
- > Keep a focus on the family’s strengths and skill-building, taking every effort to set the family up for success.

**Collaboration**

- > Make opportunities for the child, parents and family to discuss and ask questions about the family preservation processes and CYPS requirements and expectations.
- > Use culturally appropriate communication methods with family and support services, and establish a coordinated approach.
- > Provide regular updates to everyone involved, focusing on supporting family engagement with no surprises and not moving the goal posts.
- > Refer the family to collaborative, information-sharing forums such as Family Group Conferencing and case conferences to ensure everyone involved can contribute to the development of the various plans and share information. This might be very informal and include only services and individuals the parents agree to invite.

**Practice standard****Active efforts – Family preservation**

<b>Sharing risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Understand sharing responsibility for a child and their safety is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting practice and many families invoke a communal approach to raising children.</li><li>&gt; Make sure decisions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are made in the context of a Care Team or a case conference that involves all key stakeholders and the child's family and kin.</li><li>&gt; Identify local support services being used and/or available and provide choice for the family to share the risk to minimise child safety concerns.</li><li>&gt; Be clear with the family about what CYPS requires to ensure their child's safety, without using jargon, and help the family identify what is important to them regarding their child's needs and safety.</li><li>&gt; Help the family identify appropriate supports that will meet the needs of their child and family and address the safety concerns held by CYPS. This could include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• individual therapies for the child</li><li>• Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare, Uniting, Karinya House</li><li>• Gugan Gulwan, Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service</li><li>• other culturally safe services and programs.</li></ul></li><li>&gt; Provide the family with information about the Australian Red Cross Birth Family Advocacy Support Service and provide copies of the relevant 'Working Together for Kids' guides.</li></ul>
<b>Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Consult with our CYPS Cultural Services Team to provide advice and assist with planning. They may be able to provide previously gathered cultural and family information to assist with support options, including previous family finding information or refer you to other support services.</li><li>&gt; Develop and maintain strong relationships with culturally safe services through regular and open communication and working with integrity.</li><li>&gt; Where a case conference or Family Group Conference is convened, ensure the family has an opportunity to identify any community members, ACCO representatives or members of our CYPS Cultural Services Team, they would like to attend. Ensure the timing of meetings accommodates the needs of the conference members.</li><li>&gt; Ask the family if there is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation or community member who would like to make a submission on behalf of the child or family to inform the response. Ensure you follow through with the request.</li></ul>
<b>Documentation in casework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Document and record all communication (both verbal and written) in a clear and factual manner about the child's and family's progress.</li><li>&gt; Make a clear record of all consultations with our CYPS Cultural Services Team and ensure their recommendations are clearly recorded and followed up.</li><li>&gt; When conducting a Family Assessment, ensure the assessment plan includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• who undertook the assessment</li><li>• the individuals involved</li><li>• when and how communication occurred.</li></ul></li></ul>

## CARE ORDER APPLICATIONS

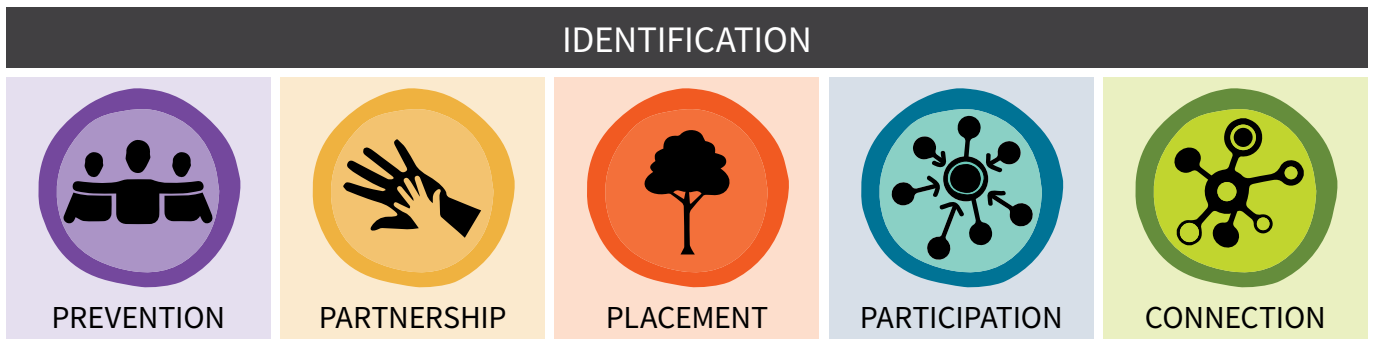
A care order application is a formal request to the ACT Childrens Court for a Care and Protection Order. Before you can make an application to the Court, it must first be approved by our **Application Review Committee**. When applications relate to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child, a member of our CYPS Cultural Services Team is represented on the Committee.

CYPS is committed to using **planned applications** to secure the safety of children, unless the child’s safety needs are immediate and significant, remembering that further trauma will always occur when Emergency Action is taken.

Similarly, where **parental responsibility** can be **shared**, instead of removed, CYPS will prioritise this. Where CYPS does share or hold parental responsibility for a child, you are to **actively** engage in **restoration** and **preservation** efforts to enable the child to be safely cared for at home or returned as soon as it is safe to do so.

### CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSICPP relevant to **care order applications** are:



### PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPS practice standards most relevant to care order applications and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



Practice standard	Active efforts – <i>Care order applications</i>
<p><b>Child and youth-centred practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Understand all care order applications are based on the determination that the order is necessary to meet the child’s best interests, and such determination has clear reference to section 10 of the <i>Children and Young People Act 2008</i> (the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people principle).</li> <li>&gt; Meet or speak with the child to hear and record their views, wishes and needs through a cultural lens to ensure the child’s voice is heard.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure all other less intrusive efforts to secure a child’s safety at home have been taken prior to making a care order application, except where immediate action is needed to ensure their safety. Consider family preservation, Functional Family Therapy and Family Group Conferencing.</li> <li>&gt; Make every effort to seek a care order that shares parental responsibility with the child’s parents, before requesting full parental responsibility be removed.</li> <li>&gt; Where possible, seek a Supervision Order rather than a residence provision to secure a child’s safety.</li> <li>&gt; Clearly communicate to the family that CYPS does not support adoption of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children.</li> </ul>

## Practice standard

## Active efforts – Care order applications

<b>Relationship-based practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Include a Cultural, Case and Care Plan in all applications to the Childrens Court for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child.</li><li>&gt; Develop Cultural and Case Plans in partnership with the child, family and relevant ACCOs involved with the family.</li><li>&gt; Request submissions from ACCOs the child or family are involved with to submit to the Childrens Court.</li><li>&gt; Make every effort to ensure the child, parents and family are aware the implications of a care order.</li><li>&gt; Communicate to parents and family in a clear and culturally safe manner that enables them to fully understand their rights, processes and available supports. Parents and family should be provided with information about CYPs processes, requirements and expectations.</li><li>&gt; Refer parents to legal advice services to ensure they are aware of their legal rights as parents and to provide support through the court process – such as Legal Aid and the Aboriginal Legal Service.</li><li>&gt; Provide the family with information about the Australian Red Cross Birth Family Advocacy Support Service and provide copies of the relevant ‘Working Together for Kids’ guides (specifically guide two, <i>Going to court and working to reunite families</i>).</li></ul>
<b>Holistic assessment and planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Include all relevant family members identified by the child’s parents and extended family in Family Assessments.</li><li>&gt; Make every effort to identify suitable kinship care options before any action is taken to remove a child from their parents’ care.</li><li>&gt; Develop a Cultural Plan in partnership with the child, parents and family that uses family-friendly and culturally appropriate language. Seek advice from our CYPs Cultural Services Team and any involved services.</li><li>&gt; Ensure everyone involved understands the purpose and contents of the Cultural Plan and provide a copy to the child, parents and relevant family members.</li><li>&gt; Ask the family if there is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation or community member who would like to make a submission on behalf of the child or family to inform the Cultural Plan. Ensure you follow through with the request.</li></ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Take every opportunity to encourage the child, parents and family to discuss and ask questions about the court processes and CYPs’ requirements and expectations to ensure they are well prepared for the legal process and supported to present themselves in the best possible way.</li><li>&gt; Maintain open, clear and transparent communication (both verbal and written) with parents and family, including being clear and factual about the child’s and family’s progress.</li><li>&gt; Let the family know about support and advocacy services and how they can access them – such as our CYPs Cultural Services Team, ACCOs, the Public Advocate and other culturally safe support agencies.</li></ul>

**Practice standard**

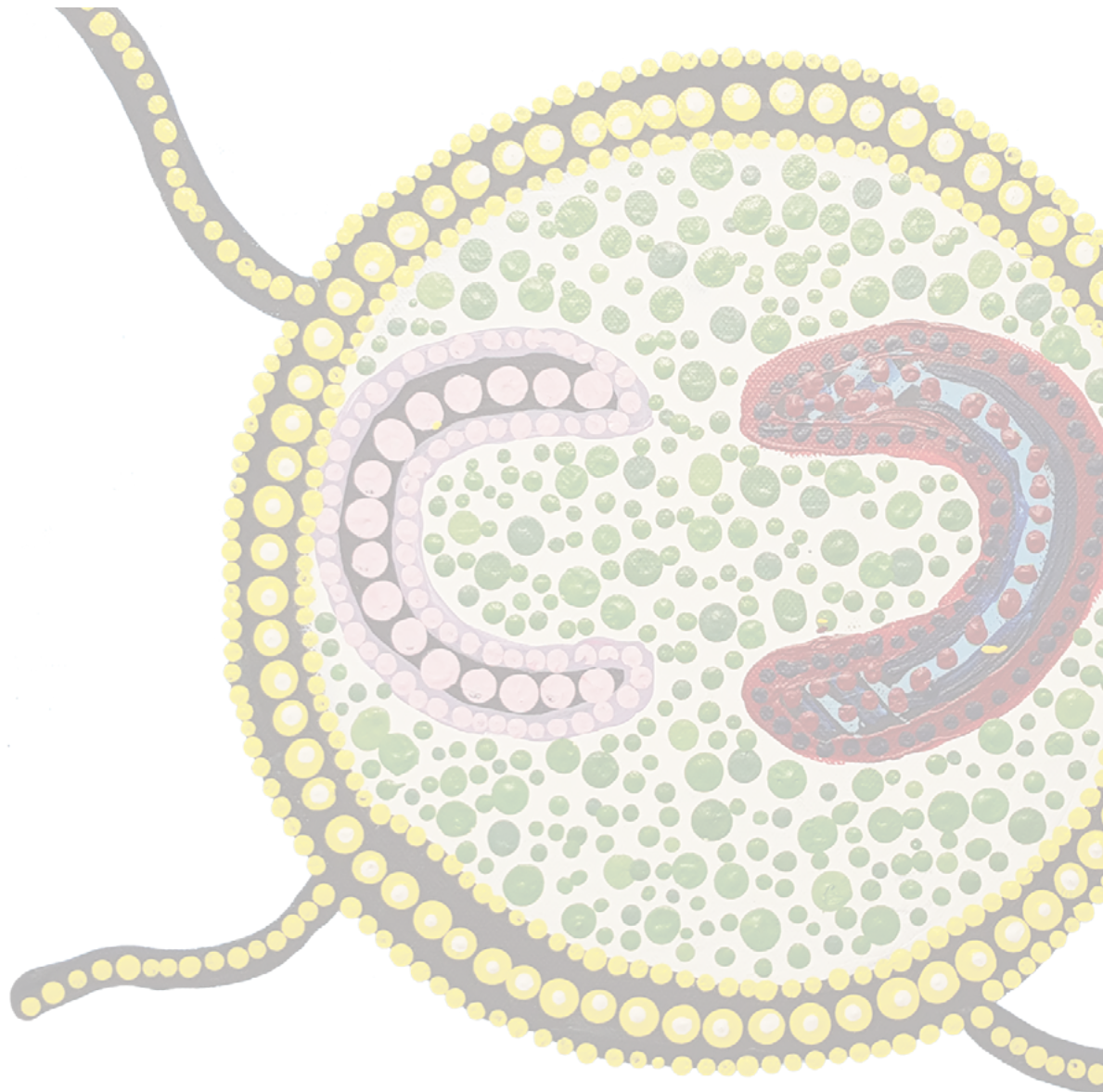
**Active efforts – Care order applications**

**Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities**

- > Hand deliver the care order application documentation to the parents. Ensure it is written in plain language and talk through it with them, using culturally safe communication, to ensure they understand it.
- > Ask the family if there is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation or community member who would like to make a submission on behalf of the child or family to inform the application to the Childrens Court. Ensure you follow through with the request.

**Documentation in casework**

- > Provide all relevant documentation, including copies of the Family Assessment and any plans developed, to the parents prior to court proceedings beginning.
- > Document and record all communication (both verbal and written) in a clear and factual manner about the child’s and family’s progress.
- > Ensure every interaction with the child and parents has been recorded appropriately on the CYPs database.



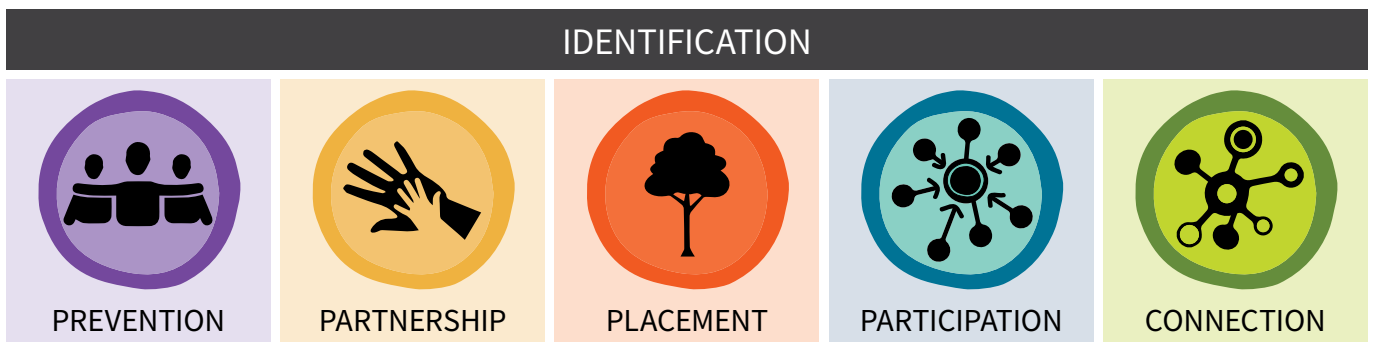
## PLACEMENT

Placement refers to where a child lives. If a child is unable to **safely** live with their parents, our **preferred** option is for them to be cared for within their broader family network – **kinship care**. This is particularly important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to support their ongoing connection to family, community, culture and country.

Finding the right placement involves searching for family members and conducting a kinship assessment to determine the person’s suitability to care for the child and their specific needs. For children who are subject to a Childrens Court order, it is important the family are informed of the carer assessment process at the time of placement.

### CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSICPP relevant to **placement** are:



### PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPs practice standards most relevant to placement and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



Practice standard	Active efforts - <i>Placement</i>
<p><b>Child and youth-centred practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Take the time to talk to the child and parents about who within their kinship network would be the most appropriate to provide care for the child.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure the child does ‘not object’ to a proposed carer (s513).</li> <li>&gt; Review the child’s Cultural Plan to be clear on who is important for the child to maintain close relationships with when in care, and what is culturally appropriate.</li> <li>&gt; Identify kin and place the child immediately after completing an initial kinship assessment where the outcome is positive.</li> </ul>

## Practice standard

## Active efforts – Placement

<b>Relationship-based practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Regularly review and update a child’s genogram and eco-map. This helps support kinship placement, contact, keeping siblings together and connection to family, community, culture, country and identity.</li><li>&gt; Undertake Family Finding activities by contacting family members – preferably in person but also via phone if family are interstate.</li><li>&gt; Identify family members who can work with the parents to improve the child’s safety, support meaningful contact visits and promote restoration.</li><li>&gt; Invest time to develop quality relationships within the child’s network, to ensure open and transparent communication is established and maintained.</li><li>&gt; Use creative ways of introducing family members who have not been in the child’s life for some time – such as introducing photos, letters, cards, text messages and phone calls.</li><li>&gt; Communicate to parents and family in a clear and culturally safe manner that enables them to fully understand their rights, processes and available supports. Parents and family should be provided with information about CYPs processes, requirements and expectations.</li></ul>
<b>Holistic assessment and planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Ensure all placement considerations are in accordance with section 513 of the <i>Children and Young People Act 2008</i>, including the placement priority order and that the child does ‘not object’ to the proposed carer.</li><li>&gt; Only place an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child with a non-Indigenous foster carer as a last resort. The carer must demonstrate an ability to promote the child’s ongoing contact with their family, community, culture and country, and live near the child’s family or community.</li><li>&gt; Begin restoration planning as soon as the child enters care.</li><li>&gt; Continue to seek a suitable kinship carer while the care order is in place or until restoration occurs, or until all kinship options have been exhausted.</li><li>&gt; Remain focused on building and maintaining safe relationships for the child with their family, community and culture.</li><li>&gt; Acknowledge the unique challenges of kinship placements for parents and carers in managing their ongoing family relationship.</li><li>&gt; Encourage contact with parents and family in ways consistent with the family’s norms and culture – where possible, at the parents’ home, in a neutral location (a park) or a culturally safe service.</li></ul>

**Practice standard****Active efforts – Placement****Collaboration**

- > Continue positive engagement with the child’s parents and family and be inclusive of family throughout case management processes to promote restoration as soon as it is safe to do so.
- > Regularly reflect on your practice to ensure it includes active efforts, regular communication with the parents and family, collaborative decision-making, discussions about culture and a focus on the child’s views and wishes.
- > Continue to identify kin and ensure parallel planning processes and contingency arrangements are in place where the child is in foster care.
- > Where the child is living with non-Indigenous carers, encourage the carers to join in cultural connection activities as often as possible to foster a strong interaction in culture and create cultural knowledge in the home.
- > Include our CYPs Cultural Services Team in restoration panel meetings and the six-week case meeting with the child’s Care Team when restoration is the goal.

**Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities**

- > Understand our CYPs Cultural Services Team must be consulted when considering a placement change for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child.
- > Identify both maternal and paternal family when considering placement options and contact, including extended family members to help maintain a strong connection.
- > Determine what contact arrangements are best for the child to maintain connections and have cultural needs met. Ensure contact is adequately supported to provide opportunities for positive engagement and respects traditional parenting practices. Consider:
  - location and venue
  - day and time
  - if contact needs to be supervised or if the carer can perform this role.
- > Seek advice from our CYPs Cultural Services Team on ways to support cultural connections that meet the child’s specific cultural needs. They may be able to provide information on current and upcoming cultural activities the child could participate in.
- > Ask the family if they would like a support person present or a representative of our CYPs Cultural Services Team or an ACCO.

**Documentation in casework**

- > Make a clear record of all consultations with our CYPs Cultural Services Team and ensure their recommendations are clearly recorded and followed up.
- > Clearly record how you have implemented the placement priority order of both the ATSI CPP and section 513 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, including the assessment of potential carers and cultural planning to maintain the child’s connection to family, community, culture and country. This could be reflected in the child’s Cultural Plan and discussed in supervision.
- > Ensure contact reports are free from judgement and bias and focus on the family’s strengths whilst being clear and factual.
- > Ensure the Cultural Plan is easily accessible on the CYPs database to inform ongoing decision-making.



## CASE MANAGEMENT – GOAL OF RESTORATION

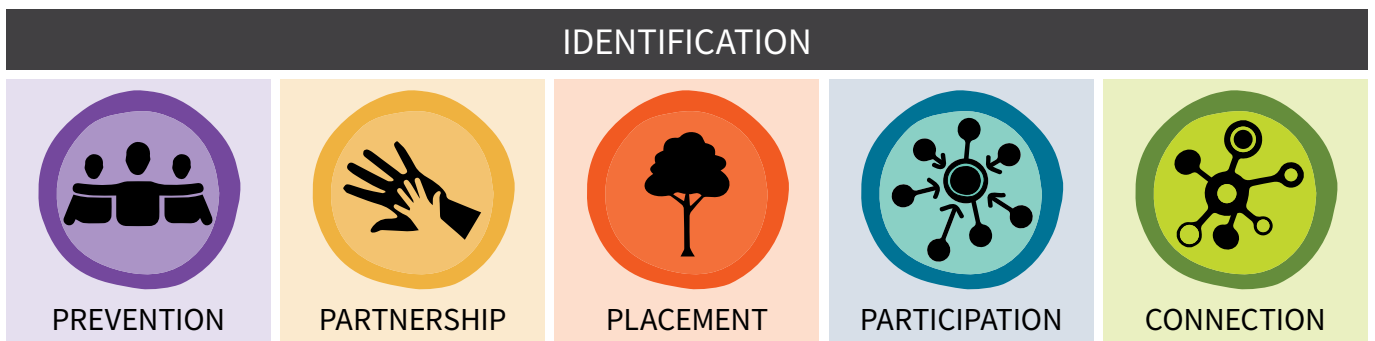
The primary goal of CYPS after a child enters care is restoration. This is the process of you **actively** working to return a child to their parents’ care **as soon as it is safe** for them to do so.

Restoration case management requires strong engagement and collaboration between CYPS, you, the child, parents, family, Care Team, agency partners and involved service providers to address the safety and wellbeing concerns CYPS holds and ensure restoration is timely and successful.

CYPS acknowledges the **best place** for children to grow up is with their family and every effort must be made to reunite children with their parents. Only where all restoration attempts have failed and assessments determine a child cannot safely return to their parents’ care long-term, will restoration efforts stop and the primary goal of case management shift to permanency.

### CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSI CPP relevant to **case management restoration** are:



### PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPS practice standards most relevant to case management where the goal is restoration and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



Practice standard	Active efforts – <i>Case management restoration</i>
Child and youth-centred practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Meet or speak with the child to hear and record their views, wishes and needs through a cultural lens to ensure the child’s voice is heard. This is central to the restoration process.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure all decisions are explicitly informed by section 10 of the <i>Children and Young People Act 2008</i> (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people principle), which allows for any submissions made on behalf of the child by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or organisations to be considered as part of the decision-making process.</li> <li>&gt; Use creative ways of introducing family members who have not been in the child’s life for some time – such as introducing photos, letters, cards, text messages and phone calls.</li> </ul>

**Practice standard****Active efforts – Case management restoration****Relationship-based practice**

- > Provide the family with information about the Australian Red Cross Birth Family Advocacy Support Service and provide copies of the relevant ‘Working Together for Kids’ guides (specifically guide two, *Going to court and working to reunite families*).
- > Provide opportunities for meaningful, regular and quality contact between the child and their parents and family, and ensure those contacts are supported to meet the needs of all involved.
- > Provide continuous support to the child, their placement and the family to promote restoration in the shortest timeframe.
- > Communicate to parents and family in a clear and culturally safe manner that enables them to fully understand their rights, processes and available supports. Parents and family should be provided with information about CYPS processes, requirements and expectations.
- > Identify who the main contact person is for the family and ensure all involved family members are aware of who this is.

**Holistic assessment and planning**

- > Continually assess the child’s strengths and safety needs during restoration with an awareness of the value of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices, including shared care responsibilities.
- > Undertake a Family Group Conference for the family to develop their own Family Plan and determine how contact with all relevant family members will be maintained after the restoration orders are finalised.
- > Ensure restoration case management includes parallel planning to ensure continuity in care for the child.
- > Include our CYPS Cultural Services Team in the restoration process.
- > Consider more creative ways for parents and family to stay involved with the child. For example, attending sport and school events, and parent-teacher interactions.
- > Acknowledge the unique challenges of kinship placements for parents and carers in managing their ongoing family relationship.
- > Ensure the restoration plan is strengths-based, clearly outlines timeframes, roles and responsibilities, and is written using language everyone involved can understand.
- > Provide the family with guide three in the ‘Working together for kids’ series, *When children are in care*, to help them understand restoration planning.
- > Measure progress through a culturally informed lens and provide opportunities for the family to succeed, rather than a focus on failure.
- > Conduct regular, informal case conferences with the family to share information about progress in a culturally safe and non-confrontational way.

**Practice standard****Active efforts – Case management restoration**

<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Ensure regular information-sharing between Care Team members takes place in the child’s best interests.</li><li>&gt; Maintain open, clear and transparent communication (both verbal and written) with the parents and family, including being clear and factual about the child’s and family’s progress.</li><li>&gt; Ask the family if they would like support or advocacy through our CYPS Cultural Services Team, an ACCO or another culturally safe support agency.</li><li>&gt; Make use of the broader community and kinship network where requested by the parents. This may include ACCOs and other culturally safe services, as well as community Elders and leaders.</li><li>&gt; Where the child is living with non-Indigenous carers, encourage the carers to join in cultural connection activities as often as possible to foster a strong interaction in culture and create cultural knowledge in the home.</li></ul>
<b>Sharing risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Be clear with the parents and family about what the restoration tasks are, without using jargon, by holding a Family Group Conference. Help the parents access the necessary support to achieve the tasks within the agreed timeframes.</li><li>&gt; Provide active case management that ensures everyone involved is aware of progress toward restoration and restoration milestones.</li><li>&gt; Help the family identify appropriate supports that will meet the needs of their child and family and address the safety concerns held by CYPS. This could include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• individual therapies for the child</li><li>• Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare, Uniting, Karinya House</li><li>• Gugan Gulwan, Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service</li><li>• other culturally safe services and programs.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have a clearly outlined Cultural Plan and use it to inform decision-making.</li><li>&gt; Consult with our CYPS Cultural Services Team to help assess parenting capacity.</li><li>&gt; Develop and maintain strong relationships with culturally safe services through regular and open communication and working with integrity.</li><li>&gt; Ask the family if there is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation or community member who would like to make a submission on behalf of the child or family to inform the child’s restoration. Ensure you follow through with the request.</li></ul>
<b>Documentation in casework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Document and record all communication (both verbal and written) in a clear and factual manner about the child’s and family’s progress</li><li>&gt; Make a clear record of all consultations with our CYPS Cultural Services Team and ensure their recommendations are clearly recorded and followed up.</li></ul>

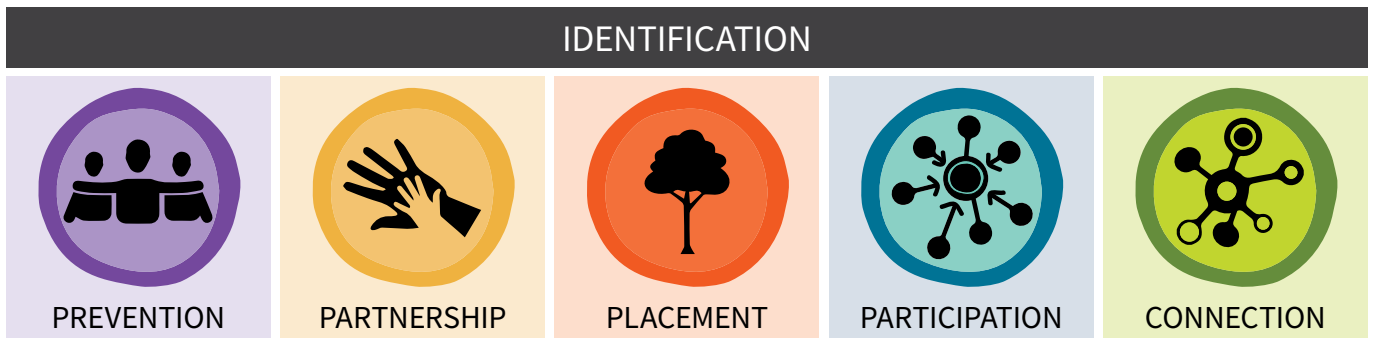
## CASE MANAGEMENT – GOAL OF PERMANENCY

If restoration is **not** possible, the primary goal of case management is to secure a **permanent home** for the child as soon as possible. Permanency must consider the placement **priority order** of the ATSI CPP and section 513 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*.

It is CYPS policy that adoption will **not** be included in any permanency proposal for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child.

### CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSI CPP relevant to **case management permanency** are:



### PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPS practice standards most relevant to case management where the goal is permanency and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



<b>Practice standard</b>	<b>Active efforts – Case management permanency</b>
<b>Child and youth-centred practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Regularly review and update the child’s Cultural Plan.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure cultural considerations are central to decision-making processes during all case management processes.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure life story work is done to a high and culturally appropriate standard and documented on the child’s file.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure the child’s views and wishes are sought, heard and recorded.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship-based practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Where possible, each Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child has access to a culturally proficient case manager.</li> <li>&gt; Use Viewpoint to capture the child’s views about what is good about where they live and what could be improved (yearly at minimum). Ask them if they believe their cultural and spiritual needs are being met.</li> <li>&gt; Maintain open, clear and transparent communication (both verbal and written) with parents, family and involved support services for a coordinated approach, including being clear and factual about the child’s and family’s progress.</li> <li>&gt; Refer parents to the Australian Red Cross Birth Family Advocacy Support Service, Legal Aid and the Aboriginal Legal Service to ensure they understand their rights.</li> <li>&gt; Provide parents with the relevant ‘Working together for kids’ guides, in particular guide three, <i>When children are in care</i>.</li> <li>&gt; Provide ongoing support to help maintain the child’s important relationships through creative thinking and where appropriate visits to extended family and country.</li> </ul>

**Practice standard****Active efforts – Case management permanency****Holistic assessment and planning**

- > Conduct Family Group Conferencing or case conferences with the child’s family and all key stakeholders to ensure everyone involved can participate in decision-making processes.
- > Make all efforts to provide the child with placement stability through effective support for kinship care and holistic case management.
- > Where the child is in foster care because a suitable kinship carer has not been found, continue the search for kin through family finding efforts.
- > Ensure the child’s Cultural Plan informs all decision-making.
- > Remain focused on building and maintaining safe relationships for the child with their family, community and culture.
- > Ensure regular contact is taking place with family in line with the child’s Care and Cultural Plan.
- > Encourage contact with parents and family in ways consistent with the family’s norms and culture – where possible, at the parents’ home, in a neutral location (a park) or a culturally safe service.
- > Acknowledge the unique challenges of kinship placements for parents and carers in managing their ongoing family relationship.

**Collaboration**

- > Continue positive engagement with the child’s parents and be inclusive of family throughout case management.
- > Undertake a reflective practice with parents and family to ensure your actions demonstrate a strong understanding of the cultural significance of family.
- > Regularly reflect on your practice to ensure it includes active efforts, regular communication with the parents and family, collaborative decision-making, discussions about culture and a focus on the child’s views and wishes.
- > Where the child is living with non-Indigenous carers, encourage the carers to join in cultural connection activities as often as possible to foster a strong interaction in culture and create cultural knowledge in the home.
- > Develop and maintain strong relationships with culturally safe services through regular and open communication and working with integrity.

**Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities**

- > Determine what contact arrangements are best for the child to maintain connection and have cultural needs met. Ensure contact is adequately supported to provide opportunities for positive engagement and respects traditional parenting practices. Consider:
  - location and venue
  - day and time
  - if contact needs to be supervised or if the carer can perform this role.
- > Make all efforts to keep the child with family for permanency, in recognition of the challenges that exist when Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children are placed outside of their family network long-term.
- > Ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have a clearly outlined Cultural Plan and use it to inform decision-making.

## TRANSITION FROM CARE

Transition from care focuses on supporting children to deal with significant life changes, including a change in care placement, moving towards independence or leaving care as an adult.

The *Children and Young People Act 2008*, requires you to begin transition planning for a young person 15 years and over to support their transition to adulthood and independence. Transition planning identifies the anticipated support and assistance the young person needs from the age of 15 to 25 years.

### CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSICPP relevant to **transition** are:



### PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPs practice standards most relevant to transition and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.



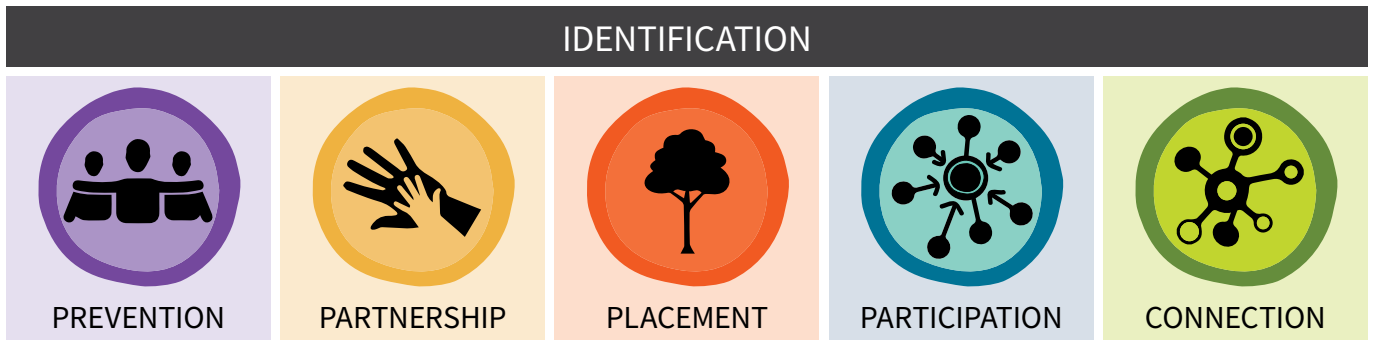
<b>Practice standard</b>	<b>Active efforts – Transition</b>
<b>Child and youth-centred practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Commence transition planning for a young person once they are 15 years of age.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure life story work is up to date and clearly and accurately identifies who provided the information and when. It should identify the young person’s connection to family and significant others from the very start of their time in care.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship-based practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Make every effort throughout case management to ensure the young person’s needs are met and they are accessing appropriate services in the community – including connecting them to relevant education and training opportunities and considering their Aboriginality for specialist program availability.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure the young person is accessing their entitlements through Centrelink and the Transition to Independent Living Allowance, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Holistic assessment and planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Develop a Transition Plan in partnership with the young person and their Care Team and ensure aftercare information is provided.</li> <li>&gt; Continue to actively embed the goals of the young person’s Case and Cultural Plans into your practice to ensure their connection to family, community, culture and country is maintained to support their transition from care.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure a final Annual Report is completed and provided to the young person, their parents and carers.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Make every effort to ensure the young person’s needs are being addressed through case management processes that are inclusive of their parents and family.</li> <li>&gt; Develop and maintain strong relationships with culturally safe services through regular and open communication and working with integrity.</li> </ul>

## CASE CLOSURE

Case closure is where a child’s involvement with CYPS ends and their case is closed. This happens when a child has been safely returned to their parents’ care, or they have become an adult (18 years) and are no longer accessing any aftercare support.

### CORE ELEMENTS

The core elements of the ATSCPP relevant to **case closure** are:



### PRACTICE STANDARDS AND ACTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the CYPS practice standards most relevant to case closure and the active efforts that will help you embed the standards into your work.

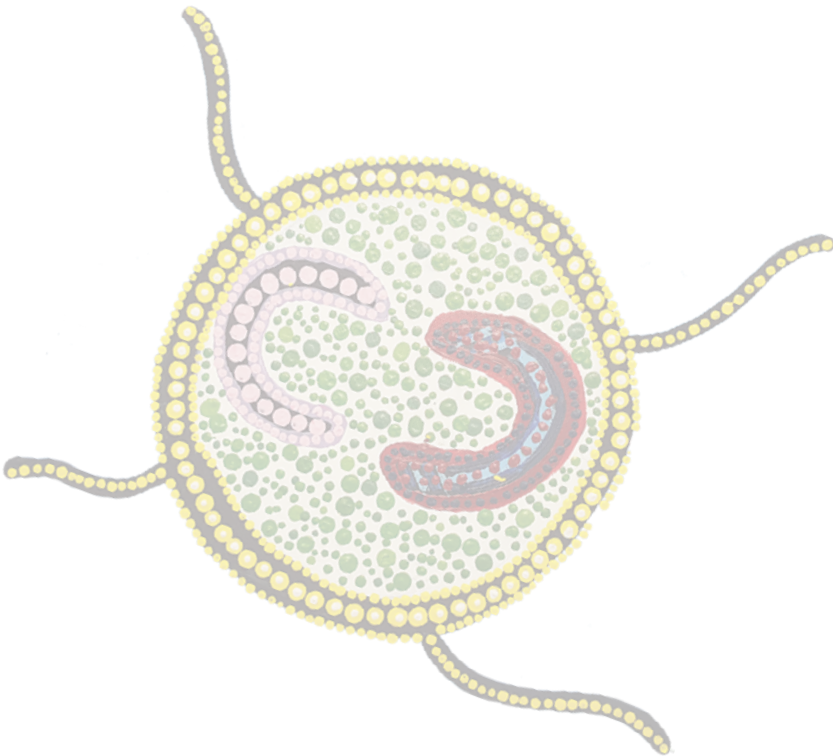


Practice standard	Active efforts – <i>Case closure</i>
<b>Child and youth-centred practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Where the young person is 18 years old, ensure transition planning has occurred and all appropriate referrals and supports are in place.</li> <li>&gt; Where the child has been restored to their parents’ care, use the CYPS Risk Assessment Framework to confirm it is safe for CYPS to stop case management support.</li> <li>&gt; Communicate clearly to the child how they can contact CYPS in the future if they require support or their circumstances change.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship-based practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Ensure the child, family and Care Team are aware of your intention to close. Seek their views and wishes about the case closure and any ongoing needs or concerns.</li> <li>&gt; Make every effort to ensure there are no unmet needs for the child and all recommended referrals and assessments have occurred.</li> <li>&gt; Provide the child and family with information about where they can go for future help and support.</li> </ul>
<b>Holistic assessment and planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Ensure the child’s final Annual Report has been completed as well as the Case Closure Report.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Undertake a case conference, prior to case closure, with the child’s family and Care Team to share a draft Case Closure Report. Ask for feedback and ensure all comments are included in the final report.</li> <li>&gt; Ensure all Care Team members agree case closure is appropriate.</li> </ul>

**Practice standard**

**Active efforts – Case closure**

<b>Sharing risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Inform all services involved of the case closure and ensure everyone understands their role and responsibilities beyond case closure where ongoing support is required.</li><li>&gt; Consider including our CYPS Cultural Services Team in the case conference as appropriate.</li></ul>
<b>Culturally responsive practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Include all relevant extended family members in the final case conference.</li><li>&gt; Consider using a Family Group Conference for making a post-closure plan for the child and family that mobilises extended family and community supports.</li><li>&gt; Develop and maintain strong relationships with culturally safe services through regular and open communication and working with integrity.</li><li>&gt; Ask if there is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation or community member who would like to make a submission on behalf of the child or family to inform the child’s case closure.</li></ul>
<b>Documentation in casework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Clearly document a final risk assessment to ensure all past safety needs have been addressed and the child is no longer at current risk of abuse or neglect.</li><li>&gt; Discuss the progress the child and family have made in the Case Closure Report, not forgetting to celebrate successes and highlight positive changes.</li><li>&gt; Ensure the child’s official record is completed and all tasks finalised and endorsed by your team leader.</li><li>&gt; Provide the child and family with the child’s Transition and Cultural Plans.</li></ul>

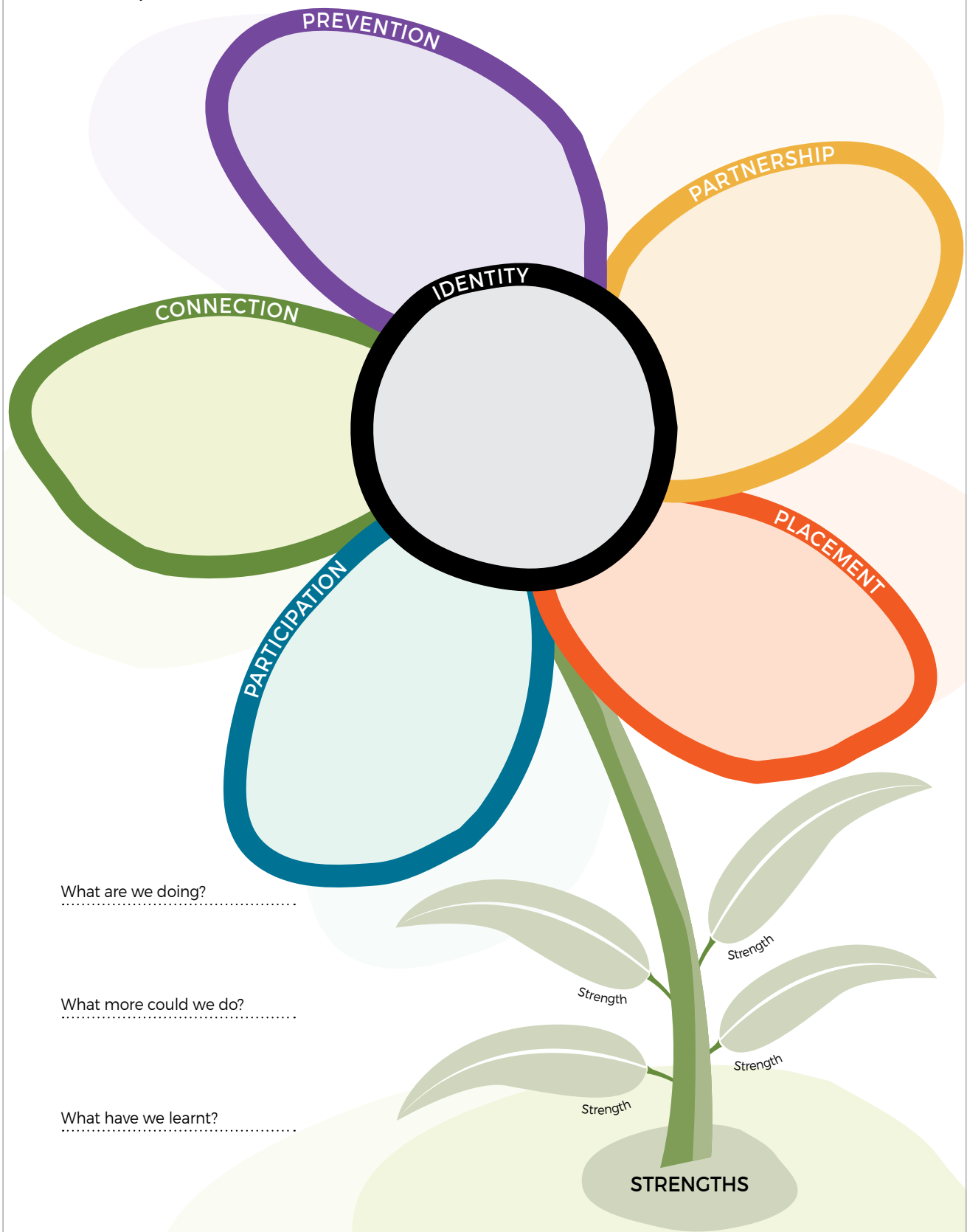




# APPENDIX: REFLECTION FLOWER

## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER REFLECTION FLOWER

Child/Family name: ..... Date: .....



## PRACTICE TOOL AND PROMPTS

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reflection flower is a practice tool to help you when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. The tool encourages you to reflect on the core elements of the ATSI CPP within your practice, both as part of your supervision and when talking directly with families. The tool is supported by reflection and discussion prompts specific to each of the ATSI CPP core elements.

### WORKER REFLECTION

The following prompts will help you reflect on your practice as part of your supervision.



#### Prevention

- > Describe aspects within the case that display the child and family are connected to culture and their community?
- > How do the family like to spend time together? What brings them together as a family/kinship network?
- > What events within the community does the child and family attend?
- > Does the family have access to safe and secure housing?
- > Does the child person have an opportunity to attend playgroup, childcare and/or school regularly?
- > Has the child had a health check within the last 12 months?
- > Is there any medical information that needs to be taken into consideration?
- > Can you identify any needs the family may have that may assist in addressing and mitigating the associated risk?
- > What systems of support does the child and family have in place? For example: Support from family, Winnunga, Gungan, Family Functioning Therapy, Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Aboriginal Educational Liaison Officer etc.
- > What support has the child and family identified that they would like to receive?
- > Has the family identified they are not comfortable accessing particular support services? If so, please explain.
- > Do you believe the child and family feel confident to access support when needed? If not, how can CYPS assist the family to obtain support?



#### Partnership

- > Please explain how the family have had the opportunity to display self-determination within the case?
- > Do you understand important factors relating to the child and family's culture, customs and history? If not, please discuss the support you may need so you can understand.
- > Have the family identified they have partnerships within the community? If so, what do those partnerships look like?
- > How have the family been supported and encouraged to build partnerships with individuals within the community and services that can support them and their children?
- > What barriers have been present for the family regarding partnership?
- > Which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, people, and communities can the family engage with that may be able to support them?
- > Have the family identified areas of further support they would like to access?
- > How can CYPS continue to work in partnership with the family?



#### Placement

- > Has a genogram been completed that displays an accurate representation of the child's family? If not, how can you work towards consulting with the family and completing a genogram?
- > Describe the kinship structure within the family unit?
- > Does the family have a matriarch? What is the best way to consult with the matriarch while empowering a family to have their voice present when making decisions about their child?

- > What information has the family shared with you regarding significant people within the community that they spend time with and seek advice from when needed? If needed, have you sought the family's permission and consulted with the identified significant people, and what information have they shared with you?
- > What are the child's thoughts and wishes regarding placement? Have they nominated significant people they would like to live with?
- > What aspects of family life and cultural connection are important to the child and family? How can you ensure the aspects will continue to be carried out if a child needs to come into out of home care?
- > Please describe the active efforts you have carried out to mitigate the need for a child to be placed in an alternative placement.
- > Explain how you have implemented the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle when sourcing placement options? Have all appropriate placement options been explored?
- > Explain the active efforts that have been carried out within the case regarding the five core elements, prior to considering placement options.
- > Can you identify any additional active efforts that can be carried out to assist the family with minimising risk and ensuring their child is safe?



## Participation

- > How would the child and family like CYPS to respect and understand their safety, wellbeing, family and cultural connections?
- > Where would the child and family like to meet CYPS, when having meetings?
- > How does the family feel about home visits? How can you best engage with the family during home visits to ensure they feel culturally safe?
- > How have the child and family had an opportunity to assist with informing decisions about how the child can be best safely cared for?
- > What views have the family articulated regarding CYPS meeting with their child? How can CYPS ensure the child feels culturally safe and supported during interviews?

- > Are there any additional people the child and family have identified they would like to receive support from and have take part in the decision-making process while working with CYPS? If so, what roles would the child like the nominated individuals to play?
- > What are the family's thoughts regarding a Family Group Conference?



## Connection

- > What Nation is the family from? For example, Wiradjuri, Ngannawal.
- > Which community do the family identify as a place where they connect? What connections have been established within the community?
- > What are the child's views and wishes regarding their connection to family, community and culture?
- > Who have the family identified as important people that play a significant role in the child's life?
- > What type of significant events do the family celebrate each year?
- > What types of activities do the child and family like to do within the community?
- > What information has the family articulated regarding their child's cultural plan?
- > Have the family had an opportunity to clearly articulate their views and wishes regarding their family, community, culture and country? If so, please elaborate.
- > How can CYPS ensure the child can have the opportunity to maintain connections to their family, community, culture and country?
- > Describe how family members and significant community members have been consulted regarding their views and wishes of the child developing their connection to family, community and culture?
- > What support can CYPS put in place to ensure the child has an opportunity to connect with family and community while developing their cultural identity?

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

The following prompts will help you when speaking with a family to learn about their child and family through their cultural lens.



### Prevention

- > What are the strengths within your family and the community you live in?
- > Tell us about your family? We would like to understand your culture and what is important for your family. (Complete genogram with family)
- > How do you and your family like to spend time together?
- > Who supports you when you need help? What does that support look like?
- > Do you currently have safe and secure housing?
- > Which playgroup, childcare and/or school does your child attend?
- > Do you feel comfortable accessing health services? When did your child last see a doctor?
- > What services in the community does your family receive support from?
- > What are some challenges you and your family may be currently facing?
- > What further support would help you and your family to move through the current challenges?



### Partnership

- > Who do you ask for help when you need help with your child?
- > Who are the main people in your family who help you when you need support?
- > What do you and your family do in the community?
- > What services within the community do you feel comfortable accessing?
- > Have you faced any challenges when trying to access support from services in the community?
- > Please tell us about your experience working with CYPS?
- > Can you tell us if you have encountered any barriers when working with CYPS in the past?
- > How can CYPS work together with your family?



### Placement

- > Who helps make decisions within your family?
- > Who is the person within your family who is the 'knowledge holder' and knows a lot of information about your family's story and connections to culture?
- > What aspects make your family strong and grounded?
- > What aspects of family life do you and your child enjoy?
- > Who does your child like to spend time with? How do they spend time together?
- > What types of activities does your child like to engage in with family members?
- > If your child wanted to spend time with other significant people within their life, who would they nominate, and why?
- > Who are the significant people within the community your family spend time with and seek advice from?



## Participation

- > What can CYPS do to ensure the safety, wellbeing, family and cultural connections of your child and family are respected and understood?
- > Where would you like to meet CYPS when having meetings?
- > How do you feel about CYPS visiting your home? Is there anything CYPS can do to help you and your family feel more comfortable during home visits?
- > Are there any additional people from your family and community you would like to receive support from while working with CYPS?
- > At times CYPS may need to talk with your child. How can CYPS do that in a culturally safe way? What support can you identify your child may need while talking with a CYPS worker?
- > Would you like to move forward with a Family Group Conference?



## Connection

- > Who are the important people that play a significant role in the life of your child and family?
- > What type of significant events do you and your family celebrate each year?
- > What types of activities do you and your child like to do within the community?
- > How can CYPS ensure your child has the opportunity to maintain their connection to family, community, culture and country?
- > Has your child had an opportunity to express their views and wishes regarding their connection to family, community, culture and country?
- > What further information would you like to include in your child's cultural plan.



# GLOSSARY

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## **Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO)**

An Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) is an incorporated Aboriginal organisation initiated, based in and governed by the local Aboriginal community to deliver holistic and culturally appropriate services to the Aboriginal community that controls it.

## **Aboriginal people**

'Aboriginal' is an adjective and widely used to describe 'Aboriginal people'. 'Aboriginal people' is a collective name for the original people of Australia and their descendants and is preferable. This term emphasises the diversity of languages, communities, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

## **Country**

'Country' is a term used to describe a culturally defined area of land associated with a particular culturally distinct group of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

## **Cultural Plan**

A plan outlining how a child's connection to culture, identity and family ties (including kinship) will be maintained and promoted by their carer. All decisions relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care are informed by the child's Cultural Plan.

## **Cultural planning**

The process of developing, implementing and maintaining a Cultural Plan. Central to this process is finding kin and ensuring a child's ongoing connection to culture.

## **Cultural safety**

Cultural safety is an environment that is safe for people, where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, learning together with dignity and truly listening.

## **Cultural sensitivity**

Cultural sensitivity is being aware that cultural differences and similarities between people exist without assigning them a value – positive or negative, better or worse, right or wrong. It simply means you are aware people are not all the same and recognise your culture is no better than any other culture.

## **Culturally responsive**

Culturally responsive is the ability to understand, interact and communicate effectively and sensitively with people from a cultural background different to one's own. It is characterised by respecting and valuing the cultures and traditions of different people and recognising connections to family, community, culture and country are central to a person's wellbeing. Also known as cultural competence.

## **Elder**

An Elder is an identified and respected member of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community. Elders generally hold key community knowledge and are expected to provide advice and support to community members. Age alone does not necessarily distinguish an Elder. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people acknowledge Elders as 'aunty' or 'uncle' as a sign of respect, even if they are not related.

## **Family finding**

The act to identify a child's family members and other sources of support, and to help them build permanent and caring relationships.

## **First People/First Australians**

'First People' and 'First Australians' are collective names for the original people of Australia and their descendants and are used to emphasise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people lived on this continent prior to European settlement.

## **Indigenous people**

The term 'Indigenous' is generally used when referring to both First People of Australia and Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' is commonly used as short-hand to include both. However, because 'Indigenous' is not specific, some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prefer the phrase to be used in full so that it refers to all the Indigenous people of Australia.

## **Intergenerational trauma**

Intergeneration trauma, also known as transgenerational trauma, is a form of historical trauma transmitted across generations. It particularly affects the children, grandchildren and other descendants of the Stolen Generations.

## Mob

'Mob' is a term identifying a group of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people associated with a particular place or country. 'Mob' is more generally used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Therefore, it may not be appropriate for non-Indigenous people to use this term unless this is known to be acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## Self-determination

The power or ability to make a decision for oneself without influence from outside.

## Self-identification

Self-identification is how you see yourself or identify yourself with someone or something else. To believe or assert that one belongs to a certain group or class.

## Stolen Generations

Children that were forcibly removed from their families and communities through race-based policies set up by both State and Federal Governments during 1910 and the 1970s. The children were either put in to homes, adopted or fostered out to non-Indigenous families. They suffered a huge amount of grief and trauma, losing their connections to family, identity, land, language and culture.

## Torres Strait Islander people

The term 'Aboriginal' is not inclusive of Torres Strait Islander people, and reference to both 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people' should therefore be made where necessary. A Torres Strait Islander person is a descendant from the Torres Strait Islands, which are located to the north of mainland Australia off the Queensland coast.

