

Case reflection tool-strengthening safe care and connection and permanency for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children.

Purpose

This tool may be used to reflect on practice when considering permanency for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child. This could occur in supervision, case consultations, and practice panels. It is suitable for use with a child who is in the custody or guardianship of the chief executive. It integrates the core elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle with the three dimensions of permanency: relational, physical, and legal. When thinking about how permanency planning is progressing, consider the four domains of inquiry – what is working well, what are we worried about, where are we now (scale) and next steps.

RELATIONAL PERMANENCY	IDENTITY 	CONNECTION 	PLACEMENT 	PREVENTION 	PARTNERSHIP 	PARTICIPATION 
	When practice is at its best we would see					
RELATIONAL PERMANENCY	Child's cultural identity is clearly and accurately recorded. Child's needs are clearly and accurately identified, recorded and central to casework tasks.	A current genogram (in the current ongoing intervention event) that has at least 3 generations and clearly identifies family members who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and other key people central to the child. Kinship mapping efforts and exploration of potential ways family members can be involved (e.g. carer/safety and support network member/cultural story telling). Evidence that decisions about family contact and case planning provides ample opportunity for the child to maintain regular positive and meaningful connections to siblings, parents, kin, carers, and significant others. Carers are actively facilitating connection between siblings across different placements. Evidence of culturally responsive practices that recognise, understand, acknowledge, and respond to the child's spirituality and cultural connections to kin, culture, community, and country. Cultural support plan is up to date and includes active efforts to promote and support the child's connection to kin, culture, community, and country.	Evidence that carers actively support the child's connections to kin, culture community, and country.	Worries relating to safety and risk for the child if in the care of the parents have been clearly stated and shared with the family and the safety and support network. A safety and support network has been built for the child and family increasing safety for the child. Safe family connection time (family contact) is occurring for the child with their parents to strengthen connections.	The family's right to self-determination has been promoted and work has been undertaken in partnership with the family and their community to ensure the child and family's culture has been central in the decision making. Evidence of active efforts to promote the engagement and participation of family and others in planning and decision making (supported by independent person/Family participation program (FPP)/others where relevant). Referral to the FPP for family mapping/identifying appropriate kin for connection (if there is a delay to FPP involvement, ensure efforts are made to progress the family map in the meantime).	The child and family have participated in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family led decision making process at key decision points. Active efforts have been demonstrated to engage and involve the child, their family and other significant people in decisions affecting them (self-determination). Cultural support plan clearly identifies a person who can support and develop the child's cultural identity. The voice of the child is expressed and considered (to the extent possible for their age and development).

 PHYSICAL PERMANENCY	IDENTITY 	CONNECTION 	PLACEMENT 	PREVENTION 	PARTNERSHIP 	PARTICIPATION 
	Cultural support plan clearly and accurately identifies the child's connections to kin, culture, community, and country. Carer's cultural identity is clearly recorded along with their relationship to the child where applicable.	Where an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child is in a care arrangement with a non-indigenous carer, active efforts are being demonstrated to meet all elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle including connection to kin, culture, community, and country.	Application of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle placement hierarchy is evidenced by active efforts to seek placement with kin or community that form the foundations of their identity, culture, and spirituality. Ongoing activity to progress potential kinship carer assessments. Consideration has been made to reunite siblings who are in different placements. A stable care arrangement meets the child's developmental, health, emotional, cultural and physical needs. Standards of care concerns are addressed in a timely way, and information is gathered, assessed, clearly recorded, and reviewed. Support to carers to meet the child's needs (including complex needs) is provided and recorded. Evidence of exploration with carers about capacity to provide longer term care is discussed clearly and recorded, and actions are taken in a timely way when needed. Placement agreements are actively reviewed regularly, and needs are responded to.	Family is linked to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations or other suitable services to address safety and risks for the child and work toward reunification. If reunification is not possible, parents play as much of a role as safely possible in the child's life.	Active efforts for the child and family to receive support from community controlled organisations or other suitable services. The carer is a partner in the care of the child and a member of the safety and support network. Carer has adequate support to enact the cultural support plan. There is a person identified within the child's network with whom arrangements have been made to support and develop the child's cultural identity. Referral to FPP for family mapping/identifying appropriate kin for a care arrangement.	The child and family have participated in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family-led decision making process regarding the placement of the child. An independent person has facilitated the child and parent's participation in the decision making processes about care arrangements and reunification. Active efforts to consistently engage with extended family and kin to identify any potential carers or change in their circumstances. Tasks/next steps to progress potential kinship carer assessment are documented, underway, and reviewed regularly.

When practice is at its best we would see:
PHYSICAL PERMANENCY

LEGAL PERMANENCY	IDENTITY ID	CONNECTIO	PLACEMENT	PREVENTION	PARTNERSHIP	PARTICIPATION
	Child's cultural identity is clearly and accurately recorded in all court documents.	Guardianship assessments fully consider the prospective guardian's capacity to meet the child's cultural needs including connection to kin community and country.	When an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child is in a care arrangement with a non-indigenous carer, active efforts are being demonstrated to meet all elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle including connection to kin community and country. Case planning with a strong focus on providing a child with lifelong stability and security.	Active efforts to achieve reunification with parents. Regular review and robust analysis of previous and current safety and risk factors. The child protection order is the least intrusive to meet the child's care and protection needs. All legal options are explored and considered to ensure the most appropriate arrangement is pursued. Ongoing consideration of guardianship to a family member or other suitable person, preferably within the child's family or community (if reunification is not possible).	Parents know their rights and have access to culturally informed legal services. Prospective guardians are assessed by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander assessors. FPP provides family-led decision making processes to inform decision making about legal permanency.	The child and family have participated in an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander family-led decision making process about permanency decisions such as, reunification or alternative long-term care arrangements, including guardianship to suitable others. An independent person has facilitated the child and/or parent's participation in the decision making processes.
CASE PLANNING	IDENTITY ID	CONNECTION	PLACEMENT	PREVENTION	PARTNERSHIP	PARTICIPATION
	Cultural support plan clearly and accurately records the child's cultural identity and connections to kin, culture, community and country.	An up-to-date genogram and/or kinship map in the case plan. Case plan reflects active efforts to engage with the child and family to identify and explore kinship connections. Case plan reflects active efforts to support the child to build and maintain kinship connections. Cultural support plan reflects active efforts to build and maintain the child's cultural identity and connection to kin, culture, community and country.	Case plan identifies rationale for current placement and where it is on the hierarchy. Goals and actions to locate a more suitable placement are included where required. Case plan and cultural support plan include actions to strengthen the child's connection to culture whilst in the child's care arrangement (especially for children placed with non-Indigenous carers).	Concurrent planning for reunification and a stable long term alternative is clearly visible in the case plan (for children on short term orders or interim orders prior to a long term order being made). Case plan goals and actions address priority needs and respond to worries. Family Reunification Assessment tool is completed prior to a long-term order being made. For children on long-term guardianship to the chief executive, the case plan reflects goals and actions to strengthen relational, physical, and legal permanency.	Active efforts to promote the engagement of carers, relevant agencies and services. Case plans developed using family led decision making principles and/or processes and the child, parents and kin participate and have a voice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family led decision making and facilitation is provided to identify an independent person. Collaborative, reflective consultation and decision making processes to make informed and timely decisions (e.g. case consultation, complex case clinic, practice panel, stakeholder meetings).	Active efforts to promote the participation of family, extended family, kin and significant others in case planning. Responsive, transparent and timely case planning, using family-led decision making principles and processes which promote the meaningful participation and active involvement of the child, family, carers, relevant agencies and support services. An independent person has facilitated the child and/or parent's participation in the case planning processes. The child and family have participated and led the development of the cultural support plan. If the child and family did not participate, how was current information gathered? The voice of the child is expressed and considered (to the extent possible for their age and development).

Consider each element of the principle for each question below:



	What is working well?	What are we worried about?	Where are we now? (Scale)	Next Steps
Relational permanency				
Physical permanency				
Legal permanency				
Case planning				

Version history

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