

PRACTICE GUIDE

Planning the investigation and assessment

The table below outlines key actions to be considered in the planning process.

Re-contact with the notifier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the notifier to clarify details and gather additional information, if required.
Child protection history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read and consider all available information in relation to the child protection history. Consider cumulative harm.
Cultural considerations and independent person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek advice about cultural protocols relevant for the community in which the family live. Consult with Cultural Practice advisor or local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community elder or representative (provide non-identifying details only). Arrange, with the child and family's consent, for an independent person to facilitate the child's and family's participation in significant decisions during the investigation and assessment process. Consider a referral to the Family Participation Service for a family led decision making process.
Assessment and Service Connect co-response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider an ASC co-response where appropriate.
Joint response with the Queensland Police Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine if a joint response with the QPS is required and have the Child Safety planning officer consult with the QPS planning officer. Ensure the QPS are advised of any criminal matters and are provided with relevant information to meet the legislative requirement of the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i>, section 14(2).
SCAN team system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider referring the matter to the SCAN team if the matter would benefit from a multi-agency discussion, or if an emergency SCAN team meeting is required.

Gather information from other sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key people, both personal and professional who can provide reliable information about the child and family, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a previous CSO ○ key family member ○ the QPS ○ a doctor ○ a teacher ○ a previous counsellor ○ another government or non-government agency or service • Where it is known that services have been accessed by the family in relation to domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol, cultural support, mental health or disability, these services may be consulted to gain further information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the family ○ including worries, strengths and resources the family may have ○ support or cultural issues • Where a child is Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander, consultation occurs throughout the investigation and assessment with key family and or community members, identified by the family, regarding cultural considerations, protocols and child rearing practices. • If safe, possible and practical seek consent from family to contact and gather information from other entities.
Consultation with National Disability Insurance Agency / disability service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify whether the child has a disability and is in receipt of services from a disability service provider or the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). • Gather information and consult with the NDIA to determine whether the child has an NDIS plan as well as the relevant disability service provider/s who have been involved in providing services to the child.
Genogram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information for a family genogram. • Update the genogram and add to it during the I&A. • Use the genogram to inform placement options, safety and support networks and case planning. • For an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child, the genogram will also inform who will be invited to participate in a family-led decision-making process, where relevant.
Interviews with children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan the interviews of all subject children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the sequence of interviews

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ who will conduct the interviews ○ who will be present for the interviews ○ where the interviews will take place ○ if the QPS are involved consult with them about the timing of the interviews ○ consider whether a child may need to be interviewed using powers under the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i>, section 17
Interviews with parents and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify all relevant adults who will be interviewed. ● Who will conduct the interviews? ● Where they will take place? ● If the QPS are involved in the investigation, consult with them about the timing of the interviews.
Use of Interpreter services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arrange for interpreter services to assist with interviews and communication with a child and family where the child or family is from a culturally and linguistically diverse background or has a disability that would require an interpreter to facilitate communication. ● In no circumstances will another family or community member be used as an interpreter. The role of the interpreter is to translate the interview and assist with communication, it is not as a support person or advocate for the child or family. ● All interpreters are to be sought through an accredited interpreting agency, and financial approval sought from the financial delegate prior to engaging an interpreting service. ● The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) for people who do not speak English can be contacted at https://www.tisnational.gov.au/Help-using-TIS-National-services/Contact-TIS-National. ● Auslan and other sign language interpreters can be organised through Deaf Services Queensland, who can be contacted https://www.deafservices.org.au/services/Interpreting.
Personal safety issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine whether there are personal safety issues indicated in the history or current information and develop safety strategies. ● Where support or protection is required for the CSO during the investigation and assessment, contact the QPS.
Co-worker/s and support persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarify roles and responsibilities for the investigation and assessment. ● Identify other persons for support and assistance if required. ● The investigation and assessment plan may be revised during the investigation and assessment.

Non-consent by parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and plan for situations where an assessment order or use of powers may be required to have contact with a child.
Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the concerns received indicate that the placement of a child may be required, placement options within the family must be thoroughly explored prior to pursuing general foster care options. If the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, the CSO must arrange, with the child and family's consent, for an independent person to facilitate their participation in the decision about where to place the child. Unless the arrangement of an independent person is not practicable and urgent action is required.
Medical examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider if a medical examination or treatment may be required for a child. If so, undertake consultation with the appropriate health or medical services.
Use of QPS assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A CSO may request QPS assistance to undertake their obligations or exercise powers under the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i>. This request can be made by telephone to a relevant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection Investigation Unit Criminal Investigation Branch local police station
Legal representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents and children may have a legal representative present during an interview. Where a child or their parents elect to have a legal representative present, the CSO will make all reasonable attempts to accommodate the request. Information may also be provided to the family about accessing Legal Aid Queensland services on https://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/Get-legal-help/Get-a-lawyer-to-represent-you.

Version history

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