



Caring Well – Protecting Well: A framework for practice standards in child protection in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia



**Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council Aboriginal Corporation
Ngaanyatjarra Health Service**

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**A framework for practice standards
in child protection in Aboriginal
communities in Central Australia**

Acknowledgments

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“Within a democratic society such as Australia, where individual and family autonomy are respected and regarded within our cultural and legislative traditions, it is not possible to ensure or guarantee that all children within our community will be free from harm. When children’s care cannot be comprehensively monitored 24 hours a day, the risk of harm towards children will sadly continue to exist. Although all children cannot be guaranteed a harm free childhood within our society, all children can be guaranteed that governments; organisations and practitioners will work to the highest standards of practice and cultural sensitivity to ensure the risk of harm is reduced to the minimum level” (Meemeduma, 2003, p.3).

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Foreword

NPY Women's Council and Ngaanyatjarra Health Service would like to thank the authors for writing this good practice framework for child protection in the cross border region of central Australia. Along with many others, NPY Women's Council and Ngaanyatarra Health Service have been concerned that child protection practices in this region are not always the best they can be. History, geographical location, cross cultural complexities and resourcing are just a few of the factors that impact on the ability of both government and non-government agencies and services to ensure children in the cross border region of central Australia receive the care and protection they are entitled to. However, this document aims to address some of these issues and provide a framework for overcoming some of these barriers.

We acknowledge that this is just the first step towards improving child protection practices in this region, and, at this stage the development of the framework has only involved NPY Women's Council and Ngaanyatjarra Health Service.

We envisage there will be several stages towards developing and implementing this framework and look forward to opening the discussion and receiving feedback. Whilst this document is largely theoretical it provides a basis from which to develop and expand our ideas, and eventually practices, in order to protect Aboriginal children in central Australia.

We hope that all relevant stakeholders will work collaboratively to progress the framework into practice. Specific resources and a commitment at all levels of government and non-government agencies will be required to ensure a united and cohesive community approach to improving child protection practices in this region.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The protection and care of children is important in any community. However, there are times when the care and protection needs of children are not always met. It is up to all people involved in child protection to make sure that children are protected from harm in the best ways possible.

What do we believe about children?

All children, no matter who they are or where they live, have the right to grow up in a safe, happy, healthy environment that allows them to develop to their full potential. All children are important and deserve the best that any society can offer. The cultural background of a child can never be used as a reason for not protecting and keeping children safe. However, while culture cannot be used as an apology for allowing harm towards children, it should be important in shaping the way a child is cared for. It is important that the culture within which a child lives is acknowledged as a significant factor in shaping the nature and quality of a child's care experiences.

In order to achieve this it is important to make sure there are good common standards in order to provide an optimal environment for children. It is a moral requirement of all Governments and non-Government agencies to ensure that children in Central Australia have access to a child protection system of the highest possible standards.

Why did we write this document?

This document comes from the belief that child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia are not the best they can be and that there needs to be better ways to think about and do child protection. This is particularly so for children in the cross border region who move between States and Territories, and therefore between many services and agencies.

Aboriginal children can be unnecessarily hurt when:

- Problems of child safety and maltreatment are not identified and stopped before there is harm.
- Risk factors are not being identified and action taken early on to reduce the likelihood of harm occurring to children.
- Efforts are not made to work and support a better life for a child who has been unsafe or harmed.
- There is an absence of mutual responsibility and shared goals between various Government Departments and non-Government agencies working in the cross border region of central Australia.

This document was written to help Government agencies and non-Government organisations involved in child protection in Central Australia to develop better ways of doing child protection. It explains the important ideas and approaches that will help reach this goal. When child protection workers are working in the best way they can, better services for children and families will happen.

Who is this document for?

The aim of this document is to provide a clear direction to build a better child protection system in Central Australia. Government and non-Government managers and workers in child protection can use the ideas in this document to clarify, monitor, reflect on and improve their work and build a quality child protection system for Central Australia.

What is this document about?

This document explains the important ideas and approaches that will assist the child protection system to protect children from harm and work in the best ways they can.

The document is divided into four sections. Section one explains what the care and protection needs of all children, and Aboriginal children in particular, are. It looks at what child protection is, and how children can be kept safe within a child protection system. Section two explains what good practice within a child protection system looks like. Section three explains the important practice principles that are needed for child protection practice with Aboriginal children, with a particular focus on children who move across borders such as in the Central Australian region. Finally, section four makes up the story of one family and explains what good practice, in keeping children safe, looks like.

Specifically, the document explains some of the best ways to protect Aboriginal children from harm by addressing the following important questions:

- What are the care and protection needs of Aboriginal children?
- What are the best ways to protect Aboriginal children in Central Australia from harm?
- How can the care and protection needs of Aboriginal children be best met by a child protection system?
- What policy is needed for good child protection?
- What resources are needed for good child protection?

What can we do with this document now and in the future?

This document is only useful if the ideas are talked about further, developed, tested and put into practice. The next stage is to broaden the discussion of this Framework with other Government and non-Government organisations involved in child protection work. The Framework can be developed more and how it can be put into practice is an important next step. To do this we will need to make sure that people working with children and young people understand, discuss, and consider the ideas carefully. We want to see that the ideas in this document become part of child protection in Central Australia by training workers, developing better practices, doing better practices, and monitoring the outcomes.

Conclusion

Child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia will not be the best they can be unless clear standards for quality service delivery are put in place. This document is an important step in making sure that all people involved in child protection in the cross border region of Central Australia work in the best ways possible.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present a framework for quality child protection practice with Aboriginal communities in Central Australia. The document will pay attention to the issue of ensuring quality child protection practices in relation to cross-border child protection cases (i.e. cases where the child(ren) and or the family move between States/Territory).

The document is intended to provide a reference source for all Government and non-Government managers and workers in child protection to clarify, monitor, reflect on and improve their work and build a quality child protection system for Central Australia. The document will provide a standard for 'good practice' in child protection services for Aboriginal communities in Central Australia, against which past, current, and future services can be assessed.

The document is prepared based upon two clear positions. These positions are supported by research knowledge, theoretical knowledge, and practice knowledge in the areas of child protection and child protection in Aboriginal communities. The two positions are:

1. The nature of 'good practice' in child protection services for Aboriginal communities in Central Australia **can be identified** and clearly stated.
2. 'Good practice' in child protection services **can be implemented** in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia

It is intended that all stakeholders¹ in the delivery of child protection services for Aboriginal communities in Central Australia will be able to use the document for several purposes:

- **Clarify:** to ensure that the purpose and expected outcomes of child protection interventions in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia are clearly stated.
- **Relevance:** to ensure that child protection services will be relevant to the cultural context of Aboriginal communities in Central Australia
- **Refer:** to provide a standard by which child protection intervention practices in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia can be referenced against a standard of expected good practice
- **Indicators:** indicators of good child protection practice in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia can be identified
- **Accountable:** for when child protection practice in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia achieve or fail to achieve good practice standards
- **Directive:** indicate required change areas in child protection practices in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia.

¹ Stakeholders refer to Government and Non-Government agencies and staff who have a responsibility and interest in child protection.

The document is divided into four sections. Each section contains several sub sections.

Section One provides a background to the development of a 'good practice' framework for child protection in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia. The section provides background information on:

1. What are the care and protection needs of children?
2. What is a child protection system?
3. How do child protection systems ensure the care and protection needs of children?

Section One also provides an overview of issues and concerns relation to:

- The care and protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia
- The present manner in which the child protection system responds to the care and protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia

Section One concludes with an overview of the current status of the care and protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia as the impetus for the development of a 'good practice' framework for child protection services in Central Australia.

Section Two outlines the framework of 'Good Practice' for child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia. The section provides the logical component parts of a 'good practice' framework in child protection for Aboriginal children in Central Australia.

Section Three elaborates the nature and characteristics of a good practice framework in more detail, by clearly describing the important practice principles that are needed for child protection practice with Aboriginal children in Central Australia. Particular attention is paid in Section Three to 'good practice' in relation to cross-border child protection cases.

Section Four demonstrates good practice in child protection through a case demonstration of the 'good practice' framework.

Section One: Child Protection in Context

What are the care and protection needs of children?

Human beings have one of the longest dependence periods of their young upon adult carers. Although the length of this duration of dependency many vary between countries, for all children there is a significant period of dependency upon the care of adults. As human societies become more and more technologically sophisticated the duration of children's dependency care period is extended.

It is important when discussing the care and protection needs of children that there is an understanding of what the terms 'care' and 'protection' mean. Both terms encompass the principle of the '**Well-Being**' of children through the avoidance of harm. That is, there is an expectation within societies, at least in relation to the majority of its children that the members of the society, particularly adults, will contribute towards two aspects of the child's life:

- The 'well-being' of the child
- The avoidance of 'harm' to the child

It is important for children that their care and protection needs are provided within an environment of continuity, stability, and predictability. The terms continuity, stability and predictability are very important terms when assessment is made as to whether a child's care environment offers adequate care and protection.

Continuity describes care-giving situations which endure over time and which can be anticipated to do so. It is made up of both the actuality of events of the past/present, as well as perceptions of the future.

Stability occurs in child care environments when the child is reassured of the essential cohesiveness of the care situation. Stability provides for the child a sense of permanency of their environment and of their place within it.

Predictability describes the capacity to anticipate and expect ongoing care. Predictability provides the child with a capacity to anticipate the future safely and therefore avoid a preoccupation/anxiety over the future in the present. (Vasta, 1992; Iverson & Segal, 1990; Wald, et, al., 1988).

The three terms indicate that care and protection must occur over extended time, enabling the child to feel secure in the on-going nature of the carer's capacity and willingness to provide care and protection for the child.

Much of the long-term damage to children of a lack of care and protection results from children being unable to perceive their care environment as one that affords continuity, stability, and predictability.

The term '**Care**' implies an active process in which predominantly, though not exclusively, adults engage in to meet the care needs of children. The concept of 'care' contains within it the idea that a person (carer) will direct their actions to ensuring the child's well-being is ensured.

The idea of '**Protection**' of children encompasses the broader idea that a child needs to be protected from possible actions or events. Protection is a more complex process than caring for the person who is a carer (though not more important), in that it requires the carer to be alert to possible ways in which harm 'may' occur to a child.

In protecting a child the carer must have the capacity to anticipate the possible sources of harm to the child and actively work towards either ensuring these situations or events do not arise, or immediately responding to 'protect' the child when the potential harm situation does arise.

When we understand the ideas of 'care' and 'protection' we are considering a concept where there is care-about and protection-of an object. That is, care-about and protection of the child through specific and conscious actions undertaken by adults, as shown in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1: care and protection as active dynamics

A Clear Object	A Clear Action	A Clear Outcome
A child	Attention to the care and protection of the child	The well-being of the child

The care and protection of children cannot happen through an inactive process. Adults must come together to ensure that the environment within which a child lives provides continuity, stability and predictability.

What is harm to children?

Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Australia is a signatory, all children have the 'right' to:

- **Survival:** children have inherent 'worthiness' as human beings irrespective of any value they can contribute.
- **Develop to the fullest:** children have an inherent right to actualise who they are as a person.
- **Protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation:** children have a right to be protected from harm within and recognising their vulnerable dependent state.
- **Participate fully in family, cultural and social life:** children have a right to active participants in a society.

Where there exists actual or potential threat to the 'rights' of the child, a child is considered to be at actual harm or at risk of harm.

Child maltreatment is a generic term used to encompass any acts towards children which result or may result in harm to a child; as defined by violation to the United Nations rights of the child.

Harm to a child arises through the exposure to environments whereby they are, or potentially can be, abused, exploited and neglected. Table 1 outlines types of maltreatment that children can be exposed to. These maltreatments are a function of two types of acts by people towards children:

1. **Acts of commission:** whereby the person actively undertakes an action, which results in the care and protection rights of the child being violated. For example, when a child is hit with a piece of wood.
2. **Acts of omission:** whereby the person fails to act and the action occurs towards the child due to the person's failure to act. For example, when a carer does not supervise the whereabouts of a small child and the child is hit by a car.

It is important, particularly when understanding and responding to child maltreatment within Aboriginal communities, due to the history of invasion and colonization of Australia, that many child maltreatment acts of commission and omission are closely associated with structural poverty and disadvantage. The socio-economic resources available to an individual, family and community impacts upon the capacity to ensure children's safety, protection and care. The care and protection resource capacity of an individual(s) and a community will play a significant part in understanding the cause of the child maltreatment, as well as shape the nature of the intervention resources required to appropriately respond to a child's safety and protection needs.

Table 1: child maltreatment

Type Of Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Physical abuse</p> <p>“hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child” (U.K. Department of Health, 1998, p.5).</p>	<p>Child has unexplained bruises, physical injuries.</p> <p>Child has fracture injuries at various stages of healing.</p> <p>Child has markings from being hit by an article. For example, wood, belt, and electrical cord.</p> <p>Child has burn marks over the body.</p> <p>Child has several markings over different areas of their body.</p> <p>Child has unexplained lacerations over the body.</p>	<p>Child does not appear for extended periods.</p> <p>Child is wary of adult contacts.</p> <p>Behaviour extremes – aggression to withdrawal.</p> <p>Child is afraid to go home.</p> <p>Child is reluctant for others to go to the home.</p> <p>Child reports injury by the parents.</p> <p>Child exhibits anxiety about normal activities such as eating, napping, using the toilet.</p> <p>Child is frightened of parents.</p> <p>Child informs someone.</p>
<p>Neglect</p> <p>“persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and /or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health and development” (U.K. Department of Health, 1998, p.6).</p>	<p>Child is hungry.</p> <p>Child has poor hygiene.</p> <p>Child has inappropriate clothes for the weather, age and gender.</p> <p>Child has unattended medical and physical problems. For example, skin rashes.</p> <p>Child has been abandoned.</p>	<p>Child is begging and stealing food.</p> <p>Child has fatigue, is listless or falling asleep.</p> <p>Child cannot indicate who is taking care of them.</p> <p>Child attacks other children who appear to have more than they do; that is, food, love, friendships, and so on.</p> <p>Child informs someone of experiences.</p>

Type Of Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Sexual abuse</p> <p>“forcing or enticing of a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse consists of contact activities such as touching, sexual penetration; as well as non contact activities such as observing sexual activities, pornographic recording of children” (U.K. Department of Health, 1998, p.6).</p>	<p>Child has difficulty undertaking physical activities such as walking and sitting.</p> <p>Child has torn, bloodied or stained underclothing.</p> <p>Child indicates itching and discomfort in the external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas.</p> <p>Child has symptoms of venereal disease.</p>	<p>Child displays sexually provocative behaviour to adult males.</p> <p>Child is unwilling to participate in physical activities, for example, school sports, bathing.</p> <p>Child’s behaviour regresses from their chronological age group.</p> <p>Child has developmentally inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual activities.</p> <p>Child has poor relationships with their peers.</p> <p>Child reports they have been sexually assaulted.</p> <p>Child indicates fantasising.</p> <p>Child informs someone.</p>
<p>Emotional abuse</p> <p>“sustained, repetitive, and inappropriate emotional response to the child’s expression of emotion and its accompanying expressive behaviour” (U.K. Department of Health, 1998, p.6).</p>		<p>Child’s emotional affect is flat.</p> <p>Child responds to others with inappropriate emotional reactions.</p> <p>Child is emotionally demanding and needy of others.</p>

Type Of Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Psychological abuse</p> <p>“sustained, repetitive, inappropriate behaviour which damages, or substantially reduces the child’s sense of self-identity, worth and efficacy and therefore impacts upon the child’s the creative and developmental potential of crucially important mental faculties and mental processes of a child; these include intelligence, memory, perception, attention, language and moral development” (Meemeduma, 2005; extending O’Hagan’s (2002) definition).</p>		<p>Child is unable to frame who they are as a person.</p> <p>Child describes themselves as worthless, useless and unimportant.</p> <p>Child does not see that they can effectively act upon the world through their actions.</p>

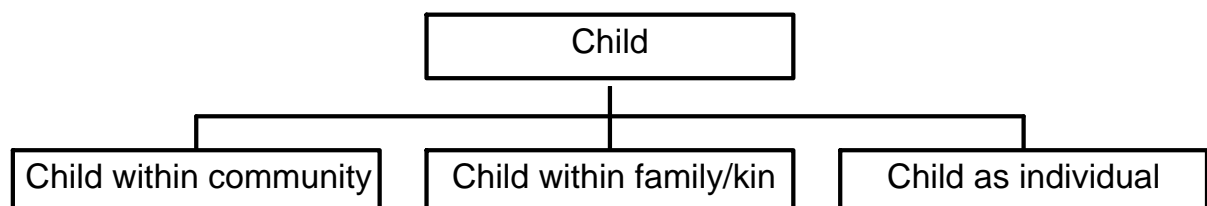
What is a child protection system?

A child protection system consists of all of the parts (individual, family, neighbours, community, organisations, government) of a society/culture, which can be expected to hold responsibility for the care and protection of children, by ensuring a child's care environment provides continuity, stability, and predictability. A child protection system can only exist as a **Whole Society Responsibility** (Meemeduma, 2003) for identifying and addressing the care and protection needs of children.

Santrock (1996) suggests that the responsibility for the care and protection of children within a society can be understood within a 'Social Ecology Model' adapted from Bronfenbrenner's pioneer work.

The 'Social Ecological Model' suggests that the care and protection of children within any society can be understood within a 'Whole Society' approach. This approach enables placement of children's well-being within not only the immediate care context of a particular child's life, but also within the broader social and economic forces operating in the society within which the child and family life is conducted. This relationship is shown in Diagram 2:

Diagram 2: social ecological model



The Social Ecology model enables awareness of a 'Whole Society' responsibility for children's care and protection. This Whole Society responsibility covers two levels of active intervention in ensuring the care and protection of children:

- **Formal child protection sector:** government and non government agencies
- **Informal child protection sector:** family, kin, clan, neighbours, friendships, community

A child protection system can therefore be understood as:

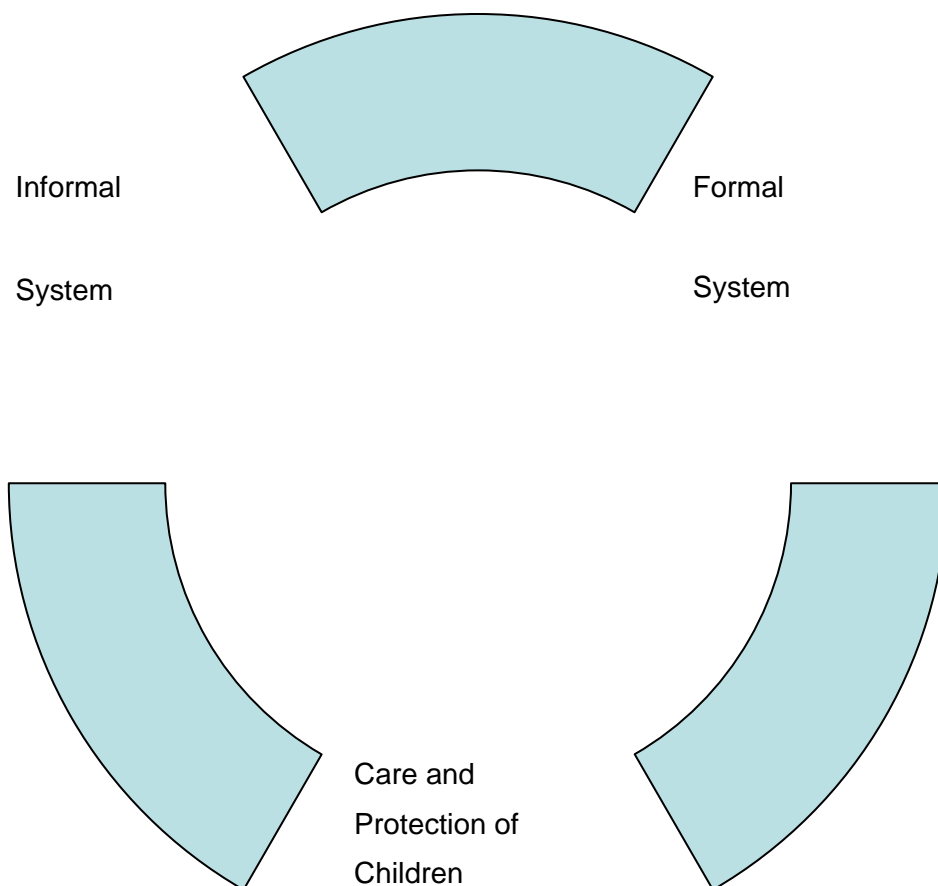
The formal and informal structures developed by a society to ensure the care and protection of children within the society. A Child Protection System is characterised by the integration of formal and informal support and service structures within the society to respond to the care and protection needs of children.

A child protection system encompasses several systems throughout society; the structures whose function is to contribute towards the care and protection of children by:

- Stopping actions which violate the safety and well-being of children
- Preventing care environments developing which place children 'at-risk' of harm
- Healing the consequences of harm to children where the child has failed to be protected

It is important to understand the principle of a 'Whole Society' responsibility for child safety and protection. It is also important to identify those parts of society (formal and informal) which have primary responsibility for ensuring children are safe, cared for, and protected to ensure 'good practice' in child protection in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia. Diagram 3 presents this inter-dependent relationship:

Diagram 3: child protection system relationships



How do child protection systems ensure the care & protection needs of children?

The potential of any child protection system to ensure the safety, protection and care of its children lies within the capacity of such a system to provide an integrated 'Whole Society' vertical and horizontal service response to the safety needs of children.

Vertical services are services which provide a range of potential service of responses at different levels of intervention, from:

- Macro: through political, policy and legislative intervention
- Mezzo: through agency/organisational intervention
- Micro: through on the ground services to individuals, families and communities

Other types of vertical integration services are:

Primary: services to whole communities or societies

Secondary: services to specific identified at risk groups

Tertiary: services to particular individuals, families, communities directly experiencing harm/problems

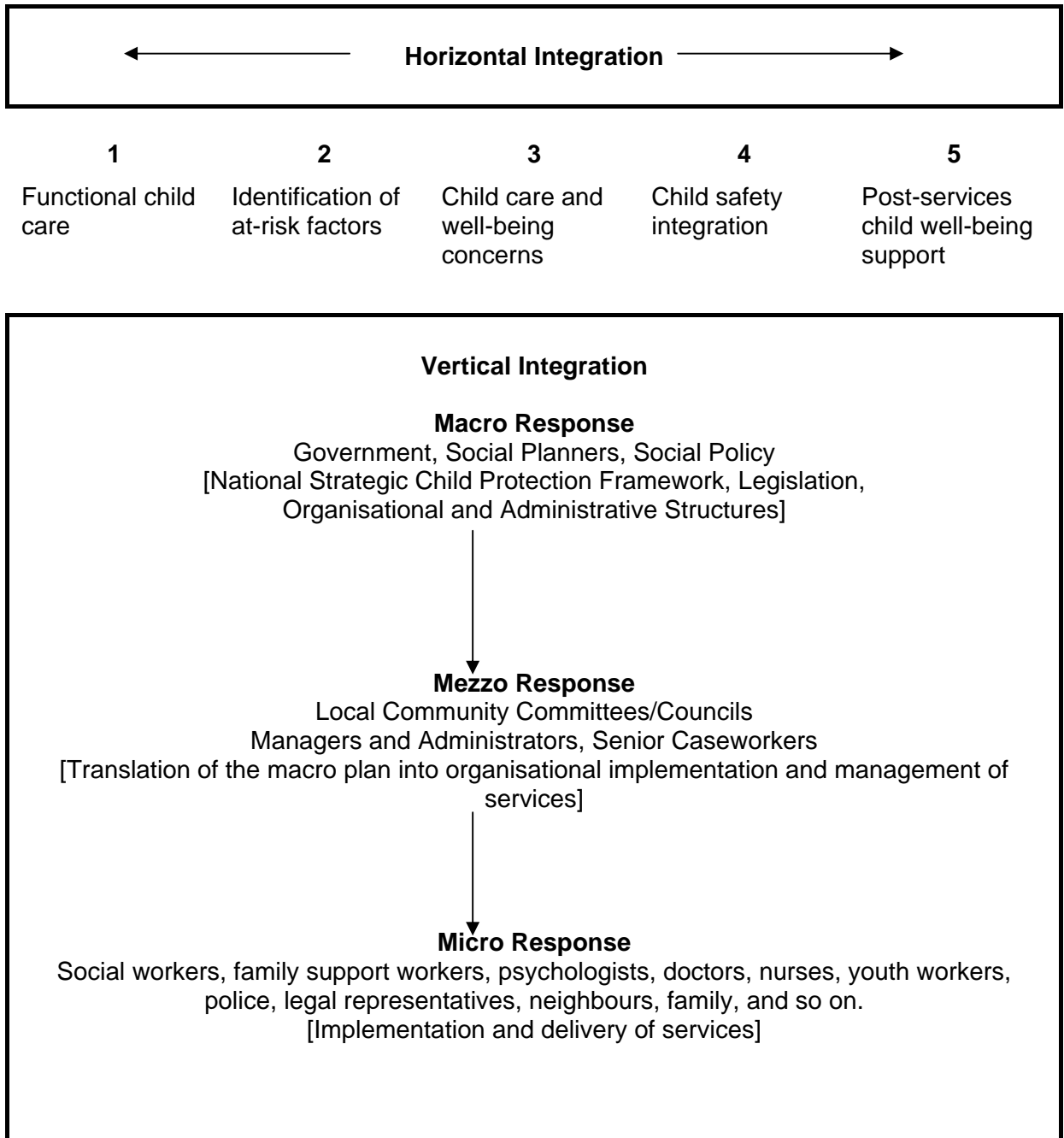
Horizontal integrated services are a range of services, which are delivered at one level of vertical servicing. A horizontal range of vertical micro level support services, for example, would include those as outlined in Table 2:

Table 2: horizontal integration of child protection services

Instrumental Support	Social Support	Personal Support
Giving of practical aid to people such as money, food, shelter, clothing, transport, information	Facilitating the development of relationships between people in the community	Enabling the person to discuss personal issues in their lives

It is an expectation that effective child protection services would be characterised by a capacity to deliver services within a Whole Society approach to child protection across a range of vertical and horizontal service responses; as indicated in Diagram 4:

Diagram 4: horizontal & vertical integration of child protection services



The care and protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia

All children, irrespective of the country or culture they live within, require that they live within a child-rearing environment that ensures their safety. The care and protection needs of children to be safe through the protective efforts of their carers are a universal imperative through out human societies. The cultural context of a child can never be utilised as a rationale for the violation of children's rights. No society can condone harm to children without long-term repercussions to the survival of the cultural and social group.

Although cultural context can never be used as an apology for harm towards children, it is important that the cultural context within which a child lives is acknowledged as a significant factor in shaping the nature and quality of a child's care experiences. Cultural variances in the values, beliefs and practices that ensure children are protected and cared for need to be valued, respected, and supported.

The care and protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia must be understood in relation to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These needs however must always be contextualised within the socio-cultural context of Aboriginal life itself and Aboriginal life within a Central Australian lived environment.

Presented in Table 3 are the identified care and protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia.

The importance of Table 3 lies in its clear presentation of not only the safety, protection, and care needs of Aboriginal children as children, but also the unique nature of their child protection needs as these are understood within a cultural context. Table 3 also highlights the active responsibilities placed upon the society when a 'Whole Society' approach to child protection is adopted. Such an active approach to a 'Whole Society' approach to Child protection can be characterised as:

1. **Active:** immediate intervention when children's rights to safety, protection and care are being violated.
2. **Vigilant:** to identify and monitor factors that may place children's rights to safety, care and protection at risk.
3. **Creative:** to build upon the inherent strengths and capacities of individuals, families and communities to ensure the safety, care and protection of children.

Table 3: care & protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia

UN Convention On Rights Of The Child	Rights Of An Aboriginal Child Living In Central Australia	Responsibility Of An Australian 'Whole Society' Child Protection System
1. The right to survival: children have inherent 'worthiness' as human beings irrespective of any value they can contribute	An Aboriginal child has the 'right' to live their life in Central Australia without threat to their safety due to geographical distance, cultural differences and economic resource access status.	Irrespective of where a child lives in Australia they will have the same rights of safety, protection and care as all other children. The capacity of a 'Whole Society' child protection system shall be based upon principles of social equity towards all children.
2. To develop to the fullest: that children have an inherent right to actualise who they are as a person.	An Aboriginal child has the 'right' to live their life in Central Australia with access to those cultural, social and economic resources which will facilitate their fullest development as an Aboriginal Australian	The child protection system has a responsibility to identify those factors that impede the fullest development of an Aboriginal child and to facilitate access to resources that will contribute towards a child's growth and development.
3. To protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation: children have a right to be protected from harm within and recognising their vulnerable dependent state	An Aboriginal child has the 'right' to live their life in Central Australia without exposure to or risk of exposure to experiences that will generate harm to the child.	The child protection system has a responsibility to identify and address those factors which may generate harmful and exploitative care experiences for the child and as a consequence subject the child to potential risk or actual experience of harm.

UN Convention On Rights Of The Child	Rights Of An Aboriginal Child Living In Central Australia	Responsibility Of An Australian 'Whole Society' Child Protection System
4. To participate fully in family, cultural and social life: children have a right to be active participants in a society.	An Aboriginal child has the 'right' to live their life in Central Australia with a clear sense of themselves as an 'Aboriginal cultural' person located within a socio-cultural context which is valued and respected within itself and by the wider Australian community	A 'Whole Society' child protection system is responsible for the development of a 'lived' environment, which is economically, socially, and culturally resourced to facilitate the provision of a child care environment where an Aboriginal child develops a sense of self as culturally worthy and valued.

How does the child protection system respond to the care and protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia?

The provision of a child protection system within a society presents immense challenges. These challenges are generated for several reasons:

1. The difficulties in knowing when children are being harmed or at risk of being harmed.
2. The difficulties in acknowledging and addressing multi-causal factors that generate harm situations or potential harm situations in children's lives.
3. The critical role that economic disadvantage through social marginalisation places in generating actual or perceived risk of harm situations in children's lives.
4. The limitations in being able to address all causal factors generating harm for a child
5. The inability to access appropriate and effective resources to address the factors generating harm or risk of harm for a child.

The outlined challenges are often compounded by factors specific to the physical and socio-economic location of children's lives within particular settings. For children residing in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia, ensuring their safety, care and protection, presents particular challenges. These challenges are:

1. Geographical distance
2. Geographical isolation
3. Economic disadvantage

In reviewing the present provision of child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia it is important to acknowledge the challenges, as outlined, which shape the nature of how practice is conducted. It is also important however to acknowledge these challenges, and through honest acknowledgement of the challenges, develop more appropriate and effective means to ensure quality child protection services are provided to Aboriginal children and their families in Central Australia.

For ease of presentation, current issues and concerns relating to child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia are outlined in Table 4. These concerns are identified and discussed under the areas of:

- Structural
- Procedural
- Personnel
- Methods
- Outcomes

Table 4: contemporary delivery of child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia

Area of Concern	Practice Implication
<p>Structural</p> <p>Lack of a Whole Society approach to child protection on Aboriginal communities; various systems do not have an integrated systemic approach to practice.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No whole system approach to understanding or responding to child protection cases. 2. Agencies and organisations work in 'silo' response to child protection concern. 3. System can respond in different and contrary ways to a child protection concern.
<p>Procedural</p> <p>No agreed upon case management life plan that enables the case to be planned and tracked.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No agreed upon whole system practice intervention goals established. 2. No agreed upon intervention goals. 3. No integration of the intervention focus of different stakeholders in a case. 4. Inadequate 'case recording' protocols and formats to ensure continuity of service intervention. 5. Lack of appropriate information communication inter-change.
<p>Personnel</p> <p>Lack of clarity as to the roles and functions of service personnel. Problems in attracting and retaining qualified and experienced appropriate service personnel.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uncertainty as to leadership roles in case direction. 2. Personnel network systems unable to be developed or enriched leading to communication and planning breakdowns. 3. Inexperienced personnel, which can lead to inappropriate and ineffective child protection practice.

Area of Concern	Practice Implication
<p>Methods</p> <p>Lack of common agreement as to the most appropriate and effective means of intervening in child protection cases in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agencies, professionals intervening in cases from different intervention approaches and strategies. 2. Intervention practices can work at cross-purpose to each other. 3. Lack of an agreed upon intervention model which responds approximately and effectively to the child protection needs within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia.
<p>Outcome</p> <p>There is no clear agreement as to the nature of child well-being for Aboriginal children living in Central Australia to which can be aspired towards a Whole Society approach to child protection.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A lack of an agreed upon vision of child well-being for Aboriginal children in Central Australia 2. A lack of agreed upon purpose and direction in child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia 3. A lack of identification of key resources required to achieve an agreed upon vision of child well-being for Aboriginal children in Central Australia

An Overview

The motivation for the present framework arose from a growing awareness that child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia fell short of expected quality standards. The short fall in the achievement of quality child protection meant that Aboriginal children were unnecessarily exposed to greater harm when:

- Existing harms were not being identified and effectively stopped
- Risk indicators were not being identified and measures taken to reduce the likelihood of harm to children eventuating
- Rehabilitative efforts were not undertaken to address the consequences for a child of child maltreatment.

It is argued that child protection services for Aboriginal children will continue to fall short of quality standards unless clear frameworks of quality service are set in place which act as a reference guide for future practices.

Section Two: Quality Services in Child Protection Practice

Section Two outlines a 'good practice' framework for child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia. The section outlines the characteristics of quality services in child protection practice. The section identifies the parts that make up a 'good practice' framework in child protection. The section then goes on to identify the utilization of the 'good practice framework' in relation to quality child protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia. The section outlines the required practices, which would evolve from a 'good practice framework'.

The characteristics of quality services in child protection practice

The existence of Child Protection Services within a society is recognition that certain children within the society are at risk of and experience care environments, which do not provide continuity, stability and predictability for the child. Child protection services are also a commitment by a society to put in place resources and measures, which will decrease the risk of harm occurring and/or actively intervene to stop the harm when it has occurred.

Child Protection Services provide one of the most important means within our society to ensure the care and protection well-being of children. For some children (where familial and community relationships are unable or unwilling to undertake this role) Child Protection Services (Statutory and Non Government) may be the only means by which society's obligation to ensure the care and protection well-being of children can be met.

The commitment to and implementation of Quality Service Standards within Child Protection Services is critical to ensuring the risk of or actual harm to children is minimised to its lowest level.

It is not possible within any democratic society, to guarantee that no child will be at risk of or not harmed through child abuse and neglect. It is possible for society however to commit to:

1. Facilitate the development of carers' capacities and strengths to enable them to care for children in ways that encourage the child's sense of continuity, stability and predictability.
2. Reduce the risk and incidence of child abuse and neglect harm to the lowest possible level through the provision of policies and services, which promote and enhance parenting/carer capacities.
3. Provide services that appropriately and effectively intervene in the lives of children who are subject to harm to bring about cessation of harm.

4. Develop services that prevent, address and ameliorate social and individual pre dispositional risk factors.
5. Generate service outcomes that contribute to addressing and healing the consequence of harm in future life.

Society cannot guarantee no child will be at risk of or actually harmed through child abuse and neglect. Our society can guarantee that children will receive GOOD SERVICE STANDARDS in all interactions with Child Protection Services.

In short our society can ensure:

Child Protection Services will always operate at the highest levels and standards of practice. That is, all services will guarantee that they will enact QUALITY SERVICE STANDARDS.

Quality Service Standards are the highest levels of practice expected in the provision of services. They are a moral commitment to the principle that when individuals, families and communities receive services they can expect to receive the highest standards of service, irrespective of the service user's racial, cultural, gender, and class characteristics.

Quality Service Standards place upon all service providers several obligations:

- Obligation to ensure all services identify and build upon carers' capacities and strengths to care for children in an appropriate and effective manner.
- Obligation that service decision makers and implementers will plan systematically to conceptualise, design, deliver and evaluate services, which are appropriate to the needs of the service user.
- Obligation that all parties to the service provision process will work to ensure adequate and appropriate resources are available to provide quality practice standards.
- Obligation to ensure that Quality Service Standards are evidenced through appropriate organisational structures, protocols and delivery mechanisms.
- Obligation to ensure up-to-date understandings and knowledge relating to child protection and care are used to publicly inform services.
- Obligation to ensure all service personnel have the appropriate level of qualifications, knowledge and skills to respond effectively to the needs of service users.

- Obligation to ensure that the unique characteristics of each individual (cultural, racial, ethnic, gender, age, experience, sexual preference etc) are respected and integrated within an appropriate and effective service response.
- Obligation to on-going monitoring, evaluation, review and reform of services.

The parts which make up a ‘good practice’ framework in child protection

A ‘good practice’ framework is made up of twelve component parts that provide the overall structure within which good practice in child protection can be understood and referenced against. The component parts are identified as key areas in which clear **positional decisions** have to be arrived at which reflect how ‘good practice’ in child protection is understood in relation to the child protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia.

The parts are ordered to show the recommended linear relationship that each part holds to other parts in the framework. The good practice framework is presented in Diagram 5:

Diagram 5: twelve-point framework for the design & development of a ‘good practice’ in child protection

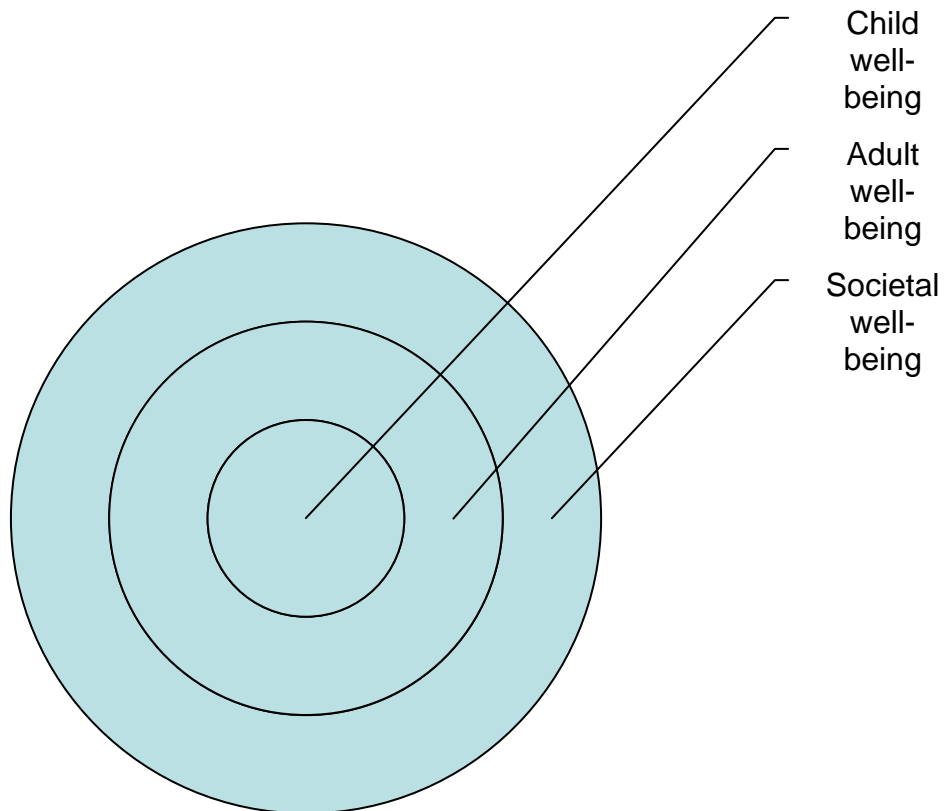
1. Nature and characteristics of individual & community well-being within both Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society
2. Nature and characteristics of child well-being, safety and protection within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society
3. Nature and characteristics of children who are considered unsafe and risk of harm within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia
4. Moral and philosophical principles within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society in relation to child well-being, safety and protection
5. Aims and objectives of child well-being, safety and protection within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society
6. Child well-being, safety and protection social policy within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society
7. State/Territory political legislative structure of child well-being, safety and protection.
8. Organisational focus of child safety and protection services in Central Australia
9. Service delivery model of child safety and protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia
10. Organisational structure of child safety and protection services in Central Australia
11. Systemic model of programme design and delivery of child safety and protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia
12. A model of manpower and resource planning for child safety and protection services in Central Australia

Good Practice Framework 1:

Nature and characteristics of individual & community well-being within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society

The design of a 'good practice' framework for child protection practice with Aboriginal children in Central Australia develops from the goals of the society/community as a whole for its people. The ability of Central Australian Aboriginal communities specifically and Australian society generally to protect children will ensure children will grow up to contribute towards the future well-being of both their Aboriginal community and Australian society. This relationship is diagrammatically presented in Diagram 6:

Diagram 6: inter relationship of society's well-being and the well-being of children



Good Practice Framework 2:

Nature and characteristics of child well-being, safety and protection within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society

Although the care and protection of children is an accepted universal throughout all human societies, how the objectives of care and protection of children are understood and implemented varies significantly from one society to another. This variance is predominantly determined by the cultural context(s) of each society and by the socio-economic characteristics of the society.

It is important in the design and implementation of a 'good practice' framework for child protection practice with Aboriginal children in Central Australia for there to be clarity in relation to what the 'benchmarks' of 'good/appropriate' care of children are, and how they are determined and measured. Such clarity ensures there is a clear benchmark to which child protection services aim towards in their intervention practices.

This relationship is indicated in Diagram 7.

Diagram 7: relationship between appropriate standards of care within a society and intervention practice focus

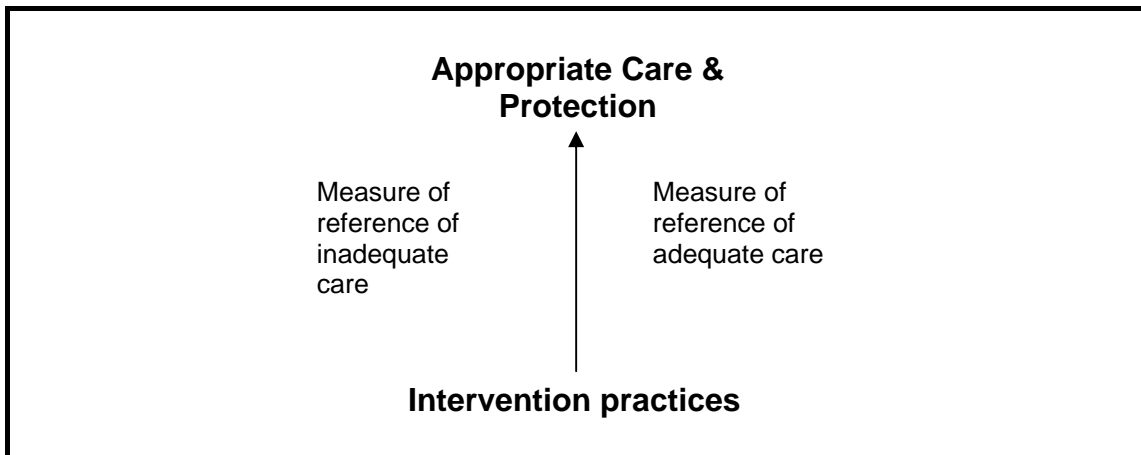


Diagram 7 indicates the importance of a clear articulation of what adequate standards of care may look like within a community and society. Knowing what adequate care is provides an inspirational focus upon which intervention practices can be referred.

Good Practice Framework 3:

Nature and characteristics of children who are considered unsafe and risk of harm within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia

Children who are experiencing harm or at risk of experiencing harm are members of one of the most vulnerable groups within both Aboriginal communities and Australian society as a whole. The long dependency period of the human young means that such children may be vulnerable throughout their childhood.

The determination of which children within a community and society are identified as members of a vulnerable or at risk of becoming a member of a vulnerable group is an important task to be addressed within a 'good practice framework. Such a task address three (3) key issues:

- **Definitional precision**

How the term 'vulnerable' children in relation to safety and protection is to be defined and understood.

How a child who is not considered vulnerable in relation to their safety and protection care needs is to be understood.

- **Indicators of vulnerable/ not vulnerable characteristic features**

What features will need to be exhibited by the child and/or their circumstances for it to be determined the child can be considered either a vulnerable child or not a vulnerable child.

- **Inclusion and exclusion categorisation implications**

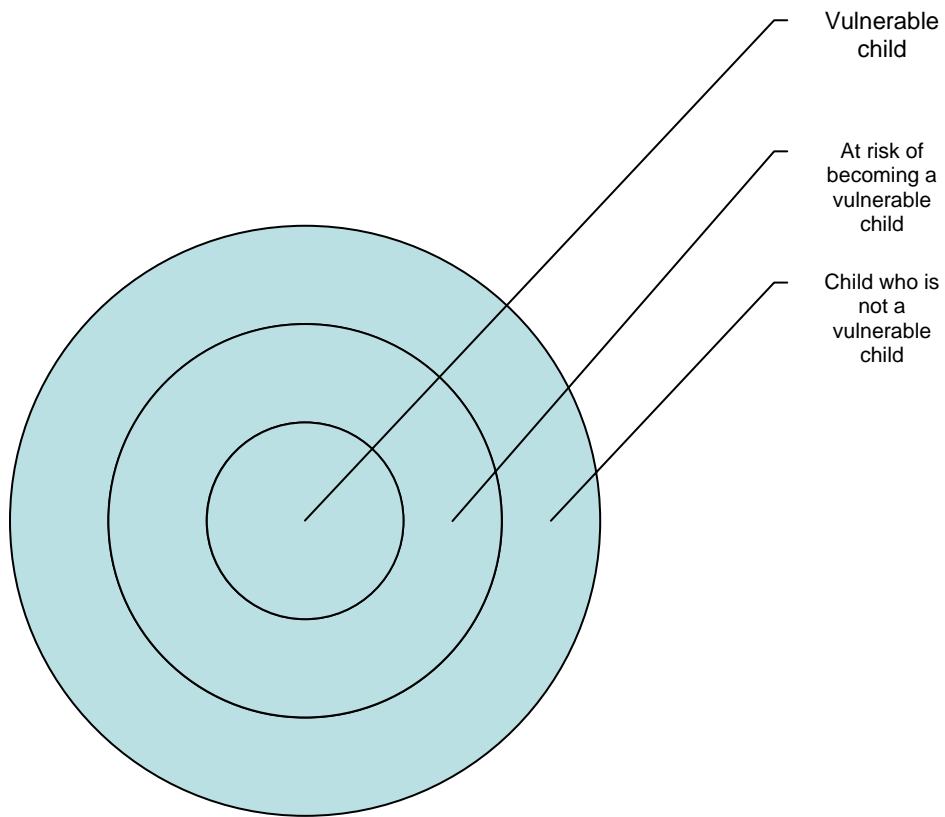
Which children fall within the definition, which children fall outside the definition?

Definitional clarity relating to which children are encompassed by the term 'vulnerable' in relation to their safety and protection needs enables the 'good practice' framework to clearly delineate the target group who are the focus of concern of the framework.

Definitional clarity enables an identification of the 'At-Risk' factors, which may place a child who is presently not a 'vulnerable at risk' of becoming 'vulnerable'. With such definitional clarity preventive primary intervention programmes can be developed to reduce or eliminate the risks of the child's movement into the status of a vulnerable child.

The relationship between each of the three (3) levels of definitional clarity is illustrated in Diagram 8.

Diagram 8: definitional relationship between vulnerable & non-vulnerable status



The definitional extensiveness or limitation of the term vulnerable child has particular importance in determining the extent and nature of resources required to address the needs of children whose life circumstances are characteristic of the determined definition of vulnerability. It is a truism that the extent of the resource demands generated by the 'good practice' framework will be as large or as small as the width of the definitional net of the term 'vulnerable' child.

Good Practice Framework 4:

Moral and philosophical principles within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society in relation to child well-being, safety and protection

All human service practice is a moral endeavour. From the conceptualisation of what are the problems, to the delivery of services, workers are engaged in a moral endeavour relating to what is and what should be, what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. For all peoples who are involved in protecting children to ignore the moral context of child protection work is to ignore the moral and ethical context of all child protection and care practice.

The care and well-being of all children must always be understood within the context of what is understood as right and wrong within a society (moral standards). All actions towards children therefore, must be informed by a belief in and commitment to fundamental moral positions (rules) in relation to children's well-being. These moral positions or rules act to inform the values held, the ethical actions expected and the social objectives of society. This relationship is indicated in Table 5.

Table 5: caring well, protecting well in a moral context

Moral Rule	Children should never be considered a means to an end, but an end in themselves
Values	Inherent worth of all people, inherent worthiness of children
Ethical Obligation	Protect, care, develop and stimulate children
Societal Investment	People can operate within the society in a manner that contributes to societal well-being, whilst providing opportunities for individual, family and community growth and development.

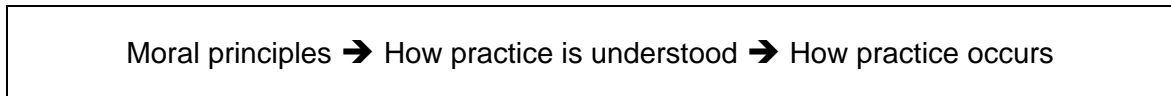
Intervening in the lives of families to ensure children are protected from harm and appropriately cared for is a complex and challenging task encountered by all societies. Addressing the challenges and complexity of protecting and caring for children must be derived therefore from clear moral and conceptual reference points.

Appropriate child protection and care practices cannot occur if they are separate from and devoid of a clear community consensus as to the **moral principles** informing and guiding practice.

Moral principles are the foundations of any 'good practice' framework. Moral principles guide the development of how the child protection needs of children are to be understood and what the practice intervention objectives and services will be.

To build a child protection system without clear adherence to moral principles is akin to building a house without foundations. This relationship is outlined in Diagram 9.

Diagram 9: moral principles as the foundation of all child protection practice



Practices not founded upon clear moral principles in relation to the well-being of children, are at risk of, at best, disjointed reactive responses to individual situations and at worst, of perpetuating the existing harm to children and their families.

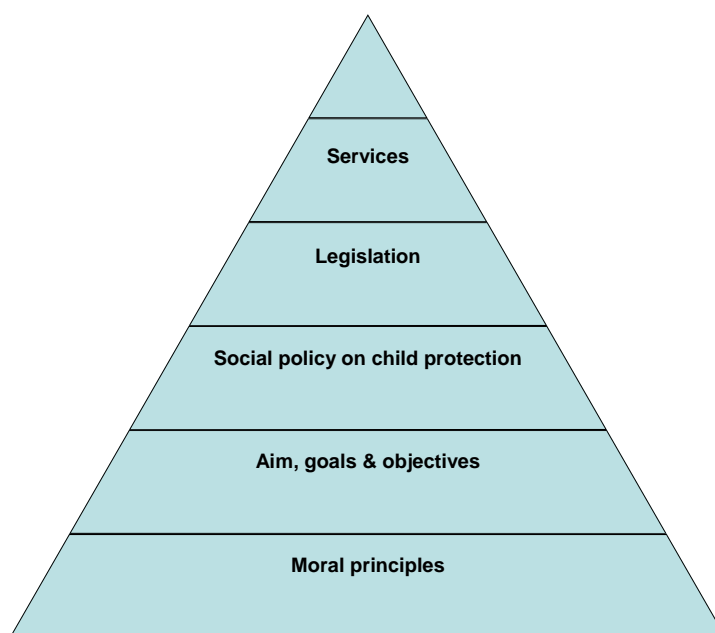
Good Practice Framework 5:

Aims, goals and objectives of child well-being, safety and protection within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and Australian society

A 'good practice' framework is an important and public means by which the aims and objectives of a Child Protection system are clearly presented and articulated to all stakeholders within the community/society. Without clearly articulated and understood aims and objectives, all members of the society will be uncertain as to the purpose and function of the child protection system.

It is important to note the inter-dependent relationship between the moral positions adopted and the aims and objectives of the child protection sector and the subsequent social policy developed. This inter-dependent relationship is presented in Diagram 10.

Diagram 10: interdependency of stages in a good practice framework



The establishment of clear aims and objectives of a child protection system provides a clear reference point for the design and development of the child protection service system within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia. It is not too simplistic an assertion to make that all subsequent policies, programmes and services must be designed to fulfil the designated aims and objectives outlined in the 'good practice' framework. The aim and objectives become the reference point against which all stakeholders in the child protection system (irrespective of the level of decision making) can reference their plans and decisions against to answer the on-going question:

“Do my planing, policy, services, programmes and actions meet the aim, goals and objectives of the 'good practice' framework?”

Good Practice Framework 6:

Child well-being, safety and protection social policy within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society

Kahn (1969, p.130) defines policy as “standing plans...general guides to future decision making...instruments by which goals are achieved”. Although there are many definitions of ‘policy’, what is common to the concept of policy is the idea of:

- Pre-emptive planning – a capacity to think into the future about what needs may need to be addressed and the manner in which they maybe addressed.
- Articulation of clear aims, goals and objectives that the policy is to contribute towards implementing.
- State/Organisational authority to develop commission and implement the ‘standing plans’.

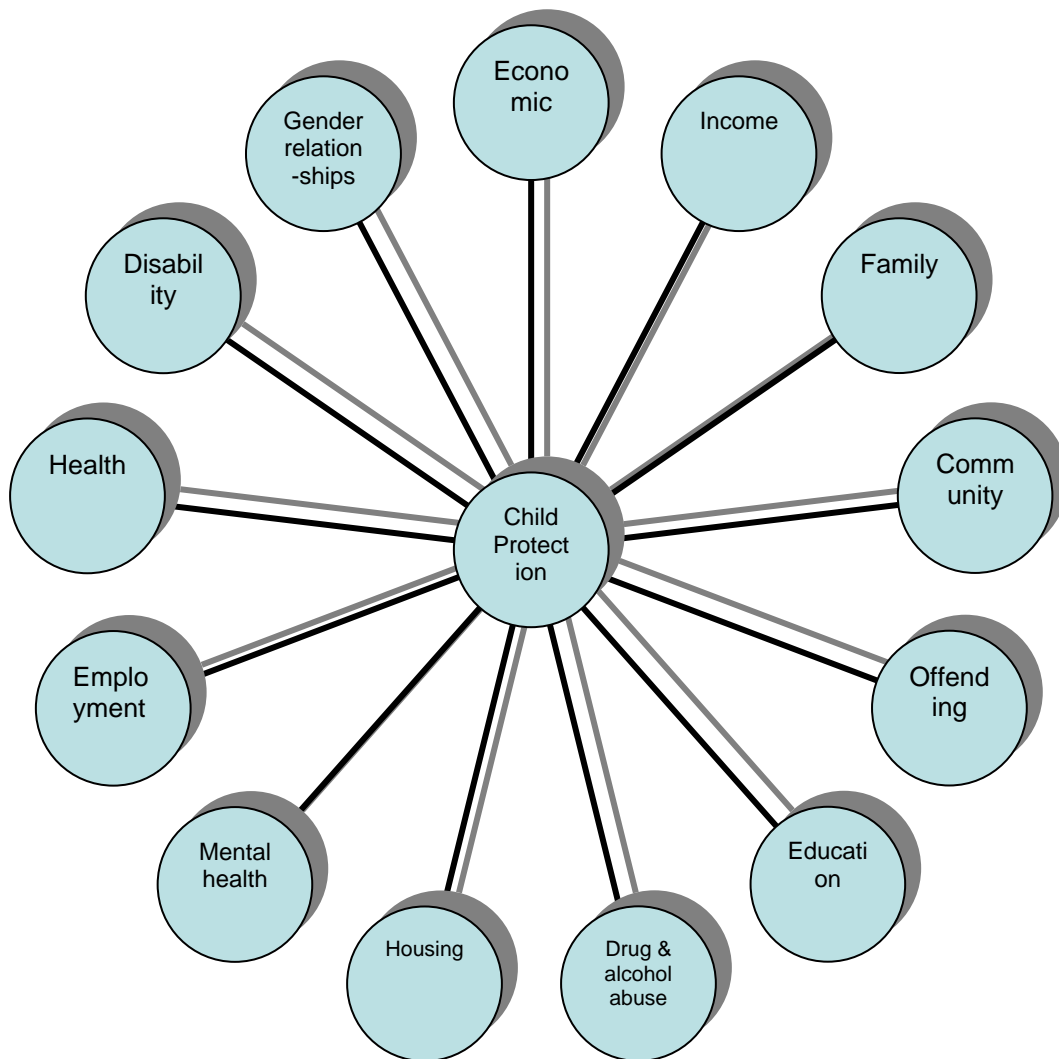
Policies provide the working principles and framework within which detailed service delivery organisational structures can be designed and programme services developed. Child protection policy requires particular attention to choices relating to:

- The areas of child protection, which it is determined social policy will be developed.
- The types of social policy developed in each area.

A concern with the quality of care of children has the potential to cover many areas of social concern, each of which has the potential to require appropriate social policy if it considered these areas have bearing upon child protection concerns. The potential areas that may require child protection social policy are presented diagrammatically below in Diagram 11.

The development of a ‘good practice’ framework requires a primary identification of the multi causal nature of child protection concerns within Aboriginal communities specifically and within the broader Australian community generally. Identification of other factors (as indicated in Diagram 11), which impact upon the capacity of carers and communities to ensure the safety and protection of children, provides the means through which related social policy can be developed in these areas. Ensuring that policy development for child protection is integrated with policy development in other relevant causal areas is a critical component of good child protection practice.

Diagram 11: potential areas of social policy concerns in child protection



Good Practice Framework 7:

State/Territory political legislative structure of child well-being, safety and protection

It is accepted practice in child protection throughout the world that all child protection systems operate within the context of a legislative framework provided and directed by the authority of the State. Statutory acts and law provide, through the legitimacy and authority of the State, the power to enforce and undertake policy directives and investigations. The predominant statutory directives relating to children are essentially civil in nature. However persons, who have committed acts upon children, may themselves be charged under criminal law.

It is important to note that Civil Law, particularly with the power of the State behind it, has the capacity to go beyond its utilization as a civil justice system in determining who and under what conditions a person may seek access to the courts in relation to the care and protection needs of children. A civil justice system, such as the Children Act (1989) in England, has demonstrated the capacity of civil law to direct and encourage duty of care responsibilities of different levels of government, non-government agencies and individual citizens; and required service provision in relation to children's care needs.

The legislative structure developed for child protection determines in its language, orders and protocols the triggering of conceptual evidence for whether a child's circumstances may be designated as exhibiting a child protection concern. What these triggers may be is determined in Australia within a State/Territory legislative framework, which must work in harmony with a 'good practice' framework.

A legislative framework for child protection is of particular importance. A clear legislative framework provides the means to determine:

- Which children will be designated as at risk of 'significant harm' and hence in need of child protection.
- What the investigative framework is to determine the substantiation of the circumstances of a child and young person.
- What the intervention options are available within the Act (s) to respond to the safety and protection needs of the child in the present and the future.

Good Practice Framework 8:

Organisational focus of child safety and protection services in Central Australia

Ensuring the safety of children occurs at two levels. These are:

- **Protection** — against actual or potential harm (negatively focused concern).
- **Facilitation** — of well-being and developmentally appropriate growth (positive focused concern).

Child protection services must therefore embrace a two dimensional focus upon behaviours and environments which are:

- Contrary to children's safety
- Conducive to children's safety

As a result of this two dimensional focus any child protection system must encompass what might on first glance appear to be a contrary focus:

- **Social control** —to use authority to stop behaviours and environments, which are a risk or present a risk to a child safety.
- **Social support** —to encourage the development of appropriate child safety behaviours and environments.

The nature of the roles required in each focus is presented in Table 6. The development of any child protection system must determine how these two roles will sit in relationship to each other through the design and delivery of services.

Table 6: roles of social control and social change in child protection

Social Control	Social Change
Reporting	Supporting
Investigation	Educating
Substantiation	Counselling
Legal proceedings	Facilitating
Directing	Brokering
Enforcing	
Monitoring	

Good Practice Framework 9:

Service delivery model of child safety and protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia

Throughout history and throughout all societies there is a vested interest, to a greater or lesser degree, in ensuring the safety and protection of children. However, how each society may undertake ensuring this safety and protection varies along a number of parameters. These parameters are:

- Authority and role of **State** or governing authority in determining the nature of a child and young person's well-being and protection.
- Authority and role of the **family** in determining the nature of a child and young person's well-being and protection.
- Authority and role of the **extended paternal and maternal family** in determining the nature of a child and young person's well-being and protection.
- Authority and role of the **local community** in determining the nature of a child and young person's well-being and protection.
- Authority and role of **local voluntary organisations** in determining the nature of a child and young person's well-being and protection.

Although throughout history it can be seen that certain parameters tended to dominate as the principle parameter which shapes child protection services, one parameter in its own right seldom has an exclusive influence upon a child protection system.

For example, throughout history it can be evidenced in many societies there existed the principle of 'pater familias' – or the father as the undisputed head and controller of the family, its members, their well-being and resources. Within such a historical model the authority and role of the father in determining the nature of a child well-being (as well as those of women), was undisputed and allowed no interference from outside bodies such as the State. However, the model of 'pater familias' was often in itself mediated and buffered in many societies by the role and authority of the extended family group.

In the development of a 'good practice' framework for child safety and protection of Aboriginal children in Central Australia there is a need to determine which key institutions within the community and society will play a service role and how each institutions service role will relate to the other institutions' service roles.

Throughout the world variations in services models (and therefore consequent organisational service delivery) occur through variations in the authority and role of the:

- Government (State) sector.
- Non Government organisations (NGOs) sector.
- Family.
- Extended family kin group.
- Local community/neighbourhood.
- Schools.
- Hospitals.
- Child care centres.

Presented in Table 7 are the types of models of child protection service delivery based upon variations in the role and authority of various social institutions.

Table 7: models of service delivery — structural variations

Model Type	Relationship of systems	Description
1	State	State retains authority and provides all social control and social support services in relation to child protection.
2	State NGOs	State has all authority and delegates service responsibilities to NGO sector, particularly in relation to social support service roles. State may or may not resource the NGO sector to undertake these functions.
3	State NGOs	State delegates some of its authority to NGOs. NGOs provide both social control and social support services. State may or may not resource the NGO sector to undertake these functions.
4	State NGOs	State delegates all of its authority to NGO sector. NGO sector provides all services. State may or may not resource the NGO sector to undertake these functions.
5	Family	Family has all authority in the care and protection of children. State may or may not provide resources to undertake the care and protection roles.
6	Family & extended family group	Family shares its roles and responsibilities for the care of children and young people with the extended family/kin group. Extended kin group given authority to monitor care and protection needs of children and young people. Extended family/kin group is a source of alternate care provision of children and young people. State may or may not provide resources to undertake the care and protection roles.
7	State and the family	State shares its authority and roles with the family. The family is expected to adhere to and implement the child safety and protection standards for children and young people directed the State. State may or may not provide resources to undertake the care and protection roles.

Model Type	Relationship of systems	Description
8	State, the family & the extended family	The State shares its authority and roles in partnership with the family and extended family. Extended family undertakes important monitoring and support roles for child safety. State may (family based foster care) or may not provide resources to undertake the care and protection roles.
9	NGOs & the family	The State delegates its authority to the NGO sector who work in partnership with families to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people. State may or may not provide resources to undertake the care and protection roles.
10	NGOs, the family & the extended family	The State delegates its authority to the NGO sector who work in partnership with families and the extended family to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people. State may or may not provide resources to undertake the care and protection roles.
11	State and neighbourhood communities	The State retains its authority. State delegates parts of its authority to local neighbourhood communities to monitor and support child and young person safety. State usually allocates resources to support this work.
12	NGOs and neighbourhood communities	The State delegates its authority to the NGO sector who work in partnership with local communities to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people. State may or may not provide resources to undertake the care and protection roles.
13	State, NGOs, family, extended family & local neighbourhood communities	The State retains its authority to determine and control the nature of child safety and to intervene in child safety matters. The State works in partnership with the NGO sector and either utilizes the NGO sector to work in partnership with families. Extended families and local neighbourhood communities, (or the State undertakes this partnership itself), work to ensure the safety and well-being of children.

Good Practice Framework 10:

Organisational structure of child safety and protection services in Central Australia

The organisational delivery of child protection services to address the safety and protection needs of children is the pivotal means by which safety and protection is afforded to vulnerable groups of children within society. The organisational delivery of child protection services is also the means by which the values towards children are translated into specific appropriate and effective services.

An organisation can be defined as a 'body of people organized for some end or work'. As such the organisational structure in child protection affords the opportunity to 'organise' people in the human services in a manner, which enables the achievement of the aim and objectives of the child protection system in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia.

The organisation of child protection services in Central Australia needs to occur at two levels:

- Systems organisational delivery structure between various systems
- Within organisation service delivery

10.1. Systems organisational delivery structure

A commonsense practice for the organisational delivery of child protection services is to utilise the existing organisational structures of Government. The most common model of Government services is centralised Government functions, which are devolved to areas and then devolved again to communities.

In determining a 'good practice' framework for child protection in practice with Aboriginal children in Central Australia it is important to determine the appropriate and effective nature of the roles and functions of each level of organisational service delivery.

Some of the possible roles and functions of levels of designation are outlined in Table 8:

Table 8: Organisational roles and functions of levels of service

Level	Roles & Functions in Relation to Child Protection
Central	Legislative Policy Budget determination and allocation Service delivery models Quality standards indicators development Central data collection/analysis Central research Manpower planning Manpower training Strategic planning Central audits and evaluation Inter systems service integration
Area	Organisational delivery design Organisational monitoring Manpower recruitment Manpower professional development Area budgeting allocation Area policy Area quality standards determination Area data collection and research
Community	Performance management Service implementation and delivery Service monitoring Service evaluation Staff recruitment Case record keeping Resource allocation Service support Service delivery Case recording Service reporting Allocation of resources

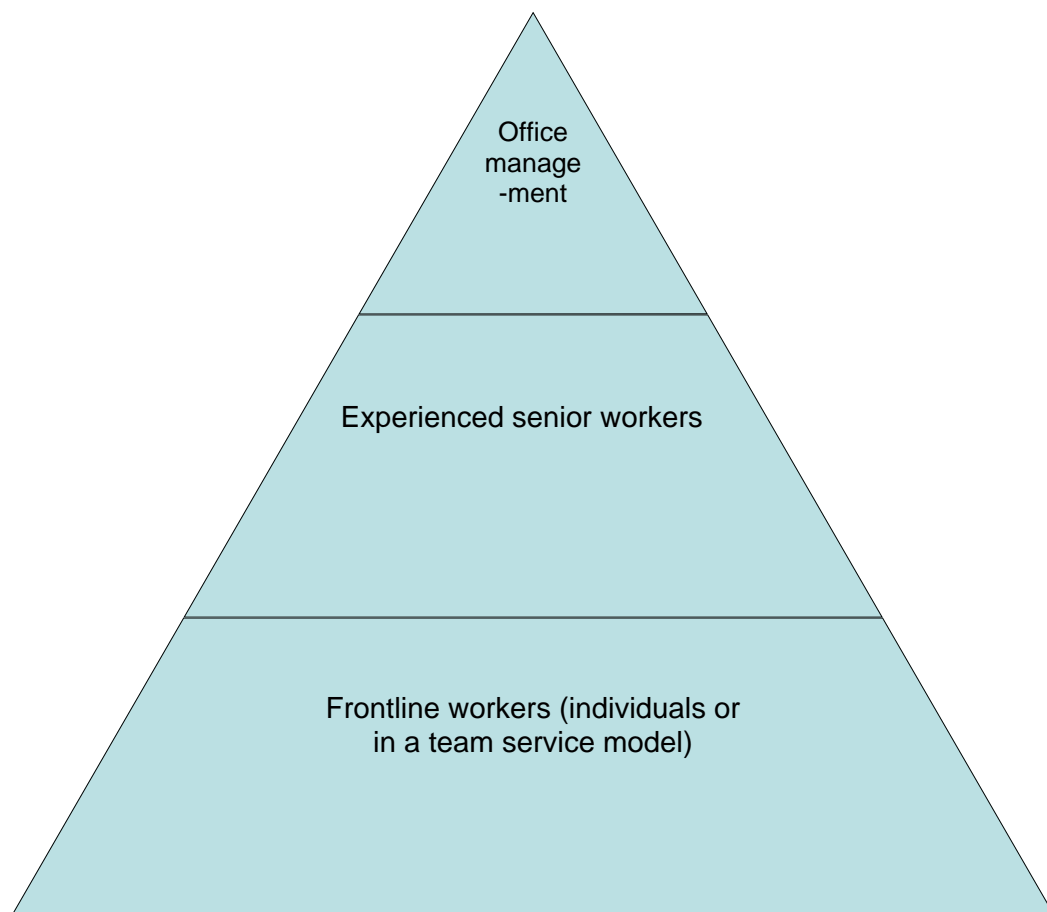
10.2. Within organisation, organisational service delivery

Within each level of child protection delivery service organisation decisions need to be made as to how the organisation will be structured to deliver services appropriate to the roles and functions of the organisations and which enable the organisations to meet its child safety and well-being goals.

The majority of human service organisations are based upon the principal of 'line-authority', whereby more experienced staff hold senior positions and oversee the work practices of more junior staff. The more senior staff are responsible for case allocation, case supervision and work with more serious cases.

A normal within-organisational structure in child protection services is represented in Diagram 12:

Diagram 12: within child protection services Organisational structure



Good Practice Framework 11:

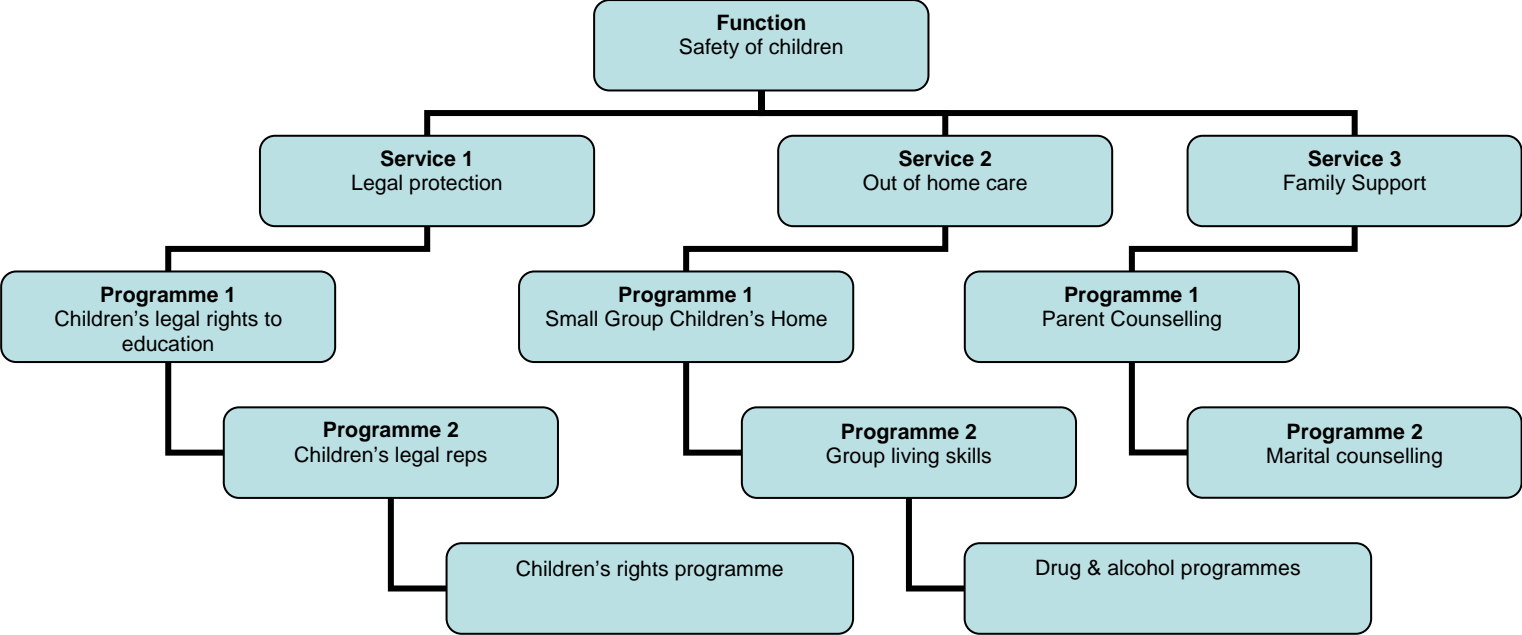
Systemic model of programme design and delivery of child safety and protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia

As noted child protection services have two functions; that is, social control functions and social support functions. To meet these functions services are designed and implemented.

Programmes are the translation of specific service needs into a format which can be delivered to a particular client group, over a designated period of time, with particular resource utilisation to achieve the pre-determined service functions. This relationship is outlined diagrammatically in Diagram 13.

As Diagram 13 indicates each level of service delivery flows logically from the previous one. A “good practice’ framework requires a thoughtful and considered approach as to the types of services required to meet the safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children in Central Australia. Such service programmes must be developed with an awareness of the integration of each programme response with other programme responses to achieve the overall child protection services aims and objectives.

Diagram 13: the relationship between functions, services and programmes in child protection



Good Practice Framework 12:

A model of manpower and resource planning for child safety and protection services in Central Australia

The development of a 'good practice' framework for Child Protection in Central Australia requires appropriate manpower and resource planning. Such planning identifies the manpower and resources needs generated by the framework in relation to present and future needs.

Key aspects of manpower and resource planning in relation to a 'good practice' framework are indicated in Table 8.1:

Table 8.1: manpower planning in child protection

Manpower Needs	Description
1. Number of service personnel	A planning projection of the number of human service personnel required presently and in the future based upon numbers of people experiencing defined need, now and in the future.
2. Types of service personnel	A planning projection of the types of service personnel and the types of specialist's skills needed within each profession required now and in the future. That is: Professional Social Workers – child protection workers, mental health workers, youth workers, sexual abuse counsellors, therapists Psychologists – sexual abuse counsellors, therapists Occupational therapists Family resource workers Psychiatrists General staff, Administrative Secretaries, drivers, cooks, cleaners.
3. Level of knowledge and skills training required	Identification of the types of knowledge and skills required by workers to ensure foundational levels of competence.
4. Professional development needs of workers	Identification of the on going training needs of workers to maintain competence in practice.
5. Training and education provision.	Design of higher educational courses which result in certified and accredited national recognition of competencies. Access to child protection educators with high

Manpower Needs	Description
	levels of experience and knowledge in child protection practice and education.
6. Informational knowledge base access.	Provision of text, journals and Internet resources to facilitate worker knowledge and skills development.
7. Professional supervision capacity.	Access to senior practitioners with established levels of expertise and knowledge in child protection.

Table 8.2: resource planning in child protection

Resources	Description
1. Money.	Calculation of the amount of money required to implement the appropriate levels of service.
2 Buildings.	Nature and type of capital building works required to deliver services and programmes.
3. Transport.	Assess to the requirements for transport mobility to implement services.
4 Telecommunications and information technology.	Assess to the present and future communication requirements for telephones, computers, photocopiers, printers, mail, email required to implement services.
5. Socio-economic societal infra-structure resources.	Assess to the types of resources families and communities will need to facilitate the capacity of families and communities to ensure children and young people are safe within society.
6. Administration infrastructure.	Assess the need for administrative resources – furniture, paper, and so on.

Section Three: Principles of a ‘Good Practice’ Framework

A ‘good practice’ framework for Aboriginal children’s safety and protection in Central Australia

Section Three outlines a ‘Good Practice’ framework for child protection practice with Aboriginal children in Central Australia. Specific practice expectations are outlined in the twelve component parts of a good practice framework outlined in Section Two. Section Three indicates clearly what ‘good practice’ in child protection is understood to encompass.

Section Three provides a clear positional reference point against which child protection practices in Central Australia with Aboriginal children and their community can be judged. Section Three provides a simple, yet effective tool to enable all stakeholders within a child protection system for Aboriginal children in Central Australia, to be transparent and accountable in their practices.

It is intended that Section Three can be used as a user-friendly daily working document. Such a ‘working document’ would enable individuals to utilise the document as a reference check of their own and others’ practice.

The Section is presented simply, with the practice characteristic outlined in point form. A brief explanation of the ‘good practice’ principle and protocols is presented after each indicator characteristic(s). To facilitate the use of the document as a working document each ‘good practice’ characteristic concludes with a quick ‘check list’. This checklist allows key questions/issues in relation to current child protection practices to be identified and answered.

The ‘good practice’ framework will enable six important benefits:

1. Identification of inadequate practice.
2. Specification of which areas of practice are inadequate.
3. Pressure to reform inadequate practice areas.
4. Identification of good practice.
5. Reinforcement of good practices.
6. Transference of good practice learning.

Principles of Good Practice Framework 1:

Nature and characteristics of individual & community well-being in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia.

Principles

- All human beings have value irrespective of their individual racial and cultural characteristics and their individual capacities and competencies.
- Human beings exist as unique individuals who will express their individuality in a variety of ways.
- Human well-being is actualised through:
 - Community location and engagement as reflected in family, kin, clan, community and national membership.
 - Access to economic, educational, health, housing, social and cultural resources.
- All human beings will exist in a harm free and safe environment.

Principles and child protection practice

In child protection practice with Aboriginal children it is expected that all stakeholders will work towards ensuring the total child care environment around the child will be assessed and responded to in relation to the principles of individual and community well-being outlined. There is an expectation that service intervention will:

- Respect the value of individual and community contributions to a child's care environment.
- Acknowledge and address economic, educational, health, housing, social and cultural restrictions to individual and community capacity to ensure a child's well-being.

Checklist

Are the principles of individual and community well-being being respected in practice?

Table 9: individual and community well-being checklist

Key Question	Yes	Developing	No
Does the vision of the agency and its staff reflect a service outcome which contain the principles of individual and community well-being?			
Are staff able to say the principles of individual and community well-being?			
Do the child protection practices of the agency/workers reflect the principles of individual and community well-being?			
In each child protection case are clear principles of individual and community well-being named and worked towards?			

Principles of Good Practice Framework 2:

Nature and characteristics of Aboriginal child safety, protection and well-being within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society

Principles

- All Aboriginal children have worth, which must be respected and valued despite their developmental dependency upon adults and older carers.
- All Aboriginal children have the right to live within a harm free and safe care environment, which ensures continuity, stability and predictability in the care of the Aboriginal child.
- All Aboriginal children are located within the socio-cultural environment of the Aboriginal community.
- All Aboriginal children are unique individuals who will express this individuality in a variety of ways.

Principles and child protection practice

In child protection practice with Aboriginal children it is expected that all stakeholders will work in a manner where the inherent worth of an Aboriginal child is respected and valued. This respect and valuing is demonstrated through acknowledgement of the unique nature of an Aboriginal child's 'Aboriginal' status. This unique status requires all stakeholders to acknowledge and respond to the safety and well-being needs of Aboriginal children with reference to and utilisation of their Aboriginal community membership. Recognition must occur that the child's interests will generally be served by enhancing the capacities and strengths of significant adult carers to protect and care for the child appropriately.

It is to be noted however that in responding to the safety and well-being needs of Aboriginal children stakeholders cannot assume the best interests of the child are always synonymous with the best interests of their immediate caregiver.

Checklist

Are the principles of Aboriginal child safety and well-being being respected in practice?

Table 10.1: safety and wellbeing checklist – key questions

Key Question	Yes	Developing	No
Does the child protection organisation have identified and articulated principles relating to Aboriginal child safety and well-being?			
Does the vision of the agency and its staff reflect a service outcome that contain the principles of Aboriginal child safety and well-being?			
Are staff able to say the principles of individual and community well-being?			
Do the child protection practices of the agency/workers reflect the principles of Aboriginal child safety and well-being?			
In each child protection case are clear principles of Aboriginal child safety and well-being named and worked towards?			

Table 10.2: safety and wellbeing checklist – evidence and practices

Principle	Evidence	Facilitated through	Impeded through
Worth is valued and respected.			
Aboriginal child is harm free and safe.			
Socio-cultural Aboriginal community context is acknowledged, valued and enriched.			
Unique individuality of each child is respected.			

Principles of Good Practice Framework 3:

Nature and characteristics of children who are considered unsafe and at risk of harm within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia

Principles

Aboriginal children are considered harmed, and therefore unsafe, when there is an assessment that there exists certain factors, or there is risk that such factors will exist indicating:

- Child is subject to physical harm towards their body.
- Child is subject to neglect of their physiological care needs such as food, shelter, clothing and supervision well-being.
- Child is subject to or witness to sexual use.
- Child is subject to psychological harm through harm to or neglect of the child's self identity, self worth and self efficacy.
- Child is subject to emotional harm through inappropriate and/or inadequate responses to their emotional needs.

Principles and child protection practice

In child protection practice with Aboriginal children it is expected that all stakeholders will be aware of and respond to the principles of harm towards Aboriginal children. Acceptance of the principles of harm, rendering an Aboriginal child unsafe, provide an unconditional:

- Determination of recognised harm and lack of safety for an Aboriginal child.
- Expectation that all stakeholders will acknowledge and respond to the child's harm and safety needs.

Checklist

Are the principles of evidence of harm (or risk of harm) towards Aboriginal children being respected in practice?

Table 11: evidence of harm checklist

Principle			If yes	If no
Has a determination of harm/lack (or risk of) of safety of an Aboriginal child been determined?	Yes	No	What practice intervention has occurred?	Why has determination of harm/risk of harm not occurred?
Has a determination of neglect/or risk of neglect of an Aboriginal child been determined?	Yes	No	What practice intervention has occurred?	Why has determination of harm/risk of harm not occurred?
Has determination of sexual use-witnessing/risk of sexual use/witnessing of an Aboriginal child been determined?	Yes	No	What practice intervention has occurred?	Why has determination of harm/risk of harm not occurred?
Has determination of psychological abuse-neglect/risk of an Aboriginal child been determined?	Yes	No	What practice intervention has occurred?	Why has determination of harm/risk of harm not occurred?
Has determination of emotional abuse-neglect/risk of an Aboriginal child been determined?	Yes	No	What practice intervention has occurred?	Why has determination of harm/risk of harm not occurred?

Principles of Good Practice Framework 4:

Moral and philosophical principles within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society in relation to child well-being, safety and protection

Principles

1. The right to survival – that children have inherent ‘worthiness’ as human beings irrespective of any value they can contribute.
2. To develop to the fullest – that children have an inherent right to actualise who they are as a person.
3. To protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation – that children have a right to be protected from harm within and recognising their vulnerable dependent state.
4. To participate fully in family, cultural and social life – that children have a right to active participants in a society (U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Australia 1991).

The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child identifies four derivative foundational principles from the four moral positions identified, these are:

- Non discrimination
- The best interests of the child
- The child’s right to life, survival and development, and
- Respect for the views of the child.

The Australian Government ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991. The Convention recognises the moral value of children through their inherent moral worthiness, despite their dependent state. This moral worthiness thereupon, contains a moral obligation on the part of adults, at both the individual and collective level, to act in ways to ensure this inherent moral worthiness, is respected and responded to, within a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner. It also places upon adults an obligation to remove or prevent actions, which threaten the well-being of children as moral beings with worth.

Checklist

Is there a moral reference context for child protection service practices?

Table 12: locating child protection within a moral context

Key Question	Yes	Developing	No
Does the organisation/ practitioner have identified and articulated moral rules in relation to children?			
Are individuals in the child's life able to articulate and ascribe meaning to these rules?			
Do individuals understand the dependency and vulnerability of children and the role of moral principles in working towards children's safety and protection?			
Are individuals aware of the care, protection, development and stimulation needs of children as moral requirements of their conduct and practices?			
Are individuals able to articulate how their practices reflect the moral principles?			

Principles of Good Practice Framework 5:

Aims and objectives of child well-being, safety and protection within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society.

Aim

- To ensure the safety of children.

Objectives

- Stop actions and events occurring within a child's care environment, which are causing harm to the child.
- Stop actions and events occurring within a child's care environment, which indicate risk of harm occurring to a child.
- To facilitate the capacity of caring environments to protect children and ensure children's freedom from harm or risk of harm.
- To enable the effects of harm caused to a child of being exposed to harm to be addressed leading to the harm consequence elimination or reduction.

The key purpose of a child protection system for all children is to ensure the safety and protection of all children. The aims and objectives outlined provide the reference point against which the appropriateness and effectiveness of child protection services provided to Aboriginal communities can be assessed.

Table 13: aims and objectives checklist

	Practice Question	Practice Answer	
AIM			
Ensure the safety of Aboriginal children.	Does the child protection system and its practices ensure the safety of an Aboriginal child?	<p>Yes</p> <p>What has been done that has made a child safe?</p> <p>How can safe outcome practices be built upon and reinforced</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Why is the child not safe?</p> <p>What can be done to ensure the child becomes safe?</p> <p>How can practices be improved?</p>
OBJECTIVES			
Stop actions and events occurring within a child's care environment which are causing harm to the child	Is the child protection system ensuring the events and actions which are causing harm to a child have ceased?	<p>Yes</p> <p>What has been done that has lead to the events/actions stopping?</p> <p>How can outcome practices be built upon and reinforced?</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Why have the events/actions not stopped?</p> <p>How can practices be improved?</p>
Stop actions and events occurring within a child's care environment which indicate risk of harm occurring to a child		<p>Yes</p> <p>What has been done that has reduced or eliminated the risk of a child being harmed?</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Why have the risk factors not been eliminated or reduced?</p> <p>What can be done to ensure the child becomes safe?</p>

	Practice Question	Practice Answer	
		How can safe outcome practices be built upon and reinforced?	How can practices be improved?
To facilitate the capacity of caring environments to protect children and ensure children's freedom from harm or risk of harm		<p>Yes</p> <p>What has been done that has increased the safety and protection capacity of the caring system?</p> <p>How can safe outcome practices be built upon and reinforced?</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Why have the capacities of the caring system to protect the child not been improved?</p> <p>What can be done to ensure the child becomes safe?</p> <p>How can practices be improved?</p>
To enable the effects of harm caused to a child of being exposed to harm to be addressed leading to the harm consequence elimination or reduction.		<p>Yes</p> <p>What has been done that has addressed the consequences of harm to the child?</p> <p>How can safe outcome practices be built upon and reinforced?</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Why have the consequences of harm to the child not been addressed appropriately?</p> <p>What can be done to ensure the child becomes safe?</p> <p>How can practices be improved?</p>

Principles of Good Practice Framework 6:

Child well-being, safety and protection social policy within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society

Principles

- Aboriginal child safety and protection policies must facilitate the provision of a childcare environment, which ensures Aboriginal children are free from harm and safe.
- A 'Whole Society' approach to policy, which identifies all relevant social policy areas, which impact upon the safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children.
 - All policy (economic, employment, housing, health, education, child protection) relating to the safety and protection of Aboriginal children must work towards the creation of a childcare environment that is characterised by continuity, stability and predictability.
 - All policy acknowledges and incorporates culturally significant aspects of Aboriginal culture.
 - All policy which has a bearing upon children's safety and protection must be characterised by a 'child safety and protection' coverage which:
 - Indicates specific child safety and protection policy features.
 - Identifies how the policy feature will work towards ensuring children's freedom from harm and protection.
 - On going review and monitoring of child care and protection policies relating to the safety and protection of Aboriginal children to assess the capacity of the policy to facilitate the safety and protection of all Aboriginal children.
 - Review and monitoring of childcare and protection policies to assess the capacity of the policy to support and develop carers' capacities and strengths.
 - Involvement of service users in the development of childcare and protection policies.

Policies are the main means by which the principles of individual and community wellbeing and child safety and protection are translated into a real world environment context. Policies provide the guiding plans as to how individual, community and child wellbeing will be worked towards. All relevant areas, which impact upon children's safety and protection, must be identified as making up the 'policy system' of child protection and must have specific policy coverage in relation to child safety and protection.

Checklist

Are the principles of an integrated child protection 'policy system which works towards the safety and protection of Aboriginal children evidenced in practice?

Table 14: policy system checklist

Policy	Characteristic	Evidence of - Yes	Evidence of – No
Culture	Relevant aspects of Aboriginal culture act as a reference point for the shaping of policy relating to the safety, protection and care of children.		
Income	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adequate income levels need to be provided to ensure adequate care and protection of children. 2. Monitoring of income utilisation to ensure adequate care and protection of children. 3. Distribution of income resources to facilitate use of shared care provision of children. 4. Provision of income access and utilisation security for carers to ensure adequate care and protection of children. 5. Provision of income sources for young people who are unsafe or at risk of lack of safety. 		
Housing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provision of adequate and culturally appropriate housing facilitates to provide appropriate safety and protection for children. 2. Monitoring and review of housing needs and resources to ensure the adequate care and 		

Policy	Characteristic	Evidence of - Yes	Evidence of – No
	protection of children.		
Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of the health status of carers and extended carers to assess the capacity of the carer to provide appropriate and effective care. 2. Support to meet the health care needs of carers to ensure their capacity to care for and protect children. 3. Provision of adequate health care resources to support the care capacity of a child's care environment. 		
Mental health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification and monitoring of mental health issues impacting upon a child's care environment. 2. Support for the mental health service needs of a caring system. 3. Provision of adequate mental health care resources to support the care capacity of a child's care environment. 		
Employment & Training	Provision of employment and training support for carers and young adults that work towards ensuring the care and protection of children and young people.		
Drug & Alcohol	1. Identification of drug & alcohol related factors that impact upon the care and protection of children.		

Policy	Characteristic	Evidence of - Yes	Evidence of – No
	2. Provision of support services and resources which facilitate the management of drug and alcohol issues as they impact upon the caring system's capacity to ensure children's safety and protection.		
Policing & Family Violence	Identification of appropriate policing responses and resources in relation to police responses to ensuring the safety and protection of children.		

Principles of Good Practice Framework 7:

State/Territory political legislative structure of child well-being, safety and protection.

Principles

- State/Territory Child Welfare legislative regulations must work towards the creation of a harm free and protected environment for children in relation to:
 - Identification of lack of safety & harm
 - Investigation of lack of safety & harm
 - Substantiation of lack of safety & harm
 - Rehabilitation of lack of safety & harm

- Implementation of State/Territory Child Welfare legislative regulations in practice must work towards the creation of a harm free and protected environment for children through implementation of appropriate practices which:
 - Identify harm
 - Investigate harm
 - Substantiate harm
 - Rehabilitate harm

- A common base between State and Territory Child welfare legislation, of principles relating to individual and community well-being and child freedom from harm and safety, be identified.

- Child freedom from harm and the right to safety be utilised as the referent point that guides cross- border child protection practices.

Statutory child welfare legislation provides the legitimate authority of a society to convey into practice the aim and objectives and social policy principles of child protection practice. Both the design of the legislation provisions and the translation and enactment of child welfare legislation into practice must work towards ensuring the safety and protection of children.

Table 15: legislative checklist

Legislation	Characteristic	Evidence of - Yes	Evidence of – No
State/Territory Child Welfare legislative regulations must work towards the creation of a harm free and protected environment for children	In the content of the legislation are the safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children facilitated?		
Implementation of State/Territory Child Welfare legislative regulations in practice must work towards the creation of a harm free and protected environment for children	In the practice implementation of the child welfare legislation are the safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children facilitated?		
A common base between State and Territory Child welfare legislation, of principles relating to individual and community well-being and child freedom from harm and safety, be identified.	Are common principles identified and implemented which demonstrate the shared framework within which service’s responses to cross-border cases can be responded to and children’s safety and protection be worked towards?		
Child freedom from harm and right to safety be utilised as the referent point that guides cross- border child protection practices.	Are children whose safety and protection needs extend across state and Territory borders assured of services which address their needs for safety and protection?		

Principles of Good Practice Framework 8:

Organisational focus of child safety and protection services in Central Australia

Principles

- Organisational function is always to ensure the safety of children.
- Organisational directs its resources to ensure harm to children ceases and the child's care environment provides continuity, stability and predictability.
- Organisations undertake their primary child protection function by utilising social control and social change intervention strategies.

The child protection organisational response is an integration of both social control and social change functions. Child caring behaviour that threatens the safety of a child must be both ceased (social control) as well as rehabilitated to ensure the behaviour does not reappear and threaten a child's safety (social change). The organisation must identify and implement the appropriate organisational focus at any point in service time.

Checklist

Table 16: appropriate social control and social change intervention in child protection

Social Control	Demonstrated working towards child safety		Social Change	Demonstrated working towards child safety	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
Reporting			Supporting		
Investigation			Educating		
Substantiation			Counselling		
Legal proceedings			Facilitating		
Directing			Brokering		
Enforcing					
Monitoring					

Principles of Good Practice Framework 9:

Service delivery model of child safety and protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia

Principles

- State provides the statutory authority to define (Child Welfare Acts) child safety and well-being.
- State provides the statutory authority to define (Child Welfare Acts) when children are considered unsafe and under threat of harm.
- State always works in consultation with Aboriginal communities to ensure understandings implementations of child safety and protection services are culturally appropriate to Aboriginal communities.
- State works in partnership with Aboriginal communities/organisations to ensure culturally appropriate and effective child protection system service delivery.
- State works in partnership with family/kin groups to ensure culturally appropriate and effective child protection system service delivery.
- Child protection services work within an integrated model of service delivery.

The authority and legitimacy of the government to ensure the safety of children is enacted through a partnership with local Aboriginal communities. The appropriateness and effectiveness of this partnership must be assessed against the capacity of the partnership, through the implementation of child protection social control and social change functions, to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of Aboriginal children.

Table 17: delivery model checklist

Characteristics	Evidence of	Yes	No
Does an organisational structure exist that enables a working partnership between the government and Aboriginal communities?	1. Organisational structure which facilitates partnership in child protection service delivery. 2. Inter agency contact to enable organisations to work together.		
Does there exist a political and community willingness to work in partnership to ensure child safety?	1. Culture of respectful organisational partnership exists 2. Will exists to ensure on-going implementation of partnership based practice 3. Demonstrated sharing of appropriate information and decision making between partners		
Are there monitoring and accountability systems to hold all parties accountable to appropriate and effective partnership service delivery?	1. Review and evaluation structures in place to access the effectiveness and appropriateness of working partnerships 2. Successful working partnerships are identified and reinforced. 2. Poor partnership practice is called to account, reviewed and changed		

Principles of Good Practice Framework 10:

Organisational structure of child safety and protection services in Central Australia

Principles

- Organisational distribution between Central, Area and Local level child protection services is appropriate and effective in ensuring the safety of children.
- The child protection services delivered by each level are appropriate and effective in addressing the safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children.
- Organisational structure of child protection:
 - Central – legislative, policy, protocols, resources.
 - Area – protocols, resources-budget, front line service delivery senior advisor.
 - Local – front line service delivery, policy consultation, protocols and procedure consultation.
- Organisational service levels work in integrated partnership with each other.

The appropriate and efficient organisational delivery of child protection services is an essential means by which children are ensured safety from harm. Each service level must be clear about its organisational responsibilities and be capable of delivering the services in a timely and appropriate manner. Service delivery levels must also work in compliment to each other ensuring necessary information is exchanged and lines of responsibility and accountability are enacted appropriately.

Table 18: organisational structure checklist

Service level	Characteristics	Enactment	
		Yes	No
Central – to provide an over arching statutory and policy mandate for the safety and protection of children.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design, implement and review statutory legislation that will direct child safety practices. 2. Design, implement and review individual and community well-being and child protection policy that will direct child safety practices. 3. To provide adequate resources to area and local services to ensure children remain safe within child care environments. 		
Area	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To implement child protection services throughout a region. 2. To oversee child protection statutory and service delivery at the local level. 3. To access and distribute child protection service resources (finance, staffing, transport, and accommodation) to ensure children remain safe within a childcare environment. 4. To support and monitor service practice responses to children’s safety needs to ensure professional appropriate, continuous and integrated servicing. 5. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of organisational level integration to ensure the delivery of services which lead to the safety of children and the support of families and communities. 		

Service level	Characteristics	Enactment	
		Yes	No
Local	<p>1. To provide direct front line services to children, families and communities to ensure children remain safe within their child care environment.</p> <p>2. To identify and lobby for child safety needs and resources required to ensure children remain safe.</p> <p>3. To monitor the appropriateness of services to children and families in reference to the needs of children to be safe and the facilitation of families/communities capacities to ensure the protection of children.</p>		

Principles of Good Practice Framework 11:

Systemic model of programme design and delivery of child safety and protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia

Principles

- Programme provision and design contributes to the safety of children.
- Programme provision and design contributes to the support for family and community competency in ensuring children's safety, protection and well-being.
- Service access and implementation protocols and procedures are developed which enable the appropriate and effective delivery of services in relation to:
 - Clear delineation of eligibility for service criteria.
 - Clear outline of information access.
 - Clear outline of service role responsibilities.
 - Clear outline of decision making roles and responsibilities.
 - Clear outline of service procedures required.
 - Clear outline of evaluation criteria to indicate service effectiveness.
 - Clear opportunities for consumer evaluation and feedback on service delivery.
- Programme provision and design is culturally appropriate to the child safety and protection needs of Aboriginal communities.
- Programmes are monitored and evaluated to ensure they appropriately and effectively respond to the child safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children.

Service programmes are the immediate context within which children and families child safety and protection concerns are raised and engaged with. Service programmes are also the immediate area where front line staff within different service delivery systems (Government, Non-government and informal [family, kin, community] interact with each other. The need for transparency and clarity of purpose and strategies and methods of work is of particular importance. It is within the level of programme delivery of service that the capacity of a child protection system is most dependent upon professionally appropriate practices. It is for this reason that the ability of programmes to effectively respond to the safety needs of children is of such paramountcy.

Table 19: systemic integration checklist

Programmes	Appropriateness in addressing safety needs of children	Effectiveness in addressing the safety needs of children
Programme focus		
1. Support		
2. Resource access		
3. Information		
4. Insight		
5. Direct protection		
6. Out of home care		
7. Relationship		
Programme protocols		
1. Programme eligibility		
2. Programme information transfer		
3. Programme role responsibilities		
4. Decision making roles and responsibilities		
5. Programme procedures		
6. Programme effectiveness criteria		

Programmes	Appropriateness in addressing safety needs of children	Effectiveness in addressing the safety needs of children
7. Client/community feedback protocols and responses to		
8. Cultural appropriateness of programmes		
9. Monitor and evaluation of programmes		

Principles of Good Practice Framework 12:

A model of manpower and resource planning for child safety and protection services in Central Australia

Principles

- Resource allocation results in designated safety outcomes for children.
- Resource allocation is a function of the programme implementation needs in relation to:
 - Financial needs.
 - Manpower needs.
 - Capital needs.
- Resources must meet a 'fitness for purpose' criterion to enable the programme to be appropriately and effectively implemented.
- Resources acquired to meet programme delivery needs must be culturally sensitive and appropriate.
- Resource allocation determinations must be a function of all stakeholder consultation and collaboration.
- Resource allocation and utilisation is subject to financial and manpower accountability and evaluation.

The acquisition of adequate resources is the critical means by which effective and appropriate service programmes are made available to ensure children's safety. Without adequate financial resources, personnel resources and capital resources, service programme outcomes cannot be achieved. It is important when planning and developing service programmes that realistic projections are made of the resource needs of the service. It is also important that the capacity to acquire resources is realistically identified in relation to challenges services will face in acquiring the determined resource. This realistic assessment of resource acquisition is of particular importance in relation to the attraction and retention of appropriate professional staff.

Table 20: manpower and resources checklist

Service	Financial resources	Capital Resources	Personnel
1. Objectives a. b. c.			
2. Safety a. b. c.			
3. Outcome indicators a. b. c.			

Section Four: Case Demonstration

Case Study

(fiction)

Katrina is a 13 year old girl. Katrina's mother is Mary and she is 28 years old. Her father is Kelvin who is 38 years old and is Aboriginal from the community. Mary has another child James to a white man Henry. James is 4 years old and is living with Mary's parents in Mackay, Queensland.

Mary and Kelvin have had an on and off relationship. Kelvin has not lived with the family for 2 years, though he has continued to see Katrina about once per month. The family have been resident in Alice Springs since January 2004. Prior to this they moved around extensively between the Northern Territory and Western Australia where they have lived in Kalgoorlie, Esperance, Northam and Katherine. Both Kelvin and Mary have serious drinking problems. There has been a long history of domestic violence between the two.

Katrina was close to her mother Mary. Although Kelvin had not lived with the family for two years, Katrina did know him as her father and she was comfortable in her relationship with Kelvin.

In September 2004 Mary died suddenly of a heart attack.

Family & Children's Services (Alice Springs) had been involved providing family support services prior to Mary's sudden death. There had been two removals of Katrina into foster care by DCD (WA) when Katrina was smaller due to Mary and Kelvin's neglect of Katrina.

On Mary's sudden death Kelvin and his younger sister Helen moved into Mary's home and indicated they would care for Katrina. Both Kelvin and his sister were drinking heavily. A week after Mary's death Kelvin and his sister took Katrina back to their home community of X, and placed Katrina with their eldest sister Glenda. Kelvin returned to Alice Springs.

Glenda has four children ranging in age from 12-17 years. Glenda does not drink and cares for her children well. Katrina resided with her aunt until March 2005. During this time Glenda had increasing problems with Katrina's behaviour. Although Katrina formed a close relationship with her aunt Glenda she was jealous of her cousins and became aggressive towards Glenda's children, would not go to school, frequently ran away and hitched back to Alice Springs, and was associating with a group of girls on the community who were abusing solvents.

In March 2005 Kelvin took his daughter to Kalgoorlie when Glenda said she was finding it difficult to manage Katrina. Glenda did not ask that Katrina be removed but rather that Kelvin stay on the community and help her in the care

of Katrina. Kelvin decided to take Katrina away from the community after a fight with Glenda over Katrina.

Kelvin took Katrina to Kalgoorlie. Mary's brother lives in Kalgoorlie. Kelvin and Katrina lived with Mary's brother Paul who is a drug addict, as well as a drug supplier. Kelvin often left Katrina with Paul and returned to his community or Alice Springs for two week stays. Katrina was intermittently attending school. Katrina was associating with a group of Aboriginal teenagers who were often in trouble in Kalgoorlie for stealing. Katrina had also resumed solvent abuse and running away and living on the streets. In July 2005 Katrina was picked up by the police for shop lifting. A medical examination of Katrina indicated she had cuts on her back, severe bruising and was 4 months pregnant. Katrina informed DCD Kalgoorlie that Paul had raped her. Paul has denied this and said Katrina slept with boys in her group at his home. Katrina was placed in emergency foster care on 22nd July 2005. On the 26th July 2005 she attempted suicide by slashing her wrists. She is presently in Kalgoorlie hospital. Glenda came to Kalgoorlie to visit Katrina in hospital. Katrina told Glenda she hates living, feels she is useless and that no one cares about her.

On the 28th July Katrina's father Kelvin was admitted to Alice Springs hospital with acute renal failure and is not expected to live.

Good practice

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 1:

Nature and characteristics of individual & community well-being in Aboriginal communities in Central Australia

Principles

- All human beings have value irrespective of their individual racial and cultural characteristics and their individual capacities and competencies.
- Human beings exist as unique individuals who will express their individuality in a variety of ways.
- Human well-being is actualised through:
 - Community location and engagement as reflected in family, kin, clan, community and national membership.
 - Access to economic, educational, health, housing, social and cultural resources.
- All human beings will exist in a harm free and safe environment.

Practice

- It is expected that the services, which are provided to Katrina and significant people in her life, will be characterised by acknowledgement and practice of key principles:
- Katrina is a unique individual who has a right to have this uniqueness respected and valued through:
 - Having her views sought and heard.
 - Participation in planning and decisions affecting her.
- Katrina's best interests are realised through her membership of a social community as reflected in:
 - Acknowledgement and respect of Katrina's membership in the Aboriginal community.
 - Acknowledgment of the impact of invasion and colonisation upon Aboriginal people.
 - Acknowledgment and respect of Katrina's membership in the non Aboriginal community
 - Utilisation of the resources and strengths of the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal community to safeguard and develop the well-being of members.
- Katrina is supported to develop into a young person and adult who is valued and respected by a community she lives within.

- Katrina is supported to see herself as a member of a community (family, kin, clan, community) where she has both rights and responsibilities in contributing to community well-being.
- Katrina's unborn child has membership of a community.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 2:

Nature and characteristics of Aboriginal child safety, protection and well-being within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society

Principles

- All Aboriginal children have worth which must be respected and valued despite their developmental dependency upon adults and older carers.
- All Aboriginal children have the right to live within a harm free and safe care environment which ensures continuity, stability and predictability in the care of the Aboriginal child.
- All Aboriginal children are located within the socio-cultural environment of the Aboriginal community.
- All Aboriginal children are unique individuals who will express this individuality in a variety of ways.

Practice

It is expected that child protection services to Katrina will be characterised by:

- Katrina is able to live her life as a young person and adult within a safe and harm free environment.
- Katrina's unborn child is a member of a community, which has responsibilities to ensure the unborn child is safe and free from harm.
- Katrina is a member of a family unit, with a sibling living inter state.
- Katrina's future care environment will be characterised by:
 - Stability – capacity of the care environment to provide an available care for Katrina.
 - Continuity – capacity of Katrina's care environment to provide on-going care for Katrina.
 - Predictability – capacity of the care environment to enable Katrina to anticipate how she will be cared for in the future.
- Child protection service intervention response for Katrina will reflect principles of:
 - Inclusiveness – of all parties relevant to ensuring the safety and protection of Katrina and her unborn child.
 - Transparency – of practice thinking and decision making.
 - Integrity – clear rationales and integration of case management planning and practices.

- Accountability – of practice outcomes to ensuring the safety and well-being of Katrina and her unborn child.
- The future child care environment provided for Katrina will reflect principles of cultural identification of Katrina as an Aboriginal person as characterised by:
 - Acknowledgment – of the status and meaning of the Aboriginal status of Katrina and her unborn child.
 - Recognition – of the capacities and strengths of Aboriginal communities to ensure the safety and well-being of its community members.
 - Consultation – with Aboriginal people as to culturally appropriate and effective child safety and care practices.
 - Collaboration – with Aboriginal people in the design and implementation of child safety planning and service delivery.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 3:

Nature and characteristics of children who are considered unsafe and at risk of harm within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia

Principles

Aboriginal children are considered harmed, and therefore unsafe, when there is an assessment that there exists, or there is risk that such factors will exist, indicated by:

- Child is subject to physical harm towards their body.
- Child is subject to neglect of their physiological care needs such as food, shelter, clothing and supervision well-being.
- Child is subject to or witness to sexual use.
- Child is subject to psychological harm through harm to or neglect of the child's self identity, self worth and self efficacy.
- Child is subject to emotional harm through inappropriate and/or inadequate responses to their emotional needs.

Practice

It is expected that child protection services for Katrina and her unborn child will acknowledge and respond to a childcare environment that is unsafe as characterised by:

- Physical abuse:
 - Cuts and bruises to Katrina's body.
 - Potential brain damage and bodily harm due to solvent substance abuse.
 - Harm to her unborn child due to solvent abuse.
 - Harm to her unborn child due to physical abuse of the mother.
- Neglect:
 - No adult carer is taking primary responsibility for Katrina's care as reflected in:
 - Frequent periods of homelessness.
 - Not eating properly.
 - Non-school attendance.
 - Inadequate supervision.
 - No adult monitoring of safety care standards of the care environment.

- Sexual abuse:
 - Sexual assault/rape.
 - Physical assault.

- Psychological abuse:
 - No opportunity provided for the development of a healthy culturally and socially appropriate sense of:
 - Self identity.
 - Self worth.
 - Self efficacy.

- Emotional abuse:
 - Inability to express feelings in relation to the loss of her mother.
 - Inability to express feelings in relation to the impending loss of her father.
 - Emotional confusion in relation to her cultural identity.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 4:

Moral and philosophical principles within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society in relation to child well-being, safety and protection

Principles

- The right to survival – that children have inherent ‘worthiness’ as human beings irrespective of any value they can contribute.
- To develop to the fullest – that children have an inherent right to actualise who they are as a person.
- To protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation – that children have a right to be protected from harm within and recognising their vulnerable dependent state.
- To participate fully in family, cultural and social life – that children have a right to active participants in a society (U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Australia 1991).

Practice

It is expected that child protection services for Katrina and her unborn child will be based upon clear moral principles of:

- Right to survive:
 - Katrina’s life and the life of her baby is protected through the provision of a safe care environment.
 - Katrina is not at risk of sexually or physically assault.
 - Katrina has access to basic on going survival provision – shelter, food.
- Right to develop to the fullest individual capacity as an individual:
 - Katrina has the opportunity to develop her own abilities and capacities.
 - Katrina has faith in her own abilities as a human being and the opportunity to develop these abilities.
- Right to protection from harmful influences:
 - Katrina has access to a social/cultural community, which provides protection from harm.
 - Katrina develops her knowledge and skills, which enable her to protect herself and her unborn child from harm.
- Right to inclusion and recognition within a social/cultural community:
 - Katrina is able to utilise her access to a social/ cultural community, which will provide a sense of belonging and place for her and her child.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 5:

Aims and objectives of child well-being, safety and protection within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society.

Principle

Aim:

- To ensure the safety of children.

Objectives:

- Stop actions and events occurring within a child's care environment, which are causing harm to the child.
- Stop actions and events occurring within a child's care environment, which indicate risk of harm occurring to a child.
- To facilitate the capacity of caring environments to protect children and ensure children's freedom from harm or risk of harm.
- To enable the effects of harm caused to a child of being exposed to harm to be addressed leading to the harm consequence elimination or reduction.

Practice

It is expected that child protection service intervention with Katrina and her unborn child will ensure:

- That the sexual, physical, psychological and emotional harm and neglect which has occurred towards Katrina will cease.
- That the physical risk to the unborn baby's safety will cease.
- That factors within Katrina's care environment, which generate risk to her physical, sexual, psychological and emotional safety will be eliminated.
- Resources will be put in place within Katrina's care environment, which contribute to ensuring the safety and well-being of Katrina and her unborn baby.
- Services will be provided to Katrina, which address the psychological, physical, emotional and behavioural consequences of the harm, which Katrina has been exposed to.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 6:

Child well-being, safety and protection social policy within Aboriginal communities in Central Australia and within Australian society

Principles

- Aboriginal child safety and protection policies must facilitate the provision of a childcare environment which ensures Aboriginal children are free from harm and safe.
- A 'Whole Society' approach to policy, which identifies all relevant social policy areas, which impact upon the safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children.
- All policy (economic, employment, housing, health, education, child protection) relating to the safety and protection of Aboriginal children must work towards the creation of a childcare environment that is characterised by continuity, stability and predictability.
- All policy acknowledges and incorporates culturally significant aspects of Aboriginal culture.

Practice

The provision of services, which work towards the safety of Katrina and her unborn child, will facilitate the development of and utilises social policies in relation to:

- Environmental resource capacities of the care environment as relates to:
 - Income – adequate financial resources to provide a safe care environment for Katrina and her unborn child.
 - Housing – adequate housing resources to provide a safe care environment for Katrina and her unborn child.
 - Education – adequate and appropriate educational resources to address the educational disadvantage experienced by Katrina.
- Child protection service capacity:
 - To work within a 'Whole Society' policy approach to ensuring a safe care environment for Katrina and her unborn child
 - To work within 'Strong Communities' policy approach to the safety and care of Katrina and her unborn child
 - To work within an 'Aboriginal child safety' policy which works through a culturally sensitive, appropriate and effective means of ensuring the safety of Katrina and her unborn child as an Aboriginal young person and child.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 7:

State/Territory political legislative structure of child well-being, safety and protection

Principle

- Territory Child Welfare legislative regulations must work towards the creation of a harm free and protected environment for children in relation to:
 - Identification of lack of safety & harm.
 - Investigation of lack of safety & harm.
 - Substantiation of lack of safety & harm.
 - Rehabilitation of lack of safety & harm.
- Implementation of Territory Child Welfare legislative regulations in practice must work towards the creation of a harm free and protected environment for children through implementation of appropriate practices which:
 - Identify harm.
 - Investigate harm.
 - Substantiate harm.
 - Rehabilitate harm.
- A common base between State and Territory Child welfare legislation, of principles relating to individual and community well-being and child freedom from harm and safety, be identified.
- Child freedom from harm and safety be utilised as the referent point that guides cross- border child protection practices.

Practice

It is expected that State/territory legislation will work towards and in the interest of ensuring the safety and protection of Katrina and her unborn child through:

- Statutory regulations which are demonstrated as contributing towards the safety of Katrina and her unborn child.
- Statutory regulations which in their implementation are demonstrated as contributing towards the safety of Katrina and her unborn child.
- Uniformity of Statutory State and Territory legislation in relation to cross border child protection cases which shared goal of ensuring the safety of Katrina and her unborn child.
- Cross border statutory uniformity, which demonstrates in its implementation the achievement of safety for Katrina and her unborn child.

**Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 8:
Organisational focus of child safety and protection services
in Central Australia**

Principles

- Organisational function is always to ensure the safety of children.
- Organisational directs its resources to ensure harm to children ceases and the child's environment provides continuity, stability and predictability within the child's care environment.
- Organisations undertake their primary child protection function by utilizing social control and social change intervention strategies.

Practice

It is expected all child protection agencies will work towards and in the interest of ensuring the safety and protection of Katrina and her unborn child through:

- An organisational commitment to ensuring Katrina's safety and well-being.
- An organisational commitment to ensuring the safety of Katrina's unborn child.
- Availability of culturally appropriate and effective organisational resources to ensure the safety and protection of Katrina and her unborn child
- Willingness to undertake 'social control' service intervention when:
 - Katrina is a danger to herself.
 - Katrina is a danger to her unborn child.
 - Katrina is at risk of abuse by others.
 - Katrina's unborn child is at risk of abuse by others.
- Commitment to undertake appropriate 'social support' service intervention roles which work towards ensuring the safety, protection and well-being of Katrina and her unborn child.
- Monitoring of the appropriateness and effectiveness of organisational service efforts to ensure they result in Katrina's and her unborn child's safety, protection and well-being.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 9:

Service delivery model of child safety and protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia

Principles

- State provides the statutory authority to define (Child Welfare Acts) child safety and well-being.
- State provides the statutory authority to define (Child Welfare Acts) when children are considered unsafe and under threat of harm.
- State always works in consultation with Aboriginal communities to ensure understandings and implementations of child safety and protection services are culturally appropriate to Aboriginal communities.
- State works in partnership with Aboriginal communities/organisations to ensure culturally appropriate and effective child protection system service delivery.
- State works in partnership with family/kin groups to ensure culturally appropriate and effective child protection system service delivery.
- Child protection services work within an integrated model of service delivery.

Practice

It is expected that the service delivery system will work in an appropriate and effective manner to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of Katrina and her unborn child, through demonstration of:

- Willingness of the State, through its statutory authorities, to utilise its legitimate power in a culturally sensitive, timely, appropriate and effective manner to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of Katrina and her unborn child.
- Collaboration and consultation with key stakeholders in the delivery of services for Katrina and her unborn child to ensure their safety, protection and well-being.
- Development and utilisation of an inter-service delivery model which ensures a 'holistic' response to the multiple safety and protection needs of Katrina and her unborn child.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the appropriateness and effectiveness of non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal service delivery integration in ensuring the safety, protection and well-being of Katrina and her unborn child.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 10:

Organisational structure of child safety and protection services in Central Australia

Principles

- Organisational distribution between Central, Area and Local level child protection services is appropriate and effective in ensuring the safety of children.
- The child protection services delivered by each level is appropriate and effective in addressing the safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children.
- Organisational structure of child protection:
 - Central – legislative, policy, protocols, resources.
 - Area – protocols, resources-budget, front line service delivery senior advisor.
 - Local – front line service delivery, policy consultation, protocols and procedure consultation.
- Organisational service levels work in integrated partnership with each other.

Practice

It is expected the child protection organisation multi level structures will work within an appropriate and effective line of authority to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of Katrina and her unborn child through:

- Clear delineation of the responsibilities and roles of each level of service provision to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of Katrina and her unborn child:
 - Central – availability of appropriate legislation, policies and protocols to cover the safety, protection needs of Katrina and her unborn child:
 - Adequacy of budget allocations to ensure appropriate and effective service delivery.
 - Consultation with Aboriginal people to ensure legislation, policies, protocols and budget allocations are appropriate and effective in responding to the safety, protection and well-being needs of Aboriginal children.
 - Area – availability of services appropriate and effective in responding to the needs of local Aboriginal communities:
 - Availability of direct services for Katrina.
 - Ensure adequate resources are available to ensure the delivery of services to Katrina.

- Work in partnership with local area Aboriginal communities to ensure the safety and protection of Katrina and her unborn child.
- Work in partnership across areas/borders to ensure a holistic service delivery to Katrina and her unborn child.
- Local – availability of direct front line services to Katrina to ensure the safety and protection of Katrina and her unborn child:
 - Utilisation of community resources to work towards the safety and protection of Katrina and her baby.
 - Strengthening of community resources to provide control and support services to ensure the safety and protection of Katrina.
 - Monitor and evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of local services for Katrina.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 11:

Systemic model of programme design and delivery of child safety and protection services for Aboriginal children in Central Australia

Principles

- Programme provision and design contributes to the safety of children.
- Programme provision and design contributes to the support for family and community competency in ensuring children's safety, protection and well-being.
- Service access and implementation protocols and procedures are developed which enable the appropriate and effective delivery of services in relation to:
 - Clear delineation of eligibility for service criteria.
 - Clear outline of information access.
 - Clear outline of service role responsibilities.
 - Clear outline of decision making roles and responsibilities.
 - Clear outline of service procedures required.
 - Clear outline of evaluation criteria to indicate service effectiveness.
 - Clear opportunities for consumer evaluation and feedback on service delivery.
- Programme provision and design is culturally appropriate to the child safety and protection needs of Aboriginal communities.
- Programmes are monitored and evaluated to ensure they appropriately and effectively respond to the child safety and protection needs of Aboriginal children.

Practice

Service provision to Katrina and her unborn child will occur within case management plan which will work towards the safety, protection and well-being of Katrina and her baby, through:

- Development of a case management plan which indicates clearly the:
 - Problems currently facing Katrina.
 - Needs which Katrina now has in her life.
 - Existing support system and resources available to Katrina and her unborn child.
 - Support capacity limitations of Katrina's existing support system.
 - Aims and objective of service intervention in working with Katrina.

- Support services which are required to meet the safety needs of Katrina and her baby.
 - Case plan audit of existing resources available to meet the support needs of Katrina and her baby.
 - Acquisition of further resources.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of service effectiveness in meeting Katrina's safety and protection needs.
- Development of practice service delivery protocols which indicate:
 - Roles and responsibilities of service personnel in relation to the safety and protection needs of Katrina and her unborn child.
 - Case information exchange responsibilities required to ensure the safety and protection of Katrina and her unborn child.
 - Case plan monitoring required to ensure safety and protection needs are being met.

Case Demonstration using Good Practice Framework 12:

A model of manpower and resource planning for child safety and protection services in Central Australia

Principles

- Resource allocation results in designated safety outcomes for children.
- Resource allocation is a function of the programme implementation needs in relation to:
 - Financial needs.
 - Manpower needs.
 - Capital needs.
- Resources must meet a 'fitness for purpose' criterion to enable the programme to be appropriately and effectively implemented.
- Resources acquired to meet programme delivery needs must be culturally sensitive and appropriate.
- Resource allocation determinations must be a function of all stakeholder consultation and collaboration.
- Resource allocation and utilisation is subject to financial and manpower accountability and evaluation.

Practice

It is expected there will always be appropriate, effective and culturally relevant resources and manpower to respond to the safety, protection and well-being needs of Aboriginal children generally, and Katrina and her unborn child specifically.

- Develop a resource and manpower planning audit to ensure resources are available to meet the child protection needs of Aboriginal children.
- Evaluate existing child protection resources in relation to the safety and protection service needs of Katrina and her unborn child.
- Develop a management plan to ensure the on going provision of adequate resources and manpower to meet the child protection needs of Aboriginal children.
- Develop a management plan to ensure the on going provision of adequate resources and manpower to meet the child protection needs of Katrina and her unborn child.

Conclusion

This document has outlined a model for good practice in regards to child protection work generally, and child protection in Central Australia specifically. It has aimed to identify and establish a working framework by which good practice in child protection can be assessed, referenced and planned for. The document outlines the important context and conceptual principles for establishing a framework for good practice. The document outlines a framework for good practice based on 12 key principles. The document elaborates these principles into a framework by which current practices, arrangements and protocols can be assessed and measured against. Finally, the document introduces this framework within the context of a case discussion and analysis.

The aim of this document is to provide sufficient detail and direction to enable continued development of good practice in Aboriginal child protection generally, but with particular reference to the complexities and sensitivities involved in cross-border child protection cases. As such, the document can be utilised in a developmental manner in a number of ways. It would be anticipated that the document could be the basis for the following:

- Review and evaluation of existing practice arrangements

The document can be used as a means of reviewing and evaluating existing practice arrangements including the policy, organisational, and practical delivery and coordination of services.

- Identification of training and development requirements

The document can be used to assess and plan for specific training, staff development and staff recruitment strategies.

- Identification of local protocols and agreements

The document can be used as a means of establishing and/or revising existing local protocols including Inter state/territory and interagency agreements and practice arrangements.

- Identification of existing practice models and approaches

The document can be used as a means of identifying existing practice approaches with a view to reinforcing and/or improving such approaches.

- Conceptual framework for standards referencing

The document provides a conceptual framework of standards by which practices can be referenced against and identified for improvement. Such a framework provides direction and clarity by which practice goals are clarified and indicated.

- Conceptual framework and language for discussion, debate and analysis

The document provides a conceptual framework and particular language of principles and practices that can enable discussion, reflection and debate relating to child protection practices to occur.

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