

Glossary of Terms

Aboriginal Child Placement Principle - A nationally agreed standard in determining placement of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care. The principle aims to enhance and preserve Aboriginal children's cultural identity by ensuring strong connections with family, community and culture. (See Children, Youth and Families Act 2005)

ACSASS - Aboriginal Child Specialist Advice & Support Service - funded by the department to provide advice and consultation services to child protection practitioners in relation to all Aboriginal children reported to child protection and all significant decisions including placement and best interests planning. The service is operated by the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) in all locations except Mildura, where the service is operated by the Mildura Aboriginal Corporation. The ACSASS service operated by VACCA is sometimes referred to as 'Lakidjeka' and in Mildura it is sometimes referred to as 'MAC/ACSASS'

ACCO - Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation

ACP - Adolescent community placement - a home based care model for young people 12-18 years who are unable to live with their families, in a home like environment with the support and supervision of approved and accredited caregivers

AFPP - Aboriginal Family Preservation Program - works intensively for up to 12 weeks with families referred by child protection, with the aim of family preservation or reunification. The program's practice approach is grounded in Aboriginal culture and provides intensive family support, practical assistance and parenting education to address protective concerns, thereby reducing need for placement of children in out-of-home care and enhancing the opportunity for reunification. AFPP services are available in Mildura, Swan Hill, Shepparton, Dandenong (for the Southern division) and in the local area and surrounds of Bairnsdale and Morwell.

Aboriginal Family Restoration Programs - aim to prevent future harm and disadvantage for the most at-risk Aboriginal children by strengthening their parents' capacity to safely care for them. The programs are based upon a holistic response to Aboriginal family breakdown to ensure the safety of Aboriginal children where there is a risk of the child being placed in out-of-home care, or the possibility of reunification. The program generally offers similar services to AFPP but with the option of a residential service for the whole family where there is imminent risk of the children being placed. AFRS programs are located in NWMR, Echuca and Morwell

Adjourn - for a court to postpone, put off the hearing of a case to a later time

AFLDM - Aboriginal family-led decision-making is culturally based decision making and planning with Aboriginal families about the safety needs of their children. Referrals from child protection are considered once abuse or neglect is substantiated. AFLDM conveners (one from DHHS child protection and one from the Aboriginal community) meet with the family and relevant community members to make decisions about how to respond to protective (safety) concerns.

A&PC - Adoption and Permanent Care teams - specialist child placement services with expertise in permanent family placement. There are 4 DHHS divisional teams and 6 CSO teams. Catholic Care deliver the local infant adoption program statewide. A&PC teams recruit, educate, assess and approve applicants for adoption and permanent care. They accept referrals from child protection, match children with permanent carers/approved adoption applicants, supervise placements for 12-18 months, provide relinquishment counselling to birth parents considering placing their child for adoption

Breach - failure of a person to comply with a court order

Basic care provided - means that the child's parents/carers are meeting a child's individual needs

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for safety, stability and development, including their physical, social and emotional needs. Their needs will also depend on their age and stage of life, culture and gender. Physical needs may include food, liquid, warmth, shelter, clean and appropriate clothing, adequate personal hygiene, and timely access to appropriate medical and dental care where needed. Social and emotional needs may include emotional warmth, stimulation, consistency, guidance and boundaries. Development includes the child's age, stage of development, culture and gender.

Best Interests Framework - for vulnerable children and youth presents the best interests principles of the CYFA to assist professionals to apply these principles in their day-to-day practice. It incorporates four dimensions of a child's experience; safety, stability and development in relation to their age and stage, culture and gender and three categories of the child's relationships; parent/carer capability, family composition and dynamics, and community participation, social and economic environment

Care and Placement Plan - addresses the needs of children and young people in out-of-home care, guided by the case plan, records the detailed day-to-day arrangements for the care of the child or young person, identifies how their long and short-term needs will be met

Case contract - a formal written agreement between DHHS and a community service organisation regarding the case management of a child protection client by the CSO; or the provision of case management tasks on behalf of child protection

Case management - coordination and delivery of services provided as part of a best interests plan

Case manager – has the primary responsibility of overseeing implementation of the child or young person's best interests plan. This can be either a DHHS or CSO employee

Case plan – (best interests plan) - the formal plan that guides assessment, planning, and action by child protection practitioners and other contracted case managers, for a child subject to protective intervention

Case planning - the decision-making process undertaken where support or intervention services are identified, planned and provided to families and children. Case planning also sets goals, responsibilities and review processes

Common law undertaking – a promise made to the court that is not based on any Act or Regulation

Complaint and Warrant - an application for an intervention order

Contact - contact of a child in out-of-home care with a significant person, who does not have custody of the child, by way of a visit or other communication

Contest - a court hearing in which the parties disagree or where an accused person pleads not guilty

CSO – community service (or non-government) organisation (providing services such as; care, support, protection, accommodation etc)

Cultural plan - is a requirement under CYFA s.176 for an Aboriginal child placed in out-of-home care under a guardianship to Secretary order or long-term guardianship to Secretary order. It sets out how an Aboriginal child is to remain connected to his or her Aboriginal community and culture

Cumulative harm - refers to the effects of multiple adverse or harmful circumstances and events in

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a child's life. The unremitting daily impact of these experiences can be profound and diminish a child's sense of safety, stability and wellbeing. Cumulative harm may be caused by an accumulation of a single recurring adverse circumstance or event (such as unrelenting low-level care); or by multiple circumstances or events (such as persistent verbal abuse and denigration, inconsistent or harsh discipline, and/or exposure to family violence). Refers to repeated patterns of circumstances and events in a child's life, which diminish and harm a child's sense of safety, stability and wellbeing

Development - a core dimension for considering a child's best interests. It covers the areas of life where all children need opportunities, encouragement and support throughout childhood to develop to their full potential. These are the parts of a child's life that are affected by the adverse impacts of any trauma. They are also the aspects of a child's life that most parents pay constant attention to (usually unconsciously) as part of everyday family life

Developmental delay/interrupted development - a child is considered to have a developmental delay or disability if he or she has been assessed as being behind in his or her developmental milestones. A delay or disability may result from a mental or physical impairment affecting one or more of the following: language/speech, cognitive development, fine and/or gross motor skills, self-care, play and social development

DV - Domestic violence (family violence) is behaviour that controls or dominates a family member and causes them to fear for their own or another person's safety and wellbeing. Includes behaviour that: is physically, sexually or psychologically abusive; economically abusive; threatening; coercive; in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes them to feel fear for their own or another's safety or wellbeing; or causes a child to hear or witness, or be exposed to the effects of the above behaviour

Extension - an order continuing an order due to expire (eg. Care by Secretary Order)

Family services - a program (including Child FIRST) delivered by registered community service organisations across Victoria. Targets vulnerable children or young people, aged 0-17 years and their families, or parents expecting a child where there are significant concerns about a child or unborn child. Coordinated within service areas, each area has a central intake, called Child FIRST

Forensic medical examination - conducted by a qualified FMO for the purposes of collecting evidence that can be used in court

Forensic procedure - the taking of a sample from any part of the body of a person charged with or found guilty of a criminal offence (whether an intimate or a non-intimate sample or any other type of sample) or the conduct of any procedure on, or physical examination of, the body but does not include the taking of a fingerprint

Foster care - temporary care of a child up to 18 years of age, within a home-based setting, by accredited and trained foster carers. CSOs are responsible for recruiting, training and supporting caregivers

Gatehouse Centre - a centre at the Royal Children's Hospital staffed by a multi-disciplinary team providing assessment and treatment services for children when there are concerns of abuse

Guardian/guardianship - a legal guardian is responsible for the long-term welfare of the child, and has all the powers, rights and duties of a guardian, other than the right to have the daily care and control of the child; and the right and responsibility to make decisions concerning the daily care and control of the child. (See definition in section 4 CYFA)

Harm - to a child involves three elements:

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- The actions, omissions, or behaviours (which may be a single occurrence or a series or pattern of continuing occurrences) that are classified into one or more of the harm types (abandonment, physical injury, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect)
- The adverse impact on the child's immediate, cumulative and likely stability and development (for example the negative affect on the child's health, emotional and behavioural development, education and learning)
- The extent to which a child is in danger of future harm - which relates to the risks (likelihood of the adverse event or circumstances continuing or re-occurring) the sustainable protective factors (parent capability, family and extended family support, community and cultural support) and the overall likely impact of the risks and protective factors on the child's stability and development

HBC - home-based care - provides placements with approved caregivers in their own home, for children and young people 0-18 years of age who have experienced significant difficulties and are unable to live with their families. Includes foster care, kinship care and permanent care

HRA - high risk adolescent

HRI - high risk infant

Informant - police officer who laid charges against a person in a case

Init Invest - Initial investigation

Intellectual disability - in relation to a person over 5 years of age, means the concurrent existence of:

- significant sub-average general intellectual functioning; and
- significant deficits in adaptive behaviour,
- each of which became manifest before the age of 18 years

Intervention order - a court order which imposes prohibitions or restrictions on one person in order to regulate the conduct of that person towards another person (due to violence, property damage etc)

Irreconcilable differences - a Protection Order may be made in relation to a child if the Children's Court finds that irreconcilable differences exist between the child and the person having custody of the child to such an extent that the care and control of the child are likely to be seriously disrupted

Jurisdiction - is used in two alternate senses:

(1) the legal power which a particular court possesses, for example, power to hear and determine child protection applications

(2) the area over which the court's legal power extends, eg. the state of Victoria

Kinship care - is the care provided by relatives or a member of a child's social network when a child cannot live with their parents. Aboriginal kinship care is care provided by relatives or friends to an Aboriginal child, where Aboriginal family and community and Aboriginal culture are valued as central to the child's safety, stability and development

LAC - Looking After Children - is a best practice framework for supporting outcomes-focused collaborative care for children and young people who are placed away from their families (child protection intervention). LAC covers the following developmental domains: health, emotional & behavioural development, education, family & social relationships, identity, self-care, self-presentation

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Magistrate - a judicial officer who hears cases in the Magistrates' Court (the lowest level of court in Victoria) and in the Children's Court. Magistrates are addressed as 'Your Honour'

MAPPS - Male Adolescent Program for Positive Sexuality - is for young people on youth justice orders, aged 10–21 years, who have been found guilty of committing a sexual offence

Mandatory reporting - Section 184 of the CYFA 2005 states that certain professionals must report their concerns for a child to child protection when they form the belief on reasonable grounds that the child is in need of protection

MCC - Melbourne Children's Court

MCH Service - the Maternal and Child Health Service is a universal primary care service for Victorian families with children aged birth to school age. Provided in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, local government and DHHS. The goal of the service is to promote a comprehensive and focused approach for the promotion, prevention, early detection and intervention of physical, emotional or social factors affecting young children and their families

MYJC - Melbourne Youth Justice Centre - is a custodial facility for up to 60 young people 15-18 years, who are either on remand or serving a custodial sentence, generally from the children's court

Neglect - includes failure to provide the child with an adequate standard of nutrition, medical care, clothing, shelter or supervision to the extent where the health or development of the child is significantly impaired or placed at risk. A child is neglected if they are abandoned or left uncared for over unreasonable periods of time that is inconsistent with their age, stage and development

New placement allowance - is paid to foster, kinship, permanent and special needs local adoption carers over the first 6 months of the placement where the carer is in receipt of the level one, or general, care allowance. Assists in meeting the immediate or 'start-up' costs of caring

NFA - no further action

Notice - an application served on a parent or child inviting or requiring them to come to court at a later date, without the child having been taken into custody

Open court - proceedings are to be conducted in a court open to the public, unless an application to the court for the court to hear the whole or part of any proceeding in a closed court is granted

On foot - proceedings which are currently active and still before a court, at either an interim or final stage, and have not been finalised

Out-of-home care - refers to services offered by a registered community service organisation (CSO), pursuant to Sections 44 to 72 of Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, providing placement and support services to children and young people, who have been assessed to be at risk by child protection, or where their parents are unable to care for them for a period of time

PA - Protection application

Parent - Defined in very broad terms in the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 as including-

- (a) the father or mother of the child
- (b) the spouse of the father or mother of the child
- (c) the domestic partner of the father or mother of the child
- (d) a person who has custody of the child or
- (e) a person registered, acknowledged or declared by a court to be the father of the child

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PASDS - Parenting Assessment and Skill Development Services

Permanent carer - is a volunteer carer who has been approved under the CYFA 2005 as suitable to have the custody and guardianship of a child, committed to the child's placement continuing indefinitely

PHC - Pre-hearing conference

PI - Protective intervention phase

Placement - the provision of an out-of-home care placement for children and young people unable to live with their parents either in the short or long term

Practice leader - is a position within the child protection operating model responsible for providing expert case practice advice and leadership; supporting and developing child protection practitioners in the integration of theory and practice while demonstrating expertise through case management. Practice leaders supervise senior child protection practitioners (Community-based), undertake case practice quality audits and provide regular practice forums and community education

Practice leader (Family-Led Decision-Making) - is a position within child protection responsible for the provision of the Family-Led Decision-Making (FLDM) program

Problem sexual behaviour - the term used to describe concerning sexual behaviour exhibited by children under the age of 10 years

Protected from harm - means that a child is protected by parents or carers from immediate, cumulative or likely harm to their stability and development. Harm in this context directly refers to the legislative definition in s.162, CYFA

Protection application - an application made to the court for a finding that a child is in need of protection from actual or likely abuse

Protective intervener - is someone authorised by the legislation to receive and investigate reports that a child is in need of protection. Child protection and the police are protective interveners

Protective plan - a case plan developed following substantiation of abuse or neglect

Protocol - a written agreement between the department and other government or non-government organisations, that defines respective mandates, roles and responsibilities for the protection of children and young people

RCH - Royal Children's Hospital

Referral - is a communication from one professional to another, to recommend that a person receive a particular service. A child, youth and family service that is managing an intake and referral service may deliver services to a family itself or may refer a family to another health or community service

Regulations - subordinate legislation made under the authority of an Act of Parliament by Governor in Council, for example the *Children, Youth and Families Regulations 2007*.

Remote witness facility - an audio-visual link between a court room and some other place which enables a witness to give evidence without being in the court room. This is often used to enable evidence to be given by a victim without being in the same room as the alleged perpetrator

Report about child - a report made to child protection of significant concern for the wellbeing of a child or suspected child abuse. Certain professionals (including police, teachers, child care workers) are mandated, that is, obliged by law to report suspected child abuse. Previously known as a notification

Residential care services - provide temporary, short or long-term accommodation and care to children and young people (seven years or older) who are unable to be placed in home-based care. Care is

provided by paid staff on a roster system

Resilience - is the positive adaptation of an individual within the context of significant adversity. Having effective coping tools in dealing with stressful events, without becoming overwhelmed. Resilience can be illustrated through two related concepts: risk factors and protective factors

Respite - is a component of home-based care that involves a time-limited placement where a child or young person is placed away from the primary caregiver or current living circumstances

Response - otherwise known as initial investigation

Reunification - return of a child to the care of a parent

Risk Level - is an assessment of the future likelihood of harm to the child, taking account of the consequences to the child of harm and parental capacity to make decisions and take actions to protect the child from harm and promote their safety, stability and healthy development. This decision may be taken concurrently with the substantiation decision or may be deferred pending a period of further protective intervention and assessment

Secondary services - target vulnerable groups or communities who need more intensive support due to their particular needs or circumstances. The aims are to build family strengths and to reduce risks to the child and young person. Examples include intensive family support services, respite care, community-based mental health services, and drug and alcohol services

The Secretary (or Chief Executive Officer) - for the Department of Health & Human Services

Secure Welfare Service - is 'a community service that has lock-up facilities' that is established under the CYFA. A young person may be placed (via an Interim Accommodation Order) by the children's court, generally at a point prior to an ongoing protection order being made. Child protection may also place a young person in secure welfare who is in the custody, or under the guardianship, of the Secretary. A child or young person must be at substantial and immediate risk of harm to himself or herself in order to be placed in secure welfare

Self-care skills - an element of the Best Interests dimension 'development'. It concerns the acquisition by a child of both practical and emotional competencies required for increasing independence. These include learning early practical skills of toileting, dressing and feeding and having opportunities to gain the confidence and skills to undertake activities away from the family. Older children begin acquiring independent living skills. Development of self-care skills involves encouragement to acquire social problem-solving skills. Special attention should be given to the impact of disability and other vulnerabilities on the development of self-care skills

Senior child protection practitioner (community based) - is a position co-located in a registered family services agency and a child protection office. The position provides consultancy, advice and community education to agencies on statutory processes and responsibilities, and chairs case conferences and attends home visits with community services organisations where required

Senior child protection practitioner - is a position responsible for supporting and developing child protection practitioners in the integration of theory and practice whilst demonstrating their expertise through case practice and supervision of practitioners. Works collaboratively with the team manager to strengthen case practice, provide effective service delivery, support other practitioners

SABTS -Sexually abusive behaviour treatment services - are funded by the department to deliver:

- a voluntary therapeutic treatment service for children and young people up to 15 years, who

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have engaged in problem sexual behaviour or sexually abusive behaviour

- a statutory therapeutic treatment service for young people aged 10–14 years pursuant to a therapeutic treatment order

Sexual Crimes Squad - differs from SOCIT in that it deals with serial offenders and child pornography

Shared Care - where the care of a child is shared between significant persons in the child's life who may live in different households

SFC - Shared Family Care - a home-based care program that provides respite, short term and long-term placements for children and young people with an intellectual disability or a developmental delay. Delivered by community services organisations as part of their home-based care service

Sibling group - relates to two or more children from the same family

Significant harm - must be defined in a way that is specific to the case. Justice O'Brien in the Supreme Court (*Buckley vs CSV 1992*) identified significant as:

- more than trivial or insignificant, but need not be as high as serious ... and
- (is) 'important' or 'of consequence' to the child's development'
- it need not have lasting or permanent effect, nor necessarily be treatable

SOCIT - Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Teams - are staffed by experienced and qualified Victoria Police detectives specially trained to respond to and investigate sexual assault and child abuse.

SOS - Streetwork Outreach Service—a specialist state-wide service that works with young people at risk in the central business district and St Kilda

Stability plan - is a legal requirement under the CYFA 2005 and forms a component of a child's best interests plan. Outlines how a child who is placed out of the care of his/her parents, will receive continuous, stable care in an out-of-home care placement. Must demonstrate compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children

Stability planning - is the process of decision-making by the Secretary that ensures that children are provided with opportunities to form stable attachments and relationships with adults caring for them, to enable a child's healthy development. Underpins actions to preserve families and to reunify children with their parents quickly if they are removed from home – so that a child experiences a continuous, stable relationship with their parents. If a child cannot live safely at home, a stability plan will be developed to provide for stable care by someone other than the child's parents

Standing - the right of a person who has a 'direct interest' in a child protection case to participate as a party in the hearing of the case

Statutory Intervention - a case in which child protection issues a protection application in respect of a

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child (as opposed to voluntary intervention)

Statutory Services - are for children who have been at risk of significant harm where intervention is needed to ensure their ongoing safety

Substantiation - the decision determining whether a child has experienced (or is currently at risk of) significant harm to their safety, stability or development within the definition of s.162 of the CYFA

Take Two - this Intensive Treatment Service aims to improve the functioning, safety and well-being of children and young people subject to child protection intervention through the provision of specialist intensive therapeutic counselling and multiple treatment methods aimed at addressing trauma and attachment disorders involving children, their families, and carers and communities where necessary

Tertiary services - target children who have experienced significant harm or who are likely to suffer harm, to redress this harm and prevent its recurrence. Eg child protection, therapeutic services aimed at children and young people who have experienced serious abuse, and out-of-home care services

TFC - therapeutic foster care is a program of home-based care that emphasises stability and provides additional supports for the child and carers. Key features are the centrally important role of the care team, the support to the child and the carer and the dedicated involvement of both placement and therapeutic specialist providers

TTO - a therapeutic treatment order issued by the children's court requires a child aged at least 10 years and under 14 years of age to attend community based treatment for sexually abusive behaviour

TTPO - a therapeutic treatment placement order issued by the children's court requires a child aged at least 10 years and under 14 years of age to reside in out-of-home care to ensure their attendance and participation in community based treatment for sexually abusive behaviour

TTR – a Therapeutic treatment report made to child protection about a child aged 10 years or over and under 15 years by a person who believes that the child has exhibited sexually abusive behaviours

Transition plan (or exit plan) - a plan for transition from the child protection system that forms part of a child or young person's best interests plan and is developed at least 6 months prior to the planned date of discharge

Undertaking - a promise made to the court, may either be oral or in writing

Undisclosed placement - a temporary residence for the child whose address is not disclosed to the parents

Universal services - are available to all children in the community and aim to promote child well-being, including health, education and social development objectives. Examples are general practitioners, maternal and child health services, child care centres, and schools

Variation - an alteration (usually of conditions) of a court order

Voluntary placements – allowed by CYFA s133-161, are those with no court order requiring the child or young person to live in a placement provided by an approved community service organisation. A writ-

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ten short or long-term child care agreement between the parent/guardian and the CSO must be completed and signed by the parent(s), and young person where appropriate, that gives permission for a them to live in a placement provided by that CSO

YAO - a youth attendance order is a sentence given by the Children's Court to a young person aged greater than 15 years and whose offence occurred prior to their 18th birthday. A direct alternative to receiving a custodial sentence, the young person is required to report to a youth justice unit for up to ten hours per week, and be involved in a community service work component

Youth Justice - the Department of Health & Human Services is responsible for the statutory supervision of young people in the criminal justice system. The department provides programs and resources to assist these young people to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to manage their lives effectively without further offending. Through supervision, offending related programs and linkages to appropriate support services, the department promotes opportunities for rehabilitation and contributes to the reduction of crime in the community

Youth Justice group conference – based on restorative principles. A problem-solving approach, balancing the needs of offenders and victims

Youth Residential Centre Order - a sentencing order by which a child or young person aged 10- 14 years is sentenced to be detained in a youth residential centre for a specified period

Youth Supervision Order - a sentencing order by which a child or young person is supervised by a youth justice officer and may be required to comply with special conditions imposed by the court. The level of supervision is generally higher than that involved with a probation order for a specified period

Youth Justice Centre Order - a young person aged 15-17 years is sentenced by a court to be detained in a youth justice centre. Young people 18-20 years may be sentenced to a youth training centre order by an adult court (Magistrates County or Supreme) following a suitability assessment if the court deems that they have reasonable prospects for rehabilitation or are immature or likely to be subjected to undesirable influences in an adult prison (that is, vulnerable)