



# FAMILY MATTERS

Kids safe in culture, not in care

| South Australian Recommendations |  | Responsibility | Timeline |
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| <b>1.</b>                        | <b>Recommendations for government</b>  |                |          |
| <b>1.1</b>                       | <b>Cultural competency</b>   |                |          |
| 1.1.1                            | Implement cultural awareness training for non-Aboriginal carers and ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are placed in culturally safe home environments.   |                |          |
| 1.1.2                            | Utilise cultural consultants and Aboriginal elders in the development and delivery of cultural awareness training for all staff at Families SA and members of the South Australian judiciary.  |                |          |
| 1.1.3                            | Establish culturally appropriate ways of communicating to enable more families to seek advice, understand the grievance process and be involved in child protection decision-making.   |                |          |
| 1.1.4                            | Introduce compulsory Aboriginal cultural learning within government agencies delivered by an Aboriginal organisation such as Tauondi College.  |                |          |
| 1.1.5                            | Outsource the development of cultural care plans to non-government organisations (NGO) and remove confidentiality requirements so Families SA can share information about kinship networks. If the NGO has no Aboriginal employees make it a requirement that all plans are developed in consultation with Aboriginal Family Support Services (AFSS) or another appropriate Aboriginal controlled community organisation (ACCO). |                |          |
| <b>1.2</b>                       | <b>Kinship and foster carers</b>   |                |          |
| 1.2.1                            | Outsource the Kinship Care Program to the non-government sector to encourage an increase in the recruitment of Aboriginal carers.  |                |          |
| 1.2.2                            | Adopt the Winangay model for assessment of foster and kinship carers.  |                |          |
| 1.2.3                            | Explore alternative and Aboriginal community controlled models of residential care.  |                |          |
| 1.2.4                            | Review permanent placement policies in context to the impact on the child of the permanent removal from family, culture and community.   |                |          |
| 1.2.5                            | Provide support and recognise informal kinship placements.   |                |          |
| 1.2.6                            | Remove labelling around fostering, encourage contact with Aboriginal communities and provide support post placement.   |                |          |
| <b>1.3</b>                       | <b>Policies and practices</b>  |                |          |
| 1.3.1                            | Establish a team of specialised Aboriginal workers funded by Families SA but located within the office of the Children's Commissioner to deal with child protection issues.  |                |          |
| 1.3.2                            | Implement a policy, which ensures family care meetings occur at the beginning of an investigation, well before a child protection hearing so the family has time to address issues before an order is made.  |                |          |
| 1.3.3                            | Develop a consistent approach to the development of family care plans, which involves extended family members such as aunts and grandmothers.  |                |          |

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| 1.3.4      | Review who has the child protection delegations in Families SA and give senior Aboriginal people the authority to review decisions and practices within Families SA and recommend strategies to the Children's Commissioner.   |  |  |
| 1.3.5      | Develop a strategy to increase the reunification of children with their birth families and outsource this work to the NGO sector.  |  |  |
| 1.3.6      | Consult with families on local issues acknowledging history; intergenerational trauma and the risk imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers.   |  |  |
| 1.3.7      | Design and deliver culturally appropriate, trauma informed, early intervention and prevention strategies.  |  |  |
| 1.3.8      | Develop and implement an Aboriginal workforce strategy to increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal staff at Families SA.   |  |  |
| 1.3.9      | Re-establish the Aboriginal Services Unit within Families SA and review the child protection reports and reviews from the 80's and 90's.   |  |  |
| 1.3.10     | Re-introduce the specialised Aboriginal child abuse report line and link reports of abuse or risk of abuse with the provision of early intervention services.  |  |  |
| <b>1.4</b> | <b>Non-government funding</b>  |  |  |
| 1.4.1      | Fund AFSS to support, monitor and review the cultural appropriateness of non-Aboriginal service providers delivering early intervention and foster care services. AFSS could also design and develop policies, standards and assessment processes for non-Aboriginal carers. |  |  |
| 1.4.2      | Increase the number of gazetted Aboriginal community controlled organisations and provide adequate resources to enable them to fulfill their role.   |  |  |
| 1.4.3      | Redirect funding from commercial care to new creative models of care.  |  |  |
| 1.4.4      | Invest in community and capacity building solutions in a sustainable way.  |  |  |
| 1.4.5      | Fund a peak Aboriginal community controlled organisation to ensure a stronger voice for aboriginal people on all topics, including those raised at the Family Matters forum.   |  |  |
| 1.4.6      | Fund organisations to provide outreach services in remote communities and introduce long term funding with a ten-year minimum.   |  |  |
| <b>2.</b>  | <b>Recommendations for the non-government sector</b>   |  |  |
| <b>2.1</b> | <b>Cultural competency</b>   |  |  |
| 2.1.1      | Lobby for the inclusion of cultural competency in the curriculum of universities and TAFE Colleges.  |  |  |
| 2.1.2      | Provide culturally appropriate training to foster carers.  |  |  |
| 2.1.3      | Implement a strategy to encourage Aboriginal staff to be employed in kindergartens to help grow children's cultural awareness and understanding and build staff's cultural capacity.   |  |  |
| 2.1.4      | Develop cultural awareness training for students and workers within the community sector.  |  |  |
| 2.1.5      | Lobby the education department to increase cultural strength (language, identity) and Aboriginal studies in school.  |  |  |
| 2.1.6      | Develop culturally appropriate programs for parents and foster carers.   |  |  |

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| 2.1.7      | Establish a network of agencies to form working groups to investigate cultural awareness curriculums across the range of educational institutions and deliver proposals on more appropriate learning for students. |  |  |
| 2.1.8      | Implement strategies to help children in foster care remain attached and connected to their culture.   |  |  |
| <b>2.2</b> | <b>Sector development</b>  |  |  |
| 2.2.1      | Organise a meeting of non-government CEOs to discuss and develop a position on funding and lobby government on resource allocations for the provision of services.   |  |  |
| 2.2.2      | Develop assessment tools to monitor and evaluate what is working in the community and develop specific key performance indicators.   |  |  |
| 2.2.3      | Bring together a group of interested NGOs who are having problems with getting referrals from Families SA. Document solutions and suggest a partnership approach with Families SA.                                 |  |  |
| 2.2.4      | Lobby for the adoption of alternative options such as Aboriginal controlled boarding schools like Worawa (Healesville, Vic).   |  |  |
| 2.2.5      | Analyse child protection reviews and reports and produce a manifesto of recommendations not implemented.   |  |  |
| <b>2.3</b> | <b>Programs and Services</b>   |  |  |
| 2.3.1      | Educate young people in care about parenting and child protection.   |  |  |
| 2.3.2      | Establish a service that provides advocacy, assistance with the grievance and appeals process, and an independent tribunal to scrutinize the department's decision-making.   |  |  |
| 2.3.3      | Recommend Create secures additional funding to employ more young Aboriginal consultants.   |  |  |
| 2.3.4      | Lobby for the introduction of Cultural Safety Officers for organisations that have high interaction with Aboriginal people.  |  |  |
| 2.3.5      | Develop a strategy to debunk the myths about trauma targeting pre-school, school, TAFE and the workplace.  |  |  |
| 2.3.6      | Deliver programs, which support families to engage in services.  |  |  |
| 2.3.7      | Educate community members using positive role models and mentors providing positive stories of how people have overcome grief and trauma.  |  |  |
| <b>3.</b>  | <b>Community</b>   |  |  |
| 3.1        | Have conversations with people about Aboriginal culture and the differences in child rearing practices.  |  |  |
| 3.2        | Bring agencies, organisations and community groups together to help affect change.   |  |  |