FAMILY MATTERS

Kids safe in culture, not in care

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ISSUES PAPER

SNAICC

SACOSS
South Australian Council
of Social Service

UNITING COMMUNITIES

Child & Family
Welfare Association SA

National Coordinating Group

Aboriginal Child, Family and
Community Care State Secretariat
(AbSec)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Healing Foundation

Queensland Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Child
Protection Peak (QATSICPP)

Australian Council of Social Service
(ACOSS)

Families Australia

Secretariat of National Aboriginal
& Islander Child Care

FAMILY MATTERS
Kids safe in culture, not in care

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

This document is available on request in alternative formats for example, large type, Braille or audio file.

SNAICC'S CONTACT DETAILS

Gemma Unwin, Manager
Family Matters – Kids safe in culture, not in care

PO Box 1445, Fitzroy North, Victoria 3068
Ph: (03) 9489 8099
Fax: (03) 9489 8044
Email: gemma.unwin@snaicc.org.au
Web: http://www.familymatters.org.au

GRAPHIC DESIGN

www.mazartdesignstudio.com

Introduction

Family Matters - Kids safe in culture, not in care aims to address the dramatic over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. The initiative is being led by SNAICC and driven by a National Coordinating Group comprising chief executive officers or chairs from Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP), Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, NSW Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat (AbSec) and Families Australia.

Over 1 100 people across Australia have contributed to setting six key objectives for the *Family Matters* initiative. These key objectives form the basis of this issues paper and the structure for discussions at the forum. State and territory public forums will play an integral role in the development and implementation of this initiative.

Resulting from this forum will be the development of a report detailing discussions and strategic recommendations for government, the non-government sector and communities. SNAICC will continue to work with the people of South Australia to reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.

The Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) was a major advocate for the national inquiry into the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. The inquiry's 1997 report, *Bringing Them Home*, contained 54 recommendations, of which it is estimated that just four have been implemented. The inquiry also led, between 1997 and 2001, to every state and territory government formally apologising to victims of child removal policies and, in 2008, then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered a historic national apology in Federal Parliament.

Despite this inquiry, public outcry and apologies, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continue to be removed from their families at an alarming rate. Nationally Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children comprise only 5 per cent of the national child population[1] but comprise 34 per cent of all children placed in out-of-home care.[2]

The causes of this over-representation are complex. Contributing factors include the following:

- legacy of past policies including the forced removal of children
- inter-generational affects of separation from family and culture
- poor socio-economic status and
- misperceptions arising from cultural differences in child-rearing practices.[3]

While rates of placement of children in out-of-home care have continued to rise, they have increased significantly more for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Since 2003, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander placement rate has more than doubled from 5 059 children in 2003 to 13 952 in 2013. While the growth in Non-Aboriginal placement is far less significant from 16 736 in 2003 to 26 422 in 2013.[4]
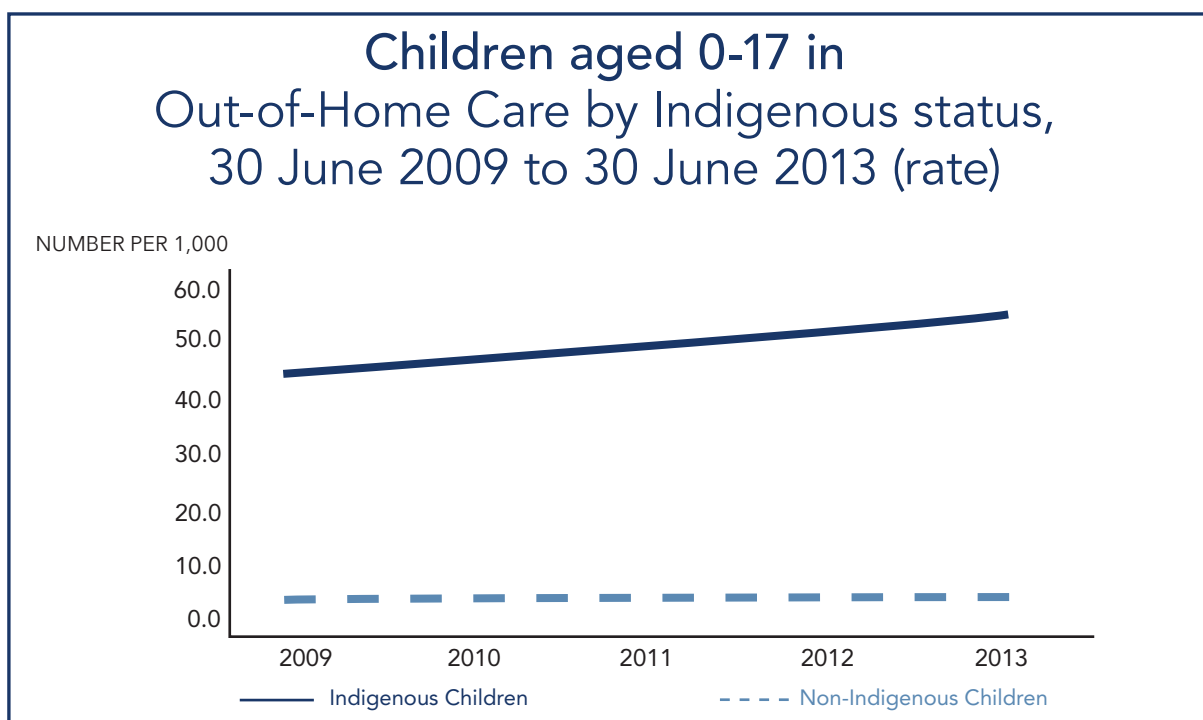
Children aged 0-17 in Out-of-Home Care by Indigenous status, 30 June 2009 to 30 June 2013 (rate)

NUMBER PER 1,000

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Child Protection 2012 -2013

Proportion of Children
in Out-of-Home Care in Australia 2013
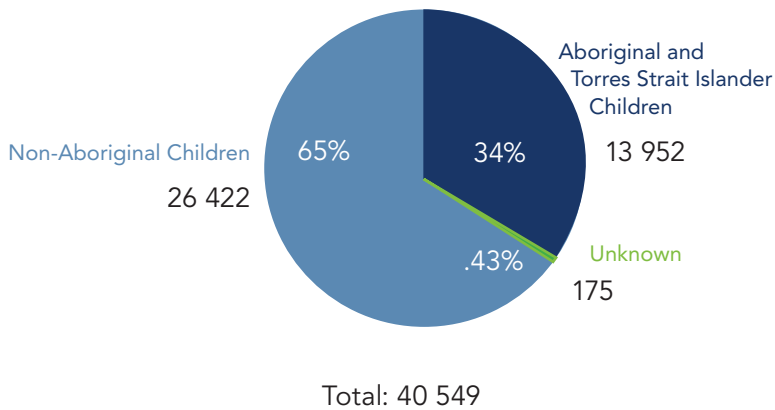
Non-Aboriginal Children
65%
26 422

Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Children
34%
13 952

.43%

Unknown
175

Total: 40 549

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Child Protection 2012 -2013

Population of Australian Children
Aged 0 – 17 years

Non-Aboriginal Children
95%
4 755 644

Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Children
5%
234 462

Total: 4 990 106
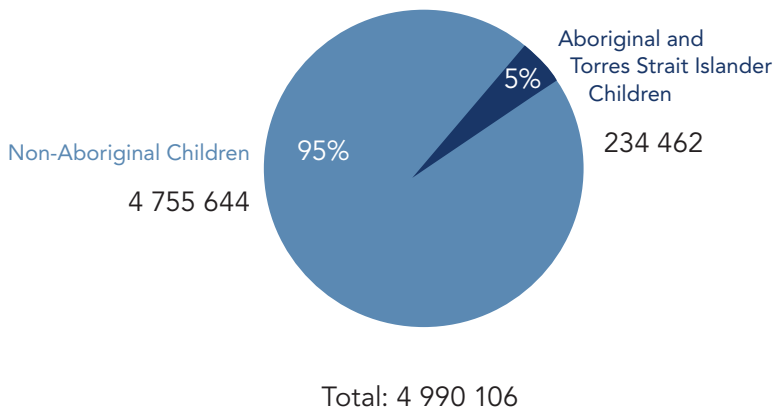
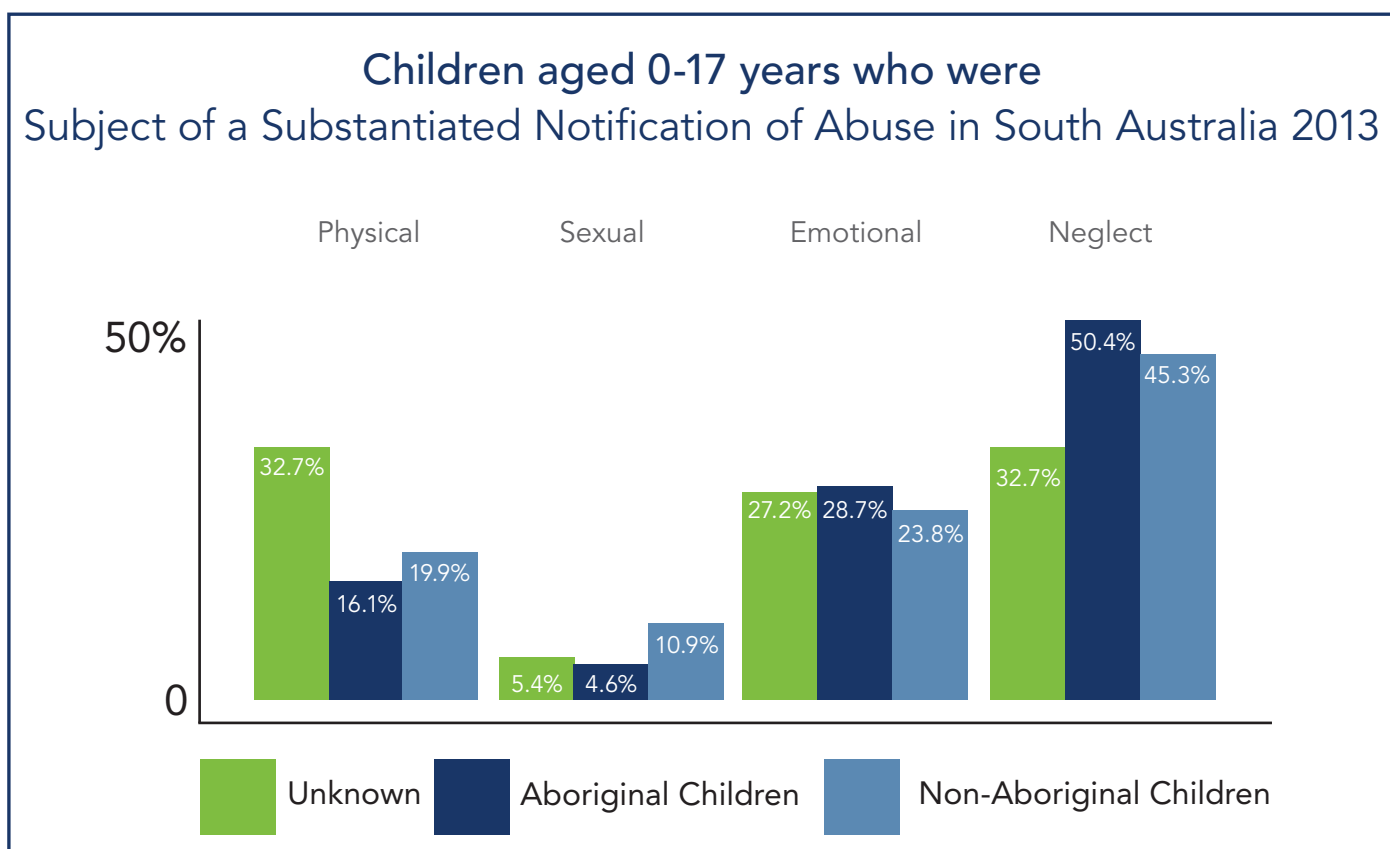Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011

A snapshot OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In South Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children make up just 3.5 per cent of the child population (aged 0-17 years) yet comprise 30 per cent of all children in out-of-home care.[5] This means the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 11.5 times more likely to be in out-of-home care than non-Aboriginal children which is higher than the national average. In South Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child removal has more than tripled in the past 10 years from 236 children in 2003 to 788 in 2013.[6]

In South Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are mainly removed because of emotional abuse and neglect.[7]

While neglect is not a well-defined term, it is strongly associated with disadvantage and poverty. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities commonly experience significant social and economic disadvantage resulting in poorer outcomes in relation to safety, health, education, housing and employment. These are all significant contributing factors to the high rate of substantiated reports of neglect among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Children aged 0-17 years who were Subject of a Substantiated Notification of Abuse in South Australia 2013

	Physical	Sexual	Emotional	Neglect
Unknown	32.7%	5.4%	27.2%	32.7%
Aboriginal Children	16.1%	4.6%	28.7%	50.4%
Non-Aboriginal Children	19.9%	10.9%	23.8%	45.3%

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Child Protection 2012-2013

Proportion of Children in
Out-of-Home Care in South Australia 2013

Non-Aboriginal Children

1 835

69%

29.6%

1.2%

Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Children

788

Unknown

34

Total: 2 657
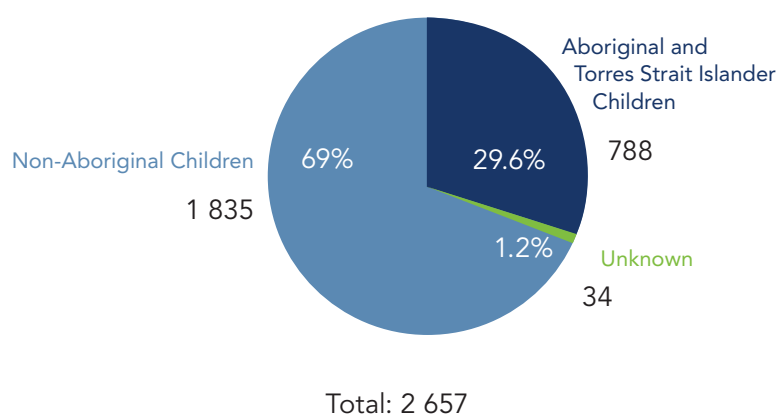
Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Child Protection 2012 -2013

Population of South Australian Children
Aged 0 – 17 years

92.5%

3.5%

3.8%

Non-Aboriginal Children

322 676

Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Children

12 546

Not stated

13 505

Total: 348 727
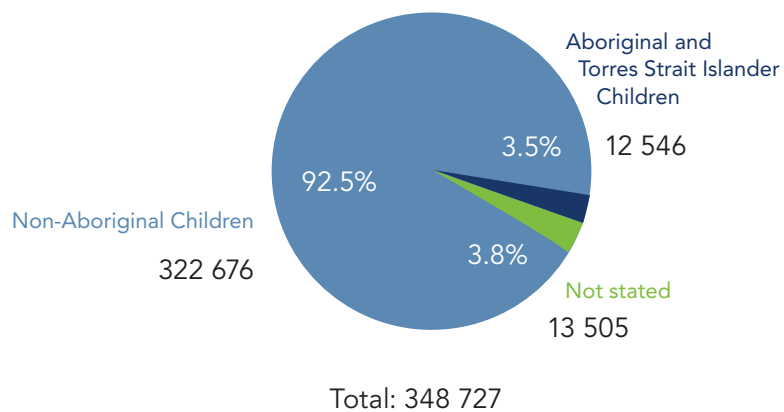
Source: ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing

Kids safe in culture, not in care

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families have been caring for and nurturing their children for over 60 000 years. Extended kinship relationships, understanding of Aboriginal values and belief systems as well as a cultural emphasis on self-reliance found within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are vital to the development of children.[8]

The *Bringing Them Home* report further acknowledged the importance of culture, stating that the right to a distinct status and culture:

"...helps maintain and strengthen the identity and spiritual and cultural practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities."[9]

Connection to culture is related to improved mental and emotional well-being and socio-economic outcomes.[10] It is well researched that a strong cultural identity is a protective factor, contributing to a child's resilience.[11] The *Bringing Them Home* report also found that the forced removal of children from their families was both destructive and compounding in its effect.

"Psychological and emotional damage renders many people less able to learn social skills and survival skills. Their ability to operate successfully in the world is impaired causing low educational achievement, unemployment and consequent poverty. These in turn cause their own emotional distress leading some to perpetuate violence, self-harm, substance abuse or anti-social behaviour."

The damage caused by forced removal has created a cycle, which contributes to higher and higher rates of child removal.[12] The past forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and placement into institutional care meant that many members of the Stolen Generations grew up with a lack of parenting role models. This has resulted at times in poor parenting skills, which were then passed onto their children. So the cycle continues to perpetuate itself, increasing the risk of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families coming into contact with the child protection system and contributing to higher and higher rates of child removal. In addition, many members of the Stolen Generations also experience unresolved grief, trauma, depression and mental illness, which makes parents more susceptible to substance abuse and further increases the risk of intervention by the child protection system.

The early years of a child's life are a critical predictor to outcomes in later life. Understanding and addressing the underlying causes of the issues that lead to children being at risk of out-of-home care is essential if sustainable, positive change is to occur to the child protection systems in Australia. Investment in early intervention strategies such as early family support services, can also serve as an effective preventative tool in reducing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being placed in out-of-home care. This in turn will help in breaking the cycle of disadvantage in Indigenous families and communities.

Understanding and respect
FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES, INCLUDING CHILD REARING PRACTICES

Family is the cornerstone of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, spirituality and identity.[13] Much emphasis is placed on the values of:

"...interdependence, group cohesion, spiritual connectedness, traditional links to the land, community loyalty and inter-assistance."[14]

Extended family relationships are the core of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship systems and are central to the way culture is passed on and society is organised.[15] Research indicates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures have protective mechanisms, such as multiple carers and mutual responsibility within kinship networks, to address the welfare and care of their children.[16]

There are various roles given to different family members in relation to child rearing and these vary depending on whether the family lives in an urban or rural setting. Women's major responsibilities in child rearing have been traditionally to teach young girls important cultural information, such as developing their spiritual and social well-being, caring for the land, and raising children.[17] Girls are taught from older women such as their mothers, aunties and grandmothers how to track, hunt and cook. Uncles have a unique role in raising male children, and pass down knowledge between uncles and fathers to young boys.

Grandparents are extremely important within Aboriginal society. Children spend a large amount of time with their grandparents, being cared for and gaining cultural knowledge.[18]

Whilst the depth and wealth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and tradition is vast, it continues to be undermined by statutory intervention. Policy failure is often driven by disrespect – a distrust of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and child rearing practices.

This contributes to high rates of notification and lays the foundation for their systemic exclusion from the development and implementation of policies and programs that affect their own families and children.

The cultural lens through which child protection services respond to notifications directly affects outcomes for Indigenous children. Cultural differences in child rearing practices are poorly understood by many child protection workers and may wrongly lead to conclusions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have been neglected or abused.[19] The 'best interests' of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child needs to be interpreted through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural lens.[20]

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Cultural Needs
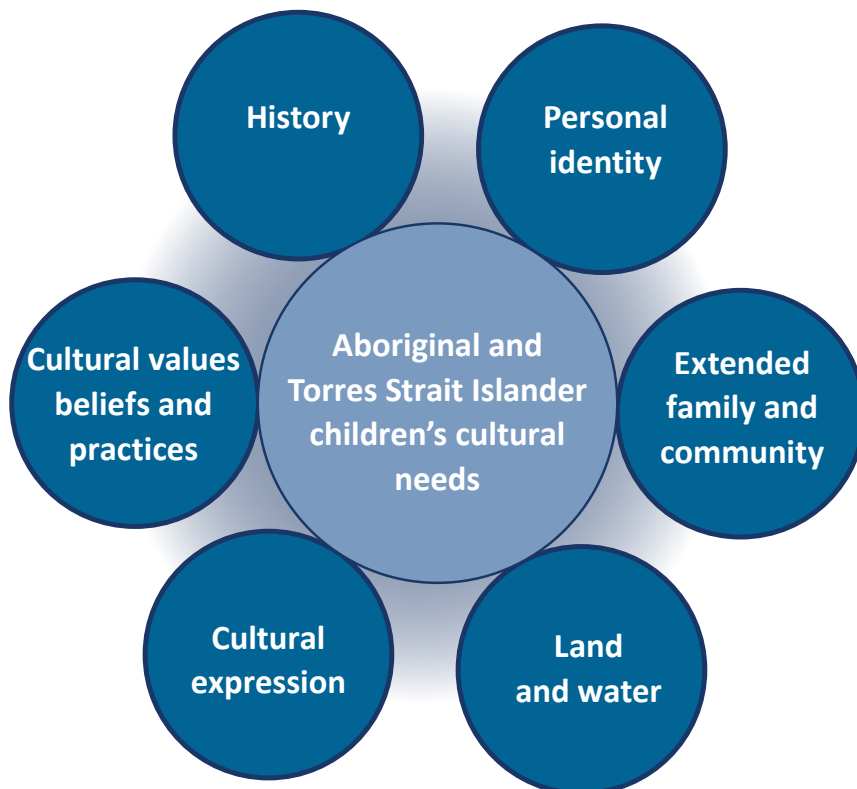
Source: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Cultural Needs, SNAICC 2012

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
PARTICIPATION IN CHILD PROTECTION DECISION-MAKING

Enabling participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decision-making is fundamental to realising their human rights.[21] All Australian governments have international legal obligations to ensure the realisation of these rights. The right to participate in decisions comes primarily from the right to self-determination, which requires the empowerment of Indigenous peoples to have control over the decisions that affect their own lives.[22]

The Stolen Generations are the devastating result of child protection policy and practice in Australia.[23] Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are particularly affected by child protection decision-making owing to the long-term impacts of past policies of forced child removal as well as their continuing over-representation in the child protection system.[24]

The participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is essential to quality and effective child protection decision-making. International and Australian evidence has strongly supported the link between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and positive outcomes in service delivery. Numerous reports and inquiries in Australia consistently confirm that two major contributing factors to the failure of government policy are:

• a lack of robust community governance; and
• an absence of meaningful Aboriginal community participation.

This highlights the need to build the capacity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled organisations to deliver child and family services.[25]

The *Bringing Them Home* report reaffirms the need for community development approaches to child protection rather than continuing to use traditional models of child welfare.[26]

The right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in child protection decision-making has been recognised in Australian law and policy, particularly through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP). This principle highlights the importance of maintaining connections to family, culture and community in order to advance the best interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Implementation of the ATSICPP requires that relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisations are consulted about the child's placement and that children are assisted to keep in contact with their family, language and culture. However the application of the principle varies throughout Australia.

Unlike the legislation in other Australian states and territories, the South Australian *Children's Protection Act (1993)* does not include self determination as a principle nor participation and/or consultation as a decision making principle in the Act.

It does however specify the involvement of gazetted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agency in placement decisions and judicial decision-making.[27] Without adequate resourcing, the capacity for one agency to provide significant input including the involvement of family members is extremely limiting.

There are other more effective models for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in child protection decision-making which enable involvement from the beginning of the child's entry into the child protection system, ongoing support throughout the placement[28] and assistance with family reunification.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
CHILD PLACEMENT PRINCIPLE

In 1976 at the Australian Conference on Adoption, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples expressed concern about the large numbers of their children who were in the care of non-Aboriginal families.[29]

It was not until 1986 however that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) became accepted and approximately another decade passed before the principle become incorporated within the child protection legislation of various states and territories. The goal of the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) is:

". . .to enhance and preserve the child's connection to family and community, and sense of identity and culture." [30]

The principle states that the preferred order of placement for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child who has been removed from their birth family is with the child's:

1. extended Indigenous family
2. Indigenous community or
3. other Indigenous people.

Once all of these options have been fully explored, the fourth and least preferred option is placement with a non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander family.

The principle is not merely about preferred placement but recognises the following:

• Prevention and early intervention strengthens Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities by keeping them together.

• Independent representative participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the decisions made for the care and protection of their children.

• Placement in accordance with the agreed hierarchy of out-of-home care placement options, informed by community and family participation.

• Child and family participation in care and protection decision-making that affects them.

• Cultural care and connection supported for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.[31]

In South Australia ATSICPP is contained in the *Children's Protection Act (1993)*.[32] In 2013 South Australia reported a 67 per cent compliance with ATSICPP which is consistent with national figures (68 per cent). However when the statistics are examined in relation to ATSICPP keeping children connected to their culture and identity the picture is quite different. Of the total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander placements, only 48 per cent were being placed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, 32 per cent were placed with foster carers who were neither Indigenous nor related and 19 per cent were placed with non-Aboriginal family members and kin.

Ensuring a high rate of compliance with the Child Placement Principle (if placement occurs within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander extended family) is essential for keeping children connected to their Indigenous culture.

Trauma, social and economic disadvantage links
TO CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Removing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families is a deeply traumatic experience, for the child, the family and their extended community. Childhood trauma has the potential to interrupt the normal physical and mental development of a child and can impair the child's ability to regulate their behaviour.[33] As a result, many children go on to develop self-destructive behaviours including aggression, violence and substance misuse in later life.

The trauma due to colonisation and the Stolen Generations also continues to affect the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children today. It forms what is called intergenerational trauma, which is a historical trauma that is transmitted across generations, from the first generation of survivors who witnessed the trauma to later generations.

The effects of intergenerational trauma are real and significant with members of the Stolen Generations often experiencing high rates of mental illness and substance abuse issues that lead to increased rates of family violence, child abuse and family breakdown. This in turn impacts on the socio-economic status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.[34]

For many people, colonisation and the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families has caused disconnection from family, community, language, culture and land.

The impact of forced removal is cumulative. Children who were forcibly removed did not experience being parented and cared for by their kin which influences their own experience as parents.

Children who have been removed from their families may have experienced different types of trauma, such as:

- Individual trauma – child abuse and neglect affecting development, attachment to others and culture[35]
- Cultural trauma – colonisation, forced assimilation, stolen generations, racism
- Community trauma – loss of land and language, substance abuse, violence, multiple deaths
- Family trauma – intergenerational trauma, domestic violence, incarceration of parents or loved ones
- Economic trauma – high levels of unemployment, welfare dependency, poverty, overcrowded housing and homelessness

In addressing the issue, it is fundamental to understand and address the underlying causes of the factors that lead to children being at risk.

While the child protection system on its own cannot solve all of these issues, a coordinated and collaborative approach across the government and non-government sectors could significantly address the underlying factors leading to child removal.

Investment
IN PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

The cost effectiveness of prevention and early intervention services is well established.[36] *Protecting Children is Everyone's Business, the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (2009-2020)* explicitly recognises the significance of prevention and early intervention in child protection. The protection of children is not merely a response to abuse and neglect; it is the promotion of safety and well being of children.[37]

Leading international and Australian research suggests that applying a public health model to care, results in better outcomes for both children and their families. This public health model offers an approach that emphasises assisting families early enough to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring.[38] Integrated prevention and early intervention services are critical to:

- reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system; and

- interrupting the inter-generational transmission of trauma in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Research is supportive of this approach, suggesting that culturally appropriate and intensive family support services have a high impact, reducing the need for child protection intervention later in life and improving the well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.[39]

Despite the potential for long-term cost savings in other areas such as education, health and the judicial system, governments continue to spend a disproportionate amount on child protection and the removal of children from their families. Adopting a preventative rather than a punitive approach would provide great benefits in making headway in tackling this issue as well as providing a cost saving to government.

To illustrate on a national level in 2013 $3.2 billion was spent on child protection and out-of-home care compared to $664 million on intensive family support services.[40] Clearly a greater investment in prevention will significantly reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being placed in out-of-home care and will also create significant long-term cost savings for government.

Comparison of Government Expenditure on Child Protection/ Out-of-Home Care and Intensive/Early Intervention Family Support 2013

Intensive/Early Intervention Family Support
$664 million

Child Protection/ Out-of-Home Care
$3.2 billion
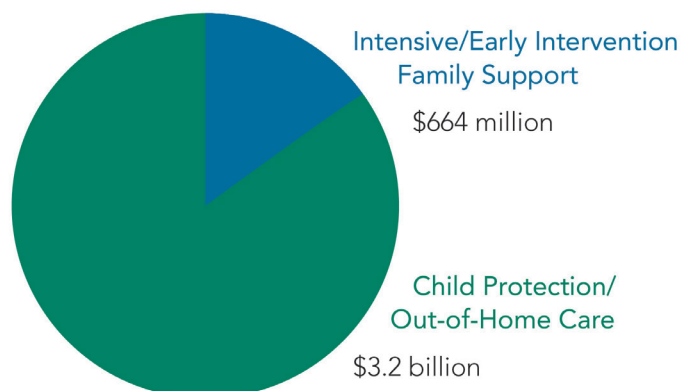
Footnote: South Australian data was incomplete

Level of expenditure
IN ACCORDANCE WITH OVER-REPRESENTATION IN THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children make up one third of all children in out-of-home care in South Australia.[41] Allocation of expenditure on services that have real, positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families should reflect this high level of representation.

A recent report of the Australian National Audit Office further highlights that building the role and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations is not only important for effective service delivery, but an important fundamental policy objective in its own right.

Building capacity promotes local governance, leadership and economic participation, and strengthens social capital for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.[42]

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations are more effective because of their strengths in cultural competence, community engagement and accessible service delivery. They also carry a broader importance in the development and empowerment of communities.

However the effectiveness of investment is undermined with a lack of support for Aboriginal-specific targeted programs, with 79% of investment in community support programs for Indigenous Australians channelled through mainstream services and only 21% of expenditure directed through Aboriginal controlled services.[43]

Despite the strengths of community-controlled services, there is significant under investment in them. For example, across NSW, Queensland, and Victoria, approximately only 17% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care are in placements supported by Aboriginal agencies.[43]

While 17% is a very small number it compares well to Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory, where child protection and out-of-home care is almost exclusively managed by non-Aboriginal organisations and the state government.[45]
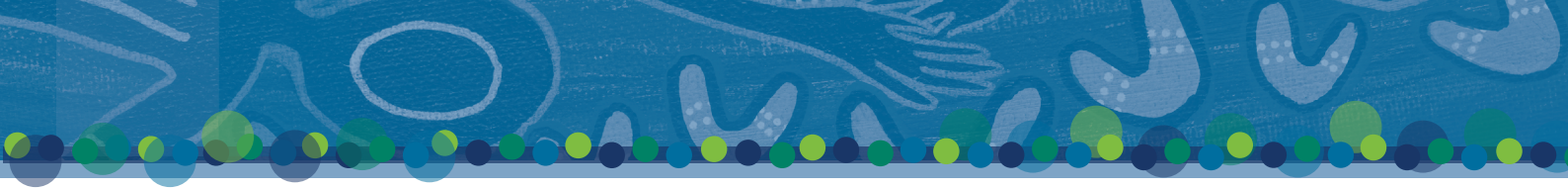
References

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011). *Census of Population and Housing, Age by Indigenous Status,* cat. no. 2002.0, ABS Ausstats, 2011, retrieved April 2014, <http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/5?opendocument&navpos=220>

2. Productivity Commission Report on Government Services (2014), *Child Protection Services 2012-2013*, Table 15A.18, retrieved April 2014, <http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/132358/rogs-2014-volumef-chapter15.pdf>

3. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Child protection Australia: 2011-2012,* Child Welfare Series, 2013, no. 55. Cat. no. CWS 43. Canberra.

4. Productivity Commission Report on Government Services (2014), *Child Protection Services 2012-2013*, Table 15A.18, retrieved October 2013, <http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/132358/rogs-2014-volumef-chapter15.pdf>

5. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011). *Census of Population and Housing, Age by Indigenous Status,* cat. no. 2002.0, ABS Ausstats, 2011, retrieved April 2014, http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/5?opendocument&navpos=220>

6. Ibid.

7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Child Protection Australia 2011-2012*, Child Welfare Series, Table A8, p.63. Canberra, 2013.

8. Bamblett, M, Frederico, M, Harrison, J, Jackson, A., & Lewis, P, 'Not one size fits all' Understanding the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal children. La Trobe University: Bundoora, 2012, retrieved October 2013, <http://www.childhoodinstitute.org.au/Assets/226/1/NotOneSizeFitsAllreportfinalNov2012.pdf>

9. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Bringing them home, Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families,* Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 1997.

10. Dockery, A. M, *Traditional Culture and the Wellbeing of Indigenous Australians: An Analysis of the 2008 NATSISS*. Centre for Labour Market Research Discussion Paper Series 2011/1, Curtin Business School, Curtin University, Perth, 2011.

11. Bamblett, M, & Lewis, P, Detoxifying the Child and Family Welfare System for Australian Indigenous Peoples: Self-Determination, Rights and Culture as the Critical Tools, *First Peoples Child and Family Review,* Vol. 3, No. 3, 2007.

12. Cunneen, C, & Libesman, T, Postcolonial Trauma: The Contemporary Removal of Indigenous Children and Young People from their Families in Australia, *Australian Journal of Social Issues (Australian Council of Social Service)*, vol 35, no. 2, 2000.

13. Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care, *Value and Respect Culture – Connection to Family Supporting Carers: To Care for Our Children,* SNAICC, 2013, retrieved 4 November 2013, <http://www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org.au/3.1.html>.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Penman, R, *The "Growing Up" of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children: A Literature Review*, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Occasional Paper No. 15, Canberra, 2006.

17. Brickell, M, *Growing Up Our Way: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Rearing,* Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), PostScript Printing and Publishing Victoria, 2011, P.35.

18. Ibid.

19. Libesman, T, Child welfare approaches for Indigenous communities: International perspectives. *Child Abuse Prevention Issues,* No.20, Autumn 2004, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 2011.

20. Lynch, P, 'Keeping them home: the best interests of Indigenous children and communities in Canada and Australia', *Sydney Law Review*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2001.

21. Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, *Progress report on the study of Indigenous peoples and the right to participate in decision-making*, Un Doc: A/HRC/15/35, para. 2, 2010.

22. United Nations, *Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007,* retrieved August 2013, <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf>.

23. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Bringing them home, Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families,* Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 1997.

24. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2013). *Child Protection Australia 2011-2012*, Child Welfare Series, No. 55, 2013, p.41, Canberra.

25. NSW Ombudsman, *Addressing Indigenous Disadvantage: the need to do things differently,* NSW Ombudsman, Sydney, 2011. Also see, Wild, R, and Anderson, P, Little Children are Sacred, Report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse, Darwin: Northern Territory Government, 2007. Also see, Australian National Audit Office, *Capacity Development for Indigenous Service Delivery,* Auditor General, Canberra, 2012.

26. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Bringing them home, Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 1997.

27. Department for Child Protection and Family Support, *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)*, Government of Western Australia, 2004, retrieved April 2014, <http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/pco/prod/FileStore.nsf/Documents/MRDocument:24401P/$FILE/Children%20and%20Community%20Services%20Act%202004%20-%20[03-f0-02].pdf?OpenElement>

28. Tilbury, C, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child placement principle: aims and core elements,* School of Human Services and Social Work, Griffith University and the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care, Victoria, 2013.

29 Australian Centre for Child Protection, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child placement principle: discussion paper prepared for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child placement principle workshop,* University of South Australia: South Australia, 2013, p.8.

30 Tilbury, C, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child placement principle: aims and core elements,* School of Human Services and Social Work, Griffith University and the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care, Victoria, 2013.

31 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Child Protection Australia 2011-2012,* Child Welfare Series, No. 55, 2013, p.81, Canberra, 2013.

32 Atkinson, J, Nelson, J, & Atkinson, C, Trauma, Transgenerational Transfer and Purdie, N, Dudgeon, P, & Walker, R, *Working together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing principles and practice,* Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Effects on Community Wellbeing, 2010, in, Canberra, 2010, pp. 135-144.

33 The Healing Foundation, *Growing Our Children Up Strong and Deadly: Healing for Children and Young People,* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, Canberra, 2013, <http://healingfoundation. org.au/wordpress/wp-content/files_ mf/1369185755GrowingourChildrenup singlesfeb2013.pdf.>

34 Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care, *Children thrive with their culture alive – healing supporting carers: to care for our children,* SNAICC, Victoria, 2013, retrieved 4 November 2013, <http://www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org. au/4.3html>

35 Valentine, K , & Katz, I, *Review paper of the cost effectiveness of early intervention programs for Queensland,* Social Policy Research Centre Service Inc, UNSW, QLD, 2007.

36 Council of Australian Governments, *Protecting Children is Everyone's Business,* National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2012, Canberra, 2009.

37 Ibid.

38 Tilbury, C, *Intensive family-based support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families,* Griffith University, 2012. Also see, Secretariat of National Aboriginal Islander Child Care, *Promising practice in intensive family support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families,* Developing Practice, Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) and NSW Family Services (FamS), Winter 2012.

39 Productivity Commission Report on Government Services, *Child Protection Services 2012-2013*, Table 15A.18, 2014, retrieved April 2014, <http://www.pc.gov. au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/132358/ rogs-2014-volumef-chapter15.pdf>

40 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Child Protection Australia: 2011 – 2012*, Child Welfare Series no. 55. Cat. No CWS 43. Canberra, 2013.

41 Australian National Audit Office, *Capacity Development for Indigenous Service Delivery*. Auditor General, Canberra, 2012.

42   Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2012 *Indigenous Expenditure Report,* Productivity Commission, Canberra, 2012, p. 226

43 SNAICC et al, *Whose voice counts? Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in child protection decision-making,* SNAICC, 2013.

44 Burton, J, *Whose Voice Counts? Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in child protection decision-making,* SNAICC, Melbourne, 2013, p.16.

www.snaicc.org.au