



Government of Western Australia
Department for Child Protection
and Family Support

Remote Services Framework

JULY 2014

Remote Services Framework

The Remote Services Framework (the Framework) describes the Department for Child Protection and Family Support's (the Department) role when providing a child protection and family support service response to children, young people and families in remote Aboriginal communities in Western Australia (WA). The Signs of Safety Child Protection Practice Framework guides how we work.

In relation to this Framework, the Department has defined a remote Aboriginal community as:

A discrete geographic location that is considerably isolated from larger regional towns and where predominantly Aboriginal children and families reside.

The Department protects and supports children, young people and their families across three outcome areas:

- Support children and young people in the CEO's care
- Protect children and young people from abuse and neglect
- Support families and individuals at risk or in crisis.

The Framework will also support the Department's work in regional areas with children, young people and families. Senior Community Child Protection Workers are located in some country district offices and their role and practice responsibilities are related to working in remote communities.

Background

The 2002 Gordon Inquiry highlighted the need for Government agencies and Aboriginal communities to respond to child abuse and family violence via a two prong approach of:

- Ensuring the immediate safety of community members, and
- Developing long term strategies to address the issues of child abuse and family violence.

The Ford Review in 2007 made further recommendations relating to working with Aboriginal children and families including:

- Aboriginal advice/guidance into policy, practice and staff development and training
- Provision of culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal families and communities
- Exploring models for engaging appropriately with Aboriginal communities
- Contributing to developing standards for the care and protection and support of Aboriginal children
- Working with other jurisdictions on issues related to practice, policy and services for Aboriginal children in care.

Relevant National, State, Local and Community Agreements and Coordination Structures

A number of agreements have been developed and government coordination structures established to assist with across government collaboration and coordination in service delivery to remote Aboriginal communities.

National	State	Local	Community
Protecting Children is Everyone's Business: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020	Child Safety Directors Group	Regional Child Safety Directors Groups	Child and Youth at Risk Meetings
National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery	Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee – Aboriginal Regional and Remote Communities	Bilateral Memorandums of Understanding and Schedules	Local Memorandums of Understanding or Service Level Agreements
National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022	Western Australia's Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy to 2022	Family and Domestic Violence Response Team	Local Memorandums of Understanding or Service Level Agreements
*Note: Strong Families may not be available in all Districts	Strong Families Monitoring Group	Strong Families Regional Management Group	Strong Families Program Coordinators

Practice Frameworks

Senior Community Child Protection Workers-Remote (SCCPW-R) are located in eleven remote Aboriginal communities in WA. The following practice frameworks support and guide the role and practice responsibilities of these positions when working with children, young people and families in remote Aboriginal communities.

- Signs of Safety Child Protection Practice Framework
- Aboriginal Services Framework
- Foster Care Partnership
- Family Support (Responsible Parenting) Framework
- At Risk Youth Strategy
- Corporate Health Framework

Partnerships

Collaboration with service integration is essential to delivering services in remote communities. The Department is the lead agency for interagency collaboration to promote the safety and wellbeing of children. The Department has a number of partnerships with State Government Departments and relevant local Agreements that have relevance for working in remote communities. Some of these Partnership Agreements and MOUs are high level and others represent local district/community interagency partnerships.

Some examples of high level Partnership Agreements and MOUs relate to:

- Reporting of concerns relating to child abuse and neglect
- Information sharing between agencies responsible for family and domestic violence services
- Children and parents with disabilities
- Response to prioritise services for children in care (Rapid Response Protocol)
- Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams
- Health care planning for children in care
- Education care planning for children in care

Some examples of local Partnership Agreements and MOUs are:

- Children At Risk Groups, East Kimberley
- West Kimberley Interagency Young People At Risk meetings

The Department also works collaboratively at a local level with a number of agencies in response to a range of issues that affect children, families and communities wellbeing. A good example of this is when the Department, alongside our partners, work together at times of crisis during emergency management responses to support community and individuals to resolve and work through these events.

Child and Youth at Risk Meetings

Child and Youth at Risk (CYAR) meetings were developed to focus on improving across agency collaboration and coordination of services to vulnerable children, youth and families of concern throughout regional WA. The purpose of the groups is to facilitate an appropriate and coordinated interagency service delivery for children and youth at risk on a case by case basis. These groups are mandatory in remote Aboriginal communities and are led by the SCCPW-R.

CYAR meetings:

- Facilitated in remote Aboriginal communities where SCCPW-R are located
- Involve the Department, WA Police, Health Clinics, Schools and other relevant agencies, including non-government agencies who are responsible for child safety/wellbeing and youth services
- Chaired by SCCPW-R in most communities
- SCCPW-R facilitates education/awareness of safety in the community for families/agencies

Multi-Function Police Facility

The Department works in partnership with a number of key agencies through the SCCPW-R and other visiting staff in remote Aboriginal communities.

Multi-Function Police Facilities (MFPFs) were established from 2002 to deliver a coordinated service response to child protection, police and justice related issues in remote Aboriginal communities. The MFPFs are operated through MOU's and local service agreements between the Department, WA Police and Department of Corrective Services.

Partnership with Police driven from MFPFs includes:

- Response to family and domestic violence
- Investigating child abuse
- Collaboration to enhance community safety and wellbeing.

Currently there are eleven MFPFs located in remote Aboriginal communities, please see list below for locations and corresponding districts:

Location of MFPFs	Department District
Bidyadanga	West Kimberley
Dampier Peninsula	West Kimberley
Looma	West Kimberley
Burringurrah	Murchison/Gascoyne
Jigalong	Pilbara
Kalumburu	East Kimberley
Warmun	East Kimberley
Wirramanu (Balgo)	East Kimberley
Blackstone	Goldfields
Warakurna	Goldfields
Warburton (2 workers)	Goldfields

Senior Community Child Protection Workers-Remote

SCCPW-R positions work with Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities to promote their wellbeing in remote Aboriginal communities. SCCPW-R are members of their larger district team and provide a range of support across a continuum of activities including:

- Child protection
- Family support
- Children in care
- Community capacity building
- Inter-agency and community collaboration

SCCPW-R work plan varies from community to community dependent on local need. Work plans are determined between the worker and their manager and regularly reviewed through supervision. The amount of time spent on each component will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis within the district, taking into consideration local and district need.

Community capacity building involves:

- Engaging with and mobilising remote communities/other stakeholders around issues that enhance the safety and wellbeing of children
- Improving opportunities for keeping children safe/creating protective environments within families/communities (safety planning - Signs of Safety).

Child protection involves:

- Using the Signs of Safety Child Protection Practice Framework
- Providing advice/expertise to case managers on child safety/protection issues and relevant information about Aboriginal communities/families that staff are working with.

The developmental approach to child protection used by the Department is the Signs of Safety Child Protection Practice Framework. This Framework works with individuals, families and the community in the design and implementation of strategies and activities to reduce risk to children. Developmental work is performed alongside and together, not for or to, although some of the work necessarily will be less developmental and more directive.

District Aboriginal Practice Leaders and Aboriginal Engagement and Coordination (AEC) Directorate staff may be engaged as Aboriginal cultural consultants as required. SCCPW-R seeking cultural advice and consultation is a critical part of practice for staff working with Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities.

The SCCPW-R can undertake work under a number of key work areas in remote Aboriginal communities. Some of the areas this incorporates are listed in the table below however; district variations will occur based on local need and agreed practice priorities.

Work Area	Role and Practice Responsibilities
Child Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate safety and wellbeing concerns of children/young people and supporting children/families through this process • Co-working cases with other department staff • Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Reports in consultation with the Senior Child Protection Worker Family Domestic Violence/Team Leader • Chair Child and Youth at Risk meetings

<p>Family Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with families of children/young people in care and families who are at risk or in crisis • Child/family assessments • Provide support services/arrange treatment for families – includes referrals to other agencies • Providing Child Centred Family Support to families where risk is deemed as high
<p>Children in Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with and provide support services to children/young people in care • Support reunification • Assess and support relative carers • Co-work role for children in care within the communities
<p>Community Capacity Building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link casework practice and community capacity building projects to safety and wellbeing • Identifying and working with a target group or community of interest (for example a family, men's/ women's group) to increase their capacity to develop long term solutions to child protection and community safety • Exploring existing community and family responses to child protection (what's in place) • Engaging, strengthening and encouraging participation of Aboriginal families using the Signs of Safety Framework to contribute to developing local solutions to child protection and community safety (how current responses can be improved) • Identifying and engaging key linkages within the community (Elders, community leaders, extended family, agencies) and working collaboratively to provide community education and information to raise awareness of child safety and wellbeing concerns and to promote the wellbeing of vulnerable people within the community – for example education workshops addressing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child protection ○ Family and domestic violence ○ Protective behaviours ○ Early intervention and prevention activities ○ Mandatory Reporting

Inter-Agency and Community Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain links/share information with other government/non-government agencies • Liaise with appropriate cultural and Aboriginal services/organisations/community members • Liaise with the Department's contracted service providers in making appropriate referrals • Provide collaborative interagency and community responses to children/young people deemed to be at risk • Responding to Family and Domestic Violence Reports in consultation with the Senior Child Protection Worker Family Domestic Violence/Team Leader • Supporting Aboriginal families to link with appropriate agencies, particularly agencies who provide visiting services • Chair Child and Youth at Risk meetings
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Line Management and Organisation Support

Line management and support is at the district level however, is to be undertaken in partnership with AEC and Case Practice. The SCCPW-R also engages in Learning Development Networks (LDN) and Aboriginal Practice Networks (APN).

AEC provides program integrity and support to SCCPW-R and facilitate regular training, development and district support in partnership with Case Practice.

Recruitment is undertaken collaboratively with the community, district, AEC and Community and Business Support.

The Remote Service Delivery Management (RSDM) Group, chaired by AEC provides an operational overview to support the Department to respond to the above outcome areas. This is inclusive of, but not limited to the daily coordination and management of infrastructure, vehicles, technical support and human resources, required for the Department to undertake work in remote Aboriginal communities.

Related Strategies and Resources

Department staff should view the Case Practice Manual, which can be accessed at <http://manuals.ad.dcd.wa.gov.au/manuals/cpm/Pages/default.aspx> and may find the following strategies and resources useful to guide their work and practice with remote Aboriginal communities.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signs of Safety Child Protection Practice Framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aboriginal Services Framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foster Care Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential Care (Sanctuary) Framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family Support (Responsible Parenting) Framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Western Australia's Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy to 2022 (With particular reference to the Common Risk Assessment Risk Management Framework)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At Risk Youth Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate Health Framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neglect Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong Families Partnership Agreement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MOU – information sharing between agencies with responsibilities for preventing and responding to family and domestic violence in Western Australia
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MOU – Children At Risk Groups, East Kimberley
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MOU – West Kimberley Interagency Young People At Risk Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The complete MOU list is on SharePoint at http://dcpworkspace.ad.dcd.wa.gov.au/DCP_Agreements/Forms/MOU%20Review%20Dates.aspx

- Liquor Restricted Premises <http://manuals.ad.dcd.wa.gov.au/manuals/cpm/Pages/05AlcoholandOtherDrugIssues-ApplicationforaLiquorRestrictedPremisesDeclaration.aspx>
- Income Management for Child Protection <http://manuals.ad.dcd.wa.gov.au/manuals/cpm/Pages/02IncomeManagementforChildProtection.aspx>
- Gordon Inquiry and Ford Review <http://dcpworkspace.ad.dcd.wa.gov.au/Workspaces/SD/ccu/Policy/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fWorkspaces%2fSD%2fccu%2fPolicy%2fGordon%20Inquiry%2c%20Ford%20Review%20and%20other%20national%20and%20international%20child%20protection%20inquiries%2fWestern%20Australia%2dGordon%20Inquiry%20and%20Ford%20Review&FolderCTID=0x01200021525BB225AD054382EFAB2C54545708>

