

Outcomes Pathway for Children and Family Intensive Support

Program Goal

An increasing number of vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the Northern Territory and the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands are better connected to their culture, are safer, and are growing up strong at home and in their community.

Inputs

Funding, Partnerships, Technical Assistance, Governance, Infrastructure, Technology, etc.

Referrals from child protection authorities, other agencies & the community

Selected organisations have a strong framework for cultural governance & cultural authority in their region

Australian Government funding of \$48 million (excluding GST) over five years for

- CaFIS direct service delivery
- Service capacity and capability building

The resources we will need

Activities

CaFIS provide assessment, intake processing, planning & referral services

CaFIS provide services that are culturally appropriate & trauma-informed

Education about the impacts of trauma & support to manage & heal trauma

Education, support & activities for families & communities about safety in the community

CaFIS services work in partnership with families to develop their confidence & capability to bring children up strong

CaFIS services educate & assist families to support their children in meeting development milestones

CaFIS services provide culturally relevant activities

CaFIS assist & facilitate engagement with supports incl. primary health, alcohol & drug, mental health, family violence, disability support...

Services collaborate & co-ordinate with regional & local inter-agencies

Services & their staff undertake capacity and capability building

What we will do

Outputs

families with a CaFIS family support plan

families assessed by CaFIS services

families that have received trauma informed support & education about the impact of trauma

family meetings & other parent capability building services

families provided with education about child development and safety

families which have participated in culturally relevant activities

families which have appropriate engagement with suitable health services

families which have suitable engagement with support services e.g. alcohol & drug services, mental health, family violence...

of CaFIS services that collaborate & coordinate with regional & local inter-agencies

of CaFIS services & staff who undertake training and other learning activities

What we will produce

Short-term Outcomes (Immediate)

1. Caregivers & parents have improved knowledge, skills & confidence in parenting

2. Parents & care givers know & use a range of positive parenting responses

3. Parents have a better understanding of trauma, its management & healing

4. Families & communities are better able to distinguish between risky & safe situations & behaviours

5. Parents have a better understanding of child development milestones & the impact of trauma on child development

6. Children & families have more social & emotional supports (kin/community)

7. Families have capacity & confidence to recognise & respond to child's health concerns

8. Families have capacity & confidence to recognise & respond to their own support needs

9. Families are better able to navigate the broader service system of supports: economic, safe & stable housing, & basic needs

10. Services & staff deliver effective, culturally safe, trauma-informed services

The changes we will see early in program implementation

Medium-term Outcomes (Intermediate)

1. Improved communication & relationships between children & their caregivers/parents

2. Families provide a safer & more nurturing home & community environment

3. Children's concerns are taken seriously and children are informed, & participate in decisions affecting them

4. Family unity & cohesion strengthened

5. Children are connected to their culture & country

5. Families are sufficiently equipped to meet children's basic needs

7. Parents/caregivers are better equipped to support their children to progress their early childhood & education goals

8. Families navigate & access suitable health & social supports for their children and themselves as needed

The changes we will see in the medium-term

Long-term Outcomes (Program Impacts)

1. Children in the NT and the APY Lands program regions are safe & secure in their home & in their community.

2. Children in the NT & APY Lands program regions are growing up strong.

3. Children in the NT and the APY Lands program regions experience improved health & well-being

And in the long-term we will have achieved:

Program Need

There is a disproportionate number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system, including in out-of-home care. These service responses are generally not trauma-informed, compatible with Aboriginal cultural safety, and often suffer a lack of trust between government and families in local communities. Additionally, legislation is not aligned with evidence-based practice and Aboriginal concepts of family, community, culture and country.

Program Beneficiaries

- The Primary Program Beneficiaries of CaFIS are children who are 0-18 years of age, live in the Northern Territory or APY Lands, and are in or at risk of entering the child protection system. Many of these children have multiple and complex needs.
- The Secondary Program Beneficiaries are the children's parents, caregivers and family members (immediate and extended), who are essential partners and enablers in achieving the intended outcomes for these children.

Implementation Partners & Key Stakeholders:

Partners, approvers, technical advisors, or others who will be involved in design or delivery of key components of this policy/program

- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and other successful providers
- DSS Northern Territory Office
- DSS National Office

External factors:

The major factors you believe will influence, positively or negatively, the change you are planning

- Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (child protection authority)
- Tripartite Forum
- Closing the Gap targets
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (including SNAICC consultations)
- National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children
- Family Matters Report

Assumptions:

Identify the underlying beliefs/expectations about how/why a particular activity or output will help to achieve a specific outcome

1. Cultural governance will inculcate the following key principles:

- Culture, law, language and land are at the centre of all aspects of the program
- The program design is locally relevant
- Aboriginal involvement and leadership are built into all levels of a program and service delivery
- There is trust between communities, sector and government.

2. CaFIS services will:

- Accept referrals from the community and local services; government and non-government organisations including schools, health services, child protection and other services; other services in relation to income support recipients; and, self-referrals.
- Be a proactive contributor to regional and local interagency collaboration and co-ordination
- Be part of local services that link closely with the community
- Be sufficiently intensive services that last long enough but be no more than 12 months in total
- Build a family's capacity to focus on children's safety and wellbeing, respond to immediate challenges, and address multiple and complex issues
- Provide co-ordinated services to meet the needs of families and address areas of concern that impact on children's safety and wellbeing
- Provide services that build on the strengths of families and communities
- Work in partnership with parents and family members to develop their confidence and capability to bring children up strong

Cultural Governance

- It is imperative that cultural governance and culturally informed approaches are at the centre of program and service delivery.
- Culturally competent and culturally safe service delivery begins with Aboriginal leadership and governance at the system and organisation level and filters through all levels of the organisation.¹
- Key features of cultural governance include Aboriginal boards, cultural frameworks and protocols, Aboriginal staff members, and provision of cultural training for non-Aboriginal staff.
- Evaluation outcomes identified that without strong cultural governance, the services don't build trust and cannot provide services which are culturally appropriate, safe or trauma-informed.

¹(Department of Human Services. (2015). *Human Services Standards Evidence Guide*. Department of Human Services. VIC: Victorian Government)

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.