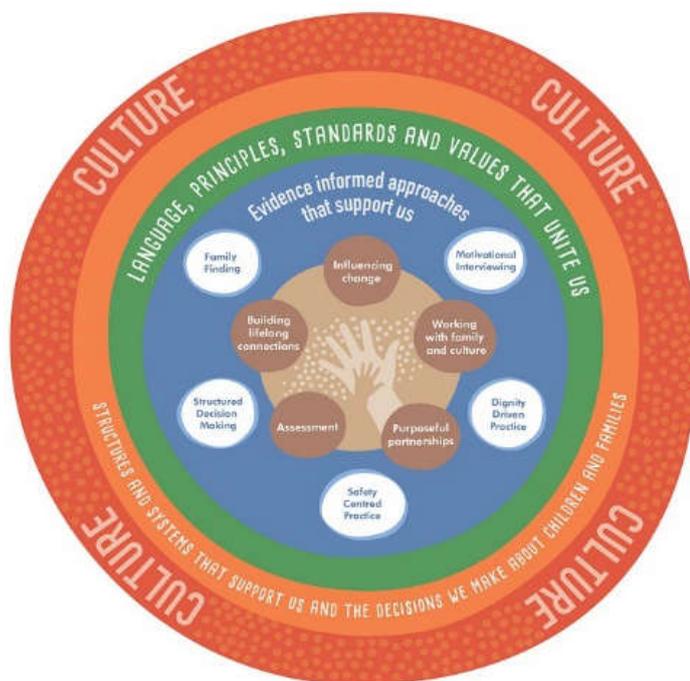


Working with Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) child protection

Factsheet 2

Understand DCJs practice framework, approaches and systems.



DCJs Practice Framework

The framework includes the principles, values, mandates, approaches and systems that underpin their work with children and families. The framework aims to show families, the community, and other services what they should expect when working with a caseworker and/or another DCJ employee.

DCJs model for child protection service delivery focuses on these principles:

- Culture is ever-present,
 - Language impacts on practice,
- Relationships create change and restore dignity,
- Critique leads to improved practice,
- Ethics and values are integral to good practice.

For more details see [DCJ Practice-framework](#)

Providing and requesting information

Exchanging information effectively and confidently with DCJ is important to enhance best practice and positive outcomes for your client. To do this, you must understand the protocols for exchanging information between agencies. It is common for workers to be fearful about sharing information, but it is essential that agencies work together to support a child's safety and wellbeing.

Chapter 16A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 establishes a scheme for information exchange between prescribed bodies and specified private health professionals and takes precedence over other legislation regulating information disclosure (e.g. Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002). It is important to inform your client early on what information may be provided to other services. To learn more see [NSW health info-exchange](#)

Practice points

Does your client and service know about the Practice Framework? We recommend displaying the framework in your service, having printed brochures for staff and clients to view to inform them about DCJ's practice goals and values.

Group supervision

Group supervision is a core component of DCJ's child protection practice. Child protection teams participate in weekly group supervision for around 3 hours and usually 1 to 3 families (cases) are discussed. Caseworkers, managers, casework specialists and other specialist staff, including AOD services, participate in group supervision to discuss families, reflect on practice, and plan future casework. Group supervision aims to create more effective referrals, wrap-around services, case plans, enhance information sharing and transparency around decisions.

DCJ's group supervision uses specific questions and topics (listed below) to structure the case discussion that is usually led by the manager casework. All conversations about a family (clients) in group supervision should occur as if the family (clients) were in the room. Respectful language is an important part of group supervision. For more details see [Critical importance of group supervision in child protection](#).

Practice points

If you are working with a client involved with DCJ, ask to attend a group supervision. Be familiar with the topics and group supervision approach to enhance your participation.

- 1. Purpose/focus of group supervision**—what do you want to achieve from group supervision?
- 2. Genogram/Ecomap**
- 3. Reason for referral**—why are child protection (DCJ) working with the family?
- 4. Grey areas**—information that is incomplete or speculative and needs further detail and assessment.
- 5. Risk statements**—the worries (risks) about the children and family and the context of the worries.
- 6. Complicating factors**—situations or events that contribute to difficulty for family.
- 7. Strengths/protective factors**—assets, resources, capacities that exist within the family.
- 8. Safety**—protection demonstrated over time and patterns of exceptions.
- 9. Next steps**—future casework tasks and clear direction in response to the goal of the group supervision.
- 10. Purpose/focus of group supervision**—were your needs met from group supervision?

Escalation pathway

Occasionally disagreements between an AOD NGO and DCJ (about a decision or response related to the child) may occur. The AOD NGO may feel a different outcome, or a better understanding of the decision or response can be achieved through escalation of the issue.

Escalation stage 1: talk with DCJ local district staff

In the first instance the AOD worker and their manager/team leader should raise the issue with the DCJ Caseworker and Manager Casework at the owning Community Services Centre (CSC). The owning CSC is the local DCJ office working with the family. If the matter is not resolved, then the AOD Manager should raise the issue with the DCJ Manager Client Services at the owning CSC. If the matter remains unresolved, then the AOD Manager should raise the issue with the DCJ Director of Community Services (a senior operational district position responsible for several DCJ CSC offices).

If following previous consultations the issue is unresolved, the AOD Manager/CEO may escalate the matter to the Executive District Director (EDD). DCJ district contact details are located below. A copy of the DCJ organisational structure is available [here](#) and district contact details include Northern Cluster - Districts and Statewide Services contacts Southern and Western Cluster – [Districts and Statewide Services contacts](#).

Escalation stage 2: talk with the DCJ Cross Cluster team

Occasionally, AOD NGOs may decide the unresolved issue should be escalated beyond the DCJ EDD. The Chief Executive Officer or Executive Officer of the AOD service may escalate the issue directly to the Director Cross Cluster Operations and Business Support. Please note this occurs by exception, and only where a matter remains unresolved by the EDD.

For more details and copies of these factsheets go to <http://www.nada.org.au/>