

Culturally and linguistically diverse child placement Policy

1. Purpose

This policy describes the Department for Child Protection (DCP) requirements in relation to the placement of children and young people from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background.

Cultural and ethnic identity is a sense of connection to a group of people with a common heritage and includes connections to ethnicity, nationality, language and religion. It is critical that children and young people in care from a CALD background are supported to maintain connections to their cultural and ethnic identity, religion and language to promote their sense of belonging and identity as this will promote a range of positive outcomes across all life domains.

The safety of children and young people is the paramount consideration but appropriate cultural matching of a child or young person and carer provides natural opportunities for the carer to promote the child or young person's cultural connections through their daily activities. Cultural familiarity also supports a child or young person's sense of belonging in care.

2. Scope

This policy applies to DCP staff and service providers involved in placement decisions (including matching) and/or responsible for placing children and young people in care from a CALD background. It is applicable to children and young people from a CALD background with specific cultural needs that must be considered to ensure culturally responsive services and adequate cultural maintenance.

These considerations include, but are not limited to, length of time in Australia, settlement factors and acculturation of the family, language factors, cultural practices and religious observance. When a child or young person from a CALD background requires a placement and they have specific cultural needs, adherence to this policy is required.

3. Authority

3.1 Legislative context

When considering the placement of children and young people, the principles of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* (CYPS Act) must be adhered to, including:

- the safety of the child or young person is the paramount consideration (section 7)
- the needs of children and young people need to be considered (including their views to be heard and considered, love and attachment, self-esteem and to reach their full potential (section 8)
- account should be taken of the culture, disability, language and religion of children or young people, and if relevant, those in whose care children and young people are placed (section 10)
- children and young people should be placed in a safe, nurturing, stable and secure environment and the preferred option in relation to such placement of a child or young person is to place the child or young person with a person with whom they have an existing relationship (section 11).

Decisions about where children are placed can be the subject of internal review (section 157) and review by the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) (section 158).

3.2 Whole of Government requirements

- National Standards for out-of-home care

3.3 DCP requirements

- [Place a child or young person in care chapter of the Manual of Practice](#)
- [Case planning, review and annual review chapter of the Manual of Practice](#)
- [Working with cultural diversity Practice Paper](#)

3.4 Service Provider requirements

- [Culturally and linguistically diverse service provision requirements](#)

4. Policy requirements

Helping children and young people stay connected with their cultural background, language and faith also helps children and young people maintain positive relationships with their birth parents, extended family and community.

It is important that workers are aware of practices that promote cultural connections for children and young people from a CALD background including the awareness of specific food (for example, halal), clothing, articles of faith, personal care and other practices particular to various cultures, language, religious practices, and social customs. It is also critical that access to cultural texts, activities and events is promoted for children and young people from CALD backgrounds.

Placement priorities for CALD children and young people

Given the importance of children and young people in care from a CALD background being provided the opportunity to develop and/or strengthen a sense of cultural and ethnic identity, workers must attempt to identify suitable placement options for children and young people from a CALD background in the following order, provided the placement is consistent with sections 7, 8, 10 and 11 of the CYPS Act:

1. a member of the child or young person's family
2. a member of the child or young person's cultural, ethnic, language and religious community, considering issues such as caste, tribal groups, province, and ethnic disparity
3. a member of the child or young person's religious community*
4. a member of the child or young person's country, or ethnic origin; or
5. a suitable family based carer of any cultural background, who is willing to support a child or young person's cultural and religious beliefs and connection to community.

When considering placement matching for children and young people from a CALD background, careful consideration should be given to the cultural identity/ethnicity, religion and language of potential carers.

Where a child or young person cannot be placed with a culturally matched carer, cultural maintenance should be supported by completing the CALD Identity Support Tool as part of the case plan, and through cultural matching of the child or young person with bilingual support staff if possible. Refer to the [Case planning, review and annual review chapter](#) of the Manual of Practice for guidance about this.

*NB this may not apply to all cultural groups

Consideration should also be given to the suitability of a placement within particular cultures if there is historical or current conflict between ethnic groups. It is critical to work in partnership with families and appropriate community members to gather accurate information and develop an understanding of the cultural, ethnic and religious needs of children and young people from a CALD background to support the identification of safe and appropriate placements.

4.1 Consultation with DCP Multicultural Services

Consultation should occur with DCP [Multicultural Services](#) prior to any placement of a child or young person from a CALD background to ensure safe and appropriate placements are secured.

For all children and young people in care from a CALD background, it is important for DCP workers to complete the [CALD Identity Support Tool, as part of the Case Plan](#), in consultation with DCP [Multicultural Services](#).

5. Compliance, monitoring and evaluation

Ongoing reports in relation to compliance with this policy will be established and reported to the Regional Director Central.

6. Related documents

| Related documents, forms and templates |
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| Case planning, review and annual review chapter of the Manual of Practice |
| Place a child or young person in care chapter of the Manual of Practice |
| Working with cultural diversity Practice Paper |
| Culturally and linguistically diverse service provision requirements |

7. Glossary

| Term | Meaning |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Culture | A set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, encompassing lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs, and art and literature. |
| Ethnicity | The shared identity or similarity of a group of people on the basis of one or more factors including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a long shared history, the memory of which is kept alive a cultural tradition, including family and social customs, sometimes religiously based a common geographic origin a common language (but not necessarily limited to that group) a common literature (written or oral) a common religion being a minority (often with a sense of being oppressed) being racially conspicuous |
| Religion | A personal set or institutionalised system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices. |



| Term | Meaning |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ethnic origin | The ancestral race that an individual belongs to, as opposed to their current nationality. For example, a child from South Sudan would be considered to have an African ethnic origin, and a Vietnamese child, an Asian ethnic origin. |

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