

This is DCJs restoration practice mandate. DCJ practice mandates are written for DCJ practitioners only. They are the “must do” activities for DCJ practitioners in carrying out work with children, families and carers. DCJ hopes that sharing this mandate will help all practitioners in OOHC to work collaboratively and have a better understanding of their different roles and responsibilities. This is a read only option for DCJs PSP partners with available links to corresponding ChildStory partner knowledge articles.

Strategy, Policy & Commissioning - DCJ



Communities and Justice

Restoration

1. Overview

Use this mandate when assessing or working towards restoration for a child who is on interim orders, a Short Term Court Order (STCO) or a long term parental responsibility to the Minister order.

Purpose

"I need you to think about my safety regardless of where I live. Be open minded and remember that people can change. Work with me and those who love me to create change in a way that suits us."

Practice Framework Standard 6 - Holistic assessment



Every child has a right to have every possible opportunity to live with their parents.

Restoration work is about a family coming back together. It is a time of challenge, discovery and adjustment for the child, their parents and their family.

To explore restoration fully, take active efforts by critically reflecting, re-thinking, and examining restoration practice at every point. Try to develop an understanding of how the family's trauma and resistance shapes who they are and how they interact with others.

Restoration casework requires us to balance assessing risk, motivating change, and partnering with others. To be successful in our work, we need to build strong relationships with the child, the parents, the family, the child's loved ones and support services. We need to work together with them to rebuild safety, influence change and restore relationships. Using [NSW Practice Framework](#) approaches will help us restore family safety, strengthen relationships, maintain hope, and support successful restoration.

By taking active efforts in all aspects of our casework with the child and family - from Family Finding to family time - we give the child the best chance to grow up being cared for by their parents and family.

Statutory requirements

[The NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection Act\) 1998](#)

Sections: 9(2)(c), 10A, 11, 12, 12A, 13, 50, 54, 71, 76, 78, 78a, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 85a, 90

[Policy and Procedures Manual - Restoration Assessment](#)

[SDM Restoration Assessment Tool](#)

[Permanency Case Management Policy](#)

[Aboriginal Consultation Guide](#)

- ♦ **Restoration: Bringing kids home**

Restoration is a process, not an event. Families need support to manage a child's safe journey home.

2. Goal setting for children on interim care orders

Work towards restoration for children when they enter OOHC

Set the initial OOHC case plan goal for a child who has entered OOHC to 'assess restoration'.

For more information read [Short Term Court Order \(STCO\) restoration process](#) and [How to satisfy Permanency Planning requirements to achieve Short Term Care Orders - Restoration](#).

Within two weeks of the child entering OOHC, arrange a Permanency Coordinator or Casework Specialist consultation or group supervision to support next steps in restoration planning and casework.

Completed by: **CW**



Extra information:

Court timeframes for deciding if restoration is a realistic possibility

After making an Interim Order, the Children's Court must decide if it accepts DCJs assessment that restoration is a realistic possibility to either parent.

The Court must make this decision within:

- 6 months for children under 2 years of age, or
- 12 months for all other children and young people ([Section 83\(5\)](#), the Care Act).

Parents are not expected to have addressed all the worries or every case plan action and goal within the timeframe of the court proceedings for DCJ to assess that restoration is a realistic possibility to either parent.

DCJ can assess restoration is a realistic possibility if we have determined the parent/s can achieve restoration within a 'reasonable period of time'. A reasonable period of time is within two years.

DCJ can assess there is a realistic possibility of restoration within a period longer than two years, only if there are exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- whether a longer period of parental responsibility would help facilitate needed services and resources that are not available at the time the court is making its decision
- what active efforts have been made toward restoring the child.

Read the [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Amendment \(Family is Culture\) Bill 2022](#) for more information.

• **Permanency Planning**

Permanency planning involves finding permanent relationships that can help children feel safe, connected, and secure no matter where they live.

3. Changing the case plan goal for children on long term care orders

When to consider restoration for a child who is in long term care

If a child is in one or more of the following situations, it may be appropriate to change their case plan goal to assess restoration:

- ♦ the parents, or another party to proceedings, have filed a section 90 application with the Children's Court to request the child returns home
- ♦ the child has self-placed (chosen to return home to stay) with their parents and the worries that led to them coming into care have reduced enough for restoration to be considered
- ♦ the child is not experiencing permanency and belonging in their current placement and DCJ assesses that returning home is a realistic possibility that will support the child's safety and wellbeing.


When a parent has filed a section 90 application

If a parent or another party to proceedings has filed a section 90 application, arrange a Permanency Consultation with a Permanency Coordinator to help decide whether to support the application and what casework actions to take.

When the child has chosen to return home (self-placed) with their parents

If the child has chosen to return home with their parents (self-placed), where safe, attempt to facilitate the child returning to their current placement.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Complete a safety in care alternate assessment](#), [Record and respond to a permanency consultation](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.


Partner Recording: Refer to [Partner: Record an OOHC case plan](#) and [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

If the child will not return to their placement and the worries that led to them coming into care have reduced enough for restoration to be considered:

Arrange a group supervision to help you decide whether to change the case plan goal. Invite the Casework Specialist and the Permanency Coordinator to attend to support you to work towards next steps.

- ♦ Offer the parents, family and kin a Family Group Conference to explore and plan next steps.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record a meeting](#), [Record and respond to a casework specialist consultation](#), [Record and respond to a permanency consultation](#) and [Record a Family Group Conference \(FGC\) referral & outcome](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

When the child is not experiencing permanency and belonging in their current placement

When the child is not experiencing permanency and belonging in their current placement and DCJ assesses that returning home is a realistic possibility that will support the child's safety and wellbeing:

- ♦ have initial discussions with the child, parents, family and carer about the possibility of the child returning home
- ♦ discuss support services with the parents and how you can support them with further changes that may be needed to change the OOHC case plan goal to 'assess restoration'
- ♦ arrange a Permanency Consultation with a Permanency Coordinator to consider changing the child's OOHC case plan goal and to support next steps.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record and respond to a permanency consultation](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Practice advice:

Parents should be supported to identify the sort of help they will need to overcome the difficulties that led to their child coming into care and what they would find helpful in making and maintaining changes.

Assessing restoration can be unsettling for children, parents and carers. It is important that discussions about potentially returning a child acknowledge and attend to the range of emotions that might arise.

Preparing for the Permanency Consultation

Before the consultation gather information that demonstrates that restoration:

- ♦ is likely to be a realistic possibility, or
- ♦ is unlikely to be a realistic possibility.



Extra information:

Considering restoration must always have the safety of the child at its core. Information needs to detail how the child's return to family will be achieved.

In preparation for the Permanency Consultation, gather information about:

- the child's views and wishes
- views and wishes of other important people in the child's life including parents, family and carers
- significant changes in any relevant circumstances in relation to the child and/or parents
- any information that shows how parents have made positive progress in addressing the risks and safety concerns that led to the child coming into care
- where relevant, why the child isn't experiencing safety and belonging in their current placement and why these issues can't be resolved through casework or other supports
- any recent assessments that may have been conducted that relate to the child's safety and wellbeing.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record and respond to a permanency consultation](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Practice advice:

Consider arranging a joint consultation with a Casework Specialist or through a group supervision to support your decision making to change the case plan goal.

During group supervision, engage in critical evaluation of your own practice and biases. Consider the views of the child, the stability and length of the child's care arrangements, the progress of the parents and the suitability and success of supports and services.

A Casework Specialist or group supervision can help critically analyse all of the issues that will affect the child's safety if they were to return to living with their parents. They can also help you decide whether working towards this goal is the best way to support the child's safety, permanency and wellbeing.

Change the case plan goal

Change the OOHC case plan goal to 'assess restoration' when consultation and professional judgement indicate this is the best option for the child.

Talk with the parents, family and carer about the reasons for changing the case plan goal.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Create an OOHC case plan](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Partner Recording: Refer to [Partner: Record an OOHC case plan](#) and [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Legal consultation

Arrange a legal consultation to help plan a section 90 application or respond to current court action.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record and respond to a legal consultation](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

♦ Permanency Planning

Permanency planning involves finding permanent relationships that can help children feel safe, connected, and secure no matter where they live.

4. Involve children in restoration planning and decision making

Participation of children

Give the child ongoing opportunities to participate in each step of the restoration assessment, planning and decision making process. Talk with the child and ask how they feel throughout the process. Include any views, preferences and worries that the child shares in assessment, planning and decision-making processes. Talk with the child about the reasons for any decisions made.




Practice advice:

- ♦ Ask for and listen to the child's views in ways that suit their abilities and communication preferences.

- Explain to the child why they cannot live with their parents right now and what the process for returning home looks like. Explain the reasons for your decisions.
- Talk with the child about what needs to change for them to feel safe at home with their parents.
- Listen to the child about who they want to live with and be connected to. Ask the child who is important to them and how those people could be involved in decisions and plans about them returning to their parents.
- Find out about the ways the child would like to spend time with their family and other important people in their life, including who, how, where, how often and if it is supervised.
- Ask the child if they have any worries about family visits and what would help them with any worries.
- Ask and listen to how the child would like to express their identity and keep connected to their culture.

Revisit these conversations during home visits as the relationship with the child develops and their circumstances change.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record a meeting](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Partner Recording: Refer to the [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Engage an Aboriginal child in culturally rich activities that support restoration


Engage the child in activities with their parent, family, kin and community, to support restoration, including:

- cultural activities, as determined by Aboriginal cultural consultation and [Aboriginal Family-led Decision Making](#)
- positive and safe family time, organised around culturally rich and meaningful activities
- life story work.

For more information read the [Identity and culture for children in OOHC practice](#)

[mandate](#).

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Create a life story event](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Partner Recording: Refer to the [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Practice advice:

Remember that the child's parents and family are experts in their culture.

- ♦ to learn how to consult meaningfully with Aboriginal children, parents, families and communities
- ♦ for things to consider and do when engaging with Aboriginal parents and families in the process of restoration.

Uphold the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Placement Principles](#) and [Aboriginal Case Management Policy \(ACMP\)](#), when working with Aboriginal families.

Meet the identity and ability needs of the child

Restoration of LGBTQIA+ children

Use LGBTQIA+ consultation to support restoration assessment and planning. Talk to the parents about how they will support their child's sexuality, gender identity or intersex status.

Completed by: **CW**

DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record a meeting](#) and [Record and respond to a LGBTQIA+ referral and consultation](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.



Practice advice:

Consider what impact restoration may have on the child's sexuality or gender identity:

- plan how to support parents to support their child's sexuality, gender identity or intersex status
- parents that can support restoration.

For more information read the [Identity and culture for children in OOHC](#) practice mandate.

Read the [Working with LGBTQIA+ children and young people](#) practice advice topic to help you consider:

- how the parents and family view their child's sexuality or gender identity
- whether the child views their parents (and family) as being supportive and inclusive of their sexuality or gender identity
- whether the parent's household provides an inclusive and affirming environment
- the child and family's access to LGBTQIA+ affirming support services.

Progressing restoration for a child with disability

Be informed by expert knowledge of the child's disability (if relevant to the child being restored successfully).

Offer to invite a disability specialist service and/or a safe and trusted adult to support a child in Family Action Planning and/or OOHC case planning.



Extra information:

Expert knowledge could include:

- reviewing existing disability-related assessments and the child's NDIS plan, to help you understand their needs
- consulting with a disability service the child is already working with
- consulting with a different specialist or disability service for advice on how to tailor your approach to the child's needs
- consulting with the Family and Engagement team about how the child's NDIS plan will be supported when they return home.

Completed by: **CW**

DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

• Talking to children and participation

Children and young people have the right to participate in decision making that affects their lives.


[Read Practice Advice](#)

5. Family Finding, Family Group Conferencing and Aboriginal Family-led Decision Making

Use interpreters for children with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds

If a child is from a CALD background, the child and their parent's first language may not be English. Use an accredited interpreter so the family can understand information and communicate their wishes for their child.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record and Respond to a Multicultural Consultation](#) knowledge article.

Family Finding

For all children, undertake [Family Finding](#) to identify important people that have a connection with the child and who can support restoration. If Family Finding has already occurred, work with the child, their parents and the people who have been identified.

Offer to meet with the child's extended family to explore family connections and build a support network around the child.



Practice advice:

Respond to culture and identity needs

For Aboriginal children, ask the child, parents, family, and kin where different people fit in their kin and community network. This will give you an understanding of the important people and decision-makers in the family.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Partner Recording: Refer to the [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Family Group Conferencing

Offer [Family Group Conferencing](#). If Family Group Conferencing has already occurred for the child, review the progress of the plan with the parents and family to see if the plan

needs to change or be built upon. If a Family Group Conference is required, partner with the Family Group Conference facilitator to make sure the child, their family and community views about their culture and values are explored.

Record all recommendations of the Family Group Conference as desired outcomes, actions or goals in the Family Action Plan for Change and/or OOHC case plan.

Refer to the [Family group conferencing practice mandate](#) for more information.



Practice advice:

Support families to resolve conflicts

Relationships between parents, family and kin may be strained because of the worries that led to the child coming into care. Play a role in bringing parents, family and kin together to focus on the child, especially when family relationships are fractured.

Sometimes casework involves reconciling the conflicting views of several different people. Consider the views of the child and their parents first, but also work with other family and kin who play, or can play, a significant role in creating safety for the child.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record a Family Group Conference \(FGC\) referral & outcome](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Extra information:

[Family Group Conferencing](#) is a family-focused, strengths-based form of alternate dispute resolution.

Family Group Conferencing creates an opportunity for parents and families to develop their own plan to keep their children safe and can strengthen partnerships between parents, family and kin, support family-led decision making and inform case planning.

Family Group Conferencing respects that parents and families are experts in their own lives and can help you work in partnership with the whole family, so that they are integral in the decisions that are made for the child.

Use Aboriginal Family-led Decision Making

For Aboriginal children, use [Aboriginal Family-led Decision Making](#) with parents, families, kin and community to foster their participation in key decisions, assessment, planning and support.

For more information read the [Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making](#) and [How Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making differs from Family Group Conferencing](#) fact sheets.

Completed by: **CW**

DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record and Respond to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Consultation](#) and [Record a Family Group Conference \(FGC\) Referral & Outcome](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.



Practice advice:

Aboriginal family networks extend well beyond the traditional nuclear family

If the family is Aboriginal, plan and implement practice that upholds their right to self-determination and participation. Allow them to make choices about what needs to change for the child to be safe and who can support those changes.

There are differences in Aboriginal family structures and roles of members to non-Aboriginal families that need to be understood and respected when delivering services. You need to understand the particular family or kin who are important decision-makers or have particular roles to play.

Involve the wider family, community networks and Elders in collective decision making processes such as identifying the worries for the child, exploring different ways of reducing these, and identifying who will care for the child and who will support the parents to create enough safety for their child to return to them.

Support parents, families, kin, Elders and community to participate in meetings and decision-making processes.



Extra information:

Aboriginal parents and families' willingness to engage with caseworkers will be affected by their history of dispossession, social, political and economic exclusion. Intergenerational trauma caused by government laws and policies will also affect their willingness to engage. This trauma is often exacerbated by ongoing removals of Aboriginal children from their families.

You cannot undo past wrongs but you can work hard to build trust through empathy, cultural sensitivity and [dignity driven practice](#). This can strengthen relationships with family and kin and support successful family-led restoration for the child.

For more information, read 'How can I work with parents to plan for the child coming home?' in the [Restoration practice advice topic](#).



Restoration: Bringing kids home

Restoration is a process, not an event. Families need support to manage a child's safe journey home.

[Read Practice Advice](#)

6. Initiate and lead court proceedings

“Allow me to have right of reply. I was not able to attend court as I had several children at home with no babysitter. At the time I did not realise the situation was that serious. I felt if it had been better verbalised to me and suggested that I needed legal representation the outcome may have been quite different.”



Develop a Summary of Proposed Plan (SOPP)

Set out the initial plan for restoration in the [Summary of Proposed Plan](#).

Mark either the restoration or restoration is still under assessment box, depending on the child's circumstances.

Involve parents in the development of the SOPP wherever possible. Talk with the parents and family about restoration assessment and the legal process.

When a PSP Provider has case management see the [Help PSP providers to plan, assess and progress restoration](#) section of this practice mandate for information about the documents and signatures the Court needs when filing a SOPP.

Provide the draft SOPP to the allocated Child Law Solicitor for settlement.


File the SOPP with the Children's Court no later than 14 days after the date of the first mention of the Care Application.

Provide a copy of the plan to:

- ♦ the child's parents
- ♦ the PSP provider, if relevant.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

Settled by: **DCJ Child Law Solicitor or External Legal Practitioner**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Create a summary of the proposed plan](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Practice advice:

Write the SOPP in plain and jargon-free language that can be understood by the parents. Explain to parents the next steps in the legal process, their right to be represented, and where they can go for support and legal advice. Help parents and families to make connections with these services.

Consider a consultation with a Casework Specialist, to support your development of the SOPP.

A Casework Specialist can help summarise the worries DCJ has, provide clarity about what needs to change, and ensure the SOPP aligns with the standards and capabilities of the Practice Framework. They can also help with ways to engage parents in

the development of the SOPP and wording the changes parents need to make and any strengths to build on in a way that parents will more easily understand.



Extra information:

The SOPP details the minimum changes the parent will need to achieve to address the child protection concerns. This includes:

- addressing immediate dangers identified in the Safety Assessment
- drawing on the parent's and family's strengths
- reducing the level of risk to the child in the parent's household and the probability of abuse or neglect to their child in the future.


The SOPP is not the Family Action Plan for Change or the Child's OOHC Case Plan. The Family Action Plan for Change and OOHC Case Plan are more comprehensive plans developed in partnership with the child, their families, kin, and community.

For children in long term care, initiate section 90 application proceedings

Seek and complete a legal consultation to make sure the evidence (including evidence submitted by PSP Providers, if applicable) is likely to represent a significant change in any relevant circumstance that has been made since Final Orders. If so, prepare a section 90 application as per the [Varying or rescinding an Order \(Section 90\) practice mandate](#).

If a child is in case responsibility of a PSP Provider, refer to [Help PSP providers to plan, assess and progress restoration](#).

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Create a Section 90 Application as a DCJ Applicant](#), [Record and Respond to a Legal Consultation](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Partner Recording: Refer to the [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Extra information:

Before the Children's Court can decide to accept DCJ's restoration recommendation in the child's permanency plan, it needs evidence about:

- ♦ the actions, assessment and rationale that have informed DCJ's decision to change a child's OOHC case plan goal to
- ♦ 'assess restoration'
- ♦ significant changes in relevant circumstances for the child or parent.

PSP Read Only

Develop a Care Plan for restoration

Develop a Care Plan with a goal of restoration for:


- A child entering OOHC, subject to a [section 61](#) application, seeking to restore the child under a Shorter Term Court Order. Refer to the [Short Term Court Order \(STCO\) restoration process factsheet](#) for more information.
- A child in long term care, subject to a [section 90](#) application, seeking to put in place a new permanency plan involving restoration.

The Care Plan must include:

- the child's views about restoration
- a rationale as to why restoration is proposed
- minimum outcomes to be achieved for restoration to occur
- the Family Action Plan for Change, including details of the services DCJ will provide or arrange to support the parents towards restoration
- outcomes of any Aboriginal Family-led Decision Making
- anticipated time frames for restoration
- how the child will be supported to transition from their current placement to the care of their parents, including how family time will be increased to support the restoration.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

Settled by: **DCJ Child Law Solicitor or External Legal Practitioner**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Create a section 78 care plan](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Extra information:

A restoration plan is approved when:

- a care plan has been filed in the Children's Court proceedings with a goal of restoration

- ◆ the Children's Court expressly finds:
 - permanency planning for the child has been appropriately and adequately addressed, and
 - there is a realistic possibility of restoration within a reasonable period having regard to the child's circumstances; and evidence that the parents are likely to satisfactorily address the issues that led to their child's removal.
- ◆ the Children's Court makes a Short Term Court Order to support achievement of the restoration case plan goal, and a Family Action Plan for Change (setting out the issues to be addressed by the parent) and an OOHC Case Plan (setting out the needs of the child) have been prepared with a case plan goal (set by DCJ) of 'assess restoration'.

Change the case plan goal to 'restoration'

Once a restoration Care Plan with a permanency goal of restoration is approved by the Children's Court, change the case plan goal to 'restoration'.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Review OOHC Case Plans and Goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Partner Recording: Refer to the [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Talking to children and participation

- ◆ Children and young people have the right to participate in decision making that affects their lives.

[Read Practice Advice](#)

7. Use Family Action Planning for Change and OOHC case planning to support restoration for a child on interim orders

Develop a Family Action Plan for Change

Develop a Family Action Plan for Change within 30 days of setting the OOHC case plan goal to 'assess restoration' when a child enters care.

Include and support the following people to participate in the planning process:

- ◆ the child (age appropriate participation)

- ♦ the child's parents, family, and kin
- ♦ other important people to the child
- ♦ any support person nominated by the child or parent
- ♦ services working with the child and/or parent, including education or health professionals and other specialist services that can support the Family Action Plan for Change
- ♦ for Aboriginal children, any Aboriginal organisations or community groups who are already working with the family and can support restoration.

Document who was included and the views they shared. Document any apologies.

If the Family Action Plan for Change was developed prior to the child entering care, review this plan with the parents, family and services. Make any relevant adjustments that best reflects the changes needed for the child to return home safely. Develop a new plan if needed.

Build on the minimum changes and strengths identified in the SOPP into the Family Action Plan for Change.

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to develop a separate Family Action Plan for Change for each parent.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Create a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Practice advice:

The Family Action Plan for Change will make it clear to you, the family and their support network what needs to be different to keep the child safe.

Ask parents, family and kin about what they think needs to change to create enough safety for the child to return to their parents. Have brave conversations with them about the changes they need to achieve, the supports they need and the strengths they can build upon.

Use these conversations to develop shared goals and actions for the Family Action Plan for Change.

Give the family time to lead the process.

Support parents and families to make choices about what services they would like to receive. This may mean having multiple conversations over time about worries and different ways to address them. Parents that lead their own action plans are more likely to commit to following through on the plan.


Let parents and family members know about the range of supports that can support change to help them keep children safe. This might include alcohol and other drug services, DCJ psychologists, disability services or restoration and family support services.

Use Aboriginal consultation to support development and review the Family Action Plan for Change

Arrange [Aboriginal consultation](#) as part of the development and reviews of the Family Action Plan for Change.

Record all recommendations of the consultation as time-framed desired outcomes, goals, or actions in the Family Action Plan for Change, or where relevant, in the OOHC case plan.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record and respond to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander consultation](#) and [Review or close a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.



Extra information:

A meaningful Aboriginal consultation will:

- help uphold the rights of Aboriginal parents, families, kin and communities to self-determination and empower them to make plans to support the safety and wellbeing of their children
- explore cultural and community strengths that can be drawn on to support restoration of the child to their parents
- make decisions informed by the child's cultural needs and the workings of their Aboriginal community
- develop a better understanding of your own cultural beliefs, biases and assumptions and the impact of these on your practice
- support ethical and meaningful discussions with Aboriginal children, parents and families.


For more information read the [Aboriginal Family Led Assessment Fact Sheet](#).

Use Multicultural Consultation to support development of the Family Action Plan for Change for a child from a CALD background

Arrange a [Multicultural consultation](#) as part of the development and reviews of the Family Action Plan for Change.

For more information read the [Multicultural Consultation](#) advice to help you plan for a consultation and use the [Curious Questions for Multicultural Consultation](#) to help you plan how to harness culture for the child, family and community.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record and respond to a multicultural consultation](#) and [Review or close a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.



Practice advice:


All children and families have diverse identities and needs. Asking questions that help you understand their experience is vital for engagement and helps to empower parents and families.

- develop a better understanding of your own cultural beliefs, biases and assumptions, and the impact of these on your practice
- develop an understanding of the child's culture and/or their parents', family's and kin's asylum seeker, refugee, or migration experiences
- make decisions informed by knowledge of a child's cultural needs and the workings of their CALD community.
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Supporting parents who have disability

If the parent has disability, offer to invite a disability specialist service and/or a safe and trusted adult to support the parent's participation in Family Action Planning for Change and/or OOHC case planning.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record a person's disability](#), [Review or close a family action plan](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.



Practice advice:

Just like any other family you work with, the children of parents with disability need you to understand any risk in the context of their own unique circumstances, not the labels they have been given. Be mindful of biases about their capacity to parent, based on stereotyped notions of disability.

With consent, engage a disability support service or advocate to:

- help explain the restoration process
- support children and their parent to express their views and needs
- identify any barriers a child or parent may face because of disability
- provide information about how to adapt your practice to support the child and parent's participation and engagement.

Avoid making assumptions about the parent's disability. Be guided by the parent's own understanding of their abilities and any barriers they are facing, as well as those of their family and kin, and professional practitioners supporting them. Focus on what the parent can do and use this knowledge to inform restoration planning and assessment.

Ensure the Family Action Plan for Change is understood by the parent and is achievable within the context of their disability and capacity of their support network.

Develop the child's OOHC case plan

Develop an OOHC case plan for the child within 30 days of the child entering OOHC.

Record how the following measures of wellbeing will support and/or be impacted by restoration:

- placement and permanency
- identity and culture
- family time (contact).

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Create an OOHC case plan](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Practice advice:

While placement and permanency, identity and culture and family time are the measures of wellbeing most likely to support and/or be impacted by restoration, other measures of wellbeing may also support and/or be impacted by restoration. Exploring this as part of the OOHC case plan development will help ensure you, the child, their carer, family and other significant people understand restoration holistically.

Consider arranging a Permanency Consultation or Group Supervision to help develop the child's OOHC case plan.



Extra information:

The OOHC case plan is for the child and for you to help ensure that the child's well-being is supported while they are in OOHC. The Family Action Plan for Change is the plan for the parents and family that sets out the goals and actions parents and family need to take so their child can be safe with their parents.

Support and review the Family Action Plan for Change

Support the parents and family to implement the actions and achieve the goals of the Family Action Plan for Change. Make referrals and connect the parents with services that can help them achieve their goals as soon as possible, to allow maximum time for parents to work with services to create change.

When supporting progress towards the Family Action Plan for Change goals speak with the parents every 30 days about:

- Progress toward the Family Action Plan for Change goals.
- Demonstration of progress during family time.
- Resolution of the dangers and risks that led to their child entering OOHC - informed by the SDM Restoration Assessment Tool.
- Explain the significant role that the elements of the Restoration Assessment Tool play in determining whether DCJ will recommend restoration to the Children's Court.
- Speak with the parents about what is and is not helping and why. Make changes to

the Family Action Plan for Change to reflect these conversations.

Monitor the changes the parents have demonstrated so that they are achieving the goals of the Family Action Plan for Change that will protect their children.

Partner with the child, parents, family/kin, community and networks of support every 90 days to formally review progress on the Family Action Plan for Change.

Talk with the parents and family about the reasons for any decisions made.

Speak with the child about progress and what is happening to work towards them being safe at home.

As part of the reviews, identify any financial challenges and supports the family may need for the child to be restored.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Review or Close a family action plan for Change](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Support and review the child's OOHC case plan

During a formal progress review of the child's OOHC case plan:

- add progress notes to monitor the enacting of recommendations and the outcomes that result
- record when recommendations are not enacted and the reasons why.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

•Partner Recording: Refer to the [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Restoration: Bringing kids home

Restoration is a process, not an event. Families need support to manage a child's safe journey home.

8. Use Family Action Planning for Change and OOHC case planning to assess and support restoration for a child on long term care orders

Develop a Family Action Plan for Change when a child is in long-term care

Develop a Family Action Plan for Change when a child is in long-term care whose OOHC case plan goal has changed to 'assess restoration' and:

- ♦ when a parent or significant other person to a child has filed a section 90 application requesting a child return home, the Court has granted leave and DCJ supports their application, and/or
- ♦ the child is not experiencing permanency and belonging in their current placement and DCJ, having sought legal advice, considers restoration as a realistic possibility.

Build on the minimum changes and strengths identified in the Summary of Proposed Plan into the Family Action Plan for Change.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Create a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Practice advice:

Assess risks, strengths and the quality of the protective factors. Protective factors need to be distinguished from positives or strengths, which may not be sufficient to alleviate the specific risks to the child.

For example, parents may attend a parenting course and try to implement their learning, which is positive and shows motivation to change. However, if this is not actually effective in addressing the identified problems in their parenting, it cannot be described as protecting the child from risk.

Include and support the following people to participate and collate supporting evidence for a Family Action Plan for Change:

- ♦ the child (age appropriate participation)
- ♦ the child's parents, family and kin
- ♦ any safe support person nominated by the child or parent
- ♦ carers (where a relationship has been built with the family and carers are playing a role in the Family Action Plan for Change)
- ♦ services working with the parent that can support maintenance and further change
- ♦ for Aboriginal children, any Aboriginal organisations or community groups that are already working with the family and can support restoration.

Document who was included and the views they shared. Document any apologies.


When parents have already addressed some of the actions in the Summary of Proposed Plan, document how these will be maintained in the new Family Action Plan for Change (where needed).

Gather any evidence from services that have worked with the parents in the past that demonstrates positive changes.

Ensure clarity about which services or other supports are needed to help parents achieve remaining goals.

Word goal statements so they are about supporting parents to have a safer relationship with their child, regardless of whether restoration proceeds or not. Recognise a parent's achievements, but remind them that their progress towards goals set in the Family Action Plan for Change does not necessarily mean the Court will approve restoration.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Create a family action plan](#) and [Review or close a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Use Aboriginal consultation to support development and review the Family Action Plan for Change

Arrange [Aboriginal consultation](#) as part of the development and reviews of the Family Action Plan for Change.

Record all recommendations of the consultation as time-framed desired outcomes, goals, or actions in the Family Action Plan for Change, or, where relevant in the OOHC case plan.




Extra information:

A meaningful Aboriginal consultation will:

- help uphold the rights of Aboriginal parents, families, kin and communities to self-determination and empower them to make plans to support the safety and wellbeing of their children
- explore cultural and community strengths that can be drawn on to support restoration of the child to their parents
- make decisions informed by the child's cultural needs and the workings of their Aboriginal community
- develop a better understanding of your own cultural beliefs, biases and assumptions and the impact of these on our practice
- support ethical and meaningful discussions with Aboriginal children, parents and families.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record and respond to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander consultation](#), [Create a family action plan](#) and [Review or close a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Use Multicultural consultation to support development and review of the Family Action Plan for change for a child from a CALD background

Arrange a [Multicultural consultation](#) as part of the development and reviews of the Family Action Plan for Change.

For more information read the [Multicultural Consultation](#) advice to help you plan for a consultation and use the [Curious Questions for Multicultural Consultation](#) to help you plan how to harness culture for the child, family and community.




Practice advice:

Children and families have diverse identities and needs. Asking questions that help you understand their experience is vital for engagement and helps to empower parents and families.

- develop a better understanding of your own cultural beliefs, biases and assumptions, and the impact of these on your practice
- develop an understanding of the child's culture and/or their parents', family's and kin's asylum seeker, refugee, or migration experiences
- make decisions informed by knowledge of a child's cultural needs and the workings of their CALD community.
-

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record and respond to a multicultural consultation](#), [Create a family action plan](#) and [Review or close a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Review the child's OOHC case plan

Review the OOHC case plan for the child when the case plan goal has been changed to 'assess restoration'.

Record how the following measures of wellbeing will support and/or be impacted by restoration:

- placement and permanency
- identity and culture

- ♦ family time (contact).

For more information follow the [Case planning in OOHC practice mandate](#).



Practice advice:


While placement and permanency, identity and culture, and family time are the measures of wellbeing most likely to support and/or be impacted by restoration, other measures of wellbeing may also support and/or be impacted by restoration. Exploring this as part of the OOHC case plan development will help ensure you, the child, their carer, family and other significant people understand restoration holistically.

Consider arranging a Permanency Consultation or Group Supervision to help develop the child's OOHC Case Plan.

Review the Family Action Plan for Change

Partner with the child, parents, family, kin, community and networks of support every 90 days to formally review progress on the Family Action Plan for Change.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Review or close a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

♦ Restoration: Bringing kids home

Restoration is a process, not an event. Families need support to manage a child's safe journey home.

9. Use the Restoration Tool to guide decision making



Extra information:

The Restoration Assessment Tool is only used when:

- ♦ the child is on interim orders, or

- when the Court has made a Short Term Court Order with a permanency plan of restoration.

Keep parents, family and kin updated and engaged

Discuss and update parents on their progress towards achieving the elements in the Restoration Assessment Tool every 30 days at a minimum.

Record any views, preferences, strengths, and worries that the parents share as part of the time-framed desired outcomes and goals that can be directed to the risk, family time (contact) evaluation and safety assessment sections of the Tool.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Complete a restoration assessment](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Extra information:

Even though the child's OOHC case plan goal on entry into care and before court approval is 'assess restoration', the Restoration Assessment Tool only uses the word 'restoration'. Use the Restoration Assessment Tool both for children on interim orders and children with a Short Term Court Order with an approved permanency plan of restoration by the Court.

The Restoration Assessment Tool helps you to consider four elements:

1. Any changes to the risk level for the child, by assessing progress towards Family Action Plan for Change goals and considering whether there have been any substantiated ROSH reports since the initial Risk Assessment or last Restoration Assessment.
2. Quality and frequency of family time (contact), by assessing parents' attendance and if they have demonstrated positive changes during interactions with their child.
3. Demonstrated safety, based on if parents have resolved the safety concerns that led to their child entering OOHC and there are no new safety concerns.
4. Placement/permanency plan guidelines measured on age of the child and length of time in OOHC.


The Restoration Assessment Tool is used to guide the process of restoration and does not make the decision about whether to pursue restoration.

Consult before using the Restoration Assessment Tool for an Aboriginal child

If the family is Aboriginal, arrange an [Aboriginal Consultation](#) before applying the Restoration Assessment Tool.

Record all recommendations of the consultation as time-framed desired outcomes, goals, or actions in the OOHC case plan and Family Action Plan for Change.


Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record and respond to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander consultation](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Consult before using the Restoration Assessment Tool for a child from a culturally and linguistically diverse background

If the child is from a CALD background, arrange a [Multicultural Consultation](#) before using the Restoration Assessment Tool. Record all recommendations of the consultation as time frame desired outcomes, goals or actions in the OOHC case plan and Family Action Plan for Change.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record and respond to a multicultural consultation](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Complete the Restoration Assessment Tool

Use the [SDM Restoration Assessment Tool](#):

- during interim court proceedings
- when the child has a Short Term Court Order for restoration.

Complete the initial Restoration Assessment Tool within 90 days of developing the Family Action Plan for Change.

Complete the Restoration Assessment Tool again every 90 days while the child's case plan goal remains as 'assess restoration' or 'restoration' and until the child returns home full time. Complete the Tool earlier if there is new information or a change in circumstances that could affect the risk to the child.

Use the narrative boxes in the Restoration Assessment Tool to demonstrate your assessment, even when the answer is 'change permanency goal'.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Complete a restoration assessment](#) ChildStory knowledge article.



Extra information:

How to record in ChildStory

All questions in the Restoration Assessment Tool record in ChildStory are mandatory and provide space for narrative. Where 'none of the above' or 'not applicable' or similar is selected, ChildStory will auto populate text in the narrative so the user can move on.

For example, if 'no' is selected for the question 'are there any dangers?', then 'no new dangers' auto populates in the narrative box. While this functionality allows you to move through the assessment, use the narrative boxes to describe the evidence that led you to that selection.

Use the narrative boxes available in ChildStory rather than completing narratives in a separate document and attaching.

• Talking to children and participation

Children and young people have the right to participate in decision making that affects their lives.

10. Support and assess family time

Plan family time to support restoration

Arrange a meeting with the parents to talk about and plan family time.

For children who have just entered care, use the [Safe Contact Tool](#) to support the relationship between the child and their parents. For children in long term care use this tool if required.

Schedule family time and other opportunities for connection in line with the Care Plan.

Plan to include siblings, family and kin who will be supporting the child and parents when the child returns home. This is especially important for Aboriginal families.

In the Family Action Plan for Change, document how family time and other connection opportunities will be used to meet goals that support restoration.



Extra information:

If needed, family time can be increased to help assess whether restoration is realistic, as long as the family time plans align with any current Care Orders.



Practice advice:


Be creative in your work alongside the child and their family to organise family time that is flexible, purposeful, fun and healing.

Use family time to help rebuild healthy, safe relationships.

Explain to the parents how the time is used as part of the restoration assessment, including what is being recorded and why, and the sorts of interactions you are looking for.

Talk with parents about the six dimensions of quality family time (contact) in the Restoration Assessment Tool. Plan for the support they might need during family time.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Details of Family Time are recorded in the OOHC Case Plan refer to the [ChildStory Recording Tool](#), [Create an OOHC case plan](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Partner Recording: Refer to [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Assessing family time for children who have entered care

Assess family time reports every 30 days using the [six dimensions of quality family time](#) outlined in the Restoration Assessment Tool (p12).



Practice advice:

Family time is a critical part of restoration assessments and casework. Use it as an opportunity:

- for the child and their parents to build and maintain their relationship
- for the child to maintain cultural connections
- to support parents to build and demonstrate their parenting skills
- to inform a restoration assessment.

Consider arranging a DCJ Psychological and Specialist Services consultation to support planning and assessment of family time.

Practice advice:



Give parents the opportunity to practice skills, demonstrate strengths, and achieve Family Action Plan for Change goals over time. Role model pro-social behaviour and effective parenting techniques and support the interactions the child needs from their parents. Partner with the parents, family, and kin to plan family time arrangements, such as regularity, activities and venues.

Consider how family and kin can support the parents during family time.

For more information read the [Family time practice advice topic](#).

Supervising family time


Apply the [Safe Contact Tool](#) to assess if family time needs to be supervised. Use the Tool as part of the Family Action Plan for Change and OOHC case plan reviews to monitor the need for supervision as family circumstances change.

To help decide whether there is a need for ongoing supervision:

- review family time reports
- seek the views of the supervisor.

Do not arrange unsupervised family time if Orders are in place that specify supervision is required.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Details of Family Time are recorded in the OOHC Case Plan refer to the [ChildStory Recording Tool](#), [Create an OOHC case plan](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Partner Recording: Refer to the [Partner: Review OOHC case plans and goals](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Extra information:

Reviewing family time reports every 30 days is essential to help practitioners monitor the need:

- to change activities or venues that best meets the child's need to connect positively and naturally with their parents and family
- to support parents who may be experiencing challenges in making family time positive for their child and purposeful in achieve family action plan goals
- for ongoing supervision of family time.

Using family time workers or external supervisors

When using a family time worker or external supervisor explain to them:

- the needs of the child and parent
- the Family Action Plan for Change goals that are being worked on during family time
- DCJ's expectation of their role as a supervisor
- the six dimensions of quality family time, so they include this in the support they give as a supervisor, and in their observations and records.

If family time is being supervised by an external agency, use the [Casework Support Scheme \(CSS\)](#).

Attend at least one in four visits between the child and parents to assess the quality of contact and support skill building and assessment of restoration.

Coaching and support

Organise family time so that children spend time with their parents doing everyday parent-child activities.




Extra information:

What does 'coaching' look like in family time?

- modelling playing a game together – encouraging children to take turns and share
- setting time limits on activities then asking parents/family members to set the time limit on the next activity
- modelling appropriate boundary setting
- offering specific praise that notes what the parent did and how the child reacted
- highlighting children's skills, interests and potential
- asking children about school, friends, hobbies, explaining to the parent why you are doing this
- reflecting with parents/family afterwards about what questions and activities they would like to lead next time.

Refer to the [Restoration practice advice topic](#) for more information.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Details of Family Time are recorded in the OOHC Case Plan refer to the [ChildStory Recording Tool](#), [Create an OOHC case plan](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.



Extra information:

Attending family time is not only an important opportunity to directly help strengthen the attachment and bond between parents and children, but can help you to see first-hand evidence of change. It also allows you to build your relationship with the child and their parents and to directly support them to build their parenting skills.

♦ Restoration: Bringing kids home

Restoration is a process, not an event. Families need support to manage a child's safe journey home.

11. Work with carers to support restoration

Involve carers in planning family time so it fits with the child, carer, parents and family's schedules and needs.

Completed by: **CW**



Practice advice:

Explain to the carer their role in family time, including supporting the child with their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour before and after family time.

Provide appropriate information to carers about the progress of the restoration.

Talk with the child, parents, relatives and kin about what role the carer could play in the child's life after restoration.

♦ Restoration: Bringing kids home

Restoration is a process, not an event. Families need support to manage a child's safe journey home.

12. Support the child's return home

If a child is in case responsibility of a PSP Provider, refer to 'Collaborating in assessing restoration' section 13: Working with PSP Providers that have case management.

Support the child to safely return home to their parent when:

- ♦ the Restoration Assessment Tool recommends 'restore', and
- ♦ the child is subject to a Care Order with a restoration permanency plan and an OOHC case plan goal of 'restoration', and
- ♦ DCJ continues to assess restoration to be realistic and achievable.



Extra information:

Unless circumstances have changed since the Court made a Final Order of restoration, the child should return home full time with their parents in line with the transition plan outlined in the Care Plan.

Once the child has returned home and is not returning to their carer, update the child's placement record.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Close a placement](#) and [Create a placement](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Partner Recording: Refer to the [Partner: Close a placement record](#) and [Partner: Create a new placement record](#).



Practice advice:

Consider arranging a [Psychological and Specialist Services consultation](#) to support the child's safe return home:

- If a child has, a disability and parents may need extra supports and/or
- If the child has an ongoing behavioural support plan (BSP).

A Psychological and Specialist Services consultation will provide strategies to increase parent's capacity to support the child's emotional and mental supports for when they go home.



Practice advice:

Placing the child with their parent before the order expires

Placing the child with their parents before the expiry of a care order (allocating parental responsibility to the Minister), allows the parents to:

- demonstrate the change in their behaviour and actions
- prepare for changes in their child's developmental needs, behaviour, and routine
- begin to use a strengthened family, social and support network to increase the likelihood of successful restoration.

The period shortly after a child returns home to their parents can be a challenging time. Continuity and consistency in everyday casework is critical. Supporting the family and services to successfully overcome stressors that can get in the way of restoration will help the child remain safely with their parents.

Supporting the child to process the change and any grief they experience after moving away from the carer can help increase the child's sense of permanency and wellbeing.

Supporting the carer

Recognise that carers can often experience a sense of loss following a restoration too.

Read the [Separation and loss practice advice topic](#) and 'How can I support a family to reunite safely?' in the [Restoration practice advice topic](#).

Home visits

Ensure the family has at least one visit per week from DCJ or a service working with the family for the first month following the child returning home. Work with the child's parents, family and kin to support and sustain restoration.

If needed, make referrals for ongoing support. Support continuing connections between the child, extended family, kin, and people who are important to the child including support services or workers.

After the first month, maintain home visits in accordance with the needs of the child and family, and provide ongoing support as set out in the Family Action Plan for Change.

Support the stepping-down of services when the family no longer requires this level of support.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record a meeting](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Provide approved financial support

Provide financial support that was being provided as part of the Family Action Plan for Change.



Extra information:

Costs that arise after the child has been restored, but prior to parental responsibility reverting or being reallocated to the parents, may be paid as a contingency as part of a financial plan to support successful restoration. Refer to [Following Restoration](#) in the OOHG Financial Guidelines.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Create a financial plan](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Review the Family Action Plan for Change

Review the Family Action Plan for Change after the child is restored to their parent's care. Continue to review the plan every 90 days.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Review or close a family action plan](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Complete a Risk Reassessment (RRA)

Once a child has returned home safely do not use the Restoration Assessment Tool. Instead, complete an SDM Risk Reassessment every 90 days, alongside Family Action Plan for Change reviews. Continue with the Risk Reassessment until the close of the child's OOHC case plan.

If a new Risk Assessment or Risk Reassessment has an outcome of 'high' risk due to changes in circumstances, and the Care Order is due to expire, seek legal advice about any additional legal actions that should be taken

When a child is in primary case responsibility of a PSP Provider, liaise with the provider so you can complete the Risk Reassessment. The Risk Reassessment is the responsibility of DCJ (not a PSP Provider).

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Complete a risk reassessment](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Conduct a closing Safety Assessment

If the Risk Reassessment has an outcome of low or moderate, complete a Closing Safety Assessment. Conduct the Closing Safety Assessment for both children case managed by DCJ and children case managed by PSP Providers.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Complete a review safety assessment](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Close the OOHC case plan and the Family Action Plan for Change:

- ♦ after the PRM care order expires, and
- ♦ the Closing Safety Assessment has an outcome of 'safe' showing no unresolved dangers, and
- ♦ there is no Supervision Order.

If the Children's Court has made a Supervision Order keep the Family Action Plan for Change open until this order expires.



Extra information:

Supervise the care and protection of the child if the Children's Court has made a Supervision Order ([section 76, the Act](#)), after the Care Order expires.

Follow the [Supervision Order](#) practice mandate.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

DCJ Recording: Refer to [Review or close a family action plan](#) and [Case closure reasons guide](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Respond to any new Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) reports when a child is home

When responding to a new ROSH report when the child is living full time at home do not use the Alternate Assessment. Use the SDM SARA tools.

For more information read the [Assessing safety and risk practice mandate](#).

Completed by: **CW**

DCJ Recording: Refer to [Complete a safety assessment \(SA\)](#) and [Complete a risk assessment \(RA\)](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.



Practice advice:

A new ROSH report does not necessarily mean that restoration can not proceed.

A Safety Assessment and Risk Assessment will help guide you in deciding what actions need to be taken to either support the child's

safety at home or if a change the child's case plan goal and seeking new orders is required.

- **Talking to children and participation**

Children and young people have the right to participate in decision making that affects their lives.

[Read Practice Advice](#)

13. Working with PSP Providers that have case management

During initial court proceedings for a child on interim orders

Share all relevant information

If a child is in primary case responsibility of a PSP Provider share all relevant information with the PSP Provider in line with the [case management transfer checklist](#). Include information about the child's family history, support network, family strengths, worries about safety and risk, involvement with services, and the reasons for DCJ decisions.

If sharing court documents with the PSP Provider to support their practice with the family, consult your Child Law Legal Officer for guidance.

Obtain signature of the Designated Funded PSP Provider representative for the Summary of Proposed Plan

Before submitting the [Summary of Proposed Plan](#) for legal settlement, obtain the signature of the PSP Provider representative on both the Summary of Proposed Plan and the [Notice of Transfer of Primary Case Responsibility to a Designated Agency and Confidentiality Statement form](#).



Extra information:

Within 14 days of of transfer DCJ must provide the court with the name and contact information of the PSP Provider with primary case responsibility (case management) along with a [Notice of Transfer and confidentiality Agreement form](#).

While PSP Providers will decide who in their organisation signs the Summary of Proposed Plan, the person should have direct knowledge of the child, family and carers circumstances, and will ideally be the equivalent of Manager Casework or above.

The signature indicates that the PSP Provider is aware of the Practice Note 17 requirements and has acknowledged and agreed to abide by the confidentiality requirements. [Practice Note \(17\)](#) details the expectations of the court when a child is, or has been, the subject of care proceedings and case management has been transferred to a funded PSP Provider.

Hold a case transfer meeting

Hold a case transfer meeting within 14 days of the child in OOHC transferring to case responsibility of a PSP Provider to share information and plan for roles and responsibilities in restoration work.

Read the [Transferring case management of a child to a PSP Provider practice mandate, Permanency Case Management Policy Rules and Practice Guidance](#) and [Case Transfer Checklist](#) for more information.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Transfer OOHC case responsibility to an NGO](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Communicate regularly with PSP Providers

Speak with the PSP Provider at least fortnightly to share information and inform development of the Care Plan and other evidence

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to the [Record a meeting](#) ChildStory knowledge article.

Family Action Plan for Change

Support the PSP Provider to develop the Family Action Plan for Change by:

- ♦ participating in the Family Action Plan for Change case plan meeting
- ♦ signing and seeking financial approval of the Family Action Plan for Change.

Where needed, visit the family, with the support of the PSP Provider, to monitor the implementation of the Family Action Plan for Change.



Extra information:

The PSP Provider develops the initial Family Action Plan for Change (or like case planning tool) within 30 days of the child entering OOHC. They develop this plan jointly with the child, parents, family, support services and DCJ.

This includes:

- ♦ arranging, preparing and hosting the meeting including taking care of administration tasks
- ♦ arranging for the parents and DCJ to sign the Family Action Plan for Change (as well as signing it themselves).

The PSP Provider monitors and supports the plan using everyday casework and conducts 90 day reviews of the plan with the child, parents, family and DCJ.


For more information read the [Permanency Case Management Policy](#).

Lead court proceedings

Collaborate with the PSP Provider to:

- ♦ prepare and file the Care Application, Care Plan and other evidence supplied or prepared by the PSP Provider
- ♦ coordinate and file evidence that supports the OOHC case plan goal 'assess restoration'
- ♦ let the provider know about the administrative directions of the Court.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

 DCJ Recording: For more information read the [Section 90 Evidence Checklist: Restoration](#) and section 6: Initiate and lead court proceedings.

Collaborating in assessing restoration

Uphold DCJ's statutory responsibilities, to make recommendations to the Court about the viability of restoration for the child and their family by:

- ♦ collaborating with the PSP provider and drawing on their evidence-based restoration assessment (that may be the Restoration Assessment Tool or another tool) to decide whether to proceed with the restoration.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**



Extra information:

The Permanency Case Management Policy (PCMP) [Rules and Practice Guidance](#) outlines roles and responsibilities of CSCs and PSP Providers when primary responsibility is transferred to a PSP Provider. For example, the PSP Provider has responsibility for:

- ♦ developing the OOHC and Family Action Plan for Change jointly with the child, parent, family and DCJ (if not already developed), this includes organising the meetings
- ♦ implementing, monitoring, and sharing information with DCJ about the parent's progress with the Family Action Plan for Change and OOHC Case Plan
- ♦ collaborating with the child, parents and family to achieve the restoration goal including with Aboriginal families by using [Aboriginal Family-led Decision Making](#).
- ♦ complying with administrative directions of the Children's Court (communicated by DCJ).

The [PSP Learning Hub](#) contains a range of resources that can help PSP Providers to return children to their family home when it is safe to do so.

Changing a child's OOHC case plan goal from long term care to 'assess restoration'

Consider a PSP Provider's request to change the OOHC case plan goal.

If the child's OOHC case plan goal is long term care and they are in case responsibility of a PSP Provider, the provider may notify DCJ that they propose a change of the OOHC case plan goal to 'assess restoration'.

Before deciding if the OOHC case plan goal should be changed to 'assess restoration', review evidence submitted by the provider, including the information and outcome of a Permanency Consultation.



Practice advice:

Consider group supervision if the evidence requires further examination. Consult with the PSP Provider to arrange the group supervision and ensure all relevant parties attend.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

Initiate section 90 application proceedings

Refer to 'Initiate section 90 application proceedings' section 6: Initiate and lead court proceedings.



Extra information:

In the past PSP Providers have also been called 'Funded Service Providers' or 'FSPs'. Use of this term has been superseded by 'PSP Provider' or 'NGO'.

♦ Talking to children and participation

Children and young people have the right to participate in decision making that affects their lives.

14. When restoration is not a viable option

Before changing a case plan goal from 'assess restoration' to a goal other than restoration make sure that you have undertaken active efforts to pursue restoration. To help ensure you have undertaken active efforts:

- ♦ make sure the Restoration Assessment Tool has provided a recommendation of changing the restoration goal
- ♦ discuss casework decision-making during group supervision to critically reflect on casework and make sure restoration efforts have been exhausted
- ♦ arrange a Permanency Consultation to make sure all options to support restoration have been exhausted and that a different case plan goal is suitable
- ♦ arrange an Aboriginal Consultation if the child is Aboriginal
- ♦ consult with a DCJ legal officer about the evidence the Children's Court will need to explain why the goal has changed
- ♦ talk with the child, parents and family about the reasons why the goal needs to change and the other permanency options for the child.

If these actions support changing the OOHC case plan goal, change the goal from 'assess restoration' to another plan goal. Do not wait for Final Orders to change the case plan goal.



Extra information:

The OOHC case plan goal should align with the recommendations for permanency DCJ is making to the Court as part of the Care Plan.

Completed by: **CW** Approval by: **MCW**

DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record and respond to a permanency consultation](#), [Record and respond to a legal consultation](#) and [Record and respond to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander consultation](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

Consider another permanency goal

Explore permanent placement with other suitable family or kin. Refer to [Exploring Permanency Options](#).



Extra information:

Guardianship is the next legal permanency option for children when they are unable to be safely returned to their parents. Guardianship allows children to return home to their extended families and be cared for independently of DCJ or a PSP Provider. Other carers can also be the guardians of children.

Parallel planning during restoration can help ensure a child's need for permanency is progressed quickly when restoration is not a viable option.

Completed by: **CW**

Explain DCJ's assessment to the parents

If DCJ has assessed that there is not a realistic possibility of restoration within a reasonable period, be honest with the parents about this:

- ♦ provide examples of actions to address worries and family action plan goals that were not met
- ♦ give parents [information about their rights and options](#), including how they can seek [independent legal advice](#).



Practice advice:

These conversations can be very distressing for families, but every family has the right to know why DCJ has made a decision to not recommend restoration to the Court.

Approach conversations with parents and children about how and why DCJ has assessed restoration to be unrealistic or unachievable by preparing to:


- ♦ hold the conversation at an appropriate time and place
- ♦ give a clear rationale for the assessment, including specific examples of factors that led to the decision.

The distressing nature of these conversations can sometimes result in self-harm, suicidal ideation, violence or other safety concerns. Engage the child's carer, family, and kin in developing a plan to keep everyone safe.

For more information read the [Ethics and reflection \(separation and loss\)](#) practice advice topic.

Speak with parents about how DCJ will work with them and other family so their child will stay connected to parents, family, community, and culture.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ recording: Refer to the [Record a meeting](#) ChildStory knowledge article. Record and update using Notes & Attachments in the Family Action Plan and OOHCase plan in the relevant measure of wellbeing.

File evidence with the Court

If court proceedings are already underway, file evidence to demonstrate the active efforts DCJ or a PSP Provider have taken to facilitate restoration (even though it has been unsuccessful), including persistent attempts to:

- ♦ engage with the parent, family, and kin in Family Action Planning for Change, OOHCase Planning, and for Aboriginal children, Aboriginal Family-led Decision


Making

- engage available services and supports to facilitate the achievement of Family Action Plan for Change goals
- conduct regular reviews of the Family Action Plan for Change to ensure it is adjusted to changes in the family's needs over time.

Also include evidence of consultations arranged to support everyday casework and family engagement, including group supervision, Aboriginal Consultation, Multicultural Consultation, and other consultations relevant to the family's circumstances or individual needs.

If new court proceedings are required, refer to 'Initiate section 90 proceedings' section 6: Initiate and lead court proceedings.

Completed by: **CW**

 DCJ Recording: Refer to [Record and respond to a permanency consultation](#), [Record and respond to a casework specialist consultation](#), [Record and respond to a legal consultation](#) and [Record and respond to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander consultation](#) and [Complete an OOHC case plan review](#) ChildStory knowledge articles.

• Talking to children and participation

Children and young people have the right to participate in decision making that affects their lives.

[Read Practice Advice](#)

Key documents

Name	Description	Size	Type
Aboriginal consultation template	Template for an Aboriginal consultation. This form is used to provide information for an Aboriginal Consultation and record the consultation discussion, advice and recommendations.	89.4 KB	PDF
Child Centred Contact Planning Practice Tool	Child Centred Contact Planning Tool.	245.5 KB	PDF
Restoration Tool	SDM Restoration Tool	491.1 KB	PDF
Policy and Procedures Manual Restoration Assessment		366.7 KB	PDF
How to Satisfy Permanency Planning requirements to Achieve Short Term Care Orders - Restoration	A guide to support practitioners to satisfy permanency planning requirements to achieve STCOs for restoration	148.0 KB	PDF

<u>Summary proposed future plan for the child or young person</u>	Summary proposed future plan for the child or young person. This form is used to summarise the proposed plan for a child or young person as	24.4 KB	Word
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Name	Description	Size	Type
	required by Practice Note 5 of the Children's Court.		
<u>Application for rescission or variation of Care Order</u>	This form is used to make changes or rescind a Care Order.	28.2 KB	Word
<u>Care Plan s38(1) registered care plan template</u>	This form to be used when registering a Care Plan where no consent orders have been sought. This form is used to register a care plan (no consent) orders sought.	390.0 KB	Word
<u>Multicultural Caseworker Cultural Consultation Request</u>	Complete a service request for a multicultural consultation in ChildStory. ChildStory Knowledge article – Record and Respond to a multicultural consultation.	12.0 KB	Word
<u>ChildStory Case Closure Reasons Guide</u>	Use this guide to help you decide the most appropriate closure reason to use on ChildStory.	235.8 KB	PDF
<u>Notice of transfer of primary case responsibility to a Designated Agency</u>	This form is used to notify the Children's Court that primary case responsibility for a child or young person has been transferred to a PSP provider and the PSP provider agrees to abide by the confidentiality requirements as required by Practice Note 17 of the Children's Court.	19.9 KB	Word
<u>Aboriginal Family-led Decision Making</u>		--	Link
<u>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principles</u>		--	Link
<u>Aboriginal Case Management Policy</u>		--	Link
<u>Family Group Conferencing</u>		--	Link
<u>Initiate s90 application proceedings for children in long-term care</u>		--	Link
<u>Financial support for children and young people in OOHC - policies and guidelines</u>		--	Link
<u>Permanency Case Management Policy - Rules and Guidance</u>		--	Link
<u>PSP Case management transfer checklist</u>		--	Link
<u>Psychologist referral form</u>	Psychologist Referral Form	42.5 KB	Word

Name	Description	Size	Type
<u>PSP Short Term Care Order restoration process</u>	A resource to support a PSP to understand the STCO restoration process.	385.8 KB	PDF
<u>Section 90 Evidence Checklist Restoration</u>	The checklist helps PSP providers gather evidence to court for a child on a long term care order. Also useful for DCJ caseworkers.	1006.6 KB	PDF
<u>How to satisfy permanency planning requirements to achieve Short Term Care Orders in restoration.</u>	A factsheet to on how to satisfy permanency planning requirements.	154.5 KB	PDF

About this page

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