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Child FIRST and Family Services Practice Advice - Child and Family Action Plans

Promoting the safety, stability and development of children and young people requires a process of continuous review, including ongoing assessment of the changing needs and views of children, youth and families through the lens of culture, age and developmental stages and consideration of effectiveness, responsiveness and appropriateness of plan and actions. Assessment planning and action should be collaborative, strength-focused, grounded in evidence based knowledge, aware of normal child development and sensitive to linguistic, cultural and religious diversity.

It is for these reason that the Department of Human Services requires that funded Community Service Organisations (CSOs) develop and review child and family actions plans for families receiving a family service response. According to the *Strategic* *Framework for Family Services*:

‘A child and family action plan identifies objectives and goals of intervention, details the interventions to be undertaken, and the roles and responsibilities of the child, young person and family and each of the organisations providing services to the family. The assessment and goals of intervention will be discussed and agreed (where possible) with the child, young person and their family.

The child and family action plan also contains timelines for the length of intervention and for monitoring and review. The frequency of review will increase for high priority cases, consistent with duty of care expectation.’ (Department of Human Services 2007 p55)

**The development and review of child and family action plans is a requirement of the *Program requirements for family and early parenting services in Victoria July 2012***

There is no one format for child and family actions plans. Many CSO’s have developed formats suitable to their needs. It is critical that the plan is able to demonstrate the intended outcomes for each individual child in the family and the roles and responsibilities of each person involved: the children themselves, parents and other family members, CSO staff and other involved agencies.

**References/ Further Information**

Department of Human Services (2007). [*A Strategic Framework for Family Services*](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/plans-and-strategies/children,-youth-and-family-services/strategic-framework-for-family-services) Melbourne.

Miller, R (2008). [*Best Interest Case Practice Model. Summary Guide*](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/best-interests-case-practice-model-summary-guide)*.* Department of Human Services. Melbourne

Department of Human Services. [*Program Requirements for family and early parenting services in Victoria July 2012.*](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/program-requirements-for-family-and-early-parenting-services)