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| Good Practice Bulletin |
| Spotlight on culturally and linguistically diverse children and families  Office of Professional Practice, Issue 18, February 2019 |

# Chief Practitioner’s welcome

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**Tracy Beaton**

Victoria is one of the most culturally diverse communities in the world. As child protection practitioners you reflect this diversity as do the children and families with whom you work. [*Engaging with culturally diverse children and families – a practice resource for child protection practitioners*](http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/node/4291) has been developed to support the provision of culturally responsive and respectful services to all children and families.

The resource has been developed following wide consultation, it is available on the [child protection manual](http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/node/4291) and includes:

* a summary of **principles** **in action** as they relate to child protection practice with culturally diverse children and families
* an insight into what it means to **parent across cultures**
* **practice tips** – including cultural consultations, using interpreters and data recording in CRIS.
* [**practice tools**](http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/advice-and-protocols/specialist-resources/culturally-diverse-children-and-families/culturally) developed to support conversations with children and their families about culture, ethnicity, faith and language
* **suggested resources** for further reading to support your practice.

As you consider the case study below and in your work with all families, remain curious and avoid making assumptions about cultural norms.

# Case study

Sara was born at 29 weeks gestation. Sara’s mother, Meaza, aged 20, arrived at Sunshine Hospital in advanced labour. Sara was delivered 30 minutes later. A report was made the following day to child protection due to concerns that Meaza appeared fearful when the father of the baby, Sammy, visited the hospital. Hospital staff were also concerned that Meaza did not wish to hold or see Sara. Meaza was born in Eritrea and arrived in Australia ten years ago. She has not received any pre-natal care.

You are planning the first visit to the hospital.

# Discussion prompts

The quality of the relationship you are able to build with Meaza will contribute to positive outcomes for the family. How can you optimise opportunities in this first visit to begin building a positive relationship?

Would a consultation with the Cultural Engagement Team assist? (see *Tips* below for further detail)

Beginning conversations about culture and ethnicity, faith, language and a person’s journey to Australia can be tricky. Have a look at *Celebrating diversity: a family snapshot* for some useful prompts.

# Tips

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| Ok, Check, Todo, Agenda, Icon, Symbol, Tick, To Do, Gui | The newly published [*Engaging with culturally diverse children and families: A practice resource for child protection practitioners*](http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/3147.1%20CALD%20practice%20resource.docx?web=1) and [practice tools](http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/advice-and-protocols/specialist-resources/culturally-diverse-children-and-families/culturally) are now available |
| Ok, Check, Todo, Agenda, Icon, Symbol, Tick, To Do, Gui | The Cultural Engagement Team sits with the Department of Health and Human Services Refugee Minor Program and has a long history of working with refugees and newly arrived communities.  Child protection practitioners can contact the Cultural Engagement Team who can assist in a number of ways including accompanying practitioners on home visits in certain circumstances, secondary consultations and case reflection.  The Cultural Engagement Team can be contacted on: 87655444 or via email at [cultural.engagement@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:cultural.engagement@dhhs.vic.gov.au) |
| Ok, Check, Todo, Agenda, Icon, Symbol, Tick, To Do, Gui | Log onto the [eLearning Portal](https://imclearningcloud.com/pages/landingpage.jsf?client=dhhs) to complete the Family violence and culturally and linguistically diverse communities module which is part of the Child protection family violence training module series. |

If you have any feedback or ideas about what you would find useful to include in the bulletin this year, please email *officeofprofessionalpractice@dhhs.vic.gov.au*

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