

Development and implementation of a culturally grounded evaluation framework: Learnings from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians on whose land we walk, talk and do business. We acknowledge and pay respects to the many Elders, past and present, who have tirelessly paved the way, guided us and given us strength to draw on knowledge systems of growing up children and their connections to family, community and culture.



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- The aspiration for the Centre is to facilitate the ownership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander intellectual property relating to children and families to support, enable and drive change in the Queensland child protection system to ensure best practice in delivering outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Our purpose:

- We are driven by our purpose: to contribute empirical research, critical evidence-based data and innovative recommendations to support program design, practice, decision making and service delivery. The Centre of Excellence is our opportunity to deliver this.
- We advocate for a child protection system that is based on evidence. By sharing our collective knowledge and experience, we can all make a positive impact on policies and practices to combat the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland's child protection system.



QATSICPP Evaluation Framework

- Support QATSICPP and its Members
- Culturally safe and culturally designed
- Implemented for internal and applied for external evaluations
- Three components we wish to test and refine
 - Evaluation Principle
 - Evaluation Standards
 - Useful Evaluation Tools



Our goal

We seek to grow the knowledge, evidence and funding base of culturally safe service responses proven to work for our families and communities.

“Our approach is all about hope, not accepting the high rates of our children in the child protection system but focusing on ways to change that and prevent involvement”



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Evaluation Principles

Our principles align with what we acknowledge are also our obligations as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Community Controlled Organisations.

1. Cultural authority
2. Decision making authority
3. Cultural identity
4. Open and respectful
5. Two-way learning
6. Collective Leadership
7. Outcomes based or future focus
8. Balance





Evaluation Standards

To place First Nations knowledge, evidence and voices at the forefront of evaluation and to ensure evaluations are linked to better outcomes for our children and families. Our standards, in conjunction with our principles, are applied to our own evaluations as well as external evaluations of our services (conducted by researchers and government departments).

Our standards are:

1. We hear the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people lead evaluation
3. Evaluation methodologies are safe and inclusive for all and provide an opportunity for healing
4. Outcomes of evaluation are transparent and accountable.

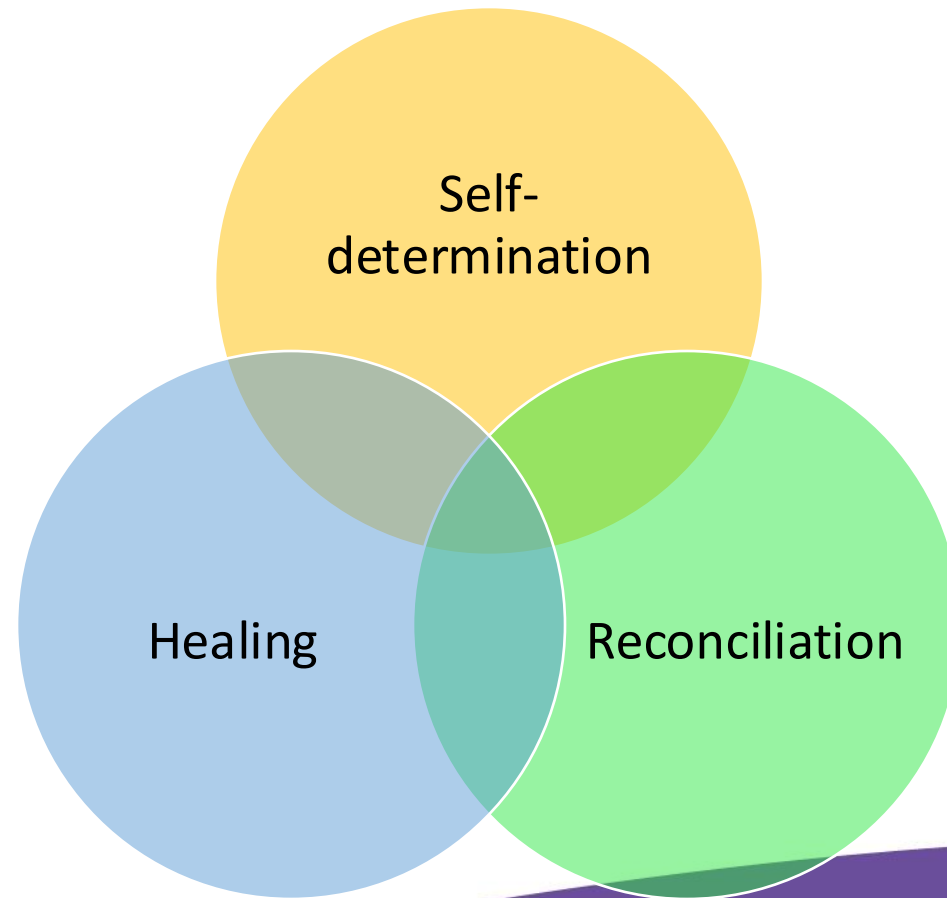


Reclaiming our Storyline: Our Story of Change for transforming systems and practice by making decisions in our way

- Delegated Authority – delegation of statutory child protection decision making, and transfer of service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations
- We have developed a theory of the change needed for reclaiming child protection decision making
- Our “Story of Change” acknowledges the importance of Storylines of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and recognises the importance of embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing within our work
- Through Our Story of Change, QATSI CPP can better:
 - Identify the key elements and barriers associated with delegated authority implementation.
 - Target investment of resources.
 - Strengthen and build the evidence base and highlight the outcomes that are being achieved.



A Story of Change to Reclaim our Storyline



**Overall vision:
Children grow
up safe and
connected to
family,
community and
culture**



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Delegated Authority Learning and Adaption Framework

- Learning and Adaption framework
 - Iterative process of learning
 - Tell the story in way that is consistent with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of exploring outcomes for children, families and communities.
- Designed to examine the outcomes and measures that were established in Our Story of Change.



Our approach to evaluation

- Mixed-method approach
- Complimentary to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evaluation processes that place reflection, yarning and listening at the heart.
- Delegated Authority 10-year Implementation & Evaluation Timelines:
 - DA Implementation Stage 1 2023–2025 Building and supporting foundations
 - Wave 1 data collection: measuring short-term outcomes Sep–Dec 2024
 - Wave 2 data collection: short to medium-term outcomes Jun–Nov 2025
 - DA Implementation Stage 2 2026–2028 Embedding the transformation
 - Measuring medium to long-term outcomes 2026–2028
 - DA Implementation Stage 3 2029–2032 Our decisions, Our way
 - Measuring long-term outcomes 2029–2032



Examples of methodology for Year 1

Short-term outcomes (12-18 months)		
Outcome	Measure	Method and data sources
More children are safely reunified with their families.	Number of reunifications Example(s) / stories of children / families that have benefited from the DA process – in ways they would not if DA was not in place.	Administrative data from the Department and ATSICCOs will be used to monitor quantitative indicators.
Families experience increased opportunities for connection.	Example(s) / stories of children / families that were actively involved in the decisions that were affecting them.	ATSICCO self-reporting through quarterly reporting and surveys.
Strong networks and genuine collaborative partnerships among QATSI CPP, ATSI CCOs & DCSSDS, including shared commitment, responsibility and accountability.		Yarning Circle with each ATSI CCO to discuss progress. Exploring areas such as: Implementation processes Commissioning Relationships Roles and responsibilities Decision-making power Accountability Outcomes

Why is this so important?

- While DA places the safety of children first, it acknowledges that the safety and wellbeing of children is best served by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and entities who know their families and communities best, and therefore, provide the supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families need most.
- The importance of:
 - Self-determination
 - Reconciliation
 - Healing





Thank you

Any extra feedback, please reach out to Candice or John

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