



Department for Child Protection Research Framework

Classification A

Summary

The development of a Research Framework provides the foundation for the Department for Child Protection's (DCP) research agenda and is a key step to achieve DCP's commitment to evidence and experience based policy and practice as a basis for wellbeing for children, young people and families involved with the child protection system.

1. Purpose

The Research Framework supports DCP to meet its legislative requirements and outlines DCP's strategic approach to research.

2. Scope

The Research Framework applies to all staff in DCP and research organisations, student researchers, external researchers and evaluators who are undertaking or propose to undertake research regarding DCP sites, services, policies and programs, staff, clients or data. It also applies to research related to services, programs, projects, policies, legislation, interventions, initiatives, and business processes undertaken or managed by, or on behalf of DCP.

3. Framework requirements

All Research must comply with relevant and appropriate legislation and policy. The Research Framework will support DCP to meet its legislative requirements within the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*. Specifically, section 14 (d) charges the Minister and DCP, with promoting, encouraging or undertaking research into matters affecting children and young people, in order to promote the wellbeing of children and young people and early intervention where they may be at risk of harm. This framework will assist in meeting that legislative direction.

The *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* at section 14 (c) instructs the promotion, support and adequate resource of evidence-based programs delivering preventative and support services directed towards strengthening and supporting families, reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect and maximising the wellbeing of children and young people. This framework will assist in building and communicating evidence for those programs.



All research covered by this framework must comply with “*The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*” updated 2018, which also includes a series of guidelines made in accordance with the *National Health and Medical Research Council Act 1992*.

Most State Government agencies collect and use personal information provided by the public. All government employees and funded contractors have an obligation to manage this information appropriately. Personal information should only be used for the purpose for which it was collected, and it should not be used for another purpose or disclosed to a third person for another purpose, but there a number of exceptions to that rule including child protection safety. All research covered by this framework must also comply with DPC Information Privacy Principals.

The *SA Public Sector (Data Sharing) Act 2016* directs the sharing of data between public sector and other agencies and guides this framework and its intersection with the (forthcoming) DCP data policy.

SA Government *Intellectual Property Policy (2006)* is the framework for SA Government Agencies to manage intellectual property. A key principle of this policy is that Government should seek to retain ownership of intellectual property it has developed or substantially contributed to.

In line with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, all persons conducting research with or within DCP must have a child safe employment clearance.

Research within this framework will be underpinned by a culturally responsive approach and be open to the values, beliefs and attitudes of children and families from a range of backgrounds and experiences to inform the research, not allowing structural or cultural barriers to hinder the work. In particular, the views and experiences of Aboriginal practitioners, families, communities and agencies will be sought with the view to understanding the outcomes that are needed to address the over-representation of Aboriginal children and families engaged within child protection and are respectful to cultures past and present.

3.1 Research Principles¹

The research principles that DCP will be guided by – incorporating the Wardliparingga² principles – are:

3.1.1 Ethical

- Research will be ethical (in line with NHMRC 2018 code and the South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord) and present minimal risk and intrusiveness to

¹ Based on DCP 17-20 Vision

² SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

participants³. DCP supports ethical and safe research practice to avoid participant concern.

- Researchers must demonstrate respect for Aboriginal knowledge, Aboriginal knowledge systems and custodianship of that knowledge.⁴
- Researchers should acknowledge, respect, and protect Aboriginal intellectual property rights and ensure transparent negotiation of intellectual property use and benefit sharing.⁵
- Sharing and translation of knowledge generated through research must be integrated into all elements of the research process to maximise impact on policy and practice⁶

3.1.2 Quality

- Research will be of high quality, relevant and translational to add value to practice or the strategic agenda that helps deliver a better child protection system.
- Communication must be culturally and community relevant and involve a willingness to listen and learn.⁷

3.1.3 Voices

- Research will ensure the voice of children, young people and carers is heard and will recognise the professional expertise and experience of our staff.
- The involvement of Aboriginal people and organisations is essential in developing, implementing and translating research.⁸

3.1.4 Cultural

- Research will consider the cultural aspects of every element (elements of the research; for example, methodology, participants, data, policy).
- Researchers must ensure the respectful and culturally appropriate management of all biological and non-biological research materials.⁹

3.1.5 Collaborative

- Research will partner with children, young people, families, carers, service providers, staff and other research institutes.
- Research should be based on the establishment of mutual trust, and equivalent partnerships, and the ability to work competently across cultures.¹⁰

3.2 Research Priority Focus Areas:¹¹

³ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/r41>

⁴ SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

⁵ SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

⁶ SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

⁷ SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

⁸ SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

⁹ SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

¹⁰ SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

¹¹ Incorporating and reflecting the 4 Priority areas of the 4th National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children.



The Research Management Committee will be responsible for determining and reviewing the DCP research priority areas, in alignment with DCP Executive priorities. The current priority focus areas are:

- 3.2.1** Reducing Aboriginal children in care; research will focus on addressing the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children in care by supporting strength and safety in Aboriginal families, communities and culture.
 - 3.2.1.1** Research should be conducted on priorities arising from and endorsed by the Aboriginal community to enhance acceptability, relevance and accountability.¹²
- 3.2.2** Improving care experience; research will support children and young people in out of home care to thrive and transition successfully to adult life.
- 3.2.3** Supporting families and carers; research will contribute to prevention and early intervention through supporting families, carers and communities to thrive, including building the evidence base on child abuse risk factors.
- 3.2.4** Deliver a better system; research will improve the organisations ability to keep children and young people safe.
 - 3.2.4.1** Research should deliver tangible benefits to Aboriginal communities. These benefits should be determined by Aboriginal people themselves and consider outcomes and processes during, and as a result of, the research.¹³

4. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Authority/responsibility for
Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Child Protection	Responsible for ensuring the overall effective and Responsible governance of research across DCP. Consider approving research applications as recommended by Research Management Committee (RMC).
Research Management Committee	Responsible for leading the development, implementation and ongoing monitoring of the DCP Research Framework. The RMC will be responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the development, implementation and ongoing monitoring of the DCP Research Framework • Supporting a culture of responsible and ethical research practice that is child and family focussed and culturally sensitive. • Determining DCPs strategic research priorities and directions, including alignment of research to the organisation’s strategic priorities. • Reviewing, assessing, and making recommendations for research applications, amendments and

¹² SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

¹³ SAHMRI 2014, South Australian Aboriginal Health Research Accord: Companion Document, key principles.

Role	Authority/responsibility for
	<p>publications to be endorsed against DCPs priorities and guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring approved research progress until research is completed. • Reviewing draft research publications to approve publication. • Facilitating partnerships and collaborative activity with internal and external stakeholders. • Developing a Research Communications Strategy to ensure research findings are shared and translatable across DCP.
Researchers	<p>Required to apply for and carry out research in a professional, safe and ethical manner in accordance with this Framework, the Research Directive and their Research Agreement.</p>
Senior Research Officer	<p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the efficient and effective coordination of research governance applications, procedures and processes. • Providing expert advice to researchers seeking to undertake DCP research. • Providing expert advice to the Chief Executive DCP and RMC on all research governance matters • Registering and maintaining all research applications, submissions, decisions and updates on the DCP Research Register. • Provision of secretariat support to the RMC.

5. Compliance, monitoring and evaluation

The RMC will report to Senior Executive Group against the priorities and outcomes outlined in this framework, and supporting documents.

6. Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Meaning
Research	<p>Research is defined as the creation of new knowledge or the use of existing knowledge in new, creative and systematic ways so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings" (OECD, 2002). A studious inquiry or examination; especially</p>



Term	Meaning
	investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws.
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
RMC	Department for Child Protection Research Management Committee

7. Related documents

The Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017	https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/CHILDREN%20AND%20YOUNG%20PEOPLE%20(SAFETY)%20ACT%202017/CURRENT/2017.25.AUTH.PDF
The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)" Updated 2018	https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018 .
The SA Public Sector (Data Sharing) Act 2016	https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/PUBLIC%20SECTOR%20(DATA%20SHARING)%20ACT%202016/CURRENT/2016.61.AUTH.PDF .
DCP Privacy Principles	https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/documents/rendition/DP-C-Circular-Information-Privacy-Principles-IPPS-Instruction.pdf
SA Government Intellectual Property Policy (2006)	https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/documents/rendition/Intellectual-Property-Policy.pdf
Research and Evaluation Agreement	\\Famsa02\user1\DATA\Plan Report Eval\Research\Research Management Committee\2019\Documents\Fdocs for New process\DCP Research Agreement - template August 2019.docx
Research Directive	\\Famsa02\user1\DATA\Plan Report Eval\Research\Research Management Committee\2019\Documents\Fdocs for New process\Directive Oct .docx



DCP Research Application form	\\Famsa02\user1\DATA\Plan Report Eval\Research\Research Management Committee\2019\Documents\Fdocs for New process\Directive Oct .docx
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Document control

Publication date	
Replaces	Policy; Research and Evaluation in DCP DECD 14/11161 Conducting Research and Evaluation in DCP procedure DCP Evaluation Framework DCP Research Application form
Framework document owner	Manager Practice Strategy
SEG member responsible (position)	Director Quality and Practice
Applies to	The Research Framework applies to all staff in DCP and research organisations, student researchers, external researchers and evaluators who are undertaking or propose to undertake research regarding DCP sites, services, policies and programs, staff, clients or data.
Approved by	Senior Executive Group
Approval date	
Commencement date	

REVISION RECORD		
Date	Version	Revision description
7/12/2018	0.1	Draft Framework
11/02/2019	0.2	Version approved by CE in brief 19DHS0070
5/04/2019	0.3	Version presented to RMC 29/05/2019
19/06/2019	0.4	Version including Wardliparingga principles to RMC 26/07/2019
12/08/2019	0.5	Final version with changes from 26/07 meeting endorsed as final