

Child Safety PROCEDURE

Title: Carer participation

Policy No: 460-4

Purpose

These procedures will direct action to facilitate and support carer participation:

- in developing and implementing aspects of the case plan for individual children
- in developing responsive policies, programs and practice that uphold children's safety, rights and well-being (systems-level participation).

Process

This policy focuses on processes to support systems-level participation, which is an ongoing process of engagement rather than a one-off event and may be informal or formal.

Informal opportunities for carer participation occur within a carer's day-to-day contact with Child Safety staff and through the deliberate encouragement of opportunities to build positive relationships between carers and staff and carers.

Child Safety is committed to providing formal opportunities for carers to participate in the development of policies, programs and practice that impact their role as carers through:

- specific workshops and forums that focus on issues impacting the training, support and resourcing of carers and the partnership arrangements between carers, Child Safety and foster and kinship care services
- engagement in service planning processes facilitated by the Regional Planning and Partnerships Officers
- facilitating carers' participation in consultation processes, to ensure carers' views and perspectives are represented and heard
- including representation of carers in the Foster and Kinship Carer Oversight Group run by Queensland Foster and Kinship Care
- support for the Foster Care Conferences organised by Queensland Foster and Kinship Care
- supporting Queensland carers representation in national level foster care conferences and forums, and
- regular reviews of the 'Statement of Commitment' between Child Safety, foster and kinship care services and carers.

The approach to carer participation in decision-making will vary depending on the decision to be made and its context. The approaches are:

- Consultation – Carers' views are taken into account. The information carers provide is one source, amongst others, that departmental and foster and kinship care service staff, take into account when making the decision.
- Deciding together – Carers are involved in discussion about the issues and the options with Child Safety staff and foster and kinship care services, and all parties come to an agreed decision.
- Acting together - Carers share responsibility for decision-making with staff of Child Safety and foster and kinship care services, and for implementing the decision.
- Supported – Carers are supported to make autonomous decisions within their responsibilities (even if they may require assistance from staff of Child Safety and foster and kinship care services to action their decision).

Foster and kinship care services may develop their own mechanisms for carer participation in the development of their services and programs.

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Links:

Procedures

Child Safety Practice Manual

Related Policies

Carer participation (460)

Carer learning and support (457)

Foster care matching: a partnership approach (639)

Related Legislation or Standards

Human Rights Act 2019

Statement of Commitment between the Department of [Child Safety], foster care services and the carers of Queensland

Rescinded Procedure

460-3 Carer participation

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