

SCALE OF CULTURAL CONNECTION FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN LIVING IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE

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BACKGROUND AND WHAT WE DID

For Aboriginal children living away from their families in non-Aboriginal foster care, cultural planning is crucial for supporting and maintaining connections to kin, family and community, Country, language, cultural activity, and for receiving and passing on cultural knowledge to our future generations. The amount, type and quality of information about children and their families is important for cultural support plans to be beneficial.

We conducted an Elder-led codesign with our advisory group members and Aboriginal staff from our partner agencies to develop a Scale of Cultural Connection for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children Living in Out-of-Home Care.

The Scale of Cultural Connection is strength-based and designed for self-assessment, or for assessment by social and support workers seeking to bolster the cultural elements of a child or young person’s life. Low scores provide information about the gaps that need to be explored and addressed to ensure that any Aboriginal child or young person living away from their families are connected to their kin, culture, country and community. The higher the score, the greater the chance of better long-term health and wellbeing. outcomes.

SCALE OF CULTURAL CONNECTION

5. Strongly Agree 4. Agree 3. Sometimes 2. Disagree 1. Strongly Disagree

1. I regularly see an Aboriginal person that I trust. *(Aboriginal Elder, kin, family or community member that the child has regular contact with)*
2. I have a cultural mentor that I trust. (Regular contact with a trusted, professional Aboriginal person)
3. I have cultural peer support to help me reach my goals. *(Aboriginal person: early childhood/playgroup support, education support, goal setting or career support)*
4. I have Mob that takes me out on Country. *(Mob = Aboriginal person/people. On Country = where the child is living i.e., camping; to the beach; on bushwalks; picnics; hunting; fishing)*
5. I go back to Country to visit my Mob. *(Back to Country = the child’s traditional lands and community)*
6. I have a regular formal contact arrangement with one of my parents.
7. I have a regular formal contact arrangement contact with my siblings.
8. I play in a sporting team with Mob. *(Aboriginal sporting team; team with other Aboriginal children)*
9. My Elders tell me cultural stories and share cultural knowledge with me.
10. I read cultural stories.
11. I can listen to or watch cultural stories.
12. I go to cultural ceremonies. *(Cultural ceremonies can look different across all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups: sorry business, funerals, smoking ceremonies, birthing ceremonies, baby naming ceremonies)*
13. I do art with Mob.
14. I do cultural dancing with Mob.
15. I learn and speak an Aboriginal language.
16. I can get resources I need for cultural activity. *(Finances, transport, willing carers)*
17. I spend time with an Aboriginal carer. *(Full-time carer/respite carer)*
18. My carer takes me out on Country. *(Camping; to the beach; on bushwalks; picnics where the child lives)*
19. I go to an Aboriginal Medical Service. *(Community-controlled services providing holistic, comprehensive, and culturally appropriate healthcare to Aboriginal community members)*
20. I go to an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation. *(Organisations that are governed, controlled and delivered by Aboriginal community members)*

Possible Maximum Score: 100 My Score:

