

Communities and Justice

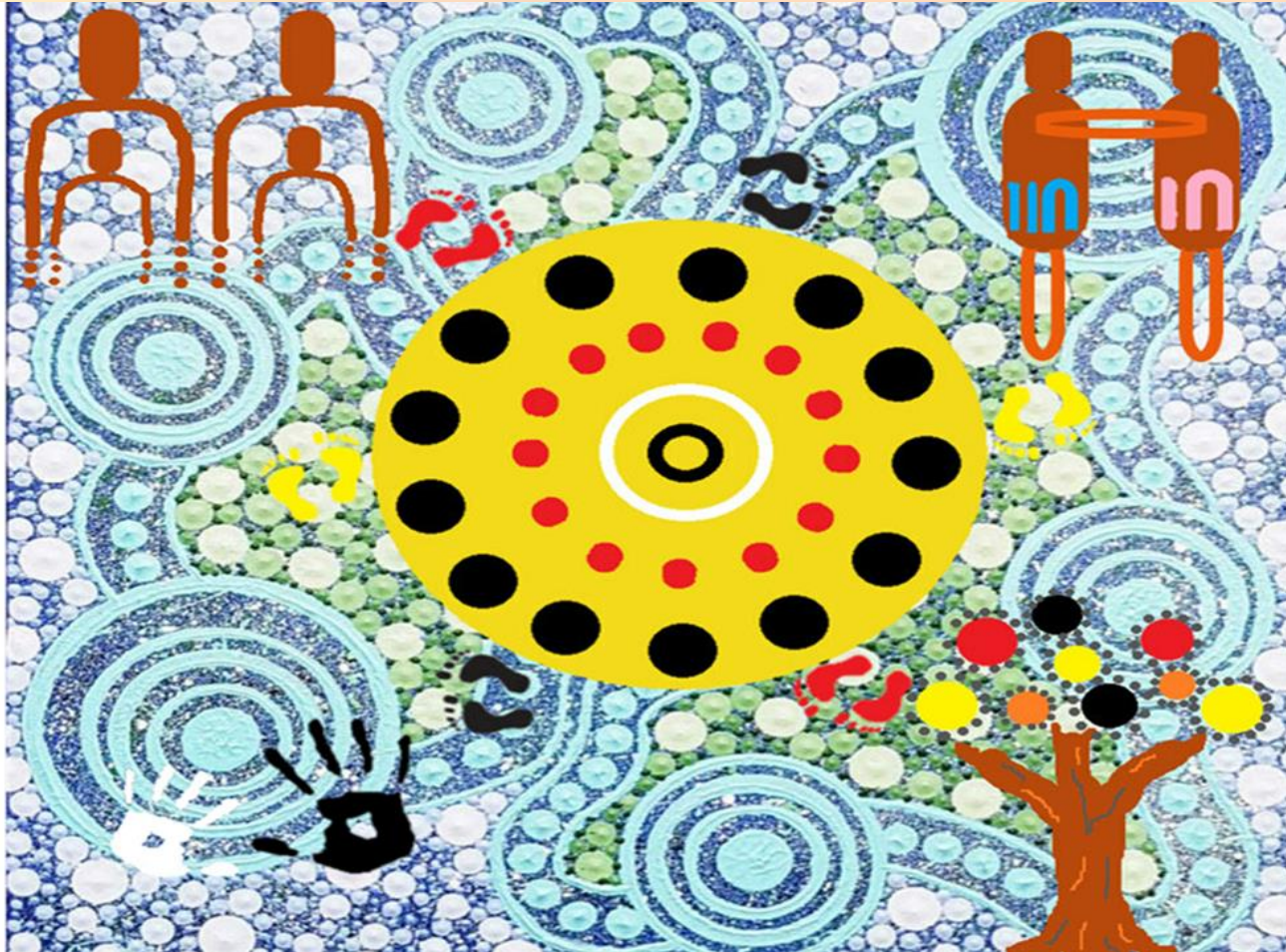
An interim approach to assessing risk in child protection

Changes to Structured Decision Making

August 2024



Acknowledgment of Country



We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the First Nations Peoples of NSW and pay our respects to Elders past, present, and future.

We also acknowledge that family is the cornerstone of Aboriginal culture, spirituality and identity.

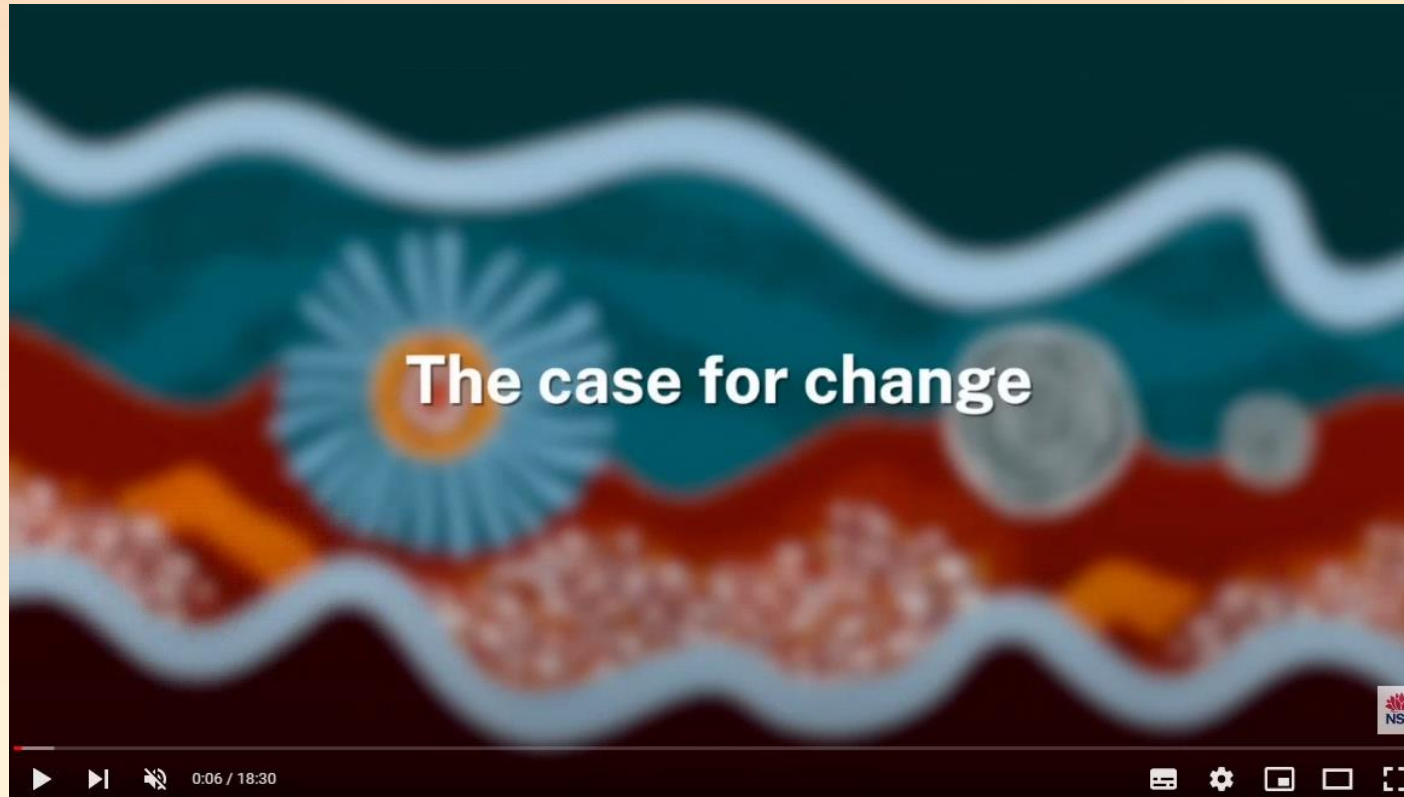
Through our work we will strive to ensure Aboriginal children and young people grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture.

Agenda



1. The Case for Change
2. Changes and Program Referrals
3. Family Based Assessment
4. In Need of Care and Protection Assessment Tool
5. Measuring Change Assessment
6. Overview of changes and what they mean for each program
7. What is not changing
8. Discussion

The Case for Change



Link for video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWV8Y4n-Urg>

What is changing?

In *September 2024* the Risk Assessment will be replaced by Family based Assessment and In Need of Care and Protection record. While Risk Reassessment will be replaced by the Measuring Change Assessment.

The Family based assessment (FBA), like the Risk Assessment, is completed by DCJ practitioners after the SDM Safety Assessment.

As before, DCJ will provide a copy of the completed FBA and other relevant documents with program referrals.

The URF will be amended to reflect the assessment changes.

What does this mean for Program Referrals?



The Risk Assessment outcomes of low, medium, high and very high will be replaced with:

- NOT In Need of Care and Protection (NOT INOCAP)
 - In Need of Care and Protection (INOCAP)
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- The Measuring Change Assessment tool replaces the SDM Risk re-assessment to review a family's progress and decide if DCJ needs to continue working with a family.

What is the Family Based Assessment?

The FBA is a structured assessment to support DCJ practitioners to gather and analyse information to inform decisions about whether a child is:

1. At risk of significant harm
2. In need of care and protection

What can you expect from the Family Based Assessment?

The FBA has a basis in the SDM Risk Assessment, with the following differences:

- scoring removed
- consolidated questions
- no outcomes
- strengthens opportunities for DCJ to consider strengths, protection and network throughout the assessment
- 13 questions, linear flat assessment (no weighting)
- questions focused on how the behaviour of any adult caring for the child impacts their experience of abuse or neglect
- professional judgment tool to support the gathering of information about unique circumstances of individual families
- critical analysis of information to understand the experience of the child
- links to section 23 of Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

What is the In Need of Care and Protection Assessment Tool?

- The In Need of Care and Protection assessment tool supports DCJ practitioners to determine whether DCJ needs to take action, or if the protective measures provided by the family or network during the assessment period are sufficient to reduce the Risk of Significant Harm issues.

How?

- By supporting DCJ practitioners to draw on the information and analysis within the SDM Safety Assessment and Family Based Assessment tool.

In Need of Care and Protection Assessment Tool Outcomes

In Need Of Care and Protection or Not In Need of Care and Protection.

If a child is not In Need of Care and Protection:

- DCJ stops working with the family
- DCJ cannot require a parent/carer to take any action if a child is not INOCAP.

Note: A referral with parental consent can be made to services and suggestions made about how to reduce the Risk of Significant Harm issues, however the parent/carer is under no obligation to accept advice provided or take up referral options.

In Need of Care and Protection Assessment Tool Outcomes (Continued)

If a child IS In Need of Care and Protection:

Determining that a child is In Need of Care Protection:

- enables DCJ to **require** an action from a parent, including attendance at a support service
- **requires** DCJ to continue to work with the family to safeguard the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child **OR** make a referral to a contracted family preservation service and ensure that the family are engaged with the service prior to case closure

What is the Measuring Change Assessment?

- Replaces the SDM Risk Reassessment
- Supports the decision to continue working with a family, or proceed to case closure

Part A–Measuring Change

- Progress with case plan
- Any significant child protection concerns during the period
- Child’s experience of change

Part B–Care and protection review

- Resolution of child protection concerns in period
- Demonstration by parents/network of change to promote safety, welfare and wellbeing
- Consideration of any aspects of care that DCJ remains concerned about

Summary of assessment criterion changes

| Preservation Program streams | Current SARA Criterion | Eligibility (September 2024) |
|---|--|---|
| Family Preservation (former Brighter Futures and Youth Hope) | SARA not mandatory. If applied, Safety Assessment (SA) outcome of safe Risk Assessment outcome of low, medium or high | If applied, SA unchanged Family Based Assessment (FBA) In Need of Care and Protection Assessment outcome (INOCAP) of <u>NOT</u> INOACP though INOCAP referrals may also be considered for referral. |
| Intensive Family Preservation (IFP) | Safety Assessment outcome of 'safe' or 'safe with plan' Risk Assessment outcome of high or very high. | SA unchanged FBA + INOCAP Assessment outcome of INOCAP |
| Intensive Family Based Services (IFBS) | Safety Assessment outcome of 'safe' or 'safe with plan' Risk Assessment outcome of high or very high. Or Case plan permanency goal of restoration. | SA unchanged FBA + INOCAP Assessment outcome of INOCAP |
| Resilient Families (RF) | Safety Assessment outcome of 'safe' or 'safe with plan' Risk Assessment outcome of high or very high. | SA unchanged FBA + INOCAP Assessment outcome of INOCAP Risk reassessment will be replaced with new Measuring Change assessment. |

Summary of assessment criterion changes continued

| Preservation Program streams | Current SARA Criterion | Eligibility (September 2024) |
|--|---|--|
| Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST- CAN®) | Safety Assessment outcome of 'safe' or 'safe with plan' Risk Assessment outcome of high or very high or Alternate Assessment with level of future risk identified as high or very high. | SA unchanged FBA + INOCAP Assessment outcome of INOCAP Risk reassessment will be replaced with new Measuring Change assessment. |
| Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare (FFT-CW®) | SARA or Alternate Assessment <u>Safety Assessment</u> outcome of 'safe' or 'safe with plan' Referral can be made from Safety Assessment so Risk outcome can be of low, medium, high or very high Restoration including Temporary Care Arrangements. | SA unchanged FBA + INOCAP Assessment outcome: INOCAP or NOT INOCAP |
| Permanency Support Program – Family Preservation (PSP-FP) | Safety Assessment outcome of 'safe' or 'safe with plan' Risk Assessment outcome of high or very high Risk reassessments required every 3 months | SA unchanged FBA + INOCAP Assessment outcome of INOCAP Risk reassessment will be replaced with new Measuring Change assessment. |
| Nabu | Where there is a likely or imminent risk of harm; or Early intervention for families.. or Child is in OOHC and restoration is the goal. | FBA + INOCAP Assessment outcome: INOCAP or NOT INOCAP |

What is not changing?

There will be no update to Service Provision Guidelines given the current recommissioning process.

There will be no change to reporting requirements for Infoshare.

Next steps

We will email to advise when FAQs from information sessions are up on our Family Preservation microsite.

You will receive an email to notify 'go live' date.

How to get in touch

For all enquiries please:



Email us familypreservation@dcj.nsw.gov.au

