Communities and Justice

External Use

Placement Needs Assessment Prompts – NGO Info Sheet

PSP NGO's creating high quality information to support placement matching.

A **Placement Needs Assessment (PNA)** is a record in ChildStory which is completed when a child or young person requires a placement with a non-government organisation (NGO) or authorised DCJ foster carer(s).

The information recorded in the Placement Needs Assessment is generated by DCJ into the **Client Information Forms** referred to as **'CIFs'** (CIF A – Personal Information, CIF B – very Personal Information) and Carer Information documents.

The Placement Needs Assessment and generated CIFs are a key part of referral documentation that captures key information about a child or young person when seeking a placement.

They provide vital information about the child or young person, their current circumstances and any supports and professionals involved in their life. It is strengths-based and contextual to support placement matching.

The PNA provides information across 10 elements of a child or young person's life:

1. **Identifying Details**
2. **Personal Identity**
3. **Family and Significant Relationships**
4. **Placement Information**
5. **Contact Arrangements**
6. **Health**
7. **Education and Vocation**
8. **Emotional and Behavioural Functioning**
9. **Daily Living Arrangements**
1. **Other Services and/or Supports**

Why the PNA is Important

The quality of the information you provide in these elements directly affects how quickly and appropriately children or young people are placed.

Thorough and accurate information reduces delays, avoids repeated requests, and helps ensure the child or young person's needs are understood and met from the beginning of placement.

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Based on the information provided, PSP (Permanency Support Program) providers and CFDU will seek to match the child or young person with the most suitable placement that will support their stability and wellbeing.

The information should create an accurate holistic picture of the child or young person and be written to maintain a strengths-based approach — especially when describing challenging behaviours.

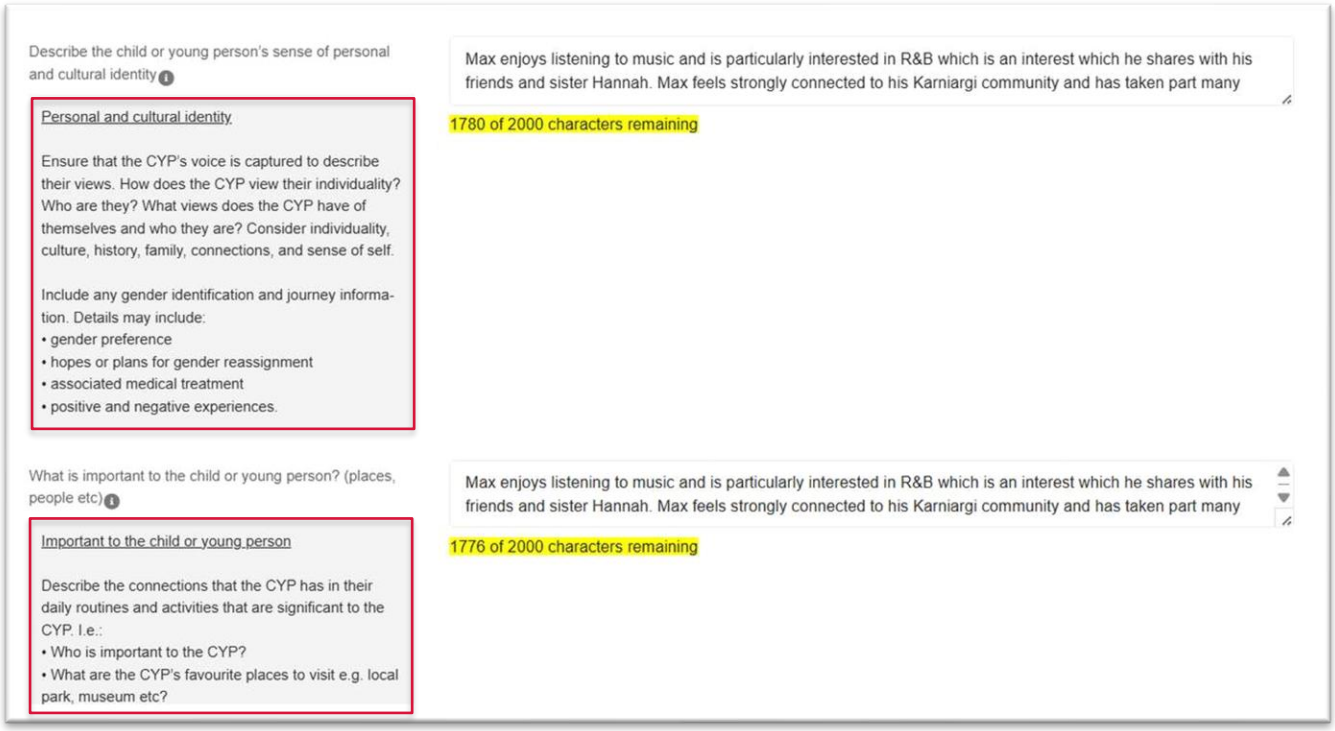
Trial of the Prompts

A set of prompts have been refined after positive trial outcomes where they showed reduced referral and placement times, improvement in the quality of information, and reduced need for repeated needs/suitability assessments.

These improvements meant less time lost to administrative back-and-forth and more time supporting children, young people and carers.

ChildStory Partner

On 31st October 2025 ChildStory was updated with the prompts, to be used when completing a Placement Needs Assessment record in Partner. You will find them on the left-hand side of the page of the record. The Partner Knowledge Article has also been updated with these changes.



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The Prompts

The prompts are designed to guide caseworkers in providing complete relevant information upfront, supporting faster and more accurate referral processes resulting in placement.

The prompts are best practice to be used for all children or young persons, of any age or circumstances who require a placement.

Every detail you provide builds the foundation for a child or young person's placement journey and can make a real difference to their experience of care.

The prompts are part of a broader commitment to strengthen practice, improve system efficiency, and deliver better outcomes for children and young people.

As a caseworker, the care and effort you put into gathering and sharing information helps create a stronger system for everyone.

PSP Providers Role

PSP Providers will utilise the prompts when writing and reviewing placement needs assessments for all children and young people requiring a placement outside their agency. Providers should ensure their staff have access to the resources and support to create placement needs assessments.

DCJ CFDU and CAU (for residential placements) will be utilising the prompts to ensure quality of placement requests made by others (DCJ and PSP). Feedback will continue to be provided as well as requests to Providers to amend information where needed to complete placement broadcast/finding.

Support

Providers should contact their relevant local DCJ contact i.e. CFDU or CAU with any queries.