

Kani paliti

Aboriginal Cultural Safety Commitment Statement

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

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Cooee tunapri

Acknowledging palawa and their way of knowing

There has never been a time when the palawa have not lived as part of lutruwita (Tasmania), and her skies, land, waterways and sea country. For always, the palawa have honoured lutruwita through their ceremonial practices and complex knowledge systems that continue to be passed down generationally through oral traditions.

Aboriginal children grow strong and thrive from the knowledge of their families, the lore of their country, and active participation in cultural practice. They carry this knowledge throughout their lives while passing it down to their own children. These children become elders who are vital in upholding and preserving cultural lore, nurturing communal knowledge, and growing children up strong. Healthy elders grow safe children.

Recognising the impacts of invasion and colonisation in lutruwita (Tasmania) is an important step to understanding why keeping Aboriginal children safe has been a critical conversation for over 200 years. The dispossession of their families, their country and their culture had and continues to affect Aboriginal children to this day.

Forced child removal under many different policies across the nation and ongoing child and youth detention, has continued to put Aboriginal children into high-risk environments, where their rights and safety have been removed.

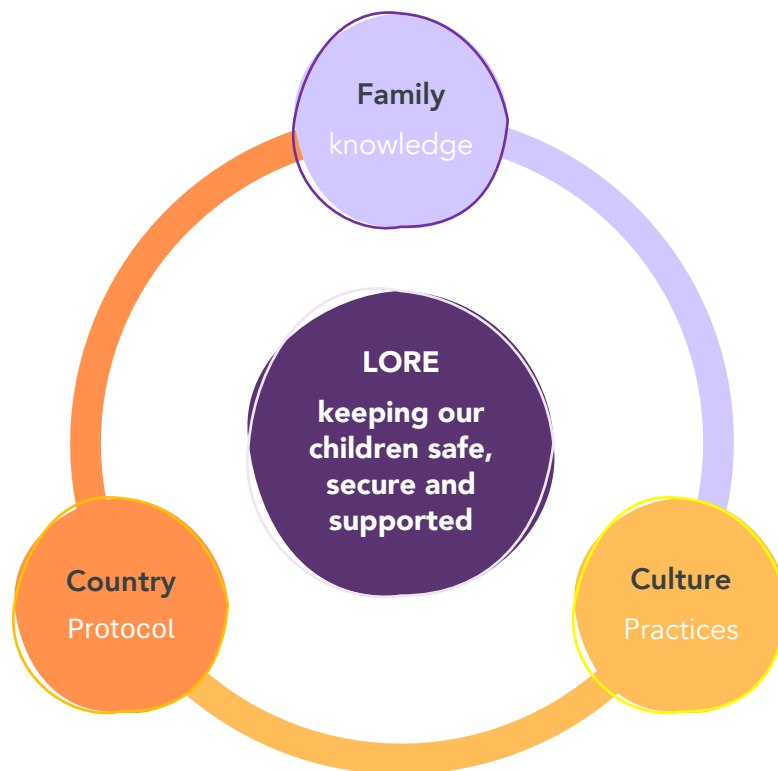
While a whole government response is underway for the Commission of Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings, it is crucial for the Tasmanian Government to acknowledge the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal children in these settings and the pathways that have led them there.

To allow any real and significant change to occur, there must be genuine partnership working with Aboriginal families and for self-determination for children and families to be enabled.

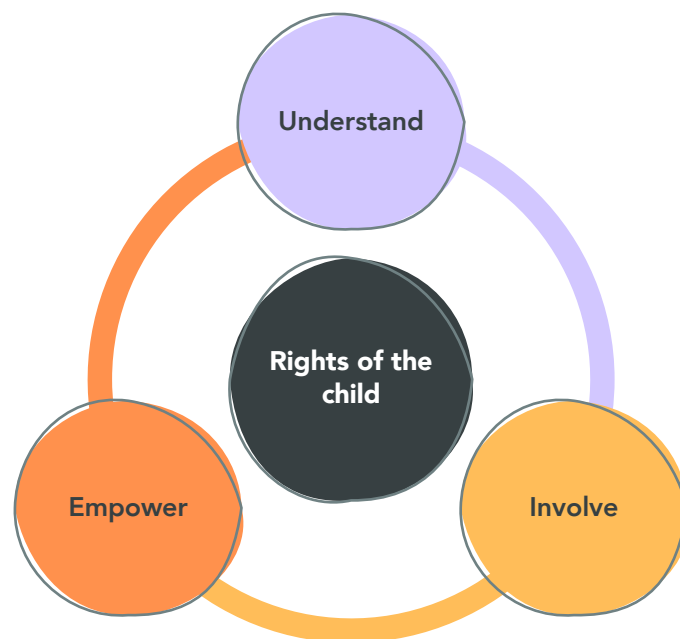
Palawa cultural methodology

Following the cultural methodology, the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Commitment statement has been prepared to align with Aboriginal values. The cultural methodology understands that our present actions can significantly impact future generations' ability to thrive. We must foster strong partnerships and collaborations that promote the preservation of cultural identity and the safe expression of values, beliefs and practices. We must engage and consult with palawa people and elders state-wide to make sure that best practices are informed by diverse knowledge and collaboration.

This Palawa cultural methodology must be embedded in all stages of creating Aboriginal Child Safety in Tasmania.



palawa cultural pathway for commitment



The above pathway demonstrates the directions outlined below to achieve Aboriginal Child Safety.

UNDERSTAND and build culturally proficient and responsive care systems that allow truth-telling to be embraced and accepted.


- To build strong foundations for change, develop cultural awareness of Aboriginal people's history and experiences and progress cultural competency proficiency training for government workers.
- Develop and embed culturally safe, trauma-informed and therapeutic practices into child and family community services that meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by completing cultural safety awareness training.
- Commence designing a long-term Aboriginal Child Safety Action Plan in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Tasmania.

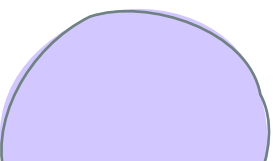


INVOLVE and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expertise and collaborate with them to create culturally appropriate governance models.

- Establish an independent delegation of cultural knowledge holders and support service professionals to work with the Aboriginal Child Commissioner in supporting government and service providers to meet Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' expectations.
- Meet Close the Gap requirements by partnering to enable growth in the community-controlled sector and support the strengthening of community capacity building and professional development.
- Improve the availability and quality of legal support and representation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children and families experiencing the child protection system.

EMPOWER children to keep them with us so they can achieve their rights to grow strong on country and in culture and thrive within their cultural and care networks.

- Establish a genuine and collaborative partnership to deliver integrated services and coordinated care to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's rights to greater choice, control and cultural authority over their own care and protection.
 - Empower and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship care threads through innovative legislation, policies, and practices that embed cultural context and safety, that also provide continued connections to family, community, culture and country for children in out-of-home care and in youth detention facilities.
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References

The directions developed in this draft Palawa Statement have been comprised of insights from initial community engagement (limited due to time constraints) and referenced from previous work, including:

- Iuwutina mana-mapali krakani waranta/Keeping our children with us: Report to Government and the Aboriginal Community about changes needed to the child protection system in Tasmania, H Sculthorpe, 2014
- Keeping Children Safe and Rebuilding Trust, Tasmanian Government
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle
- National agreement on Closing the Gap

Influences include:

- UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child
- Previous and ongoing advocacy from SNAICC