

**Principle 1. The services available to children are not limited by the type of care they are in.** The best interests and wellbeing of the child who is in care is the determining criteria for eligibility for services/resources. Where and with whom the child is living should not limit the resources available to support the placement.

1.1 All kinship carers to have access to information such that children in their care can access early childhood education, educational support services and health care in the same way as other children.

1.2 Advocacy to take place with Centrelink regarding the development of a communications and implementation plan to ensure that Kinship carers are aware of their Centrelink entitlements and how to access them. The plan to be developed by consulting with key stakeholders, such as Grandparent liaison officers, state child welfare departments and NGO service providers.

1.3 Permanent care arrangements not to be used as a reason to reduce the availability of support to kinship carers.

1.4 All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are supported by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations, and that the organisation demonstrates compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle.

All carers and their kin are able to meaningfully participate in decision-making and benefit from family finding programs.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled agencies are resourced to support their communities in the identification, assessment and support of kinship carers drawing on the requisite cultural authority in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

1.5 The definitions of kinship care in law and policy are reviewed, including ensuring an adequate recognition of culturally defined concepts of kinship care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the critical role of children, families and communities with cultural authority to define kinship relationships for children.

1.6 Where there are Family Court orders in place that result in kinship care arrangements, as a result of child protection issues, the State carer allowance be payable. Introduce a provision or practice for grandparents to have PR for specific period of time and a linked mechanism for financially supporting this.

1.7 That all families have access to service provided within the definition of 'best practice' in working with families, for example family participation in child protection and family finding. That is be included as mandatory training for all kinship carers.

**Principle 2. Children in Kinship care have rights - and government, services and the border community have a responsibility to up hold these.**

2.1 Children's view should be sought in developing Kinship care services and supports and in relation to a research agenda.

2.2 Rights to access education, health care are upheld and facilitated.

2.3 All children in kinship care to receive the same Centrelink entitlements and support regardless of whether they are being cared for by grandparents, other relatives or 'significant others'. (Some currently only available to Grandparents).

2.4 \*\*States and Territories to provide financial support for children in statutory care equitably on the basis of need regardless of whether they are in kinship care or foster care.

2.5 All States and Territories to implement a common decision-making process for statutory carer payments according to the needs of the children in their care, regardless of the type of home based care the child is in.

2.6 Every child in statutory kinship care to have an active caseworker, and every kinship carer to have a support worker available to call on as required.

**Principle 3. Public recognition of Kinship care. There is public awareness raising activity about kinship care including recognition of the distinct nature of ATSI kinship care.**

3.1 Exploration of the appropriate vehicle for establishing a National Kinship Care organisation to provide ongoing advocacy for support for children in kinship care both informal and formal (statutory) and their carers. This body would represent the issues relating to the breadth of kinship care policy. It would be developed using a co-design process that allowed for a proper consultation process with key stakeholders, including SNAICC, other national and state peaks and government equivalents. This body is to be independent from government.

3.2 Long term kinship care to be the subject of further research to identify the extent and nature of this issue and potential policy responses.

3.3 A social media and advertising campaign, to be funded by federal government to support positive recognition of the role that kinship carers play. This will include the creation of a kinship care week

3.4 Concrete proposals regarding support for all children in kinship care to be included in any new National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children post 2020.