

# ACWA NGO Sector Permanency Support Program (PSP) Needs Analysis

## Report 6: ACWA OOHC Forum – 12 September 2017

This report identifies the critical needs and proposed solutions NGOs conveyed to ACWA relating to the PSP Reform in the Sydney OOHC Forum Focus Group. Participants were also asked to rank the priority of need relating to each of the needs. This information was gathered on Tuesday 12 September at the ACWA OOHC Forum from 26 people representing 11 different agencies. The participants comprised of OOHC caseworkers, team leaders, managers and 2 Health Coordinators. Notably, no Aboriginal controlled agencies were present. The feedback gathered from participants will inform a statewide survey that would gather more information on the needs of the NGO sector relating to the Permanency Support Program reform.

<p><b>1. The critical needs in caseworker practice, skills and capabilities</b></p>	<p><b>Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Affidavit writing and other legal documentation</li> <li>➤ Legislation relevant to PSP</li> <li>➤ Working with Section 90s to reach permanency goals (especially in relation to Guardianship Orders)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Having/handling difficult conversations</li> <li>• Risk assessments and tools (SARA and SDM)</li> <li>• Working with crisis/emergency placements</li> <li>• Understanding of when to remove and what is an “acceptable” level of risk for restoration/preservation</li> </ul> <p><b>Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An overall understanding of what case work practice is going to look like under the PSP</li> <li>• Working with birth families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Conversations around permanency (difficult conversations)</li> <li>➤ Preservation</li> <li>➤ Restoration</li> <li>➤ Removal of children</li> <li>➤ Family Finding</li> <li>➤ Life story work</li> <li>➤ Working therapeutically</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Casework practice – changing carer’s exceptions</li> <li>• Working in the new therapeutic model</li> <li>• Understanding the new</li> </ul>
---	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical training for new and emerging areas of work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Working therapeutically with birth families</li> <li>➤ Overview of PSP once finalised</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Working effectively with Aboriginal agencies and communities</li> <li>• Carer support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Understanding when to engage carers with birth families and how to facilitate a strong relationships</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Capabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trouble shooting during PSP rollout</li> <li>• Identification tools made available to NGOs to make appropriate decisions re families</li> <li>• Education for caseworkers regarding funding packages (outcome based) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowing what the expectations are on permanency – individual and global expectations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• More understanding on dealing with cases where permanency pathways are not appropriate/clear</li> <li>• Increasing the carer pool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recruiting for new short term arrangement</li> <li>➤ Supporting carers to work with birth families</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understanding the new way FACS and NGOs will work together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Clarity of roles</li> <li>➤ Information sharing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Access to databases and other resources to be able to adequately do life story/family finding/genealogy work/etc.</li> <li>• Capacity and time to work adequately with all stakeholders</li> <li>• Ensuring ongoing health/education needs will be monitored after permanency has been achieved</li> <li>• Pathways and support for step-down services within OOHC</li> <li>• Adequate funding to ensure the child's needs are met</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. How you rank them in priority to be addressed</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carer recruitment awareness across boarder carer training and support / retention continuum</li> <li>2. Working with birth families <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strength and risk measurement tools and other measures</li> <li>b. Therapeutic care when to address trauma and develop therapeutic relationships with birth families</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Legal training <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Speaking same language affidavit writing</li> <li>b. Working within the Act</li> <li>c. Report writing</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Clarification of roles (FACS/NGOs etc.)</li> <li>5. Collaboration across spectrum of PSP and understanding and information flow</li> <li>6. Health and wellbeing assessment vs. PSP goals</li> </ol>
<p><b>3. What you think the possible support solutions are</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint NGO/FACS training across PSP spectrum</li> <li>• SDM and SARA tool training</li> <li>• Legal training / access to advice</li> <li>• Information hotline</li> <li>• Realistic expectation / timeframes</li> <li>• Large scale advertising campaign for broader community to inform NSW about the changes to child protection</li> <li>• Ongoing training and support for carers (coaching/ mentoring skills for case workers) and continuum of support</li> <li>• Online training/feedback – teleconference and communities of practice</li> <li>• Trauma training new models</li> <li>• Access to services</li> <li>• Cultural lens/competency and consultation</li> </ul>