Appraisal

Direction to staff

This document provides instructional information for Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) to conduct its business. All staff must comply with it.

Note: Unless otherwise indicated:

- the term 'child' or 'children' also refers to 'young person' or 'young people'
- the term 'children in care' refers to 'children in out of home care'
- the term 'parent' also refers to a 'carer' with daily care responsibility.

Summary of main points

This document outlines how to:

- Plan for an Appraisal with consideration of the Appraisal Risk Analysis
- Develop an Appraisal Action Plan
- Seek parental agreement to an Appraisal and/or provide notification
- Seek an Appraisal Order (if required)
- Gathering information through interviews, visual examinations and information requests
- Conduct an analysis of the information collect
- Record the Appraisal outcome, substantiation decision and person believed responsible
- Develop post-Appraisal actions

Purpose of this document

This procedure outlines the process for determining whether an Appraisal is required, developing an Appraisal Action Plan, implementing the plan through completing an Appraisal and finalising an Appraisal.

Scope

This procedure applies to all staff within CYPS undertaking an Appraisal. The appraising case manager may differ from the allocated case manager.

Note: Appraisals conducted in response to an allegation of abuse in care will be carried out by a CYPP4 (or above), a senior practitioner or a principal practitioner (see the 'Abuse in care allegations – OOHC provider case managed' or the 'Abuse in care allegations – CYPS case managed' procedures).

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Relevant policy

This procedure upholds the principles of the Appraisal Policy and is to be read in conjunction with the documents listed in the below section 'Related materials'.

When to perform this procedure

This procedure is to be conducted when a Child Protection Report requires an Appraisal response.

Procedures

There are 13 key steps in the Appraisal process. Depending on the circumstances of the case, the order and completion of the steps can vary:

There are eight key steps in the Appraisal process:

1. Identify when to complete an Appraisal
2. Planning an Appraisal
3. Developing an Appraisal Action Plan
4. Determine if Appraisal agreement from a parent is required
5. Determine if Appraisal notification to a parent is required
6. Conduct the Appraisal
7. Information gathering
8. Analysis of the information collected
9. Make a substantiation decision

10. Record a 'person believed responsible'
11. Assess the need for Family Preservation
12. Develop post-Appraisal actions
13. Seek endorsement of the Appraisal

Step 1 – Identify when to complete an Appraisal

A care and protection Appraisal is one of a range of options available to CYPS in responding to Child Protection Report.

An Appraisal is a planned process of enquiry into a family situation, with the aim of identifying whether or not the child:

- is experiencing,
- has experienced, or
- is at risk of[1] experiencing abuse and/or neglect.

An Appraisal is appropriate in response to a Child Protection Report where the risk assessment process indicates:

- That the subject child and/or their siblings may:
    - **have been**,
    - **are being**, or
    - **are at risk of**, abuse and/or neglect (including family violence), and
- the capacity of the parent/s to protect the child/ren from this abuse is **unknown** or **untested**.

An Appraisal will also occur where a child may be in **need of care and protection** because of:

- Serious and persistent conflict between the child and the people with parental responsibility, or
- The people with parental responsibility for the child are dead, have abandoned the child or cannot be found after reasonable inquiry, or
- The people with parental responsibility for the child are sexually or financially exploiting the child or not willing to protect them from sexual or financial exploitation.

An Appraisal response does not prevent the appraising case manager from also recommending strategies for addressing **need** such as referral to community support or arranging a case conference.

Linking additional Child Protection Reports to an open Appraisal

Completion of an open Appraisal **will not** be affected by receipt of further Child Protection Reports before the 28 day Appraisal period has elapsed. As an Appraisal addresses the entire risk environment (not just a reported event), any new information received will be considered in the context of the open Appraisal.

- Where new Child Protection Reports concerning the **same** incident are received and where no additional risk issues are identified, the additional reports may be closed as a multiple report on the client information system, CYRIS (provided **less** than 28 days has elapsed since the receipt of the original CCR or CPR).

[1] Please refer to s344 and the examples provided for the definition of 'at risk' of abuse and/or neglect. Many situations involving cumulative harm, neglect and emotional abuse will fall within this category.

- However, any Child Protection Reports received identifying a **new** incident or **new risks** will need to be assessed as meeting the criteria for an Appraisal.
- If there is already an open Appraisal on CYRIS, subsequent Reports can be linked to the open Appraisal as long as:
    - the Reports are received within **28 days** of the Appraisal commencement date, **and**
    - all subject persons on the Report are also subject persons on the open Appraisal (otherwise a new Appraisal will need to be created).
    - Linking several CPRs to one open Appraisal means:
        - All risk types identified by each CPR will be addressed in the open Appraisal
        - All of the Appraisal actions (e.g. collecting information, risk analysis, documenting findings) in response to the risks identified by each CPR can be documented in the one Appraisal record on CYRIS
        - Only one Appraisal Agreement/Notification process is required
        - Families will experience the Appraisal as one continuous process (e.g. interviews, phone calls, gathering of family information etc).
- Each linked CPR which meets the criteria to proceed to Appraisal **must** record the outcome of 'To Be Appraised Within Current Open Appraisal' and be linked to the open Appraisal by selecting the Appraisal number (APP number) at the CPR outcome. This is to ensure that data is accurately recorded and counted.
- When more than one CPR is addressed in a single open Appraisal, each suspected abuse or neglect type identified by the individual CPRs must be addressed in the Risk Quadrant on CYRIS.
- If a CPR details risks which have not been adequately addressed in the Appraisal activities which have already taken place, additional activities must occur **or** a separate Appraisal should be commenced:
    - Staff **must** conduct additional interviews in response to any linked CPR which details sexual or physical abuse
    - Staff **must** be clear with the family about the purpose of the interview (e.g. investigating allegations of sexual or physical abuse) and highlight this in record keeping.
- It may be appropriate to address new Reports of sexual or physical abuse by commencing a separate Appraisal process, instead of investigating these concerns within the context of an open Appraisal. Staff may determine the most appropriate Appraisal response based on the information already available and decisions made in collaboration with their team leader.

Step 2 – Planning an Appraisal

Planning an Appraisal must result in decisions about the activities and information necessary to complete the Appraisal Risk Analysis.

At every stage of the Appraisal process the appraising case manager is assessing risk to the child (and their siblings) – from gathering information, to analysis and forming a judgement about what the collected information means in terms of safety and risk.

The Appraisal Risk Analysis begins with the commencement of an Appraisal and does not conclude until all interviews and Appraisal activities have been conducted.

Completion of an Appraisal Risk Analysis may be affected by:

- Waiting until the results of a section 862 request for information have been received and considered
- Receiving a specialised assessment from an external assessor (e.g. a CARHU medical assessment)
- Ensuring assessment results are used to inform the Appraisal Risk Analysis outcome.

The Appraisal must be completed within **28 days** of the commencement date.

In cases where it is unlikely this timeframe will be met (such as where CYPS are waiting for an assessment report from a health professional), the appraising case manager's **team leader** will bring the matter to the attention of the relevant operations manager.

The **operations manager** may use their discretion to approve an appropriate extension to the Appraisal deadline.

There are four related processes involved in the Appraisal Risk Analysis:

1. Gathering Information
2. Analysis of information
3. Judgment of risk and safety
4. Substantiation and further CYPS support decisions.

The objectives of the Appraisal Risk Analysis will be considered while scoping the Appraisal. Doing so will allow the appraising case manager to:

- Clearly articulate the information about the child, parents, siblings, family functioning and parenting capacity, that is necessary to determine an analysis of risk
- Identifying significant factors which will impact the analysis
- Guide professional judgement of the child's exposure to risk and mitigating protective factors, and therefore inform the Appraisal outcome.

Appraisal Risk Analysis			
Information gathering	**Analysis of information**	**Judgement of risk and safety**	**Substantiation and further CYPS support**
Gather information about: • The child and siblings (age, development, functioning) • The parent/s (attitude to the abuse and/or neglect, relationship with child, parenting capacity, parent's relationship with each other) • The source of abuse and/or neglect	The analysis of information gathered during the Appraisal to: • Understand what has occurred in the context of family dynamic • Determine abuse and/or neglect behaviour and history or pattern of abuse • Impact of violence on the child and family function • Impact of other factors such as;	An informed judgement regarding: • Has the child been abused or neglected? • Is the child at risk of abuse and/or neglect? • Is there an indication that cumulative harm has occurred? • Is there evidence of coercive control? • What is the impact on the family functioning?	Determine the outcome of the Appraisal by considering: • Has the Appraisal process been substantiated? • Has an additional mandated abuse type been identified? • Has a person believed responsible for the abuse and/or neglect been identified?

• Patterns of family violence • Patterns of drug use • Mental health issues • Supports to family • Services involved • Information held by other agencies (e.g. police, DVCS, Health) • The child's views	poverty, unemployment, drug and alcohol, mental health on family functioning and child wellbeing • Understand what factors are in place to protect the child • Actions taken by parent/s to protect the child and promote safety	• Who is responsible for the abuse and/or neglect or risk of abuse and/or neglect? • What is in place already to protect the child/ren?	• Is a Safety Plan required? • What further support will be recommended?

2.1 - Appraisal activities

Section 366 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008* (the Act) defines the scope of an Appraisal process by listing the following Appraisal activities:

- a visual examination of the child or young person or someone else,
- an interview of the child or young person or someone else,
- giving information to someone,
- asking someone to give information to the Director-General,
- making inquiries about the child or young person or someone else,
- arranging for a care and protection assessment of the child or young person or someone else,
- asking the child or young person or someone else to attend a stated place at a stated time for the Appraisal or a care and protection assessment,
- asking the child or young person or someone else to comply with any arrangement made by the Director-General for the Appraisal or a care and protection assessment.

An Appraisal does not have to include every one of these activities, however it can involve many of them.

Care and protection assessments

A care and protection assessment may take place as part of an Appraisal. Section 367 of the Act defines a care and protection assessment as:

- a medical examination or test of the person,
- a dental examination or test of the person,
- a social assessment of the person,
- a paediatric or developmental assessment of the person,
- a psychological examination or test of the person,
- a psychiatric examination or test of the person,
- if the person is a parent or other person with parental responsibility – an assessment of the person's parenting capacity.

A care and protection assessment will be requested when specific expertise is necessary to assess the child or parent/s. The assessment must be conducted by an authorised assessor (defined by section 438) and may not include an assessment or test that involves surgery or is otherwise

prescribed by a regulation. All assessments sought by CYPS must be completed by the assessor within a timely manner.

Certain assessments **must** be conducted when particular allegations are being appraised. For example, CYPS must arrange a medical examination when any of the following apply:

- the appraising case manager has formed a reasonable belief that a child has suffered or is suffering:
    - medical and/or physical neglect
    - physical abuse
    - sexual abuse
    - sexual exploitation
- a child discloses that they have suffered sexual or physical abuse
- liaison with health services indicates that a child under 2 has not been seen recently by a health professional.

To arrange a medical examination, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Discuss the need for a medical examination with a team leader and seek endorsement
2. Seek the parent/s consent for the examination. If the parent/s refuse to provide consent, the appraising case manager may consider:
    a. Emergency Action (if the child is considered to be at immediate risk), or
    b. Application for an Appraisal Order.
3. Submit a medical examination referral to the Child at Risk Health Unit (CARHU) (see the 'Referrals to the Child at Risk Health Unit' procedure).

Step 3 – Develop an Appraisal Action Plan

The appraising case manager will develop an Appraisal Action Plan by completing the relevant section on CYRIS. The Appraisal Action Plan will outline the activities that will form the Appraisal Risk Analysis process.

Note: If an Out of Home Care provider provides case management for the subject child, the Appraisal Action Plan must be developed in consultation with the relevant OOHC provider staff member (see the 'Abuse in care allegations – Out of Home Care provider case managed' procedure).

The Appraisal Action Plan will address:

1. The information gathered during the Child Concern Report and Child Protection Report Risk assessment phases.
2. Any immediate safety concerns, including:
    a. the likelihood of requiring an out-of-home care placement for the child
    b. risks during the Appraisal process
3. What Appraisal activities will be required, such as:
    a. A visual examination of the child
        - CYPS staff must follow particular requirements when conducting a visual examination of a child (see Step 7.4 - 'Undertaking a visual examination').
    b. The schedule of necessary interviews:
        i. Who will be interviewed (this **must** include the child, siblings (if applicable) and at least one of the parents)

Note: All interviews will be conducted in person. Telephone interviews are **never** an appropriate method of Appraisal.

ii. in what order should interviews be conducted?

iii. consider what time of day might be best time to approach each parent (keep in mind patterns of drug and alcohol use, employment and school hours)?

iv. is it appropriate to speak to the child on their own?

v. is there information which indicates family violence?

- If so, make sure **each parent is interviewed in at a separate time and place**.
- Interview the non-violent parent first (see the 'Working with Families Affected by Family and Domestic Violence' guide).

vi. where should the interviews be held?

vii. are support workers necessary?

viii. Do support services already involved with the family have advice about how to best engage the family?

4. What information will be gathered to inform a judgement of the child's risk and safety, including:

   a. Vulnerabilities, such as:

      i. the child's age, developmental stage, and functioning (see the 'Essential Information Gathering Categories' section of the Risk Assessment Framework)

      ii. prior Appraisals which have substantiated abuse, neglect and/or family violence

      iii. previous CYPS involvement and the outcomes of the support provided

      iv. recurring themes or issues in the child's history which might be indicative of cumulative harm.

   Note: the appraising case manager must consider whether there are any other factors which may influence the child's development and wellbeing, such as an organic or medical condition, which cannot be attributed to the care the child receives.

   b. Information about each of the child's parents, including:

      i. attitude to the abuse, neglect and/or family violence

      ii. relationship with the child

      iii. relationship with the other parent (if applicable)

      iv. functioning (including disability)

      v. parenting capacity.

   See the 'Essential Information Gathering Categories' section of the Risk Assessment Framework.

   c. The source of the abuse and/or neglect, including:

      i. the abuse and/or neglect behaviour such as any actual or believed injury to the child, details of the neglectful behaviour and any explanations given for the abuse and/or neglect

      ii. the severity of the current abuse and/or neglect

iii. details of any history and patterns of abuse and/or neglect.

See the 'Essential Information Gathering Categories' section of the Risk Assessment Framework.

d. The perpetrator of the family violence including:
    i. Patterns of coercive control
    ii. The impact of the violence on the child
    iii. The impact of the violence on the family functioning
    iv. The efforts being made by the non-violent parent to keep the child/ren safe
    v. The interaction of other factors including drug and alcohol, mental health, disability.

e. The child's exposure to and the opportunity for abuse and/or neglect, including:
    i. access of person/s associated with causing the abuse, neglect and/or family violence to the child
    ii. the intent of the person/s associated with causing the abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    iii. the child's exposure to the abuse, neglect and/or family violence.

See the 'Essential Information Gathering Categories' section of the Risk Assessment Framework.

f. The family's engagement with support and services, including engagement with informal (i.e. extended family) and formal supports (i.e. services)

See the 'Essential Information Gathering Categories' section of the Risk Assessment Framework.

g. The views and wishes of the child, including:
    i. The child's views in respect of the alleged abuse and/or neglect
    ii. How the child feels about any risks in their environment
    iii. Any concerns or fears that the child has articulated during interview
    iv. What the child would like to see change or improve in their home.

Note: Refer to the Risk Assessment Framework for additional considerations. In particular, see 'Attachment 2: Practice Tool – Risk Factors Guide (including questions).'

5. If a care and protection assessment conducted by an external accessor is necessary, such as an psychological examination (see the 'Role of the Assessment and Support team – assessments and referrals' practice guide).

   Note: the appraising case manager may organise certain care and protection assessments directly with the provider, such as submitting a referral to CARHU for a medical examination.

6. If the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, CYPS may request submissions from an Aboriginal or Torres Straits Islander person or organisation who have been identified as providing ongoing support to the child or their family (see section 10(b) of the Act). This submission may detail factors such as:

   - the family's engagement with the community and/or services
   - protective factors such as the support provided by extended family members and/or the community to the child and their parent/s
   - parental capacity, including strengths and potential risk factors

- the home environment.

Note: staff will consult the Cultural Services Team on the most appropriate method to seek information and factors which should be considered.

7. Who will provide support and/or advocacy for the child during the Appraisal process:
    a. does the child require a representative of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community for support?
    b. will other family members require advocates or support persons?

Once the Appraisal Action Plan has been drafted, the appraising case manager will:

1. Discuss the Appraisal Action Plan with a team leader and seek endorsement.
2. Where the child is in out of home care, provide a copy to the Out of Home Care provider (such as ACT Together)
3. Make amendments to the Appraisal Action Plan if required.

3.1 - Developing an Appraisal Action Plan when police (including SACAT) are involved

Where SACAT has indicated that they intend to conduct a criminal investigation into the circumstances of a child, CYPS may propose a joint Appraisal.

It is important to note that the police have a different investigation focus from CYPS and apply different legal thresholds to decision-making (including the legal burden of proof). In general, the focus of a police investigation will determine if there are grounds to proceed to the prosecution of an adult for a criminal act towards a child.

The focus of the CYPS Appraisal process is much broader and will explore the child's entire risk environment. While a criminal process may *inform* a CYPS assessment of the parent's capacity, it will not *depend* on it, and therefore a CYPS Appraisal is possible in parallel with a criminal investigation.

If CYPS believe a joint Appraisal with SACAT is appropriate, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Contact the SACAT Liaison Officer to confirm if SACAT will investigate the matter and if they agree to a joint Appraisal
    a. If SACAT are unable to confirm their participation in a joint Appraisal, the appraising case manager **will not** postpone the Appraisal activities until this outcome is known.
    b. The appraising case manager will progress the Appraisal within the endorsed CYPS timeframes. If SACAT begin an investigation at a later date but before the Appraisal is finalised, CYPS may request information from SACAT to inform the Appraisal outcome.
2. Record if CYPS and SACAT undertake a joint Appraisal in the Appraisal Action Plan.
    a. If a joint Appraisal is not appropriate, liaise with SACAT to allow for independent investigations. This will include:
        i. informing SACAT that an Appraisal will be conducted
        ii. coordinating interview schedules to ensure the process is child-focused (i.e. considering the timing of police interviews in Appraisal planning, but not delaying the Appraisal if it is not in the child's best interest to do so).

If SACAT agree to a joint Appraisal, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Arrange a meeting with SACAT to develop the Appraisal Action Plan

2. Agree to the approach of the joint Appraisal, including:
    a. respective roles for the interview/s and when they will occur
        i. this can include the appraising case manager observing the police interviewing the child, obtaining a copy of the interview record or conducting a joint interview with SACAT.
    b. specific information which will be sought at interview
    c. where the interview/s should take place
        i. consider any issues relating to venue of the interview.
    d. the child's age and developmental stage, and how this will influence the interview process
    e. when and how to cease an interview if necessary
    f. the support the child is likely to need before, during and after the interview
    g. if the child is from a culturally or linguistically diverse background, consideration of any issues or practices recommended by support services, including the use of interpreter services.
3. Proceed with the Appraisal process.
    - If the information gathered during the course of an Appraisal is believed to be relevant to a criminal investigation this should be shared with SACAT.

Note: It is possible for CYPS to substantiate abuse, neglect and/or family violence and police to not charge the person alleged to be responsible.

Step 4 – Determine if Appraisal agreement from a parent is required

Under section 368 of the Act CYPS may carry out a care and protection Appraisal where:

- **agreement** has been obtained from at least one parent or other person who has daily care responsibility, and
- **notification** has been given to any other parent or person who has daily care responsibility.

However, there are clear circumstances where either seeking agreement or notifying a parent or person with daily care responsibility is **not** in the child's best interests, and the process of seeking agreement could place the child at **further risk** of abuse and/or neglect. These circumstances are outlined at section 370(1) of the Act.

Where these circumstances exist, the appraising case manager may proceed to an Appraisal involving an interview and visual examination **only** (see section 371) of the child without obtaining parental agreement.

When preparing to conduct an Appraisal, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Determine if section 370(1) applies. This section applies if on reasonable grounds it is believed obtaining agreement from **one or both** parents (or people with daily care responsibility) is either:
    - not in the child's best interests (for example, the parent is the subject of the allegation of abuse), or
    - would likely jeopardise a criminal investigation (for example, SACAT is still considering if they will investigate).

Use the table below to assist decision-making and identification of next steps.

TABLE: Is seeking Appraisal agreement needed?		
WHEN…	**AND a parent or a person with daily care responsibility…**	**THEN…**
A Child Protection Report alleges abuse, neglect and/or family violence	• Is alleged to have caused the abuse and/or neglect or has committed a criminal act, or • Lives with the person alleged to have caused the abuse and/or neglect, or who committed a criminal act, or • Is in a relationship with the person alleged to have caused the abuse and/or neglect, or who committed a criminal act.	Section **370 applies** and CYPS does **not** need to seek agreement from this person. Consider whether it is appropriate to seek agreement from the other parent. Consider whether it is appropriate to provide **notification** to one or both parents.
	• Is **not** alleged to have caused the abuse and/or neglect or criminal actor, • Does **not** live with the person alleged to have caused the abuse and/or neglect or criminal act or, • Is **not** in a relationship with the person alleged to have caused the abuse and/or neglect or criminal act.	Section **370 does not apply** and CYPS must seek agreement. If neither parent is accused, obtain and record agreement from at least one parent, and either agreement or notification of the other parent **before** commencing Appraisal. If a parent is the accused, obtain and record agreement from the other parent, and consider if it is appropriate to notify the accused parent **before** commencing Appraisal.

2. Having worked through the table above and determining which scenario relates to the subject child's situation, follow the corresponding requirements listed under the column titled 'THEN'. (Information about seeking agreement and providing notification is outlined in later steps of this procedure.)
3. Where section 370(1) does apply, clearly **document the rationale** for using section 370(1) to commence an Appraisal with only one or neither parent's agreement on the CYRIS Appraisal record. This rationale must articulate evidence of a professional and accountable decision-making process.
    - Where CYPS staff form a view that one parent may inform the other parent, and one of those parents is the subject of an allegation of abuse, neglect and/or family violence, it is considered reasonable to proceed to an Appraisal without *either* parents' agreement using the *best interests* test.

- Similarly, it is reasonable to proceed without agreement if a parent's contact with the child is not allowed, or is limited, under a court order (under the Act or another law such as the *Family Law Act 1975*).

4. Where section 370 applies, consider whether it is appropriate to provide notification to one or both parents prior to commencing the Appraisal (see Step 5 – 'Determine if Appraisal notification to a parent is required').
5. Obtain approval from a team leader, in the course of developing an Appraisal Action Plan, to proceed to interviewing the child **without** seeking parental agreement.

Record of decision: Clear recording of the decision to progress to Appraisal without seeking parental agreement of a parent, or both parents, must be documented and endorsed by a team leader.

Step 5 – Determine if Appraisal notification to a parent is required

Where section 370 applies to a child's situation, CYPS staff need to consider the appropriateness of **notifying** one or both parents about the Appraisal (where agreement has not been sought) prior to commencing the Appraisal. As with seeking Appraisal agreement, the Act (section 369(5)) requires the appraising case manager to consider if providing notification would:

- not be in the child's best interests, or
- not be possible or reasonably practicable in the circumstances to do so.

When preparing to conduct an Appraisal, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Determine if notification to one or both parents will be required prior to commencing the Appraisal.

Use the table below to assist decision-making and identification of next steps.

TABLE: Is providing notification required?

WHEN…	THEN…	AND…
Section 370 applies to **both** parents (or people with daily care responsibility)	Consider if providing notification to either parent would: • not be in the child's best interest, or • likely place the child at risk, or • not be possible or reasonably practicable in the circumstances.	Where the answer to any of these is 'yes', do not provide notification. Commence an Appraisal under section 371 (visual examination and interview only). Following the Appraisal consider advising at least one parent that the Appraisal has occurred. Refer to section 371(3)-(4).
Section 370 applies to **one** parent (or person with daily care responsibility)	Consider if providing notification to the same parent would: • not be in the child's best interest, or	Where the answer to any of these is 'yes', do not provide notification to this parent.

	• likely place the child at risk, or • not be possible or reasonably practicable in the circumstances.	Consider whether it is appropriate to notify the other parent.
Section 370 applies to **neither** parents (or people with daily care responsibility)	Seek agreement from both parents.	Obtain and record agreement from at least one parent, and either agreement or notification of the other parent **before** commencing Appraisal.

2. Having worked through the table above and determining which scenario relates to the subject child's situation, follow the requirements listed under the column titled 'AND'. (Information about seeking agreement and providing notification is outlined in later steps of this procedure.)
3. Where it is determined providing notification is **not** in the child's best interests, reasonably practicable or possible, clearly **document the rationale** for this decision and/or any reasonable efforts made to locate or contact the parent in the CYRIS Appraisal record. This rationale must articulate evidence of a professional and accountable decision-making process.
4. Obtain **approval** from a team leader, in the course of developing an Appraisal Action Plan, to proceed to interviewing the child without providing notification.
5. Where providing notification **is** possible, staff are to complete 'Step 7 – Provide Appraisal notification to a parent'.

Record of decision: Clear recording of the decision to progress to Appraisal without providing notification to a parent, or both parents, must be documented and endorsed by a team leader.

Step 6 – Commence the Appraisal

The Appraisal process will be influenced by whether:

- If it is appropriate to seek agreement from and provide notification to the parent/s or persons/s with daily care responsibility, as per section 368
- Section 370(1) applies and CYPS will not seek agreement
- Section 368(5) applies and CYPS will not provide notification
- The parent/s or persons/s with daily care responsibility are unwilling to participate in the Appraisal process and an CYPS will seek an Appraisal Order.

Staff are to progress the Appraisal according to the situation/s listed below, of which one or more may be applicable.

6.1 - Seek parental agreement to an Appraisal

Where section 370(1) does **not** apply, CYPS staff must act in accordance with section 368(2)(a), which states an Appraisal may only be carried out if:

- **agreement** has been obtained from at least one parent or other person who has daily care responsibility, and

- **notification** has been given to any other parent or person who has daily care responsibility.

If previous decision-making has determined parental agreement is required, the appraising case manager will contact the parent/s or person/s with daily care responsibility. In doing so, the **appraising case manager** must:

1. Introduce themselves as a representative of CYPS and show or inform the parent of their ACT Government identity card
    - For example, 'my name is xxx and I work at Child and Youth Protection Services'.
2. Describe the role and function of CYPS
    - For example, 'CYPS is the government agency responsible for child protection in the ACT'.
3. Describe the reason for the contact, including the purpose of the Appraisal (without providing details of the Child Protection Report).
    - For example, 'the reason I am contacting you today is because information has been received from a member of the public which I need to discuss with you in person'.
4. Negotiate a **time** and **venue** to meet and discuss the matter in person.
5. If there are concerned the initial contact with a parent has resulted in shock or distress:
    a. Suggested the parent speaks to a friend or family member about their concerns or worries, and
    b. Offer a referral to a relevant support service.

When meeting with the parent/s or person/s with daily care responsibility to obtain their agreement to conduct the Appraisal, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Ensure a second CYPS case manager attends the meeting to ensure detailed and accurate notes are recorded.
2. Notify the parent/s of their legal right to be informed of:
    a. the purpose of the Appraisal, including gathering information (speaking to the school, requesting information from other agencies or services)
    b. the scope of the Appraisal, such as:
        ii. interview/s with the child, their siblings (if applicable) and the parent/s
        iii. a visual examination of the child, which may need to be conducted by a health professional at CARHU (if applicable)
        iv. the inclusion of a care and protection assessment and the type of assessment to be conducted (i.e. medical, social, psychological)
3. Inform the parent/s they may refuse agreement to the Appraisal.
    a. ensure the parent/s are aware that if agreement is refused, CYPS may continue with the Appraisal by conducting an interview and visual examination (only) of the child under section 371 of the Act. See Step 6.3 – 'Commence Appraisal without parental agreement or notification (interview and visual examination only)'.
    b. CYPS may also apply for an Appraisal Order through the ACT Childrens Court to assist in the Appraisal process.
4. Provide the 'Appraisals - Information for families' information sheet.
5. Seek **written** agreement from at least one parent using the 'Appraisal Agreement and Notification' form.

- Where it is not practicable to obtain written agreement, **verbal** agreement is permitted and must be clearly recorded in the CYRIS Appraisal record. Written agreement will be sought as soon as practicable.

6. Where agreement is given from at least one parent or person with daily care responsibility, commence gathering information as outlined in the Appraisal Action Plan (see Step 7 – 'Information gathering').
    - The Act allows CYPS to commence an Appraisal with only one parent's agreement.
7. Ensure all conversations and attempts to obtain approval are **clearly documented** in the CYRIS Appraisal record.

If the parent/s refuse to provide agreement, the **apprising case manager will**:

1. Emphasise that CYPS has a legal responsibility to respond to the Child Protection Report.
2. Acknowledge concerns and suggest some alternatives, such as offering to meet at a more convenient time or venue in the next 24 hours or when the other parent returns home, if it is safe to do so.
3. Record details of the visit in the CYRIS Appraisal record.

If the parent/s maintain that they will not provide agreement to the Appraisal:

1. Consult a team leader to determine if a court order is required (see Step 6.4 – 'Seeking an Appraisal Order (including temporary parental responsibility)', or
2. Obtain approval from the team leader to proceed to interviewing the child without parental agreement (see Step 7.3 – 'Interviewing a child without prior parental agreement').

6.2 - Provide notification of the Appraisal to a parent

When previous decision-making has determined notification to a parent is needed, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Contact the appropriate parent/s or person/s with daily care responsibility to notify them of the Appraisal of their child. In doing so, the appraising case manager **must** tell the person/s:
    a. the purpose of the Appraisal
    b. the type of assessment to occur/that occurred (if the Appraisal is to include/included a care and protection assessment of the child).
2. Ensure all conversations and attempts to provide notification are **clearly documented** in the CYRIS Appraisal record.
3. Obtain approval from a team leader to proceed to interviewing the child.

6.3 - Commence Appraisal without parental agreement or notification (interview and visual examination only)

Where the child has been interviewed **before** the parent/s or person/s with daily care responsibillity are either notified or asked to provide agreement, CYPS may use section 371 of the Act to commence an Appraisal with visual examination and interview of the child only.

Where section 370 applies, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Conduct an interview and/or visual examination of the child only.
2. If it is appropriate to do so, take reasonable steps to inform at least one person with daily care responsibility that the interview/examination has taken place as soon as practicable.
3. Ensure information and decision-making processes are appropriately recorded in the CYRIS Appraisal record.

6.4 - Seeking an Appraisal Order (including temporary parental responsibility)

An Appraisal Order provides the authority for the Director-General to undertake an Appraisal of a child without the agreement of a person with daily care responsibility. An Appraisal Order can be for a period of 4 weeks.

Under section 376 of the Act, the Director-General may apply for an Appraisal Order for a child if:

- satisfied that an Appraisal is necessary to assess whether the child is in need of care and protection, and
- has taken reasonable steps to obtain agreement to the Appraisal from each parent or person with daily care responsibility and no parent or person with daily care responsibility has given agreement, or
- is satisfied that seeking agreement would be contrary to the child's best interests, or likely to place the child at significant risk of abuse and/or neglect, or likely to jeopardise a criminal investigation (i.e. neither s368(3)(b)(i) nor s370(1) apply).

The need for an Appraisal Order may be indicated where a parent or person with daily care responsibility:

- is unwilling to participate in the Appraisal process,
- refused to be interviewed or discuss the Child Protection Report concerns with CYPS,
- refused to participate in urinalysis,
- refused to attend an arranged medical appointment (for themselves or their child),
- refused to allow entry to the premises, or
- refused to comply with any other arrangements made by CYPS for the purpose of Appraisal.

When applying for an Appraisal Order, staff may request one or more of the following provisions or requirements, that:

- a person attend, either alone or with someone else, at a stated place and time for an assessment,
- a person or entity to comply with arrangements made by the Director-General for the Appraisal,
- a person or entity allow entry to a stated place for the Appraisal,
- a person or entity to give the Director-General information about the care, welfare or development of a child,
- something be produced to the court or given to the Director-General or someone else,
- a person not have contact with the child, or not have contact with the child except if a stated person or person of a stated class is present to supervise the contact, or
- a temporary parental responsibility provision is sought (see Step 6.5 – 'Seeking temporary parental responsibility').

The Childrens Court may include any of the above-mentioned provisions, whether or not they were applied for by CYPS.

Prior to making an application for an Appraisal Order, the appraising case manager **must** consult with a team leader to determine if an Appraisal Order is required. The application must then be endorsed by an operations manager or above.

If an Appraisal Order is deemed necessary, the **appraising case manager** must:

1. Consult with the Legal Services team

2. Complete the Affidavit - Appraisal template. The affidavit must state:
    a. grounds on which the Appraisal Order is sought,
    b. length of the order (must not be longer than 4 weeks),
    c. the relevant order provisions or requirements (as outlined above)
        i. if the application includes an application for a **temporary parental responsibility provision**, staff must identify the proposed care arrangements for the child during the period of the temporary parental responsibility provision and state the length of the provision (see Step 6.5 – 'Seeking temporary parental responsibility').
3. If the matter is **urgent**:
    a. **Legal Services** may make the application by phone to the Childrens Court, however, a written application must be completed and submitted to the Childrens Court as soon as practicable.
    b. the **Operations Manager** is to liaise with Legal Services and the Application Review Committee (ARC) for an urgent or out-of-session listing. The action is to be listed at the next ARC meeting for discussion. Staff must then provide a copy of the material filed with the Court.
4. If the matter is **not urgent**:
    a. The **appraising case manager** will request the Operations Manager list the matter at ARC and submit the relevant documentation (see the 'Application Review Committee' procedure):
        - ARC checklist
        - Affidavit
        - Child Protection Report
        - Appraisal record detailing any Appraisal actions that have been able to be undertaken.
5. Attend ARC with a team leader (see the 'Application Review Committee' procedure)
6. Record the application on the CYRIS Appraisal record
7. Provide a copy of the affidavit to Legal Services
    a. **Legal Services** will:
        i. File the Appraisal Order application with the Childrens Court and liaise with the Childrens Court as needed
        ii. Scan a copy of the application into the client management system and place a copy on the child's client file
        iii. Arrange for a copy of the Appraisal Order application to be served to the following people before the application is heard by the court:
            1. the child
            2. each parent of the child
            3. each other person who has daily care responsibility or long term parental responsibility for the child, and
            4. the ACT Public Advocate.
        iv. Upon receiving the Appraisal Order:

1. notify the case manager and team leader
2. scan a copy of the order into the client management system and place a copy on the child's client file

8. Once the Appraisal Order has been granted, staff are to proceed with the Appraisal process.

Seeking temporary parental responsibility

A temporary parental responsibility provision (section 373) may be sought through an Appraisal Order. This provision may involve:

- transferring daily care responsibility to the Director-General for the period of the Appraisal Order (including decisions regarding where a child should reside), and/or
- allowing the Director-General to enter and search any place to locate the child.

CYPS should consider a temporary parental responsibility provision when there is reason to believe:

- the child may be at high risk of harm while living in the home for the duration of the Appraisal process,
- the parent/s intend to take the child interstate in order to avoid the Appraisal process.

Note: If staff believe the child is at **immediate risk** of harm in the home, Emergency Action should be considered (see the 'Emergency Action' procedure).

When requesting an Appraisal Order with a temporary parental responsibility provision, staff must:

1. State why a temporary parental responsibility provision is needed in the affidavit
2. Identify suitable care arrangements for the child for the duration of the Appraisal Order:
    - Staff should consider all potential kinship placements prior to exploring alternative placement arrangements
    - Staff may consult the Placements Manager for an emergency Out of Home Care placement.

6.7 - Seeking an Appraisal Order extension

An Appraisal Order can be for a period of four weeks. However, if the court is satisfied that the application is appropriate, the length of an Appraisal Order may be extended to a maximum of 8 weeks. The total length of the order and the proposed extension will not be longer than eight weeks

When applying for an extension of an Appraisal order (including applying for an extension of a temporary parental responsibility provision), staff must

1. Consult with a team leader and operations manager
2. Consult with Legal Services team
3. Complete the application for an extension. The application must state:
    a. the grounds for the proposed extension, and
    b. if the application includes an application for extension of a temporary parental responsibility provision, propose suitable care arrangements for the child's or young person's care during the period of the extended temporary parental responsibility provision.
4. Attend ARC with a team leader
5. Provide the application to Legal Services
    a. **Legal Services** will:

i. File the application with the Childrens Court

ii. Scan a copy of the application into the client management system and place a copy on the child's client file.

iii. Give a copy of the application to each party to proceedings.

Step 7 – Information gathering

The appraising case manager will gather information from the child, their siblings, parents, organisations or others to inform the Appraisal Risk Analysis. The sections below outline the methods of gathering information during the Appraisal process.

7.1 - Interview the parent/s

When conducting an interview with a parent, staff must be mindful the parent may feel concerned and uncomfortable. Staff are to draw upon their professional standards and training in relation to rapport building, active listening, conflict resolution and, de-escalation techniques to undertake a respectful dialogue.

Before the interview

Prior to commencing an interview, the **appraising case manager** must:

1. Ensure a second CYPS case manager attends the meeting to ensure detailed and accurate notes are recorded (verbatim where possible).
2. Introduce themselves by name, provide the name of CYPS and allow the parent to view their ACT Government identity card.
3. Explain the reason for the visit
    - For example, 'someone has contacted CYPS expressing concern about the safety and wellbeing of <child's name> and CYPS needs to know more about the situation.'
4. Where the discussion is being held in public view, ask the parent to more somewhere private, such as inside the house, taking into consideration the safety of staff and any children present.

During the interview

When it is appropriate to commence the interview, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Advise the content of the discussion will be recorded and offer to provide a copy to the parent.
2. Outline the allegations which have led to the Appraisal, in accordance with the Act, without disclosing the source of the information.
3. Ask questions relating to the concerns raised in the Child Protection Report Risk Assessment process.
4. Ask the questions identified in the Appraisal Action Plan necessary to inform the Appraisal Risk Analysis.

See the 'Interviewing parents and carers' practice guide for further information.

After the interview

At the conclusion of the interview:

1. Ask the parent if they have any questions?
2. Advise the parent will happen next, including that CYPS will:

a. continue to gather and assess information

b. decide what the appropriate actions are

c. keep the relevant parties informed about the process and any further action and what this may entail.

Following the interview, staff in attendance are required to sign and date interview notes (handwritten and/or typed) and save the document to the client management system.

7.2 - Interview the child

Interviewing a child requires skills and preparation to establish trust and preserve the credibility of any disclosures made. Children should be interviewed separately from their parent/s. Siblings living in the same home or exposed to the same alleged risk should also be interviewed individually to help inform the Appraisal and ensure their views and wishes are heard and documented.

If the child will be interviewed **without prior parental agreement**, go to Step 7.3 – 'Interviewing a child without prior parental agreement'.

Before the interview

To prepare for an interview with the child, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Consider the child's right to privacy and ensure no-one will be present who does not need to be. However, ask the child if they would like someone known to them, such as a teacher, to be present in a support role.
2. Consider the age of the child and plan your interview approach based on the information contained in the Child Protection Report.
    a. If Child Protection Report indicates the child has a physical injury, prepare to undertake a visual examination as part of the interview process, see Step 7.4 - 'Undertaking visual examination of the child'.
3. Organise for an additional case manager to be present to document a real time account of the interview.
4. Be prepared to conduct more than one interview with a child if necessary, sometimes the process of establishing trust may require several interviews to achieve.

During the interview

While interviewing the child, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Introduce themselves by name and simply explain the role of CYPS, for example, 'my name is xxx and my job is to check in with children to make sure they are safe'.
    - If appropriate, staff may show the child their ACT Government identity card.
2. Briefly explain the purpose of the conversation and seek the child's verbal agreement to participate in the interview.
3. Ask the child if they would like a support person to be present, such as a teacher.
4. Allow time for the child to adjust to the interview environment, to get to know you and feel comfortable.
    - It is important not to rush the interview and to build a relaxed rapport.
5. If the Child Protection Report indicated the child has a physical injury, undertake a visual examination during this interview, see Step 7.4 - 'Undertaking visual examination of the child'.

6. Ask questions in clear and easy to understand language consistent with the child's developmental functioning.
    - Questions must be straightforward and open ended, for example 'tell me about' and 'then what happened' repeatedly to support the child to continue with their narrative.
7. Allow time for the child to answer questions and allow periods of silence.
8. Acknowledge and accept the child's perceptions and understanding of events.
9. Summarise or repeat back to the child the information provided in order to fact check and eliminate misunderstandings, where possible.
10. Provide opportunities for the child to ask questions.
11. Let the child know what is likely to happen next.
12. Ensure the child is feeling okay at the end the interview before returning their activities (home, school, child care).

If during the interview with the child, communication is difficult because the child is very young or has particular communication needs, a referral to other professionals for assessment may be appropriate. Consult a team leader regarding making a referral.

After the interview

Following the interview, the **appraising case manager** and the **secondary case manager** will:

1. Sign and date interview notes (handwritten and/or typed), and
2. Save the notes on the client management system.

7.3 - Interviewing a child without prior parental agreement

There are circumstances where decisions will be made to interview a child without first seeking agreement from a parent. This can include:

- there is information to suggest that the child may be placed at greater risk by interviewing them at home, for example where there is concern that the family may persuade or threaten the child to withhold information or give false explanations for injuries,
- the child has disclosed that they have experienced abuse and has requested an individual interview without their parent/s' knowledge,
- the parents are unavailable and it would be inappropriate to delay the Appraisal, or
- the person alleged to be responsible for the abuse and/or neglect is living in the same home.

When interviewing a child without prior parental agreement, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Inform the school, health facility or childcare service where the interview will take place, either prior to the visit or an arrival:
    a. the reason for contact
        v. For example: 'CYPS has been notified about a concern about the safety and wellbeing of a child in your setting.'
    b. the need to interview the child without informing the parents and advise the Act (section 371) allow this.
    c. the requirement for the school, health facility or childcare service to **not** inform the parents of the interview.
2. Undertake the interview, following instructions under Step 7.4 – 'Interview the child'.

After the interview, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Determine if advising the parent of the examination or interview will place the child at risk
    - If there are concerns for the child, consult a team leader regarding Emergency Action and seeking an alternative placement for the child.
2. Take reasonable steps to inform at least one parent the examination or interview has been carried out, **unless** information gained during the course of the interview indicates doing so would either:
    a. put the child at risk of abuse and/or neglect, or
    b. jeopardise a criminal investigation.
3. Ensure information and decision-making processes are appropriately recorded on the client management system.

7.4 - Undertaking a visual examination of a child

If the Child Protection Report indicates a child has a physical injury, staff are to undertake a visual examination as part of the interview process.

When undertaking an examination, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Ensure the two case managers are appropriate, taking into account the child's age, gender and culture
2. **Not** undress or adjust any of the child's clothing
3. Ask the child to identify and show the sight of the possible injury:

If…	Then…
The child is unwilling to display their physical injury, or there are sensitivities in relation to the injury	1. Arrange for a medical assessment of the child either with parental agreement in accordance with section 367 of the Act, or 2. If the parent does not provide agreement, consult a team leader about obtaining an Appraisal Order (see Step 6.4 – 'Seeking an Appraisal Order (including temporary parental responsibility)'.
An injury is noted by the appraising case manager	Arrange an assessment by a medical practitioner: • This may be the child's own GP, however • A specialised service such as CARHU is preferred if physical injury is suspected.
The child's GP is identified to inspect the alleged injury	1. Contact the GP and inform them of the suspected physical injury, and 2. request a written report of the assessment.

4. Record the outcome of the visual examination and any follow up medical examinations in the CYRIS Appraisal record.

Note: CYPS staff will **not** photograph a child's physical injury as these images cannot be used as evidence in court. If a child has an injury, staff must refer the matter to SACAT and contact CARHU. These services have forensic photography capabilities and can produce images which can be used for evidentiary purposes.

7.5 – Requesting information

The appraising case manager may request information through consultation and phone calls if it is relevant and specific to the concerns identified in the Child Protection Report.

Section 366 provides considerable scope for gathering further safety and wellbeing information at Appraisal by allowing CYPS to:

- interview someone
- give information to someone
- ask someone to give information to the Director-General
- make enquiries about the child or young person
- make enquiries about someone else.

The Act allows CYPS to verbally seek or provide safety and wellbeing information to 'anyone' as long as it is in the child's best interests to do so.

Where written information from an **information sharing entity** such as ACT Health or ACT Police is required, staff should invoke section 862 to place a written request.

Staff may use the 'Section 862 - Request for Information' and send the request via e-mail.

The case manager will also conduct a check of the Connect for Safety database if this was not completed during the Intake process. This will let you identify if information exists for a person in a child protection agency in any State or Territory.

- If you identify a potential match on the database, contact the Interstate Liaison Officer to request the information from the relevant jurisdiction.
- Do not contact the family directly using the information found on Connect for Safety
- Send an email to the Interstate Liaison Officer at [Redacted]with:
    - the person's name, date of birth and any known addresses
    - the reason for requesting the information
    - any potential matches from Connect for Safety including the client number from the relevant jurisdiction
- If you can't identify a clear match, but you believe a person could have a record in another jurisdiction, contact the Interstate Liaison Officer.
- For more information on Connect for Safety, please access the Connect for Safety Information Sheet and Quick Reference Guide.

Note: Information gathering for Appraisals may take place before, during and after seeking parental agreement for an Appraisal.

7.6 Mandatory reports and listing any additional abuse and neglect types

If an additional abuse and/or neglect type which differs from the originating abuse or neglect type reported in the CCR is identified during the Appraisal process, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Record the findings in the same Appraisal CYRIS record on the 'Other Information' tab: *List any additional abuse and neglect issues (if any) that have been identified for risk assessment in this Appraisal that were not in the originating Child Protection Report.*
2. Document the additional abuse and/or neglect type and the reasons for forming this belief.

If the additional abuse type is a mandated abuse type (i.e. physical and/or sexual abuse) and the case manager has formed a belief on reasonable grounds that the abuse or neglect has occurred and the reasons for the belief arise from information obtained because of their work, the appraising case manager **must** make a **mandatory report** by following the above steps.

Note: The additional abuse must be recorded in the CYRIS Appraisal record for CYPS staff to fulfil their mandatory reporting responsibility.

The appraising case manager should **not** record an additional Child Concern Report in this situation.

There is no requirement to make a mandatory report if someone else has made a report to the Director-General about the same child in relation to the same abuse or neglect.

Step 8 – Analysis of the information gathered

The Appraisal Risk Analysis will include an in-depth and evidence-based analysis of the information gathered throughout the Appraisal. This analysis will consider the child's entire risk environment. The findings of the analysis will allow the appraising case manager to make a professional judgement regarding the risk and safety. This judgement will address:

- If the child has been abused or neglected or is at risk of abuse and/or neglect (i.e. the substantiation decision),
- If the child has experienced family violence (directly or indirectly) or is living in a home where violence is being perpetrated (i.e. the substantiation decision),
- Who is responsible of the abuse and/or neglect or the risk of abuse and/or neglect,
- Who is responsible for the family violence,
- If the child has at least one parent who is both willing and able to protect the child from abuse, neglect and/or family violence, and
- If a Family Preservation Response (i.e. ongoing work by CYPS) is appropriate.

The **appraising case manager** will ensure evidence of the Appraisal activities to gather information are detailed in the CYRIS Appraisal record. This includes:

- Dates and summaries of interviews conducted.
- A description of direct observations of the parent-child relationship.
- Details of the information provided by other parties which can be validated, including
    - results of section 862 information requests (if applicable)
    - findings of a care and protection assessment (if applicable)
- Date/s the child attended medical or other specialist appointments to inform the Appraisal.
- Date/s the parent attended medical or other specialist appointments to inform the Appraisal
- If relevant, a record of each of the CPRs being addressed in a current open Appraisal (e.g. when **new** CCRs/CPRs are received identifying **new** risks with 28 days of the original Appraisal commencement date) **and** how the risks of each CPR are being addressed within the single Appraisal process.

To develop an accurate overview of the child's environment and their exposure to risk, the Appraisal Risk Analysis analysis will focus on:

1. Immediate safety concerns for the child, including
    a. the severity of the abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    b. access of the person associated with the abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    c. the intent of the person associated with the abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    d. any pattern or history of abuse, neglect and/or family violence (i.e. pattern of coercive control)
    e. the risks within the child's care environment.

Note: If the child is subject to significant risk of danger, immediately consult a team leader about progressing Emergency Action.

2. The child's exposure to abuse, neglect and/or family violence, including:
    a. the severity of the abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    b. access of the person associated with the abuse and/or neglect of the child
    c. opportunity for abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    d. consideration of any child protection history
3. The parent/s capacity to protect the child from abuse, neglect and/or family violence, including
    a. the parent/s attitude to the abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    b. the attachment between the child and the parent/s
    c. the parents' relationship with each other (if applicable)
    d. the presence of strengths which decrease the probability of abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    e. strategies the parent/s currently use to keep the child safe
    f. evidence of a regular care routine.
4. The views and wishes of the child, including:
    a. the child's views in respect of the alleged abuse, neglect and/or family violence
    b. how the child feels about any risks in their environment
    c. what the child would like to see change or improve in their home
    d. how the child appears to be growing and developing
    e. any concerns or fears that the child has articulated during interview
    f. what (if anything) the child would change about their life
    g. what (if anything) the child believes their family needs to make life better.

Refer to the Risk Assessment Framework for additional analysis factors. In particular, see section 'Attachment 1: Risk Analysis Practice Guide'

Note: the factors which have an impact on a child's wellbeing may not have equal significance. However, staff should be mindful that the cumulative effect of some relatively minor factors may be considerable over time (see the 'Cumulative Harm' guide).

The outcomes of the Appraisal Risk Analysis will allow the appraising case manager to determine if the concerns of the child being subjected to, or at risk of, abuse and/or neglect will be substantiated.

Step 9 – Make a substantiation decision

A matter will be substantiated when the Appraisal Risk Analysis causes the appraising case manager to reasonably believe that abuse, neglect and/or family violence **has occurred, is occurring** and/or there is a current **risk of**[2] abuse, neglect and/or family violence.

To decide if an Appraisal process will be substantiated, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Consider if:

[2] Since 2015, CYPS no longer make substantiation decisions regarding a 'future risk' of abuse and/or neglect. However, it is reasonable to consider current risks to a child within their care environment such as exposure to a person previously found responsible for abuse and/ or neglect of a child.

a. There is reason to believe or suspect that a child has been, is experiencing or is at significant risk of:

   i. physically abused, and/or

   ii. sexually abused, and/or

   iii. family violence, and/or

   iv. neglected to the extent that failure to provide the child with a necessity of life has caused or is causing significant harm to the wellbeing or development of the child, and/or

   v. emotionally abused (including psychological abuse) if the child has (or is) experiencing the abuse in a way that has caused, is causing or would cause significant harm to his or her wellbeing or development.

Note: A child is **at risk of abuse or neglect** if, on the balance of probabilities, there is a significant risk of the child being abused or neglected.

See section 344 of the Act for case examples. These are particularly relevant to cumulative harm and emotional abuse and neglect allegations.

Identifying chronic risk factors within a child's environment may be a valuable predictor of the parent/s current and future parenting choices.

OR:

b. It can be demonstrated that:

   i. there is serious or persistent conflict between the child and the person/s with daily care responsibility to the extent that the care arrangements for the child are, or are likely to be, seriously disrupted, or

   ii. the person/s with daily care responsibility for the child are dead, have abandoned the child or cannot be found after reasonable inquiry, or

   iii. the person/s with daily care responsibility for the child are sexually or financially exploiting the child or are not willing and able to keep the child from being sexually or financially exploited.

Note: A case manager must not decide to not substantiate a matter merely on the basis that insufficient information was available to make the decision. When insufficient information is available, a team leader may endorse further assessment of parenting capacity to inform the substantiation decision.

2. If neglect or emotional abuse are substantiated, evidence how 'significant harm' to the child's wellbeing or development has occurred. Significant harm is caused by the effects of harmful events, both acute and chronic, or the damaging impact of neglect. Indicators of significant harm may include:

   a. a regression in the child's behaviour,

   b. trauma-related symptoms which have been observed,

   c. cumulative harm from long term exposure to effects of multiple adverse circumstances and events in a child's life,

   d. advice provided by an involved professional who has a therapeutic relationship with the child.

3. Record the outcome of substantiation decision on the CYRIS Appraisal record with supporting evidence for this decision.
    a. Multiple abuse or neglect types may be substantiated based on the findings of the Appraisal.
    b. Supporting evidence must also be provided when the decision is made to not substantiate.

9.2 - Resubstantiation

A matter will be recorded as a resubstantiation if:

- the current Appraisal has substantiated abuse, neglect and/or family violence or risk of abuse and/or neglect, **and**
- a previous substantiation of abuse, neglect and/or family violence has been recorded within the past 12 months.

If an Appraisal results in a resubstantiation, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Organise a review meeting with the:
    - current case manager (if different from the appraising case manager),
    - team leader,
    - operations manager (or equivalent), and
    - principal practitioner.
2. The review meeting must address:
    - the efficacy of CYPS involvement with the family,
    - gaps in case planning and direction, and
    - recommendations for further action.
3. The agreed actions will be documented in the CYRIS Appraisal record.

Step 10 – Record a 'person believed responsible'

Where a CYPS has formed a reasonable belief that a child has been abused, neglected or experienced family violence or is at risk of abuse, neglect and/or family violence, it is **necessary** to create a record of the person believed responsible (PBR).

Note: Staff should be aware that recording a person as responsible for abuse and/or neglect is a permanent record which may have implications on the person's suitability to provide care for a child and/or employment with vulnerable people.

To nominate a person as a PBR the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Revisit the legal and policy definitions of abuse and neglect
2. Revisit the legal and policy definitions of family violence
3. Apply principles of natural justice and procedural fairness to inform the decision
4. Record the rationale of why the person is believed to be responsible within the Appraisal CYRIS record
    - This determination does not require sufficient evidence for a successful criminal prosecution and relates to the professional opinion of the appraising case manager.
5. Record an Appraisal Outcome on CYRIS, listing the substantiated abuse or neglect type/s and the associated PBR

a. As an Appraisal addresses a child's entire risk environment, multiple people can be listed as a PBR

b. Staff must ensure the PBR record only identifies the abuse or neglect type/s which the individual person is believed responsible for.

6. Following the completion of the Appraisal:

- The **appraising case manager** will advise the person they have been recorded as the PBR for the abuse and/or neglect
    - The person will be provided with the 'Person believed responsible' letter (template available on the client management system)
    - The template must be signed by the team leader.
    - The signed template will be recorded on the client management system and the original placed on the child's client file.
- The **team leader** will record the PBR on the client management system.

In some circumstances, it may not be appropriate to record a PBR. For example:

- where a parent is willing, but not able, to prevent a child from engaging in self-damaging behaviour,
- the occurrence of serious persistent conflict between the child and a parent, or
- where a parent has died.

If the appraising case manager cannot form a belief about the person responsible for the abuse and/or neglect, the case manager will record that nominating a PBR is not applicable and provide supporting information for this determination. This is to be included in the 'Provide a summary and analysis of the outcomes of this Appraisal' field on the Risk Analysis tab of the CYRIS Appraisal record.

10.1 - Special considerations

It is **not** appropriate to name a child as a person responsible for matters relating to self-harm. In such a circumstance the appraising case manager will record the matter as not applicable in the 'Provide a summary and analysis of the outcomes of this Appraisal' field on the Risk Analysis tab of the CYRIS Appraisal record.

In situations when a child under the age of 12 is believed to be responsible for the abuse of another child, the appraising case manager will:

1. Consider the context of the situation to guide the decision, such as when the appraising case manager suspects the child believed responsible for the abuse may also be exposed to abuse and/or neglect.
    - If there is reasonable cause to suspect that this is the case, staff should make a separate Child Concern Report.
2. Discuss the appropriateness of recording a child as a person believed responsible with an operations manager.

In situations when a child is above the age of 12 but under the age of 18 years and is believed to be responsible for the abuse of another child staff will:

1. Discuss and develop the recommended response to the Appraisal with a team leader.
2. Consider whether the child believed responsible for the abuse or neglect may also be exposed to abuse and/or neglect.

- If there is reasonable cause to suspect that this is the case, staff should make a separate Child Concern Report.

Where the outcome of an Appraisal finds that a kinship or foster carer is believed to be responsible for the abuse and/or neglect of a child:

- The child may be moved from the care placement at the discretion of the CYPS Operations Director, and
- The CYPS Relationship Management Team must be informed so a carer approval review can be conducted.

Staff will refer to the 'Abuse in care allegations – CYPS case managed' and the 'Abuse in care allegations – Out of Home Care provider case managed' procedure for additional information.

Step 11 – Assess the need for further support

Following the substantiation decision, the appraising case manager will determine if the child has a parent who is both **willing and able** to protect the child from future risk of abuse and/or neglect.

The test of a parent's willingness and ability is not a part of the substantiation decision, rather it is a secondary consideration which relates to whether further CYPS support such as Family Preservation is appropriate.

The assessment to determine if further support is appropriate must consider:

1. Is the parent *willing*? – based on the parent's stated intention which has been demonstrated.
2. Is the parent *able*? – based on the parent having the capacity and resources to protect the child.
3. The applicable environmental factors and supports which influence the parent's willingness and ability, based on sources of information such as professional opinion or family members.
4. If additional assessment, analysis or action is necessary to establish if a parent is willing and able to protect the child from abuse and/or neglect (or the risk or abuse and/or neglect)
    - At times, the willingness and ability of a parent to protect a child will not be known until they have been provided with the support and assistance they need to demonstrate their protective capacities
    - It may be necessary to conduct an additional assessment to determine if a parent is both willing and able to be protective. This recommendation must be endorsed by a team leader.
5. If the team leader will endorse the recommendation for further support.

If the appraising case manager is uncertain about the considerations above, Family Preservation should be recommended with the aim of actively reducing risk within a specific timeframe.

To record if a parent is willing and able, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Document the decision in the CYRIS Appraisal record
2. Provide a sound evidence base and professional rationale for the decision.

11.1 - Purpose of Family Preservation

Recommending a Family Preservation Response (without a Care and Protection order) allows CYPS to continue to address ongoing concerns about parenting capacity and mitigate potential risk factors through implementing appropriate supports.

Family Preservation may be an action **with or without** substantiation of the Appraisal process.

A Family Preservation Response may include safety planning, case conferencing, working to address family violence, use of a Family Group Conference and active referral to support services. These activities support the parent/s to reduce the risks within the child's care environment in order to actively prevent the likelihood of a statutory involvement being necessary to protect the child.

Family Preservation may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- a child is experiencing family violence
- family preservation is in the child's best interests
- a Safety Plan is required
- a child and/or family have needs which cannot be adequately addressed through referral to other services
- a child and/or family have been referred to services and monitoring of their engagement with services is required
- a child and/or their siblings are exposed to risks in the home which require an intensive care and protection response to reduce the risk
- a family is experiencing some form of crisis (health, housing, family violence) which is impacting upon the safety and/or wellbeing of a child
- there is insufficient information to decide if a parent or carer has capacity to protect the child in their care.

Family Preservation does not preclude the need for a child/ren to go into a brief (voluntary) out of home care placement, for the purposes of improving the immediate safety of the home. In these situations, restoration will occur as soon as possible.

To recommend a Family Preservation Response, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Clearly articulate within the Appraisal outcome:
    a. the need for CYPS involvement to support Family Preservation. This may include support to:
        i. reduce the risk the child is exposed to
        ii. address the family violence
        iii. address the needs of the child and/or family
        iv. improve parenting capacity
        v. improve the family's access to supports (formal and informal).
    b. the identified goals of the response which can include:
        i. strategies to reduce risk and/or address the needs of the child
        ii. strategies to improve parenting capacity
        iii. strategies to improve the family's access to formal and informal supports.
    c. the likely duration of continued CYPS involvement to support Family Preservation.
    d. the family's willingness to engage with CYPS support.
2. Organise a home visit to meet with the family and discuss their willingness to participate in the Family Preservation Response by working with CYPS.

If the goals of Family Preservation have not been achieved within the identified timeframe and the child continues to be exposed to risk, staff should consider progressing to a Family Assessment (see Step 12 – 'Develop post-Appraisal actions').

The decision to provide Family Preservation should reflect the appropriate CYPS response. For example, an Appraisal addressing family violence may indicate that a mother is trying hard to protect her children from exposure to family violence. Therefore, the Appraisal actions should include:

1. Engaging with the mother to implement a safety plan
2. Talking to the perpetrator of the violence about his actions and the impact on his child and family
3. Ask the perpetrator of violence to leave the family home for a period of time
4. Link the mother with support services
5. Refer the father to appropriate perpetrator intervention program
6. Work with the mother to increase the child's safety at home
7. Monitor the implementation of the safety plan over time

Step 12 – Develop post-Appraisal actions

The final task of an Appraisal is the development of a realistic action plan, detailing future activities, a timeframe for completion and who will be responsible for each activity.

To develop the action plan, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Determine the appropriate actions to address the concerns outlined in the Appraisal. This can include one or more of the following actions, depending on the post-Appraisal objectives (such as family preservation):

Action	Rationale/Description
Referral to support services	Referral to support services by CYPS should be 'active', meaning that parents and families are actively connected with recommended support services and not 'passively' given service names to follow up themselves. Active referral should occur after discussing with the parent/s or carer/s the nature of CYPS' concerns and the services that are available in the community to assist the family to address them. The case manager will facilitate a referral to a support service by: 1. contacting the recommended service to determine the viability of the referral 2. Provide the parent/s or carer/s with information about the service and articulate what they may expect from the service. 3. Follow through on a referral by sending the parent/s or carer/s a letter that provides the service details in writing. Relevant referral services at this stage of CYPS involvement include: 2. Uniting Children and Families ACT • Uniting can provide preservation or restoration services through their Intensive Family Based Service or Newpin programs (Uniting will assess with program will meet the needs of an individual family) • Referrals to Uniting must be approved by a senior manager • For referral details see the 'Uniting Children and Families ACT program referral criteria' practice guide.

Action	Rationale/Description
	3. Functional Family Therapy • This service is provided in partnership by Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation and OzChild • It provides culturally specific support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children aged 0-17 years who are at risk of entering the out of home care system • Functional Family Therapy is appropriate for families where there is minimal provider engagement and may have difficulty accepting services, families struggling with mental health issues, families with a history of abuse and/or neglect, family violence, substance abuse and criminal justice involvement. • In consultation with a team leader, case managers will submit the Family Functional Therapy referral form to a Senior Manager to ensure eligibility criteria have been met. The Senior Manager will forward referrals to Gugan Gulwan.
Safety plan	A safety plan is a protective response that seeks to identify if the parent/s, carer/s and/or family are able to provide for the care and protection of a child from family violence and/or future abuse and/or neglect. A safety plan is developed to implement specific actions that will secure the safety of a child. A safety plan may be developed as an Appraisal action when: 1. an Appraisal is occurring and there is a need to ensure the child is safe for the duration of the assessment of parenting capacity 2. an Appraisal has occurred and identified risk issues, but the child is safe at home with some conditions in place 3. the child has contact with a high-risk family member 4. attempts are being made to divert a family from statutory involvement (such as family preservation) 5. responding to family violence and/or physical abuse 6. responding to parent/carer drug and alcohol misuse 7. a care placement requires support due to 'quality of care' concerns. The implementation of a safety plan is appropriate when: 1. the parent/s or carer/s demonstrate adequate emotional, cognitive and behavioural protective factors to protect a child 2. family and environmental protective factors supplement the parent/s or carer/s capacities to protect the child 3. the parent/s or carer/s and family are able to identify strategies to protect the child 4. the parent/s or carer/s, family and other supports are assessed as being willing and able to implement the strategies. See the 'Safety planning' procedure.

Action	Rationale/Description
Case conference	A case conference may be held by staff in order to: 1. discuss a multi-agency response to the Appraisal 2. connect the child and family with appropriate early intervention community support services such as: maternal and child health (MACH) nurses, child care, respite care, parent education programs, family support workers, parent support workers, mediation or advocacy services, or drug and alcohol services. 3. discuss the CYPS follow up actions including any non-negotiables. Staff may consider declaring a care team at the case conference to assist information sharing if appropriate. Case conferences may be arranged by case management staff or with the support of the CYPS Case Conferencing team (if particular circumstances apply). See the 'Case conferences' practice guide.
Family group conference	Staff will consider a family group conference for all Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families. The conference provides the family with an opportunity to develop a family plan which addresses the identified concerns. The family plan establishes the child's needs for safety which need to be achieved (such as child living in a safe home) and allocates responsibility within the family for the care, wellbeing and safety of the child. See the 'Family Group Conferencing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People' procedure.
Family Preservation Response	A Family Preservation Response allows CYPS to undertake a voluntary engagement with a family for up to six months. This response facilitates a partnership approach with parent/s to reducing risk in the home and thereby preventing future statutory involvement where possible. The response allows CYPS to operationalise family-led decision-making principles through developing an agreed Safety Plan and facilitating processes including; Family Group Conferencing, case conferencing and case management for a time limited period. Where necessary, a Voluntary Care Agreement may be used during this type of response in matters involving family violence. Active efforts in this space must be made by CYPS to increase the child's safety with a view to closure after six months. Where risk has not reduced at the end of the Family Preservation response, the family should be referred for a Family Assessment and exploration of the potential need for a planned application to the Childrens Court. A Family Preservation Response should be used with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families wherever there is a future risk of child removal. These responses must involve active discussion with the Cultural Services Team about how best to engage the family and offer culturally appropriate support to both parents and child/ren. See the 'Family Preservation' procedure.

Action	Rationale/Description
Family Assessment	A Family Assessment is required when: 1. a child is believed to have been or be at risk of abuse and/or neglect **and** it is unclear whether the parent/s or carer/s are both willing and able to protect the child from future abuse and/or neglect, **or** 2. Family preservation may be supported through the planned application process (see the 'Planned Applications' procedure), **or** 3. there is reason to suspect that a child is in need of care and protection and an application to the Childrens Court for a Care and Protection Order is likely in the future. The appraising case manager will discuss the suitability of conducting a Family Assessment with their team leader prior to including this as a post-Appraisal action. See the 'Family Assessment' procedure.
Case closure	Case closure may only occur if: 1. an assessment of risk indicates that the child is not at risk of abuse and/or neglect or otherwise in need of care and protection 2. all identified child and family needs have been addressed either through further CYPS support or through referral to other agencies and services 3. possible causes of re-reporting have been considered and appropriate strategies employed, including active referral to other agencies 4. the child is visible in the community to the extent that they are likely to be the subject of a future Child Concern Report if risk escalates 5. the team leader has endorsed the recommendation to close the case. If case closure is being considered, the appraising case manager will seek the views of the child, family and other involved professionals before arriving at a final decision. If the proposed case closure will occur, the relevant parties will be formally advised in writing two weeks in advance of the closure.

4. Consult with the family and the relevant parties (such as external services) who will support the implementation of the action plan to ensure the aims and expectations of the action plan are clear.
5. Document the details of the action plan on the CYRIS Appraisal record including:
    a. A summary of the recommended actions
    b. The purpose of the recommended actions
    c. The dates for completion of specific actions
    d. The person responsible for the action.

6. Determine a review date when the progress of the actions will be considered.

Step 13 – Seek endorsement of the Appraisal

The Act allows staff to determine that a child has been, is being, or is at significant risk of abuse/neglect/family violence **without** the parent or person with parental responsibility participating in the Appraisal, provided sufficient information is already known.

An Appraisal may be finalised **without** the parent's input, even if one or both parents (or persons with parental responsibility) have not given agreement to participate in an Appraisal interview. However, for this to occur, staff would need to ensure sufficient information has been gathered through interviews with the child, rigorous information gathering processes and consideration of the outcome of any Child Protection Report Risk Assessment to answer the substantiation question.

Prior to seeking endorsement for the Appraisal, the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Ensure the Appraisal process has addressed each of the risk and safety issues for the child and their siblings.

The completed Appraisal will be submitted to a team leader for endorsement. The **team leader** will:

1. Consider if the Appraisal:
    a. analyses all relevant information
    b. provides a professional safety and risk assessment.
2. Determine if the outcomes of the Appraisal will be endorsed
3. Identify if the Appraisal meets the criteria for:
    a. a section 507 response (i.e. informing the Public Advocate)
    b. Reportable Conduct (i.e. to be forwarded to the Reportable Conduct team)
    c. restricted access on the client management system
    d. completing an incident report (i.e. submitting a report to ACTIA)
4. Update the client management system including:
    a. Recording the Appraisal outcome
    b. Finalising the CYRIS Appraisal record.

To finalise the Appraisal process the **appraising case manager** will:

1. Inform the relevant parties of the Appraisal outcomes in writing using the Appraisal outcome advice letter.

Note: If the Appraisal was conducted for a child in care:

- Inform the OOHC provider who manages the placement of the Appraisal outcome (if applicable) (see the 'Abuse in care allegations - OOHC provider managed' procedure)
- The Manager of Operational Compliance will:
    - Inform the Public Advocate of the Appraisal outcome
    - Inform the ACT Ombudsman under the Reportable Conduct scheme.

Roles and responsibilities

The following table outlines the roles and responsibilities under this procedure.

Role	Responsibility
Appraising case manager	• Develop the Appraisal Action Plan • Seek parental agreement to the Appraisal and/ or provide Appraisal notification (when appropriate) • Gather information by conducting interviews the child, parents, organisations or relevant others and submitting information request • Conduct an analysis of the information gathered to determine the outcome of the Appraisal • Determine if the Appraisal process will result in substantiation • Nominate a 'person believed responsible' for the abuse and/ or neglect (if applicable) • Assess if Family Preservation is appropriate • Develop post-Appraisal actions and recommendations • Inform the relevant parties of the Appraisal outcome
Operations manager	• Endorse applications for Appraisal Orders and order extensions • List Appraisal Order applications at ARC • Approve extensions to the Appraisal deadline • Attend review meetings following resubstantiation
Principal practitioner	• Attend review meetings following resubstantiation
Team leader	• Support the case manager throughout the Appraisal process • Endorse requests for care and protection assessments • Endorse Appraisal Action Plans • Approve an interview or visual examination of a child without parental agreement to the Appraisal • Endorse the Appraisal, including the substantiation decision, recommendations for post-Appraisal actions and case closure (if applicable) • Finalise the Appraisal and the intervention on the client management system • Record the person believed responsible on the client management system • Attend review meetings following resubstantiation

Record keeping

All information gathered in relation to the Appraisal process is to be recorded in the CYPS client management system as progress notes, minutes, service events and other scanned documents.

Related materials

The following materials directly relate to this procedure.

Legislation

- *Children and Young People Act 2008*

Policies, procedures and practice guides

- Policy: Appraisal
- Procedure: Abuse in care allegations – CYPS case managed
- Procedure: Abuse in care allegations – OOHC provider case managed
- Procedure: Application Review Committee
- Procedure: Emergency Action
- Procedure: Family Assessment
- Procedure: Family Group Conferencing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People
- Procedure: Family Preservation
- Procedure: Information sharing in child protection
- Procedure: Planned Applications
- Procedure: Referrals to the Child at Risk Health Unit (CARHU)
- Procedure: Safety Planning
- Practice guide: Case conferences
- Practice guide: Interviewing children
- Practice guide: Interviewing parents and carers
- Practice guide: Role of the Assessment and Support team – assessments and referrals
- Practice guide: Uniting Children and Families ACT

Other documentation

- Working with families affected by domestic and family violence guide
- Working with families affected by cumulative harm or neglect guide
- Working with families affected by physical abuse guide
- Working with families affected by sexual abuse guide
- Risk Assessment Framework
- Form: Appraisal
- Form: Appraisal Agreement and Notification
- Information sheet: Appraisals – Information for families
- Template: Appraisal outcome advice letter
- Template: Person believed responsible

Document information

Authorising officer:	Senior Manager, Practice and Performance, CYPS
Effective date:	29/05/2019
Last reviewed:	10/03/2022
Next review date:	By March 2024

Access:	Open access – Available to all staff and the public

Version history

The following table details the published date and amendment details for this document.

Date	Amendment details
29/05/2019	First publication of this procedure.
28/07/2020	Updated to include guidance that an Appraisal may be finalised without input from a parent or person with parental responsibility.
10/03/2022	Included information about addressing several CPRs within the context on an existing open Appraisal, when appropriate criteria are met.

Definitions

Appraisal Agreement and Notification Form: Accessed via the client management system. The written record that a parent has agreed to participate in an Appraisal process or has been notified of the Appraisal.

Appraisal record: Accessed via the client management system. Used to document the Appraisal Action Plan, if agreement or notification is necessary, the Appraisal outcomes and follow up activities.

Appraisal Action Plan: overview of the activities and information gather that **will** take place in the Appraisal.

Appraisal Risk Analysis: The Appraisal Risk Analysis is an analysis of information gathered during the Appraisal to determine the Appraisal outcome and if further CYPS involvement is necessary.

Care and protection assessment: A care and protection assessment means any of the following activities carried out by an authorised assessor (Section 438) on a person:

- a medical examination or test
- a dental examination or test
- a social assessment
- a paediatric or developmental assessment
- a psychological examination or test
- a psychiatric examination or test
- if the person is a parent or other person with parental responsibility—an assessment of the person's parenting capacity.

Care and protection Appraisal: A care and protection Appraisal is a planned process of enquiry into a family situation and is defined in section 366 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*.

Information sharing entity: An individual or organisation that may provide the Director-General with information on the safety and wellbeing about the child or young person when it considers that the provision of this is in the best interests of the child or young person.