

Integrated Therapeutic Justice Care: Co-creating a 'safety net of care' for family violence prevention, relational trauma recovery & wellbeing for Aboriginal children & families with complex needs

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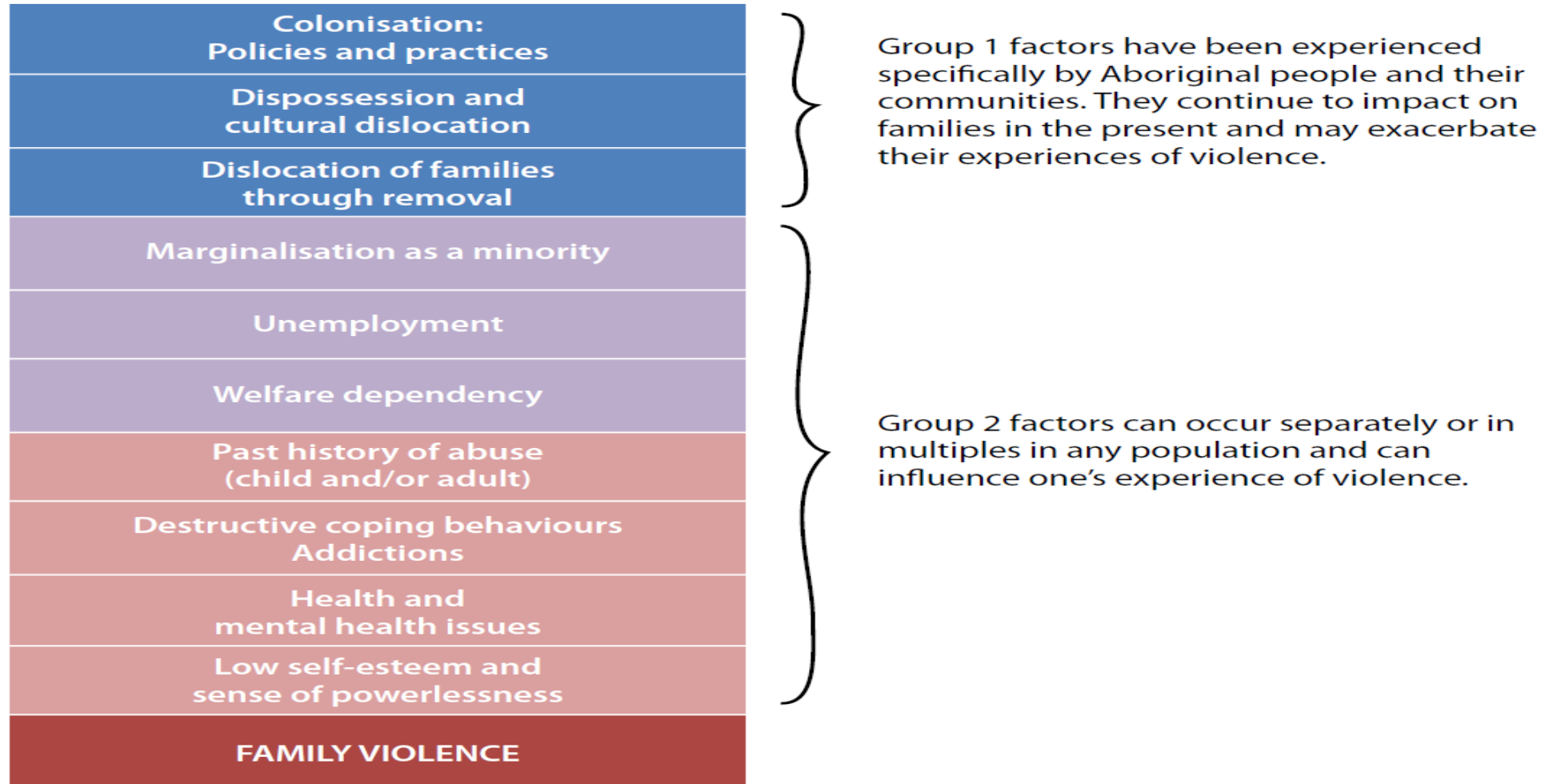
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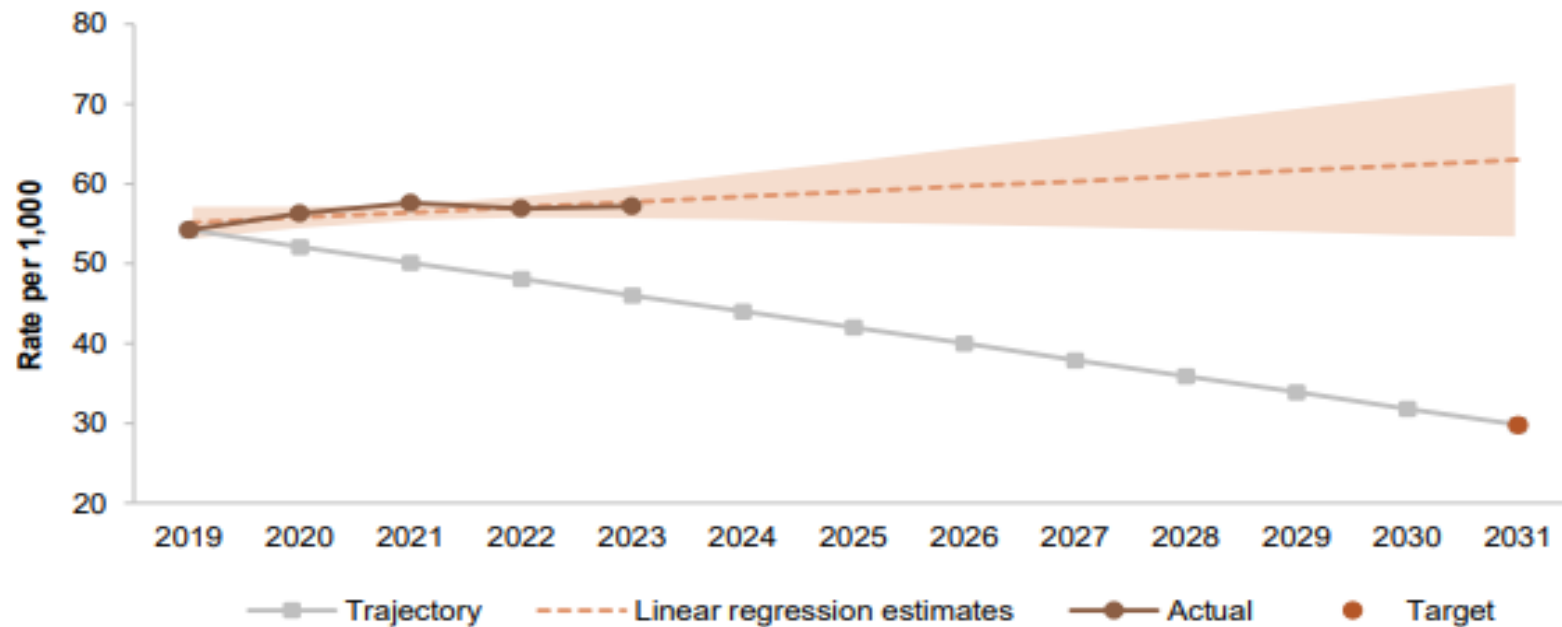
Contextualising family violence: Embracing a ‘shared understanding’ of intergenerational trauma & ‘shared commitment’ for systemic reform



Urgent call to collaborative action: Addressing the unrelenting & 'widening gap' of 'crisis-driven' overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care

Figure 2.10 – Children in out-of-home care, nationally^a

Rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0–17 years in out-of-home care per 1,000 children



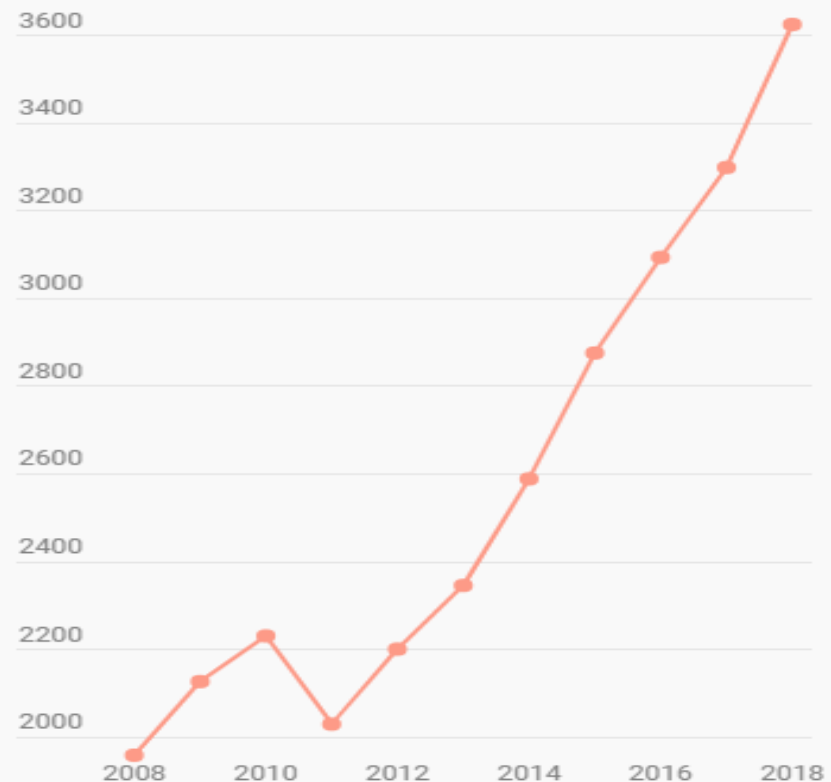
a. The shaded area represents 95% confidence intervals for the linear regression estimates.

Source: Derived from state and territory governments (unpublished); ABS Estimates and Projections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians

Source : Closing the Gap Annual Data Compilation Report July 2024, Canberra; <https://www.pc.gov.au/closing-the-gap-data/annual-data-report/closing-the-gap-annual-data-compilation-july2024.pdf>

Rethinking systemic 'stress activation' & 'recursive cycles' of cumulative risk & harm: Is imprisoning mothers counter-intuitive?

Australia's female prison population, 2008-18



“The costs are borne by entire families: imprisoning mothers can have devastating consequences for their children and perpetuate intergenerational offending and cycles of incarceration. This disproportionately impacts Indigenous women in prison, of whom some 80 per cent are mothers”.

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-20/womens-prisons-full-of-domestic-violence-victims>

Addressing the ‘family violence crisis’: Is systemic inequity & reactivity impeding access to timely service engagement & exacerbating complex needs & traumatic stress activation?

WHAT WE KNOW :

- ❖ Alarmingly, the rates of Intergenerational Trauma are particularly high for Aboriginal women & associated with mental health disorders & susceptibility to complex needs
- ❖ Child removal is reportedly associated with exacerbation of complex needs presentations, such as mental health issues, alcohol & drug addiction & susceptibility to justice involvement and/or entrenchment of social disadvantage*

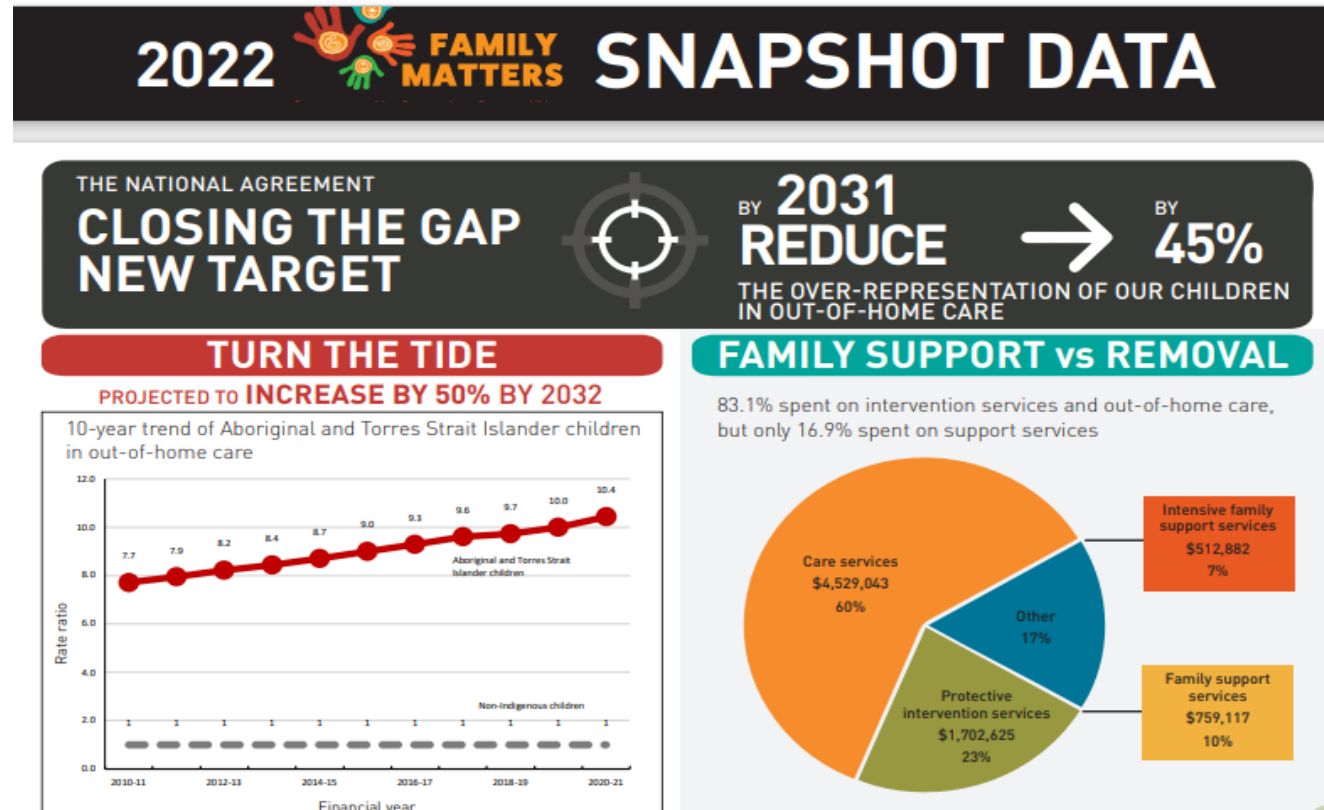
YET

- ❖ Mental health issues & complex needs presentations experienced by Aboriginal women, occur in a context of life-span, historical and ongoing inter-generational trauma, grief and loss and sustained by UNMET NEEDS which are perpetuated by:
 - ❖ SYSTEMIC INEQUITY, notably a significant lack of funding for integrated services and programs providing timely intervention, care & support** and
 - ❖ SYSTEMIC REACTIVITY, most notably reactive child protection policies & practices in the context of child removal that is often reportedly experienced as distressing, coercive, disempowering & non-inclusive***

Sources: * Kendall, S. et al (2019). Holistic conceptualizations of health by Incarcerated Aboriginal Women in New South Wales , Australia. *Qualitative Health Research*, 29(11),1549-1565.

DOI:10.1177/1049732319846162 ; **<https://www.familymatters.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/20221123-Family-Matters-Report-2022-1.pdf> &***Bastian, C, & Wendt, S.(2022). Collaboration Between Child Protection and Domestic and Family Violence: A Case File Review, *Australian Social Work*. [DOI:10.1080/0312407X.2021.2000627](https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2021.2000627).

Closing the 'systemic gaps within the Gap': Co-investing in 'Systemic Equity' & 'Systemic Responsivity'



Source: The Family Matters Report (2022); https://www.familymatters.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/1533_2022-F.M.-Snapshot-2pp_option-1.pdf Matters Data Snapshot

Prioritising primary prevention & family reunification: Focusing on relational wellbeing and cultural continuity

“Child protection intervention and removal of children from their family into OOHC can have highly detrimental impacts on the continuity of a child’s relationships, culture and identity. To best support child safety and wellbeing, efforts must focus on achieving and promoting relational and cultural continuity for children who come into contact with child protection services” (p.30).

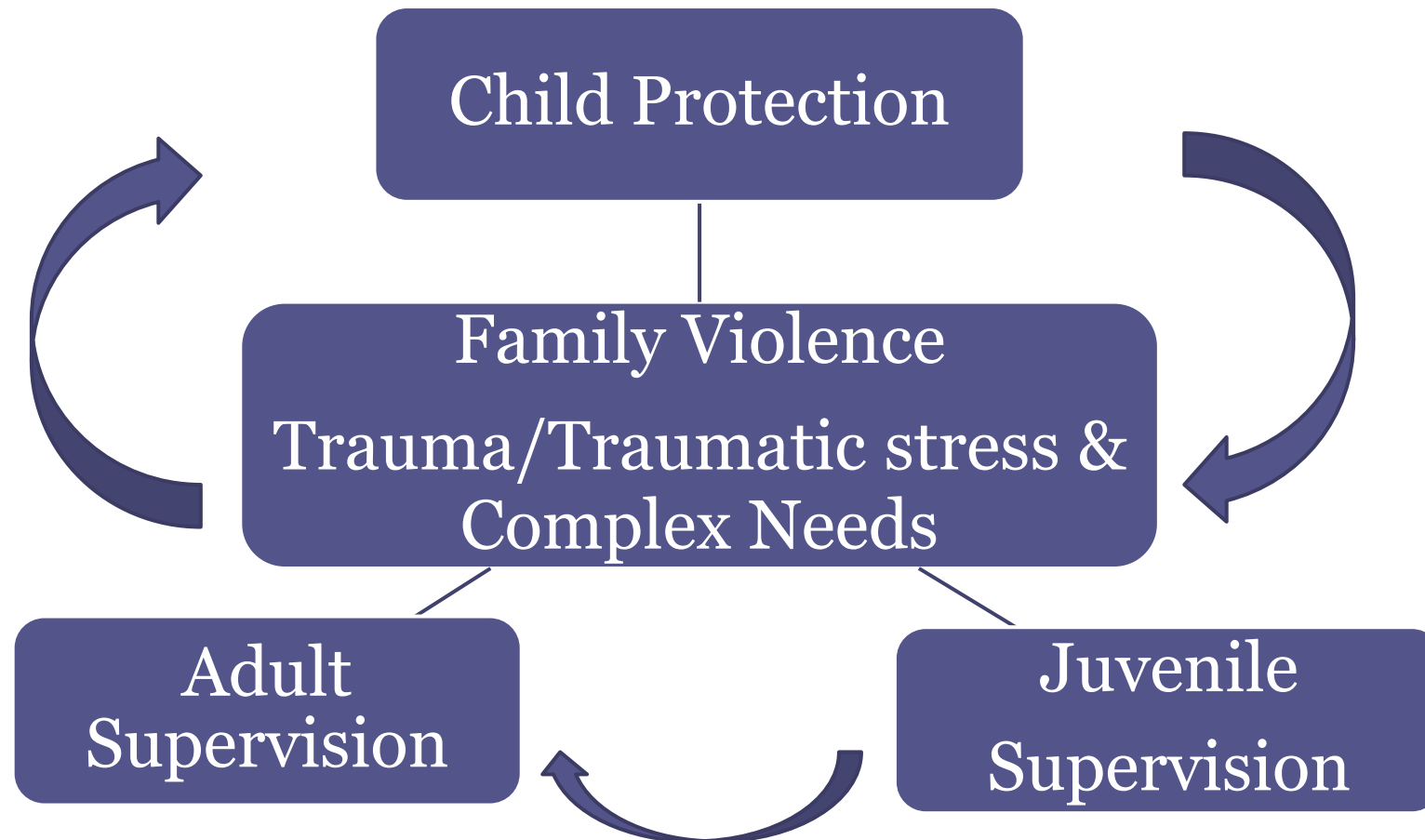
Source: Family Matters (2023). Family Matters Report 2023 : SNAICC;
<https://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/20240731-Family-Matters-Report-2023.pdf>

Considering the interaction effects of traumatic stress activation & stress vulnerability on relational functioning and care capacity

“Traumatic childhood experiences, such as those of Stolen Generations survivors, may affect following generations through biological changes in stress responses and by undermining the ability to parent and love freely without fear.”

Proposed model: Intergenerational cycle of family violence & justice involvement

QUESTION: Is 'systemic traumatic stress activation' an implicit key driver of 'recursive cycles' of family violence & intergenerational trauma?



Addressing systemic barriers & challenges: Enabling timely service access & inter-sector collaboration

- ❖ Lack of access to differential responses & a 'continuum of care'
- ❖ Lack of collaboration between child protection & family violence servicing

Source: Zafirakis, E. (2022). Feature Article: Collaborative care: A way forward. NAIDOC Special Edition : Law Institute Journal, 96(7), 40-43 · Jul 1, 2022

Co-investing in Aboriginal workforce capacity for ‘cultural healing’: Restoring healthy relationships ,family connection & wellbeing

“The creation of safe places where people can talk and access support is a crucial first step in the healing process, as this increases a sense of safety and enables the building of safe and healthy connections.” (pp.19-20)

Source: Edwige, V., & Gray, P. (2021) . Significance of Culture to Wellbeing, Healing and Rehabilitation;
<https://bugmybarbook.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/significance-of-culture-2021.pdf>

Closing the (Incarceration) Gap: Calling for collaborative investment in 'caring capacity' not prison capacity

Fundamentally this involves a systemic 'paradigm shift' & re-envisioning:

“a system that no longer focuses on removal but is realigned to focus on supporting families to care safely for their children in their family, culture & community” [p.12].

Source : SNAICC (2021). Turning the Tide : Designing a New Plan to address the over-representation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander children in Out-of-Home Care-Consultation guide


At the 'heart' of systemic change: Participation & Empowerment



...When the voices of the families and communities we work with are involved, solutions and strategies are much more likely to be effective...

Source : Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2021), *Keeping Our Kids Safe: Cultural Safety and the National Principles for Child Safe Organization* [p.19]

Promoting systemic 'responsivity of care' for transformative & sustainable system responses

SYSTEMIC ACCESSIBILITY  **SYSTEMIC EFFECTIVENESS**

**SYSTEMIC 'RESPONSIVITY OF CARE' &
COLLABORATIVE CARE PROCESSES**

CORE DOMAINS:

- *CULTURALLY SAFE & RESPONSIVE CARE
- *TRAUMA INFORMED CARE
- *FAMILY-FOCUSED CARE
- *INTEGRATED CARE

Co-creating a 'Safety Net of Care': Embedding Collaborative Care in policy & practice

- ❖ Collaborative care essentially embraces a relationship-based approach which is key to implementing effective collaborative practice and facilitating trust for timely service engagement.
- ❖ Integral collaborative care processes, such as inter-agency communication, collaboration, coordination, and continuity of care, have reportedly been found to be facilitative processes in reducing system fragmentation and facilitating meaningful, timely & responsive service engagement.
- ❖ These relational domains have been recognised as essential in addressing client needs and developing a proactive and collaborative approach to care provision by helping families to feel safe and supported in accessing servicing and support.
- ❖ Embedding Collaborative Care in policy & practice may potentially help to co-create a 'Safety Net of Care' & optimise service provision for more responsive, reflexive & sustainable service outcomes aimed at early intervention, family restoration and enhancing wellbeing outcomes for children and families with complex needs.

Advancing 'transformative & sustainable' systemic responses: Balancing the implementation of collaborative care 'processes' & collaborative 'outcomes'

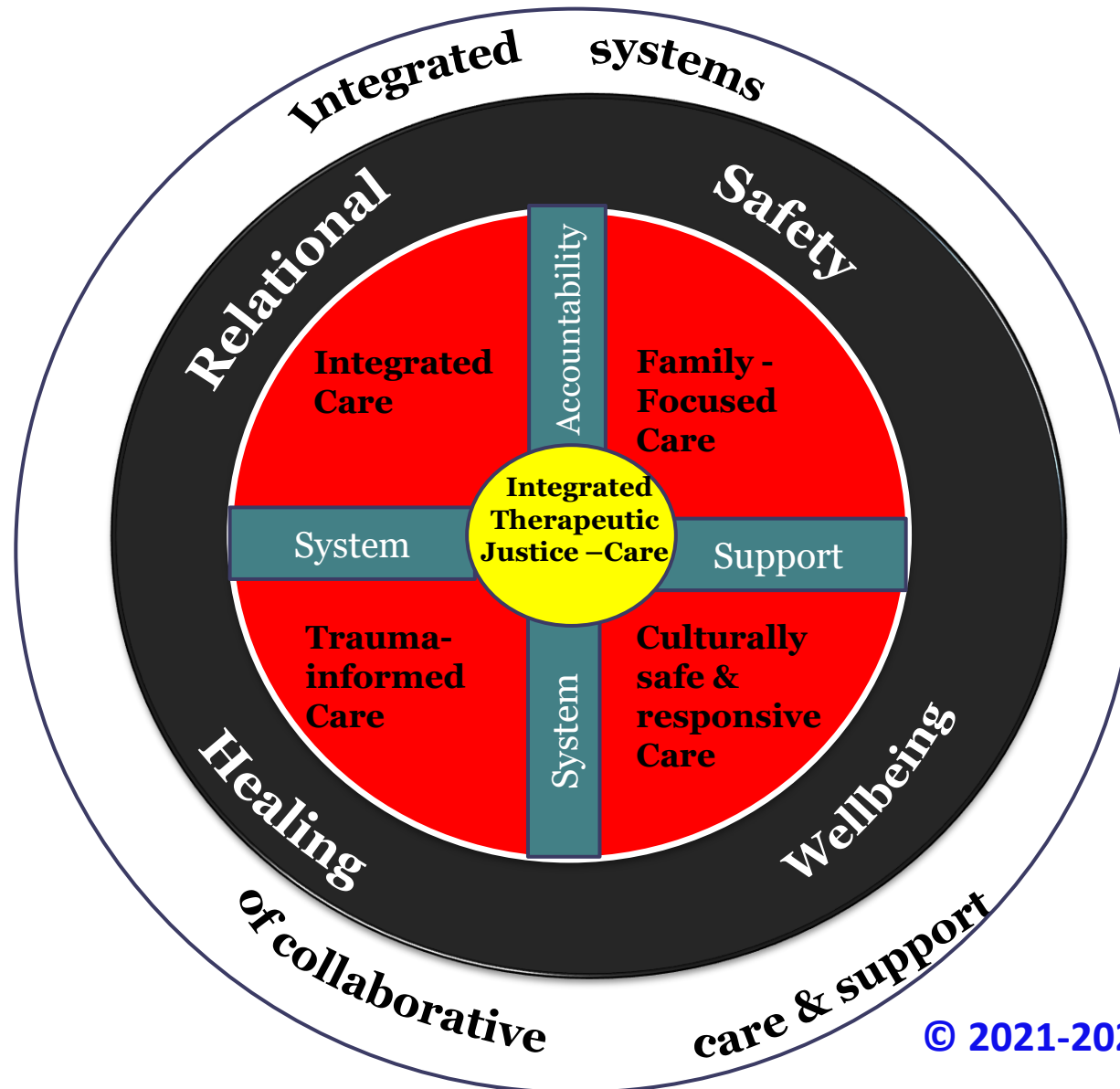
Balancing the needs for embedding:

- ❖ Collaborative care & 'process orientation' to services - the 'HOW' &
- ❖ Collaborative service design & 'outcome orientation' to services - the 'WHAT'

ITJ-care - Implementing a principle-based approach to transformative systemic change: Embedding integrated systems of collaborative care & 'Ethos of Care'

“ITJ-care: Embedding an ‘ethos of care’ & collaborative care processes for the implementation of sustainable systemic change requires collaborative action across the sectors of health, justice and social services, to maximise systemic impact. Collaborative care with Aboriginal community-based organisations and other Aboriginal stakeholders requires services to work together, ‘hand-in-hand’ with Aboriginal families & communities by embedding collaborative care processes and an ‘ethos of care’ in action. At the same time, for the implementation of these collaborative care processes to be effective, there is an urgent need for redress of systemic gaps of inequality & responsiveness. At the ‘heart’ of this framework is the need for a ‘paradigm shift’ & ‘collective action’ to address the complex needs of children and families at risk of justice involvement & refocus our collective attention on early intervention & family restoration. In essence this entails embedding integrated systems of collaborative care & building collaborative relationships that prioritise relational safety & wellbeing through continuity of care & enhanced service coordination, communication & collaboration to effect transformative & positive change. ”

Integrated Therapeutic Justice Care - Proposed Collaborative Care Network Model



Collaborating & Innovating for systemic change:

Is it time to promote a more proactive wellbeing-informed systemic approach that embraces the Indigenous psychology of flourishing?

“Facilitating and nurturing Indigenous flourishing requires recognition of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing, ... the complex holistic therapeutic knowledge systems of Indigenous peoples represent hopeful, dynamic and innovative paradigms of collective eco-centric relational flourishing within psychology”(p.2).

Source: Dudgeon, P., Bray, A., & Walker, R. (2023). Embracing the emerging Indigenous psychology of flourishing. *Nature Reviews Psychology*.

*** THANK YOU! ***

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