



SUMMARY SHEET

An Aboriginal Participatory Action Research Study Protocol

Sharynne Hamilton, Larissa Jones, Millie Penny, Charmaine Pell, Nicole Ilich, Carol Michie, Raewyn Mutch, Melissa O'Donnell, Carrington Shepherd, Brad Farrant

The Research

This is an Elder and community-led research study, working with agency staff and non-Aboriginal foster carers from three mainstream out-of-home care (OOHC) agencies: Key Assets Australia, Life Without Barriers and MacKillop Family Services. The study will provide information about cultural connections, and cultural activity and resources for Aboriginal children living in non-Aboriginal foster care arrangements. This summary sheet briefly describes the research processes published in full detail at the link below.

Objectives

1. To work with Aboriginal Elders and community, alongside stakeholders from OOHC agencies, to provide cultural knowledge, resources and activities to bolster current cultural support plans for Aboriginal children in their care.
2. To work with non-Indigenous foster carers and OOHC agency staff to develop a suite of culturally secure training and workforce support materials.
3. To provide recommendations from the research that can assist address structural challenges to collecting and sharing cultural information for Aboriginal children in care with non-Indigenous foster carers.

Research question

Can the provision of Elder and Aboriginal community-led knowledge-sharing forums and cultural training with OOHC agency staff, assist to develop sustainable ways to provide cultural connections and cultural activity for Aboriginal children in the care of non-Indigenous foster carers?

Methods

- Recognising that Elder consultation is highly important, cultural governance will be provided by the study's Elder Co-Researchers and Aboriginal advisory groups will provide advice and guidance for the life of the research. The study will use an Aboriginal Participatory Action Research Framework (see diagram below).
- Data will be collected using social yarning and research topic yarning.
- Fully informed written will be obtained from all study participants. Ethical approval has been received from the Western Australian Aboriginal Health Ethics Committee (#1137) and reciprocal ethical approval from the University of Western Australia. The research is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council Ideas Grant #2010384.

Research Activity

- The study will conduct several rounds of semi-structured focus groups with OOHC agency staff and interviews with non-Indigenous foster carers.
- A co-designed 'Cultural Knowing, Being and Doing' survey will be conducted at multiple timepoints across the research with OOHC agency staff.
- Information about the cultural connections and assets that Aboriginal children in care possess will be collected from their carers using a co-designed Justice Capital Assets Scale.
- A cultural training program will be co-designed.
- The research will be evaluated using multiple sources to assess attendance, participation and research impacts.

