

Aboriginal-Led Community Co-design

Commissioning for better Aboriginal child and family outcomes

Acknowledgement of Country

AbSec acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we are meeting today, and pays our respect to Elders past, present and future; and acknowledges the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices and connections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We also wish to acknowledge and pay our respects to members of the Stolen Generations, particularly those who have not had the opportunity to make it home; and to Aboriginal children in care today, for they are future elders and knowledge keepers.



Aboriginal-Led Community Co-design of the Aboriginal Guardianship Support Model

NCOSS NGO Researchers Forum, April 2022



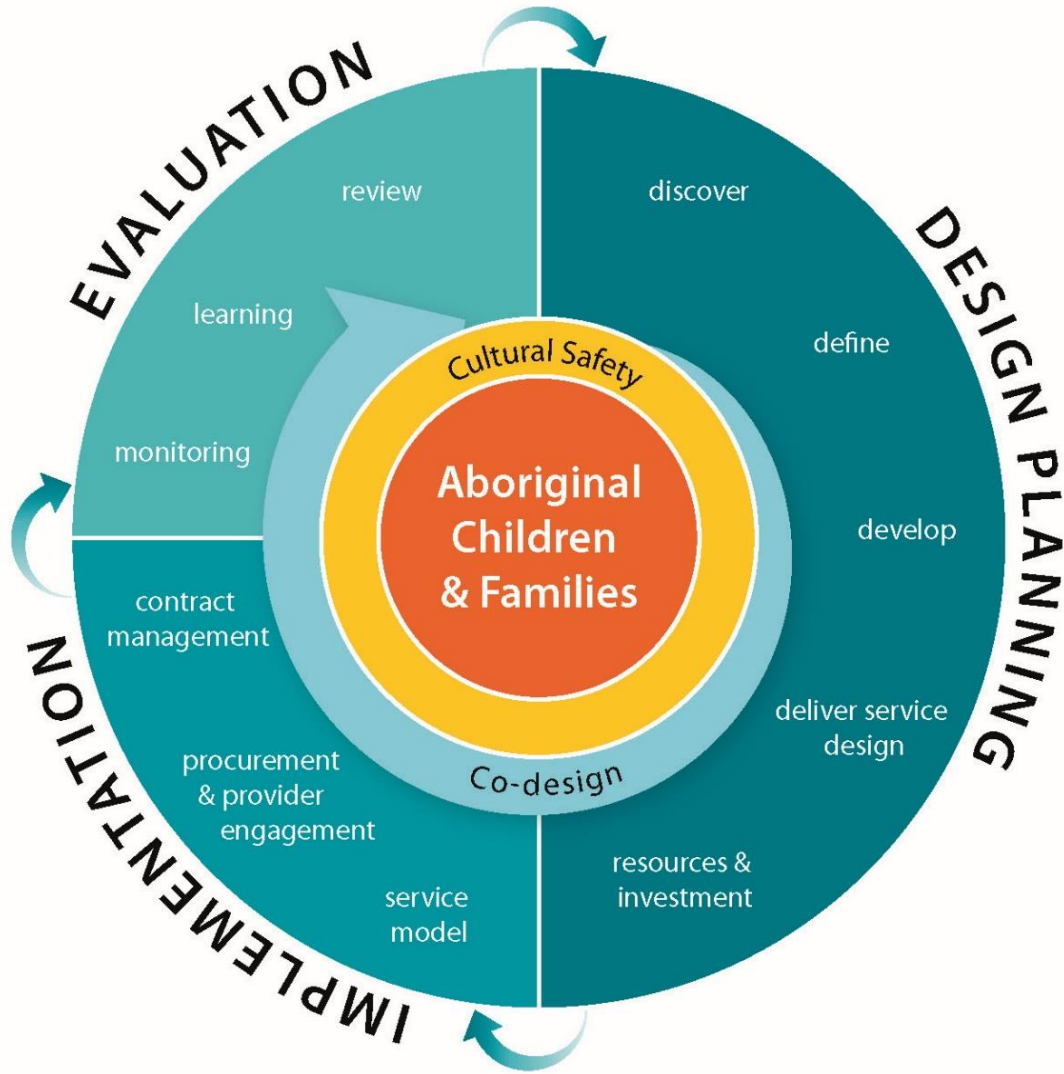
AbSec – NSW Child, Family and Community
Peak Aboriginal Corporation

Our yarn is about

- ◎ The background to AbSec's Aboriginal-led community co-design
- ◎ Our co-design approach
- ◎ Our insights and learnings on community-led co-design
- ◎ Your Q&A



Background: AbSec's Aboriginal Commissioning Framework



- ☉ draws on the well established commissioning approaches of the NSW Government and the Australian Government's primary health network (phn)
- ☉ is a three phase commissioning model of:
 - Design planning – using human centred design methods of discover, define, develop and deliver a co-designed, community –led solution; with resourcing and investment
 - Implementation – open market engagement, procurement and contracting of initiatives
 - Evaluation – monitoring, learnings and outcomes evaluation
- ☉ puts our children and families at the centre and builds in cultural safety in all aspects of the model

Background – the context of our co-design

- ◎ Persistent disparities - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children are over-represented:
 - across the child and family services continuum of care
 - in out-of-home care
- ◎ The situation persists despite multiple and significant investments in system review and reform
- ◎ The current system of services and supports
 - fails to effectively target investment
 - focuses on outputs rather than outcomes
 - is inflexible and fails to deliver self-determination to Aboriginal communities.



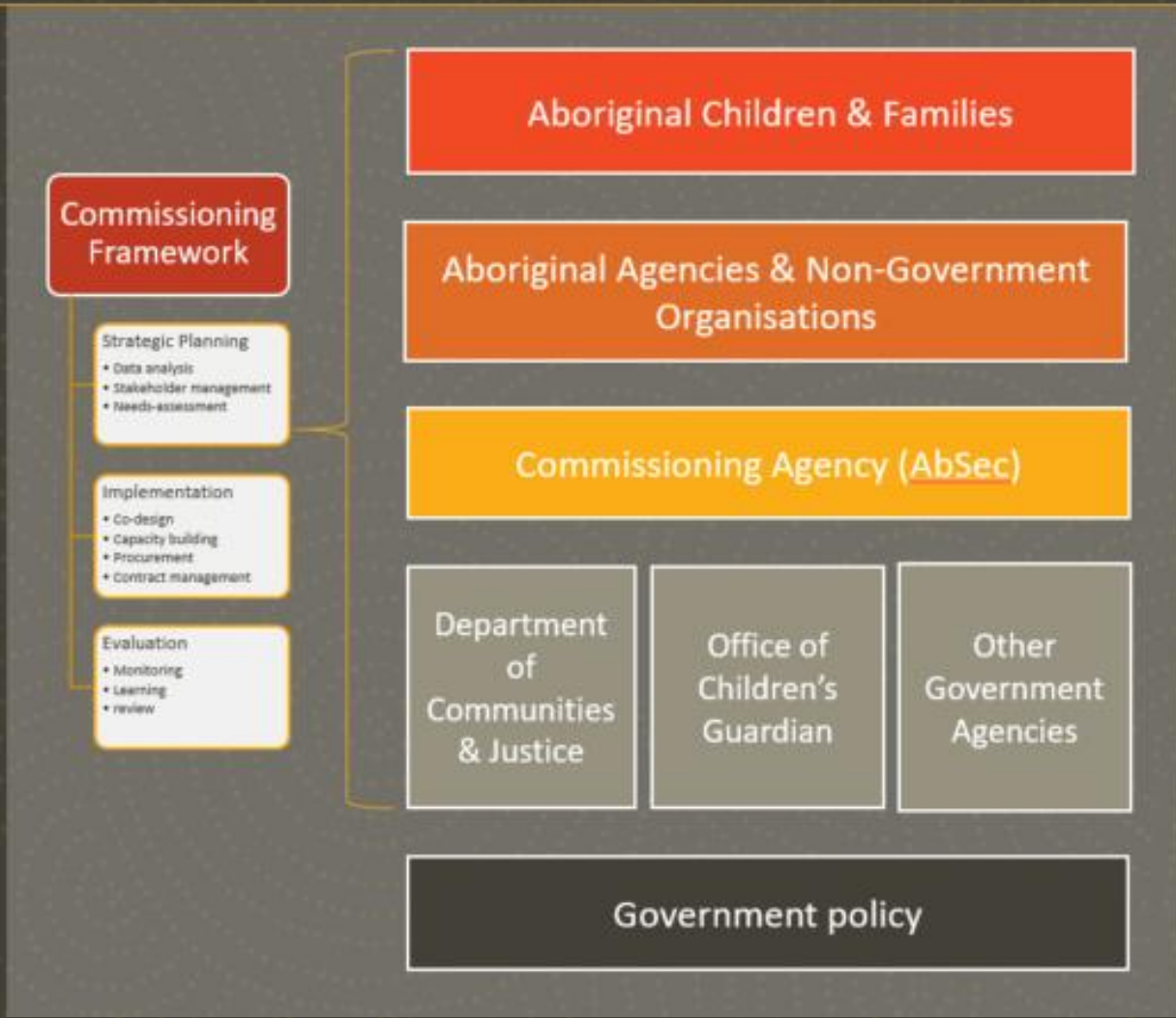


System Comparison (simplified)

CURRENT SYSTEM



ENVISAGED SYSTEM



Our Co-Design Method: Partners and co-designers

Government partners -
NSW Treasury, FACS / DCJ,
AANSW, FACSIAR, DPC

Community
members

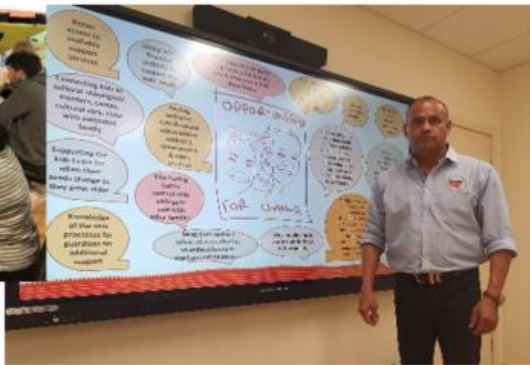
AbSec

End-service
users &
families

Sector
practitioners



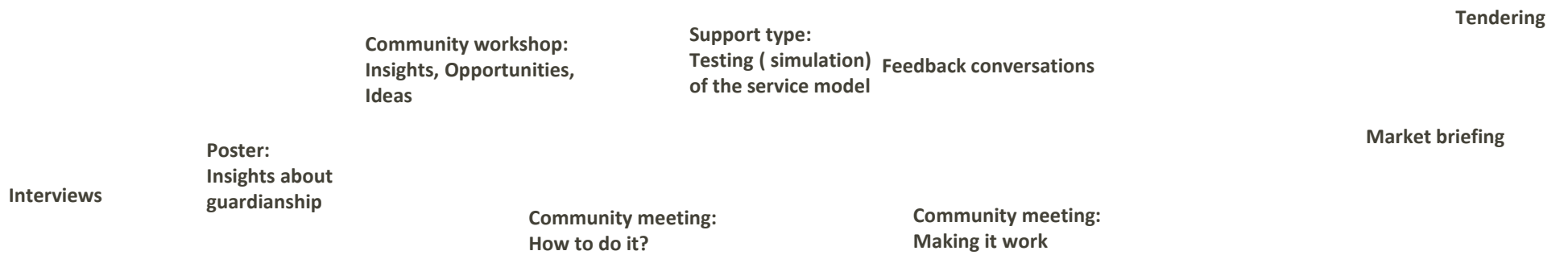
Co-design in action



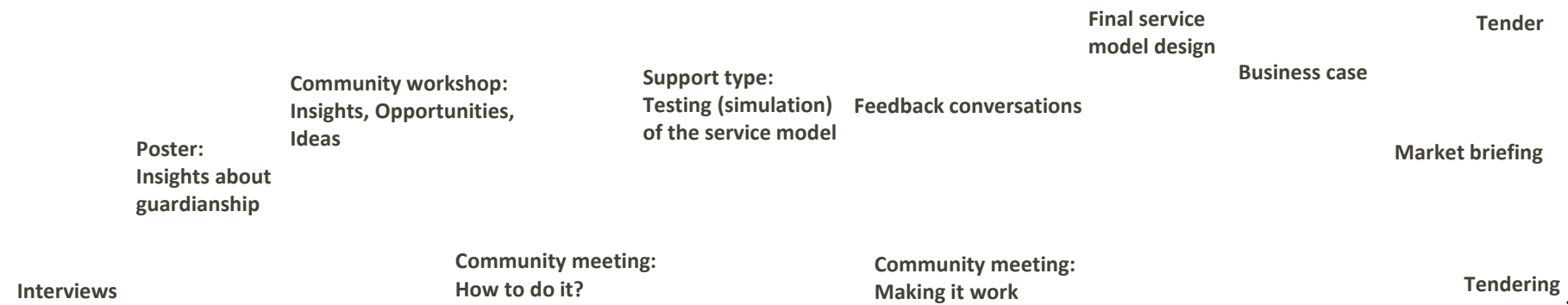
Our Co-design journey



SW Sydney



Hunter



Guardians of Aboriginal children

Aboriginal community members and ACCO representatives

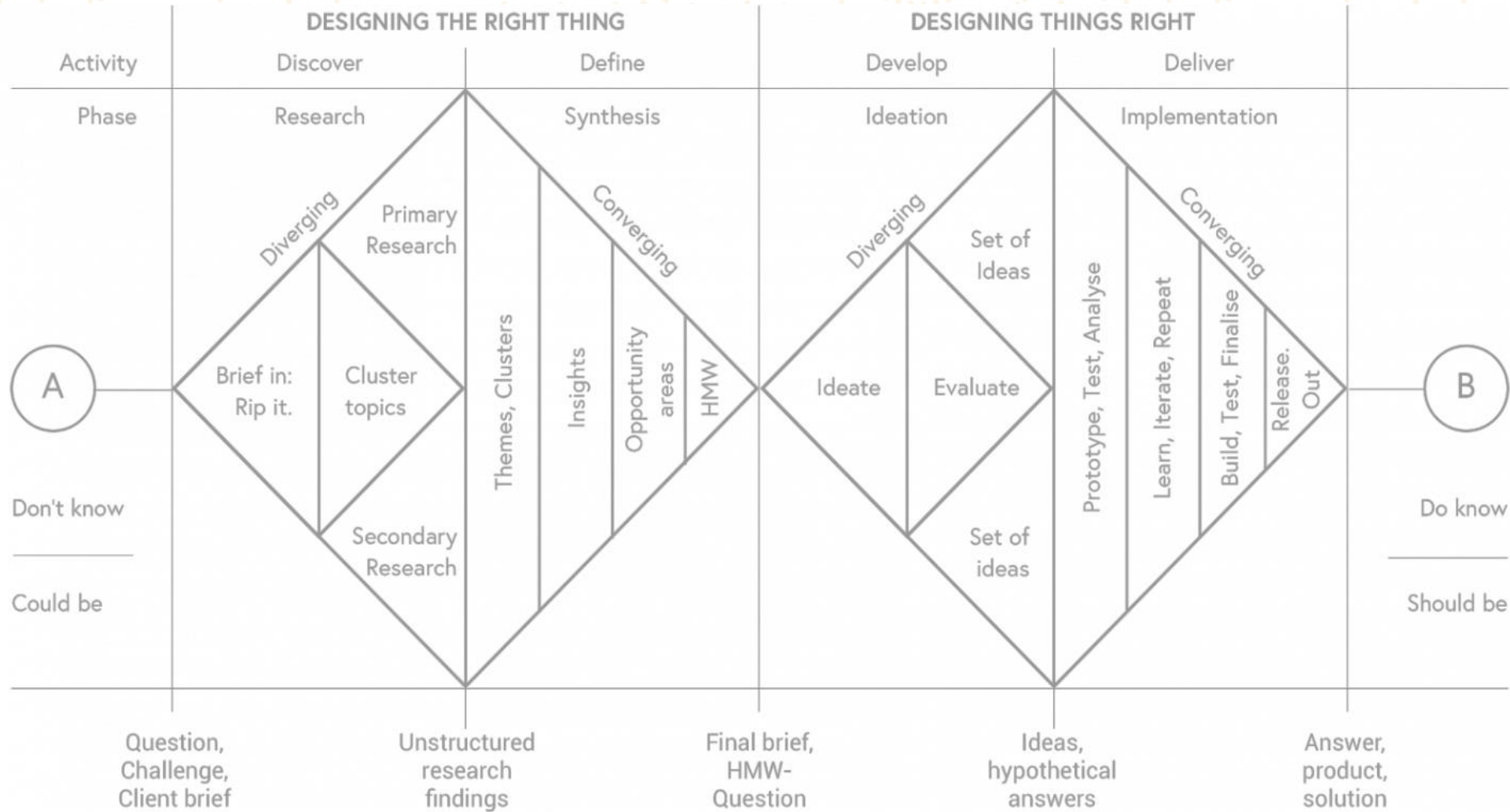
Representatives of non-ACCO organisations

AbSec facilitators and team

Documented and shared for feedback



Our Co-design method: DD DD Outcomes Design



DD DD Method - Human Centred Outcomes Design

THEMES

Connection to culture, family and country is limited for non-Aboriginal guardians and families

Getting by on my own - with little additional support

CULTURAL SUPPORT

- We travel back to country for important family and community events
- We eat traditional food regularly
- Family is strong in our cultural which is passed onto the grandchildren
- Kids know their Aboriginality & history - part of a large family practicing cultural



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

- Access to cultural activities is limited (*some families*)
- Cultural camps would be great
- Access to Aboriginal mentors would be great
- Limited understanding of Aboriginality (*non Aboriginal guardians*)

SPECIAL SUPPORT NEEDS

- Children have special & behavioural needs
- Disability support needs
- Trauma and mental health issues

DENTAL & MEDICAL SUPPORT

Access to contingency funds assistance

ONGOING FAMILY CONNECTION

- My kids are connected to family well but it is getting more expensive to travel
- Better supported sibling & family contact opportunities is needed
- It's difficult due to different types of care arrangements and locality

Kids & siblings get lost in the gaps between support & care systems

Taking good care of my kids is getting expensive, more than I can afford

DCJ MATTERS

- We had good case workers previously & during transition (*some families*)
- I feel like they think I'm a pest asking for information and support I should have gotten
- Accessing DCJ support feels like a closed door - difficult getting information, documents, assistance, entitlements, contingency financial support to cover emerging needs of the kids

RESPIRE SUPPORT

- Cultural camps
- Family or other options would be good



We need ...

A local Aboriginal one stop shop

- An **information** service
- A support & referral service
- Access to **trained family specialist** staff
- **Info on local services**

A local skilled advocacy and referral service & place to go

Non-judgemental community case support

Somewhere to drop in and find out information

Access to **legal** advice

Someone to call when needed

Post-school support package

A guardian support network to swap information and ideas

A normal family life



Types of respite – so we can take a break – like access to a community Aunty & Uncles or Grandparents program, cultural and sports camps

Access to non-judgement support workers

Contingency funds & a kids' financial support plan

Access to the kids' DCJ documents & Court Orders

A clear & easily explained process to access DCJ support

What should the service do to support the above?

Better **information** and advice for Aboriginal families about **guardianship** – we don't understand the system

Access to additional support for our **kids with high needs**, when we need it

The annual DCJ letter **checking how the kids are going** and if they need something

NO TICK & FLICK case workers

Training & support package on trauma, culture, other **carer support matters**

Access to **trauma therapists**

If you have this, it will lead to

HELP US UNDERSTAND THE CURRENT SERVICE PROVIDER MARKET

1. Who is currently providing these services? Or close to it?
2. Which service is not yet provided in the local provider market? Are there gaps?
3. What could we do to fill those gaps? How?

POTENTIAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY SERVICE HUB

1. Provides specialist family-centred support and needs planning services

- One point of contact – someone to call or call in to see, someone to talk to, who understands cultural and family concepts context, in a non judgemental safe space and make family-led decisions
- Family-centred Support Work and staff working with kids and families around needs over time, tailoring services and delivery and developing a:
 - needs and support plan
 - financial plan and
 - cultural plan
 - transitioning out to independent living and post-school
- Supporting the plan & coordinating actions and activities so appointments are received
- Supporting families and family groups conferencing
- Help family to be 'normal'

2. Provides Information, advice & referral – linking to/ navigating other services

- An information service - information on general and specialist child and family services, supports, on guardianship and family
- Provision of family support information
- A directory for guardians of information and resources
- A directory for kids - information and resources - self help and sharing platform
- Referral support to get health, healing and trauma therapy, wellbeing & mental health, family counselling, therapies (OT, Speech, psychology etc) education
- Community linker / connector support

3. Provides community connections support

- Providing a safe space drop in service and arrangements, and resources
- Fostering effective communication
- Community support and development services – local connections
- Providing outreach
- Facilitated Guardians support network and supporting peer support opportunities
- Kids network
- Community events connections - activities, ceremonies, excursions, programs,
- Community relationships - taking a break, mentors, activities, camps, Elders, Aunties & Uncles, visitors
- Education & training
 - for kids - build knowledge and skills, life skills, resilience
 - For guardians re guardianship carer issues, parenting, challenging behaviours etc

4. Provides Advocacy

- Advocacy and navigation support (not limited to) :
 - Legal
 - Education
 - DCJ touchpoints
 - NDIS
 - disability & special needs,
 - housing
 - complaints
 - family contact with siblings, parents & extended families
 - child and guardian rights
 - Child and family support services & systems

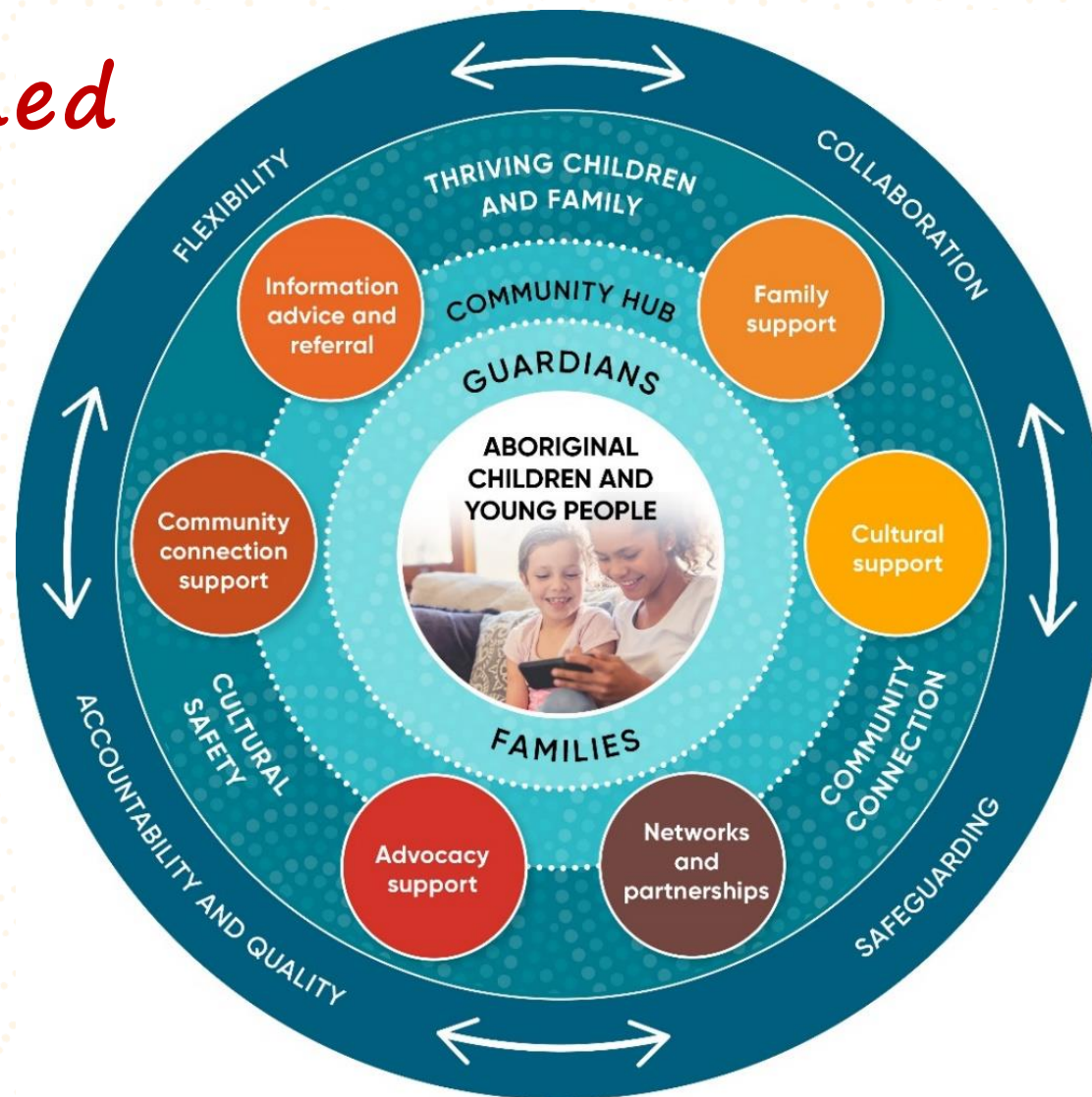
5. Provides cultural Support

- Cultural plan
- Kids identity
- Cultural strengthening connections activities and programs, camps, local and other significant events
- Connection and support with Country, Elders, mob, family -
- Support with Identity documents and family history & heritage
- Cultural support for Non-Aboriginal family with Aboriginal children in care – including training

6. Supports networks & partnership arrangements

- Referral and intake network around the key family support type domains
- Building a local networks and arrangements for guardianship support
- Local partnerships for providing essential support services

The co-designed solution



Aboriginal Guardianship Support Model 2020 co-designed with Guardians, carers, and communities of the Hunter and South West Sydney, service practitioners, and AbSec Commissioning project partners



Questions??

Contact us on Office phone | 02 9559 5299



absec.org.au/commissioning



@AbSecNSW



@AbSecNSW



AbSec (Aboriginal Child, Family and
Community Care State Secretariat)

