

# Actions on the taking of Aboriginal children

1. Action: Independent Aboriginal Controlled Child Care Agency (ACCCA) based on Victorian and Queensland models to be established by SA Government. Aboriginal child protection matters are overseen by ACCCA.
2. Action: Check List (CL) outlining the DCP steps from notification to reunification in Pathway Pack (PP) is provided to parent(s)/family from first interaction. PP includes CL and information about how parent(s)/family can link to and engage with support to address child protection concerns raised by the DCP. PP demonstrates the DCP intent to work in partnership with Aboriginal parent(s)/family and community.
3. Action: Independent Aboriginal Controlled Panel (ACP) established to review the DCP decisions and ensure accountability.
4. Action: ATSICPP, associated Active Efforts and defined role of allocated Social Worker in accordance with the AASW Code of Ethics 2020, 1.3 – Working alongside Australian First Nations People information, is provided to families by the DCP in PP including verbal and written advice from ACCCA.
5. Action: Social Worker role is clearly defined both verbally and in writing to ensure consistency in accordance with AASW Social Work Code of Ethics and Declaration.
6. Action: An independent Advocate, support person and Interpreter if needed, is present during all interactions with the DCP.
7. Action: The ACP will ensure exposure and formal documentation of opportunistic, coercive, discriminatory and racist practises by the DCP.
8. Action: Social Work students to be informed and educated in relation to ‘on the ground’ culturally appropriate practice, ATSICPP and associated Active Efforts, to ensure a meaningful partnership with Aboriginal parent(s), family and community.
9. Action: Independent review board established to assess and review the DCP adherence to established ‘new norms’ related to Aboriginal child protection matters and enable Social Workers to report DCP mal-practise without reprisal.
10. Action: The DCP to work in partnership with independent Aboriginal kinship workers to advise and implement ATSCIPP and Active efforts.
11. Action: Check List (CL) accompanied by evidence that shows DCP compliance with ATSICPP and Active Efforts, which demonstrates consistency, reliability and willingness to work in partnership, in accordance with Social Work Code of Ethics.
12. Action: Aboriginal parent(s)/families are given user friendly versions of the DCP processes and practises including their rights under legislation. Transparency through information will empower and bring change to a broken system.
13. Action: An Aboriginal child’s ‘best interests’ is determined by ACCCA. ACCCA is best positioned to assess and determine ‘best interests’ outcome for Aboriginal child(ren).
14. Action: Removal of any reference to adoption practises. Use of adoption is reminiscent of the Stolen Generation and historical deviant Social Work practice.
15. Action: Strengthen existing legislation to uphold and implement already legislated ATSICPP to ensure accountability by the DCP.
16. Action: Due to the DCP operating 24/7 an Interpreter and legal advice service must also be available 24/7. ‘Field Officers’ will outreach to ensure understanding of ATSCIPP, the DCP Check List and Pathway Pack. Families from APY lands and regions where English is not a first language, must have an Interpreter present and legal advice before any DCP intervention.
17. Action: Through ACP, Aboriginal parent(s)/family must have full understanding and knowledge of the DCP intention to ‘take’ an Aboriginal child(ren).
18. Action: Aboriginal parent(s) must be advised of a pathway forward, which provides the opportunity to demonstrate capacity, regardless of circumstances, in order to address the DCP concerns raised. Language that includes reunification gives hope and opportunity.
19. Action: The Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People must be given independent powers, equal to Children’s Commissioner.
20. Action: Immediate action to establish an Independent ACCCA in South Australia and in the interim appoint an advisory Aboriginal panel to guide the process.

*Nunga Babies Watch and the Grannies Group,  
30 October 2021*