



## **Making a 'PAC' purposeful and meaningful**

*These are some purposeful questions to use as part of a PAC. It is helpful to plan what questions you might ask family members and to practice asking these questions with your colleague, manager or casework specialist before visiting the family.*

### **Take a safe and respectful approach**

- How can we prepare to respectfully approach and talk to the parents and children?
- What information do we have about the family? What information do we still need?
- Who can we consult with if the family is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or culturally and linguistically diverse? How can we plan for consultation before the first visit?
- Who are we going to speak to first — the child or the parent? The mother or the father?
- Have any previous engagement approaches worked or not worked?

### **What are the dangers? And how will you be mindful of other risks?**

- What are your worries?
- How do these worries potentially place children in danger?
- What can we do to see and learn about other dangers?

### **Uncover biases and assumptions to stay fair and curious**

- How can you stay open to alternate hypotheses?
- What protective abilities do you think may exist?
- Who supports this family?
- How can we make sure we are always thinking about what life is like for each child?
- What power do we each hold in relation to each family member?

### **Help each other**

- What can your manager and secondary caseworker do to help you feel more confident?
- How can they challenge and support you to be open to different hypotheses and stay child centred?
- Can you make an agreement to provide feedback and challenge each other's practice in a respectful way?

### **How should I document this?**

Document a summary of the conversations detailing decision making about the approach to take with the family when starting an assessment, how dangers and risk will begin to be assessed, and how to maintain fairness and curiosity throughout the assessment. Be clear in your language about how you are drawing conclusions or making decisions about how, what and who to assess.

The three primary sub-sections where these conversations may be recorded within a PAC include:

- Assessment of ROSH
- Comments – Issues Identified in report
- Comments – Actions required

## Making an 'AC' purposeful and meaningful

*The assessment consultation is an important practice process to support quality reflection, analysis and planning. This reflective process helps practitioners to think through what has already occurred, as well as what is and what might be.*

*Here are some important points to consider following a safety assessment, particularly in considering next steps. This should be explored with space for responses by the caseworker as well as the manager and second caseworker.*

- Describe the scenario
  - What did you say?
  - What did you hear?
  - Where were you looking?
  - What did you see?
  - What did you feel?
- Reflect on what went well and what you thought the challenges were
- What is worrying you the most? What impact is this worry having on the child? How do you know?
- Think about who supports the family and who could be a part of a safety network for them
- What acts of resistance did you identify? How are these acts protective?
- How would you describe your views of the family at this point? What may be influencing this view? What views are others holding e.g. other services, other government agencies, other family?
- What do we need to do immediately; in the next week; and prior to the risk assessment, to support this family?
- If a safety plan is in place, how will we check the plan is working to keep the child safe?

### How should I document this?

Focus documentation on the decision making about assessing the safety of the child and clear accountability about continued family work and assessment and any worries you are holding and strengths you may be seeing.

The four primary sub-sections where these conversations may be recorded within an AC include:

- Outcome
- Issues Discussed
- ROSH to CYP Details
- Actions Not Completed

For more ideas, take a look at the safety assessment chapters of the practice kits on Casework Practice site.

