



**CENTRECARE**

*"People Making Time for People"*

# Child Inclusive Practice



# TOPICS

- ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILD INCLUSIVE PRACTICE
- ASSESSMENT TOOL AND ROLE OF CASE MANAGEMENT MEETINGS
- HOW TO PRESENT THE OPTION OF CIP TO PARENTS
- ROLE OF FDRP VS CHILD CONSULTANT DURING JOINT FEEDBACK SESSION
- OUTCOME OF CHILD INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

# ELIGIBILITY



# WHEN SHOULD WE CONSIDER INCLUDING CHILDREN

- When the case has been approved for mediation
- Children are 5 and over, taking into account communication skills, emotional maturity, disability etc.
- When parental conflict is impacting negatively on the child's relationship with one or both parents
- When parents are still distracted or absorbed by their own experience of the separation or dispute, and therefore this seems to be affecting their ability to put their child's needs first



- When it is considered that it may be of benefit to the child
- When we consider that CIP may add value to the mediation process
- When we consider that CIP may add value to the child's life at this point in time

**CAN WE CHANGE OUR PROCESS TO FIT AND SUPPORT INDIVIDUAL FAMILIES, CONSIDERING THEIR CAPACITIES???**



# THE “McINTOSH” PRINCIPLE

Neither the nature or amount of information fed back to parents from a child inclusive process should exceed the capacity of either parent to hear and make use of the material, with support.

It is critical to fit the Child Inclusive process to the parents, and to help both parents to stay on board, and engaged.



# EXCLUSIONS FROM CIP



- Severely dysregulated behaviour (Untreated/ poorly managed psychiatric disorders or current drug and alcohol use. Severe personality disorders)
- No genuine interest/capacity to value the child's views
- Extreme and poorly contained conflict (current domestic violence)
- Very complex matters that required a different therapeutic forum (e.g. entrenched alienation)
- One parent does not consent
- Child does not consent
- Case exceeds the expertise of staff

In cases where there is a history of domestic violence (not current), past or current drug/ alcohol use and some mental health concerns and the practitioner is of the view that there is still room for a child inclusive approach, please discuss with Team Leader (and Elmarie if needed) for consideration.....

.....CALL ME







*Special consideration should be given to ANY suggestion that a parent may want to retaliate against a child OR the other parent, should the child disclose experiences that implicate that parent, or share preferences that parent may not like.*

# ASSESSMENT AND CASE MANAGEMENT



## CIP Tool Parental Capacity - Reflective thought, attunement and sensitivity of response

*(select presenting attributes for each parent)*

1 Maturity and genuine interest P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>	2 Willingness to strengthen parenting alliance P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>	3 Medium to high level of co-operative parenting P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>	4 No present risk for DV/FV assessed P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>
5 Willingness to resolve conflicts (future focussed) P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>	6 Adequate cognitive functioning and capacity to consider options P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>	7 Absence of entrenched personality disorders P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>	8 Awareness of child's experiences of the separation P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>
9 Openness and capacity to consider the child feedback P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>	10 Capacity for protective thought P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/>		

### Parental Capacity for CIP Feedback

None Medium High

0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

*(50% or more ticked B= indicators of capacity to engage parents in child inclusive FDR)*

Suitable for CIP: Yes  No

Parents willing to participate in the CIP process? P1 Yes  No  P2 Yes  No


*Small group discussion*

# CIP TOOL

- Maturity and genuine interest
  - Expresses thoughts on how they think the child is doing
  - Expresses some concern or at least consideration that the child may be affected
  - Appears non–defensive
- Willingness to strengthen parenting alliance
  - Describes the other parent in fairly positive terms (not all negative)
  - Can see the other parent’s perspective
  - Speaks about a desire for things to be easier between parents
  - Mentions their attempts and efforts in improving the parental relationship

- Medium to high level of co-operative parenting
  - This is desirable and linked to previous item.
  - Expresses some positive regard towards the other parent
  - Parents are able to communicate with each other in relation to the child
- No present risk for DV
  - No DV incidents since separation
  - Needs to be separated for at least 6 months (with no incidents) if there was DV in the relationship
- Willingness to resolve conflicts
  - Talking about attempts they have made at resolving conflict - irrespective of how successful
  - Talking about desire for things to be easier

- Adequate cognitive functioning and capacity to consider options
  - Parent is able to follow a reasonable conversation
  - Parent is able to remain focussed and present with current conversations
  - Absence of any noticeable learning difficulties
  - Demonstrates some reflective capacity – ability to consider different options
- Absence of entrenched personality disorders
  - No diagnosis of personality disorders (diagnosis refers to medical diagnosis rather than the other parent's opinion 😊), in particular Borderline Personality Disorder
  - Is condition medicated/ controlled?
  - Impact of condition on decision making, reasoning and behaviour
- Awareness of child's experiences of the separation
  - Talks about the child's experience
  - Talks about the child's feelings

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- Openness and capacity to consider the child's feedback
    - Test what it would be like for parent to hear something from the child which may be difficult to hear?
    - Test how the parent thinks the other parent will respond if they heard something from the child they were not expecting to hear?
  - Capacity for protective thought
    - Child's wellbeing and needs are forefront in their thoughts

# ASSESSMENT IS ONGOING...

1. **FA/ FDRP** - first assessment at Individual Assessment Appointment.
2. **Case Management** – second assessment using critical thinking and exploration.
3. **Child Consultant** – third assessment during individual appointments with parents and then the child.
4. **Child Consultant with input from FDRP** – fourth assessment during the feedback session.

*(Exercise)*



# HOW TO TALK TO PARENTS ABOUT CIP.....



# PRESENTING CIP TO PARENTS

**At seminar** – should be mention that in some cases Centrecare can offer a child inclusive approach which means including the voice of the child/ children in the mediation process. More detail available at individual appointments.

## **Family Advisors/ FDRPs – At Assessment appointments**

- Be familiar with the eligibility criteria and the CIP assessment Tool.
- Be alert for possible cases and invite parents to consider CIP in the event the decision is made to progress with FDR – keep in mind that both parents have to agree, and that agreement will be sought at Case Management Meeting, however it is good to plant the seed and to gain a sense of willingness from parents.
- Familiarise yourself with spiel in order to be able to explain CIP to parents.



## **Following Case Management decision**

- Consider who is the best placed person to make the call
- If admin, ensure they are fully briefed about CIP and able to answer any questions

Next page spiel on how to explain to parents what CIP is and how it works

# CIP MESSAGE TO PARENTS



*“The child consultant will meet with each parent for 1 and half hours each prior to meeting with the child. The purpose of this meeting is to offer parents the opportunity to explore the current situation between them (what is working and what is not working) and the impact this has on the children. This also prepares the child consultant prior to meeting with your child/ children.*

*The children will be seen by a trained child consultant, who provides a fun, safe and supportive environment where the children are able to articulate themselves through various methods (cards, drawings, play, storytelling to name a few). The purpose of this interview is to gain a sense of the child’s experience moving between their parents since separation. This appointment will be no longer than 1 hour.*

*Then the child consultant will join you, the other parent and the FDRP for the joint session to provide their feedback.*

*This process is designed to enable your children to tell you how they are doing, with the purpose of supporting you to make decisions that are in the children’s best interest.”*

ROLE OF FDRP

VS

CHILD  
CONSULTANT



## FDRP

- Set the scene: Intro and Structure
- Invite CC to start feedback
- Actively involved
- Eyes on the parents
- Look for missed opportunities or impacts

## CHILD CONSULTANT

Be prepared

Wait for FDRP's invitation to provide feedback

## FDRP

- Look to emphasize salient points
- Be inquisitive
- Acknowledge the CC
- Keep the focus on the child

## CHILD CONSULTANT

Acknowledge the FDRP

Keep the focus on the child

## FDRP

- Keep the child in the room

- Check in with parents

## CHILD CONSULTANT

Bring the child into the room

Bring learning from research  
into the room

Highlight identified strengths  
and vulnerabilities in the child

Check in with parents



## FDRP

- Hold onto core messages and themes
- Walk alongside CC
- Assist in positive reframing
- This is the link into the FDR session

## CHILD CONSULTANT

Provide feedback on activities focussing on core messages and themes

Lead parents into a reflective space

Enable parents to consider the need to change their interaction

Enable parents to identify what changes they can implement

Summarise commitment from parents to the child

# OUTCOME OF CIP



# LINK FROM CIP TO FDR



- Break between CIP feedback and FDR session
- Where necessary CC will attend the full FDR session
- Start FDR by reflecting on CIP session and particularly the commitment made by parents
- Invite parents to consider the idea of a commitment letter or statement
- Commitment letter can be directed to the child and actually given to the child
- Commitment statement could be part of the Parenting Plan – an opening statement to the Parenting Plan

*(As a wise person once said.....☺)*

“CIP is a partnership between two professionals, working towards improving the partnership between two parents. All for the benefit of the child.

Every part of this partnership needs to actively participate, and be affected by the child to be efficient in bringing about a change.”



**TEAM EFFORT**

The ~~End~~

^  
*Beginning*