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| Child Information Sharing Scheme |
| Scenario 2 - Applying the scheme – ‘responding to a request’ scenario |

This information sheet provides a scenario to demonstrate how the Child Information Sharing Scheme might be applied in practice.

**Themes**: Responding to a request for information, sharing information about Aboriginal people, wellbeing and safety, seeking the views of children and families, maintain engagement with children and young people, record keeping.

| Scenario | What this means under the scheme |
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| Talia is an Integrated Family Services worker employed by an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation.  Talia has been working with Michael, an Aboriginal man, who is a single dad of two children, Jack aged six and Leeann aged four.  At the start of service provision, Talia makes Michael aware of her obligations around handling his information, including sharing information to promote the wellbeing or safety of the children, where appropriate.  Talia and Michael have built a strong rapport and are working together to develop and improve Michael’s household management strategies. | * *Talia’s service is an Information Sharing Entity (ISE).* * *Talia talks to Michael about her obligation to share information under the scheme.* |
| Talia is aware that Michael and his children have moved into public housing recently and have been assigned a senior housing officer, John.  Talia receives a request for information from John.  She confirms that the housing organisation he works for is anISE. | * *Talia talks to Michael about other services he is engaged with.* * *Talia confirms that the requesting organisation is an ISE, and so she knows that she is able to share with John if the threshold under the scheme is met.* |
| John informs Talia that Michael has not attended their last three appointments and has stopped returning phone calls.  John is concerned that if Michael disengages from the housing service, the family’s tenancy could be at risk. A lack of adequate housing could jeopardise the family’s connection to community, school, health care, and other services.  John asks Talia whether she has any information that could assist him to contact Michael or whether she knows of the family’s whereabouts. | * *John informs Talia of his concerns regarding the children’s wellbeing.* * *He ensures that Talia understands how he will use the information she provides to support the children’s wellbeing.* * *This information assists Talia in her assessment as to whether the threshold for sharing information has been met.* |
| Before responding to John’s request for information under the scheme, Talia speaks to Michael.  Michael informs Talia that his two cousins and an auntie, who is an Elder within the Aboriginal community, are staying with the family temporarily and he had received advice from John that the family’s rent would increase if his two cousins and auntie remained at the property.  Michael informs Talia that they were thinking of moving out because they do not believe that John understands the family’s culture and they no longer wish to continue to work with John. He is also concerned about how he will afford to pay more rent. Michael asks Talia that she not share their information with John. | * *Before sharing information, Talia seeks and takes into account the views of relevant family members as it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so.* |
| On this occasion, Talia does not think it is appropriate to seek the views of the two children due to their age and the nature of the issue. | * *The scheme requires that the views of children be sought and taken into account if safe, appropriate and reasonable to do so.* |
| Talia considers the views of Michael and the wellbeing of Jack and Leeann. Talia decides that sharing information may support the family to maintain stable housing, which will promote the family’s wellbeing and safety.  Using her professional judgement, Talia decides to share information despite Michael’s views.  However, she explains her decision to Michael, including how sharing information could assist the family to stay in stable housing and promote the wellbeing of the children.  Talia acknowledges Michael’s concerns and tells him that she will work with John to help him understand the importance of kinship for Michael and his family. | * *Talia decides the request for information meets the threshold for sharing.* * *Talia takes into account Michael’s views.* |
| Talia responds to John’s request for information and provides further contact details. She also shares Michael’s view that John does not seem to understand the family’s culture.  Talia also explains that as Aboriginal people, maintaining contact with their kinship network is a priority for Michael and the two children. John expresses surprise and acknowledges that he may not have explained the process in a way that would ensure the cultural safety of the family in this instance. He also explains that there may have been a miscommunication between himself and Michael. John clarifies that Michael’s rent would only increase if his two cousins and auntie stay at the property for longer than three weeks, although he is aware that their plan at this stage is to only stay for approximately three weeks.  Talia suggests that she facilitate a meeting with Michael, his auntie and John, to assist the family to understand why the rent would increase if additional family members stay in the long term, to explore additional support services the family may require, and to assist John to understand the cultural needs of the family. | * *Talia shares information under the scheme.* * *Talia uses the scheme to promote the cultural safety and recognises the cultural rights, familial and community connections of Aboriginal children.* * *John and Talia respect each other’s professional expertise and work together to support the family.* |
| After Talia speaks with John, she follows up with Michael, informing him of what information she shared with John, that she helped John to understand Michael’s concerns and the outcome of the conversation. Michael is still not pleased but tells Talia that he understands why she shared information with John and hopes that John now appreciates the situation.  Michael adds that he has felt stressed about the idea of finding alternative housing and would be happy to attend the meeting provided Talia is present. | * *Talia keeps Michael informed about how his information has been shared, which helps to maintain service engagement.* |
| During the meeting, Talia helps Michael and John to re-engage. Through service collaboration, the family’s tenancy is no longer at risk and John has a much greater understanding of the cultural issues involved, which helps to promote the children’s wellbeing and safety, including their cultural safety. | * *Talia uses the scheme to promote service collaboration and early intervention with the aim to prevent housing instability and service disengagement* |
| Talia makes a record of the date she received the request, details of the information she shared and the date on which she shared it, that Michael’s views were sought (but not the views of the children), that Michael did not agree for his information to be shared and that he was informed of the situation prior to Talia sharing. | * *Talia keeps accurate and complete records in accordance with the scheme.* |

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| This scenario is practice guidance to assist professionals in the application of the Child Information Sharing Scheme. The Child Information Sharing Scheme Ministerial Guidelines detail the legal obligations of prescribed information sharing entities. Ministerial guidelines and additional resources are available at <https://www.vic.gov.au/childinfosharing>  To receive this publication in an accessible format email <childinfosharing@edumail.vic.gov.au>  Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.  © State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services August, 2018.  In this document, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.  ISBN 978-1-76069-552-1 (pdf/online/MS word)  Available at <https://www.vic.gov.au/childinfosharing> |