


Child protection capability framework

Capability cards



The information in this document is available in an accessible format in Child protection capability framework user guide, available at Child protection manual – Child Protection capability framework <www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/our-workforce/learning-and-development/child-protection-capability-framework>

To receive this document in another format email Child Protection Learning <childprotection.learning@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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Contents of this pack

Capability cards

The capability cards have been developed to help child protection practitioners determine the capabilities that are critical for success in a particular role and to identify potential strengths and development needs.

The capability cards include the following:

How to use the capability cards

Proficiency levels card

'Our values' card

Three self-assessment cards (orange):

- ✓ Key strength
- ✓ Satisfactory
- ✓ Development opportunity

17 capability cards across four domains:



Critical assessment and reflection

(5 green cards)



Engaging others

(3 blue cards)



Delivering results

(5 purple cards)



Leading and inspiring

(4 red cards)

How to use the capability cards

The capability framework cards help to determine the capabilities needed for a current or future role, and to identify opportunities for development.

1. **Choose the role** – this could be the practitioner’s current role or a future role they aspire to.
2. **Review the capabilities** listed for the relevant role profile (including required proficiency levels)
3. **Complete a self-assessment** – practitioners should review the role capabilities and assess whether they currently perform at the proficiency level listed for the role:
 - Is the capability a key strength?
 - Do they perform the capability to a ‘satisfactory’ level?
 - Is the capability a ‘development opportunity’?

The ‘success profiles’ identify the capabilities required for high performance.

4. **Discuss and explore the strengths and learning and development opportunities** with the line manager and match these to the specific child protection learning pathways.
5. **Record agreed learning opportunities** in the practitioner’s professional development plan
6. **Regularly review** with the line manager.

Proficiency levels

1. **Beginning** – the baseline level of capability of child protection practitioners and may describe those early in their career or operating in foundational roles.
2. **Advanced** – has significant practical experience in this area and demonstrates this capability consistently in all settings and situations.
3. **Leading** – being known as an expert in this capability. Consistently demonstrates this capability in all settings and situations and actively coaches, engages and leads colleagues in application, theory and practice.
4. **Expert** – has significant and deep experience in applying this capability, is recognised statewide as an expert and strategically plans for how colleagues and staff can continue to develop in this area.

Each level of proficiency assumes competence at the preceding level.






Each role may require capabilities at different levels, depending on the nature of the work



Our values

Our vision is to support and enhance the wellbeing of all Victorians.

We aspire to be an organisation where everyone is committed to achieving our vision and demonstrates our values in all that they do.

-  We are respectful
-  We have integrity
-  We collaborate
-  We care for people, families and communities
-  We are accountable
-  We are innovative



Self-assessment card 1 of 3

Key strength

Demonstrates this particularly well





Self-assessment card 2 of 3

Satisfactory

Demonstrates this well





Self-assessment card 3 of 3

Development opportunity

Needs improvement





Critical assessment and reflection

Risk assessment and analysis

Beginning

- Gathers information and draws insight from children, families and internal and external stakeholders
- Succinctly formalises an assessment by identifying the likelihood of risk
- Articulates and transcribes the assessment rationale with the family, supervisor, manager and other stakeholders (such as courts) as required
- Consistently applies and adheres to legislation, policies and departmental frameworks
- Seeks endorsement and review of risk assessment with their supervisor

Advanced

- Competently works with complex cases
- Competently and autonomously assesses the nature and level of risk
- Competently and autonomously applies theoretical frameworks to make decisions
- Supports, advises and guides colleagues to understand and apply frameworks as required
- Listens and provides support, guidance and advice to peers

Leading

- Provides case conferencing and case planning as required
- Authorises plans and decisions in relation to risk assessment, analysis and mitigation/intervention
- Provides support, guidance and advice to broader sector and community partners/stakeholders
- Further develops and coaches others in their understanding of risk analysis and analysis

Expert

- Proactively identifies and analyses patterns associated with risk assessment and analysis
- Competently and autonomously exercises delegations
- Clearly articulates expert analysis and complex reasoning to support and extend practitioner skills in risk assessment





Critical assessment and reflection

Case planning review and case management

Beginning

- Consistently applies, understands and adheres to legislation, policies and departmental frameworks
- Creates child-focused plans with the child, family and other stakeholders
- Ensures case plans are culturally aligned
- Drafts case plans in consultation with their supervisor
- Drives daily case management activities to implement the case plan
- Regularly reviews case progress and outcomes
- Seeks and shares further information to review case plans and progress if required
- Seeks information about potential referral pathways to support implementation of the case plan
- Uses action tables to analyse and assess case plans

Advanced

- Coordinates and leads planning, review and management of their own case work
- Supports and guides colleagues with less experience

Leading

- Leads planning, review and management of their own and team members' case work
- Provides case planning advice, guidance and support to others
- Guides and endorses the quality of team members' case plans in line with KPIs, practice standards and expected timelines
- Directly supports and provides input into cases where there is unacceptable risk to the child

Expert

- Provides effective decision making in the context of reviews and appeals
- Proactively identifies and analyses patterns and themes associated with case management across the team and broader area
- Competently and autonomously exercises delegations





Critical assessment and reflection

Critical inquiry

Beginning

- Thinks clearly and systematically using self-awareness and analytical techniques to solve issues
- Applies a forensic lens to analysing issues
- Reflects on the root cause of issues, potential implications and resolutions
- Seeks guidance and consultation from the team manager and other senior staff
- Ensures issues are identified and reported appropriately

Advanced

- Supports, advises and guides others to apply evidence-based frameworks to resolve issues
- Uses outcomes from critical inquiry to develop and build on existing knowledge and skills
- Applies understanding of standards, techniques, practices and approaches to issue resolution

Leading

- Leads planning, review and management of issues in line with best practice principles and legislative requirements

Expert

- Provides expert advice and oversight to issue investigation
- Implements strategies for continuous improvement in using evidence-based frameworks across teams, programs and practice
- Sees emerging issues and takes proactive steps to manage potential implications
- Displays broad thinking, drawing on research and literature to support evidence-informed practice





Critical assessment and reflection

Standardised reporting

Beginning

- Demonstrates knowledge to use reporting frameworks when recording case data
- Competently and efficiently uses departmental systems (such as CRIS) when documenting care solutions
- Records accurate and relevant data
- Seeks guidance and consultation from the team manager and other senior staff

Advanced

- Supports, advises and guides others to use standardised reporting
- Supports the introduction of new technology and develops their own and others' skills to master new systems or system changes
- Produces a range of documents in a confident manner
- Ensures reporting obligations are fulfilled
- Recommends improvements to frameworks and systems to better meet client needs

Leading

- Reviews team documents including court reports, case plans and assessments, ensuring reporting obligations are met
- Provides critical feedback and opportunities for development
- Adapts data and develops reports for broad and varied audiences
- Supports the team to implement changes, upgrades and new technologies to improve business practice

Expert

- Has recognised expertise in utilising information for the purpose of providing and interpreting standardised reports
- Promotes the use of new/improved technologies to enhance business processes
- Articulates the background, purpose and need for new and existing frameworks





Critical assessment and reflection

Reflective practice

Beginning

- Critically reflects on practice and articulates assessment outcomes with their supervisor
- Uses reflective practice to develop and build on existing knowledge and skills
- Seeks guidance and consultation from the team manager and other senior staff

Advanced

- Supports, advises and guides others to develop via reflective practice
- Critically reflects on their own practice and implements changes where required
- Competently demonstrates reflective and evidence-based practice in regular interactions with staff and stakeholders

Leading

- Demonstrates expertise in reflective practice through interactions and communication with staff and stakeholders
- Facilitates reflective practice for team members

Expert

- Promotes practice quality and consistency
- Offers practical solutions to time-management issues, prioritising reflective practice for practitioners
- Supports and coaches managers to establish a reflective practice culture in their teams





Engaging others

Child-centred and family-focused
relationship-based practice

Beginning

- Works with the child as the client in the context of their family, facilitating client feedback and participation
- Works collaboratively with children and their families by facilitating client participation and feedback
- Uses strong verbal and written communication skills to convey key information clearly and respectfully
- Establishes and maintains effective relationships with children and their families, colleagues and stakeholders
- Listens to and demonstrates respect for alternative points of view
- Develops solutions in collaboration with children and their families, colleagues, supervisors and stakeholders
- Shares critical information across the system, both internally and externally, to ensure shared understanding and safety of the child
- Seeks guidance and consultation from the team manager and other senior staff

Advanced

- Competently deals with complex situations autonomously
- Uses strong communication and interpersonal skills to resolve issues and ensure child safety and wellbeing
- Supports and guides colleagues with less experience

Leading

- Assists others to reflect on interpersonal interactions, encouraging self-reflection to enhance relationships and communication
- Provides advice on client-centred practice to peers and team members
- Effectively responds to and manages complaints from children, families and other stakeholders
- Provides oversight and leads practice that is child-centred and family-focused
- Leads and articulates the department's position at meetings and forums using a conciliatory approach, focusing on client safety and wellbeing
- Liaises with principal practitioners and practice leaders about their learning and development goals

Expert

- Provides expert advice on best practice and supervision
- Coaches others to drive child-centred and family-focused practice
- Represents the department at the strategic level and can competently convey the department's position in a range of settings and forums





Engaging others

Collaboration

Beginning

- Seeks out all relevant stakeholders involved with a child and their family to gather and share information
- Engages and consults with children, their families and relevant services
- Seeks out information about potential referral pathways to implement additional wraparound services
- Establishes and maintains strong partnerships with service providers and care teams
- Maintains currency of knowledge about all relevant services in their area/division

Advanced

- Works with stakeholders to deliver outcomes in a collaborative way
- Supports and models collaborative practice with stakeholders and colleagues
- Models best practice conflict resolution by active listening and negotiating a course of action that is mutually beneficial

Leading

- Establishes and maintains strong relationships with their team, colleagues and other stakeholders
- Encourages participation from team members to contribute to decision making
- Actively manages conflict resolution in an increasingly complex and broad environment
- Models best practice in co-design, providing advice, guidance and expertise to internal and external stakeholders
- Further develops and coaches others in collaborative practice

Expert

- Provides expertise on best practice in collaboration, co-design and program leadership
- Strategically collaborates with internal and external colleagues and stakeholders to improve operational plans and processes
- Builds trust through consistent actions, values and communication
- Promotes consensus through diplomatic handling of disagreements





Engaging others

Knowledge sharing

Beginning

- Competently contributes to and shares information at staff meetings and forums
- Works with internal and external partnerships to achieve positive client outcomes
- Actively listens and passes on relevant information
- Identifies opportunities to do things better, and develops ideas with others

Advanced

- Participates effectively in internal and external networks to promote appropriate action for clients
- Uses evidence-based logical arguments to share information and advocate for positive client outcomes

Leading

- Represents the organisation and promotes awareness of systemic issues across teams, programs and practice
- Makes convincing presentations using a range of media to communicate key issues and options
- Articulates clear and persuasive messages

Expert

- Exchanges and promotes critical information across teams, programs and practice to identify barriers and levers to positive outcomes for clients
- Builds and maintains productive partnerships with internal and external stakeholders at all levels
- Models collaborative practice by building trust through consistent actions, values and communication
- Promotes harmony and consensus through diplomatic handling of disagreements
- Proactively seeks out multiple stakeholders to maintain rapport, build trust and create the opportunity for information exchange





Delivering results

Problem solving

Beginning

- Anticipates problems and reflects on potential solutions to improve practice
- Clearly communicates their thinking, analysis and assessment of the problem and options for resolution
- Prioritises (triages) problems according to the nature of the problem and seeks appropriate support, guidance and consultation
- Gathers information and draws insight from children and families to support and empower them to identify their problems and possible solutions
- Uses a collaborative approach through care teams and professional networks to support children and families through the problem-solving process
- Has an awareness of theoretical approaches that drive practice and problem solving

Advanced

- Competently anticipates and identifies problems and appropriate solutions before consulting with manager
- Clearly and competently articulates and critically reflects on a problem and relevant solutions
- Considers suggestions, alternatives and feedback
- Uses a combination of theoretical and practiced risk assessment frameworks to address problems with families or practice standards
- Competently identifies and applies legislation when problem solving with families
- Supports staff and students to identify and resolve problems, identifying learning opportunities as appropriate
- Sensitively challenges families about consequences or outcomes using communication that is transparent, honest and family-sensitive

Leading

- Creates an environment that allows for proactive and shared problem solving, supporting the team to use their strengths to resolve issues
- Encourages staff to use reflective practice and theoretical frameworks when analysing problems
- Understands the breadth and scope of problems and can identify when consultation is necessary
- Understands the broader issues and political dimensions of a problem

Expert

- Applies a system focus on delivering results for the wider program
- Identifies and addresses problems that are occurring across teams, programs and practice
- Provides constructive divisional and statewide perspectives to issue identification and resolution
- Identifies and escalates operational issues and barriers to inform policy and legislation development
- Uses data effectively to identify trends to improve systems and deliver improved practice outcomes
- Actively facilitates and resolves complicated case flow issues between regions
- Drives continuous improvement through addressing programmatic issues and influencing change in workplace culture and problem solving at the area level





Delivering results

Culturally informed practice and safety

Beginning

- Adapts engagement approaches to suit children and families from different backgrounds
- Demonstrates culturally informed practice that focuses on the child in the context of their family and culture
- Understands their own culture and how this may affect client engagement and participation
- Consistently applies and adheres to legislation, policies and departmental frameworks
- Consults with specialist positions to support culturally informed decision making

Advanced

- Demonstrates ongoing learning of culturally informed practice and safety
- Develops positive partnerships with stakeholders of different cultural backgrounds
- Reconciles differing cultural perspectives in developing culturally informed assessment and decision making
- Supports, advises and guides other colleagues on culturally informed practice

Leading

- Demonstrates leadership in applying culturally informed practice
- Develops and reviews case plans that reflect culturally informed practice, providing feedback, guidance and support to enhance awareness
- Demonstrates evidence-based culturally informed practices across teams, programs and practice
- Further develops and coaches others in culturally informed practice

Expert

- Maintains an ongoing focus on the unique needs of Aboriginal children and families
- Provides advice and oversight on culturally informed practice
- Leads and demonstrates complex stakeholder engagement to shape the service system response in the cultural context of children and families
- Identifies and responds to emerging patterns in culturally diverse clients to improve outcomes for children, their families and communities
- Implements strategies for continuous improvement in the way services are provided to culturally diverse populations





Delivering results

Business operations

Beginning

- Competently uses departmental IT and recording systems and other web-based applications in line with departmental guidelines and privacy principles
- Applies awareness of the department's internal business practices
- Seeks guidance from their team manager, child protection administration and others

Advanced

- Supports, advises and guides others in effective business operations according to departmental guidelines and privacy principles

Leading

- Creates awareness of any changes in business operations and ensures implementation of new practice/processes
- Identifies the processes, tasks and resources required to achieve business outcomes
- Translates the strategic direction into day-to-day activities

Expert

- Applies contextual knowledge of the program, department, community, sector and the Victorian political landscape to promote positive outcomes for clients
- Identifies connections between activities or information that may not obviously appear to have a connection
- Understands the organisation's current and future role and applies this to consider the ramifications of issues and long-term impacts on the workforce and clients
- Actively promotes and drives change using broad influencing skills to overcome barriers and gain support





Delivering results

Evaluating and delivering program improvements

Beginning

- Uses formal and informal networks to achieve outcomes
- Contributes to discussion for improved ways of working
- Considers activities, decisions and outcomes from the perspective of making things work better

Advanced

- Applies understanding of community, organisation and workforce needs
- Supports others to work more effectively and identify opportunities for improved service delivery
- Generates and shares ideas, encouraging others to reflect on activities and develop solutions

Leading

- Routinely reviews and manages services in response to changing needs
- Encourages the team to look for ways to improve outcomes
- Captures, communicates and shares innovative ideas with internal and external stakeholders as appropriate

Expert

- Creates and sustains productive strategic relationships
- Envisions new possibilities and implements those with significant organisational benefit
- Models, rewards and promotes creativity and innovation





Delivering results

Packaging of support

Beginning

- Consistently applies and adheres to legislation, policies and departmental frameworks
- Researches the market and attains value-for-money and sustainable options
- Makes value-for-money purchases

Advanced

- Effectively plans for purchasing services, managing to establish budgets and allocating finances to achieve the best outcomes

Leading

- Prepares program and complex budgets
- Reviews financial performance and implements remedies where issues are identified
- Reviews and monitors probity protocols, rectifying issues as they are identified

Expert

- Oversees the program budget, reviews performance and ensures the availability of adequate resources for clients
- Is transparent and accountable in achieving value for money





Leading and inspiring

Practice leadership

Advanced

- Supports, advises and guides colleagues through assessment and decision making
- Responds to the curiosity and questions of colleagues about risk theory, family assessment and the interplay with decision making
- Asks open-ended questions to facilitate the exchange of considerations and issues
- Provides support, supervision and guidance to students in theoretical and practice requirements and implications
- Demonstrates leadership and mentoring skills when working with students
- Competently carries out assessments independently and makes appropriate, informed decisions
- Clearly communicates the rationale and logic associated with decision making
- Leads discussions with colleagues and line managers in an open, informed, proactive and assertive way
- Provides alternatives and challenges approaches in a transparent, honest and sensitive way

Leading

- Leads planning, review and management of assessment and decision making in line with best practice principles and legislative requirements
- Expertly translates best practice principles and legislative requirements to apply in practice
- Independently prepares and leads discussions consistent with best practice principles and legislative requirements in an open and assertive way

Expert

- Provides authoritative and respected advice and oversight on a range of topics associated with practice
- Delivers training and reflective practice discussions competently and engages staff appropriately
- Educates, mentors, coaches and supervises staff on a range of practice topics including case supervision/consultation
- Competently undertakes specialist assessments, case reviews and interventions
- Presents expert advice to colleagues, managers and organisational leaders at all levels competently, accurately and in a timely way
- Translates findings from case consultations into organisational learnings and drives operational plans to deliver outcomes





Leading and inspiring

Collective leadership

Beginning

- Demonstrates working within a team
- Demonstrates active listening and asks appropriate questions
- Maintains enthusiasm and understands their own role contribution
- Openly shares information and participates and contributes to team meetings and discussions
- Considers the views of others and aims for cohesion

Advanced

- Develops leadership skills via learning from the senior leadership team and other departmental learning and development opportunities
- Demonstrates active listening, empathy and emotional intelligence
- Offers constructive feedback to peers and team members
- Provides a balanced and informed perspective
- Recognises differences and works towards resolutions

Leading

- Helps create a collective leadership culture where leaders are developed, valued and supported at all levels
- Actively shares and delegates responsibility to develop team members
- Fosters an environment where people feel their contribution counts
- Encourages, celebrates and rewards team performance and collaboration
- Manages team dynamics, supports productive working relationships and work-life balance and is actively involved in team issue resolution
- Selects diverse team members with strong and appropriate skills

Expert

- Fosters encouragement of employees at all levels to broaden their perspective and develop leadership skills
- Actively participates in area-based child protection leadership teams
- Motivates others through personal interactions
- Mentors emerging leaders
- Models collaboration, productive relationships and work-life balance
- Operates effectively in political environments and provides the team with context for value and meaning in their work





Leading and inspiring

Developing others

Beginning

- Is open to learning and reflection with peers and supervisors to build on practical experience and capabilities
- Plans their own development in discussion with their supervisor
- Initiates formal and informal learning opportunities
- Understands their own learning style and identifies appropriate opportunities

Advanced

- Supports, advises and guides others to actively learn and develop
- Is aware of their skills, strengths and development needs, actively working to address skill gaps
- Supports others to identify their strengths and development needs

Leading

- Facilitates staff coaching, mentoring and practice development and provides leadership
- Encourages a learning environment for team members, promoting the need for gaining new knowledge, insights and skills
- Offers secondary consultation and live supervision

Expert

- Implements strategies for continuous improvements based on best practice
- Encourages a learning environment for all staff
- Encourages and models ongoing learning, promoting the need for gaining new knowledge, insights and skills





Leading and inspiring

System leadership

Beginning

- Uses existing skills and experience to collaborate and build relationships within the department
- Demonstrates openness to learn from others

Advanced

- Supports, advises and guides others in how to create effective working relationships
- Encourages a culture of continuous improvement
- Understands the needs and concerns of the community and workplace

Leading

- Uses expert knowledge and leadership to drive effective relationships, both internally and externally
- Uses formal and informal relationships to build buy-in and support from key internal and external clients or stakeholders
- Uses expert knowledge and understanding of the client or stakeholder's situational context to review and improve standards and challenge the status quo
- Constructively deals with service issues in a timely manner

Expert

- Implements continuous improvement strategies based on best practice
- Encourages and supports others in taking calculated risks to deliver service excellence
- Creates a climate of service and practice excellence by challenging and supporting others to deliver outstanding service
- Encourages new and different approaches that will deliver benefits beyond client or stakeholder expectations

