

# Policy position statement: Adoption in Queensland

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## Purpose

This statement sets out the Commissioner's child rights, human rights and governance-based position on adoption in Queensland and on any proposal to amend adoption law or policy as it applies to children.

This position is grounded in the enduring best interests of the child, the rights of children to family, identity, culture and participation, and the obligation of the State to act lawfully, compatibly with human rights, proportionately and accountably when making decisions that permanently alter a child's life.<sup>1</sup>

It applies to all children and families. While the rights implications are especially acute for children in the child protection system and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, adoption law affects the legal status, family relationships and rights of every child who is the subject of an adoption process.<sup>2</sup>

Adoption is not an ordinary administrative decision. It is one of the most serious legal interventions the State can authorise in relation to a child. Any proposal to expand, normalise or simplify adoption must therefore be approached with the highest degree of caution.<sup>3</sup>

## Core position

Adoption must remain an exceptional and highly safeguarded pathway in Queensland.

Children need safety, stability and enduring care. But permanency cannot be reduced to legal finality alone. A child-rights approach requires attention not only to safety and continuity of care, but also to identity, relationships, culture, belonging and voice across the course of the child's life.<sup>4</sup>

Adoption is distinct from other permanency pathways because it permanently transfers legal parentage and extinguishes the child's legal relationship with their birth parents. That legal severance has profound implications for family, identity, culture and lifelong wellbeing.<sup>5</sup> For that reason, adoption cannot be treated as a routine response to instability in care.

Queensland's legislative framework is appropriately cautious. Its safeguards reflect the gravity of adoption as a permanent legal act and the need to ensure that decisions of this kind are made only in carefully justified circumstances.<sup>6</sup> That includes strong safeguards around parental consent, recognising the seriousness of permanently extinguishing legal parentage and the need to ensure that any departure from consent requirements remains tightly confined and strictly justified.<sup>7</sup>

## Why adoption is different

Adoption is not the only long-term pathway available under Queensland law. Where reunification is not possible, the legal framework already provides other permanency options, including long-term guardianship and permanent care orders.<sup>8</sup>

This matters because public debate can sometimes imply that adoption is the primary answer to instability in the child protection system. It is not. Adoption sits within a broader permanency framework and is used only in a very small number of cases.<sup>9</sup> That limited use reflects its exceptional nature. It does not, of itself, demonstrate legislative failure.

Nor should permanency be confused with severance. Stability can be achieved in ways that preserve important relationships, cultural continuity and identity. The central question is not simply whether a child has a long-term order, but whether the pathway chosen best protects the child's rights and wellbeing over time.<sup>10</sup>

Adoption is also different because it does not merely regulate care arrangements. It permanently changes the child's legal status and extinguishes the legal relationship between the child and their birth parents, replacing it with a new and enduring legal identity.<sup>11</sup> That has profound consequences for the child's rights to family, identity and belonging, and for the legal rights and responsibilities of parents. While parental rights are not absolute and must always yield where necessary to protect the child's enduring best interests, their extinguishment is one of the reasons adoption must remain exceptional and highly safeguarded.<sup>12</sup>

Parental consent remains a critical safeguard for that reason. Consent requirements recognise the gravity of permanently severing legal parentage, and any exception to those requirements must remain narrow, lawful and strictly justified by reference to the child's enduring best interests.<sup>13</sup>

The law's caution in relation to adoption is justified by the nature of the order itself. Adoption permanently reconfigures legal parentage and may sever or fundamentally alter a child's relationship with parents, siblings, extended family and community.<sup>14</sup> Even where adoption is intended to provide stability, the rights implications remain profound.

The issue, therefore, is not simply whether adoption may provide permanence. It is what kind of permanence is being created, at what cost, and with what effect on the child's identity, relationships and long-term wellbeing.<sup>15</sup>

This must also be understood in light of Australia's history of forced adoption and forced child removal. Those practices caused deep and enduring harm, not only at the point of removal but across the life course.<sup>16</sup> They affected identity, belonging, family relationships and cultural connection. That history is not incidental to this debate. It explains why safeguards exist, why legal severance must be approached with extreme caution, and why contemporary reform must be tested against the risk of reproducing harm in modern form.<sup>17</sup>

See [Appendix A](#) for further information on Queensland's use of adoption and other permanency pathways, and the impacts of former adoption policies.

## Legal and policy frameworks

### Queensland's legal and policy context

Queensland's legal framework is broadly aligned with the UNCRC and the Human Rights Act 2019, recognising the family as the fundamental unit of society, the child's right to protection in their best interests, and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to culture, identity, language and kinship.<sup>18</sup> Both the Child Protection Act 1999 and the Adoption Act 2009 make the child's enduring best interests paramount, prioritise family and other non-adoption permanency pathways, and set strong safeguards around adoption, including parental consent, limited exceptions, the child's views, and specific protections for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.<sup>19</sup> Together, these laws, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle, are designed to ensure the threshold for adoption remains high in recognition of its permanent effects on a child's legal identity, family relationships, culture and belonging.<sup>20</sup>

See [Appendix B](#) for further information on Queensland's legal and policy framework regarding adoption.

### International human rights architecture

International human rights law requires adoption-related legislation and practice to be treated as a matter of last resort.<sup>21</sup> Under the UNCRC, children should be raised by their parents wherever possible and only separated from them where this is necessary for their best interests and no less intrusive measure can keep them safe.<sup>22</sup> Any best interests assessment must consider not only immediate safety, but the short-, medium- and long-term effects of a decision, including the child's views, identity, culture and relationships.<sup>23</sup> If separation is necessary, the State must still protect the child's right to maintain family, extended family and community connections unless that would be contrary to their best interests.<sup>24</sup> For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, this also requires attention to cultural rights and collective identity.<sup>25</sup> UNDRIP further strengthens this position by prohibiting the forced removal of Indigenous children and requiring the State to prevent actions that undermine Indigenous identity, culture or rights.<sup>26</sup> A child-rights approach requires more than a general reference to best interests. It requires close attention to the full range of rights engaged.

Children have the right to preserve their identity, including family relations recognised by law.<sup>27</sup> Because adoption permanently extinguishes and recreates legal parentage, it engages not only the child's rights to identity and family relations, but one of the most serious interferences the State can make with the legal relationship between a child and their parents.<sup>28</sup>

Children also have the right not to be separated from their parents except where necessary for their best interests and determined according to law, and the right to express their views freely in matters affecting them, with those views given due weight according to age and maturity.<sup>29</sup> Those rights are directly engaged by adoption.

Adoption is therefore not simply a welfare mechanism. It is a decision that may permanently alter a child's legal identity and family status. For that reason, it demands the highest level of scrutiny and the strongest safeguards against avoidable or disproportionate interference with a child's rights.<sup>30</sup>

The child's voice must not be treated as incidental. In decisions as serious and enduring as adoption, children must be recognised as rights-holders whose views, experiences and preferences are actively sought, heard and given due weight.<sup>31</sup> Participation must be meaningful, not symbolic. It is not enough that a child is technically consulted. The child must be supported to understand, express views and be taken seriously in light of the lifelong significance of the decision.<sup>32</sup>

A child who is the subject of an adoption decision is not merely the object of adult protection. The child is a rights-holder whose perspective forms part of the assessment of best interests, especially where identity, family, culture and belonging are at stake.<sup>33</sup>

A human-rights approach also requires legality, necessity, proportionality and accountability. Under Queensland's *Human Rights Act 2019*, the State must act compatibly with human rights and properly consider those rights in decision-making.<sup>34</sup> Where the State uses coercive power to permanently reconfigure a child's legal and family relationships, it must be able to justify that intervention by reference to the full spectrum of the child's rights, not by reference to convenience, administrative efficiency or simplistic claims about permanence.<sup>35</sup>

See [Appendix C](#) for further information about international human rights law relating to adoption.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the rights implications are especially grave. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle is a fundamental safeguard grounded in the importance of family, kin, culture, community and self-determination in decisions affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.<sup>36</sup>

A rights-based approach must also respect self-determination, including the meaningful involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the design, interpretation and oversight of laws, policies and decisions affecting their children.<sup>37</sup>

Any discussion of adoption reform in Queensland must be understood in the context of the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the findings of *Bringing them home*, and the continuing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.<sup>38</sup> In that context, legal pathways that permanently sever children from family, kin and culture demand the highest level of caution and accountability.

The best interests of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child cannot be assessed in a culturally neutral way. Best interests must include the child's connection to family, community, language, identity and culture.<sup>39</sup> They must also reflect the child's right to grow up with a strong sense of belonging and continuity.

A rights-based approach therefore requires more than avoiding immediate harm. It requires preserving the child's identity and protecting against decisions that fracture belonging in ways that may carry lifelong consequences.<sup>40</sup>

## Non-discrimination, prevention and structural inequality

A human-rights approach requires attention to the structural conditions in which child protection decisions are made.

Children should not move toward permanent legal severance because of poverty, inadequate housing, disability, service failure, lack of culturally safe support, or other forms of structural disadvantage.<sup>41</sup> Family hardship, poverty or unmet support needs must not be conflated with parental unfitness or used to justify unnecessary progression toward permanent legal severance.<sup>42</sup>

A rights-based system must ask what support was available, whether family preservation and reunification were genuinely pursued, whether kinship options were properly explored, and whether the system responded fairly to families facing structural inequality.<sup>43</sup>

Consistent with a child-rights approach, the State must address the root causes of family separation and ensure that family strengthening, reunification support and community-based care are prioritised before permanent legal severance is contemplated.<sup>44</sup>

Legal permanence can sometimes appear to solve a problem that is, in fact, rooted in upstream system failure. Adoption cannot become a substitute for family support, early intervention, cultural support or a functioning child protection system.<sup>45</sup>

Adoption policy therefore cannot be understood in isolation from the broader child protection system. The central question is not whether adoption should be easier to obtain. It is whether the system is organised in a way that keeps children safe while preserving rights, relationships and belonging wherever possible.<sup>46</sup>

A rights-based system begins before removal. It requires serious attention to prevention, family strengthening, culturally grounded support, safe reunification where possible, and properly supported family-based care.<sup>47</sup> It must also include effective gatekeeping, timely family support and adequately resourced family-based care so that children are not moved toward permanent legal severance because earlier supports were absent, inaccessible or inadequate.<sup>48</sup> Where that wider system is weak, legal severance risks carrying the weight of failures that should have been addressed much earlier.

## Accountability and governance

Adoption must be understood not only as a child welfare matter, but as a matter of governance and accountability.

Safeguards are not technical obstacles. They are accountability protections. They exist because adoption is permanent, because its consequences are profound, and because history shows the harm that can occur when the State is permitted to sever children from family and culture without adequate justification and scrutiny.<sup>49</sup>

A child-rights approach also requires strong general measures of implementation, including legislation, oversight, data, workforce capability, monitoring and adequate resourcing, so that rights are protected not only in principle but in practice.<sup>50</sup>

For that reason, any proposal to change adoption law or policy must be examined not only for its stated intent, but for its practical effect. Does it strengthen or weaken rights protection? Does it lower the threshold for legal severance? Does it weaken parental consent safeguards or broaden exceptions to consent? Does it dilute cultural protections? Does it increase the risk of disproportionate harm to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children or other overrepresented groups? Does it preserve rigorous scrutiny of decisions with lifelong consequences?<sup>51</sup>

These are governance questions as much as legal or policy questions. They go to whether the State is discharging its obligations to children in a way that is lawful, rights-compatible, culturally safe and accountable.<sup>52</sup>

## Conclusion

Adoption in Queensland must remain exceptional, tightly safeguarded and subject to the highest level of scrutiny.

This applies across all children and families. The State must approach adoption with caution in every case, recognising both the diversity of family forms and the seriousness of permanently altering legal family relationships.<sup>53</sup>

Children need safety, stability and enduring care. But a child-rights and human-rights approach does not treat permanency as synonymous with legal severance. It recognises that identity, family, kin, culture, participation and belonging are fundamental to a child's life and to any proper assessment of best interests.<sup>54</sup>

Queensland's current safeguards reflect the seriousness of adoption and the lessons of past harms. They exist because the permanent severance of legal family relationships is one of the most consequential acts the State can authorise in relation to a child.<sup>55</sup>

Any move to weaken those safeguards, including parental consent protections, would raise serious concerns from a child rights, human rights and governance perspective.<sup>56</sup>

## Appendix A: Contextual analysis

### Current permanency pathways

A significant and critical focus of the child protection system in Queensland is achieving 'permanency' for children. The *Child Protection Act 1999* (the Act) defines permanency across three dimensions:

*The experience by the child of having:*

1. *ongoing positive, trusting and nurturing relationships with persons of significance to the child, including the child's parents, siblings, extended family members and carers;*
2. *stable living arrangements, with connections to the child's community, that meet the child's developmental, educational, emotional, health, intellectual, and physical needs' and*
3. *legal arrangements for the child's care that provide the child with a sense of permanence and long-term stability.*

Currently under the Act, there are several pathways to achieving permanency for a child if reunification with parents is not possible. These include a long-term guardianship order to a relative or other suitable person (LTG-O), a long-term guardianship order to the Chief Executive (LTG-CE), or a permanent care order to a relative or other suitable person (PCO). Table 1 outlines the details of each of these options.

**Table 1. Types of long-term orders available under the *Child Protection Act 1999***

Order	Guardianship	Maximum duration	Review of order
LTG-CE	Chief Executive.	Until the child turns 18 years old.	<p>The Chief Executive must review the child's case plan at least once every 2.5 years.</p> <p>This review must consider whether permanency would be better achieved through an alternative pathway.</p>
LTG-O	Suitable relative or other person.	Until the child turns 18 years old.	<p>The Chief Executive must contact the child at least once a year to allow opportunities for comments and queries on, or requests for review of the child's case plan.</p> <p>The child or long-term guardian may request the Chief Executive review the child's case plan at any point.</p> <p>The child's parent may request the Chief Executive review the child's case plan if it has not been reviewed in the past year.</p>

			The Chief Executive may decide not to review the plan under specified circumstances.
PCO	Permanent guardian.	Until the child turns 18 years old.	The permanent guardian may request the Chief Executive review the child's case plan at any point.  The Chief Executive may decide not to review the plan.

Source: *Child Protection Act 1999*

Adoption is another permanency pathway referred to in the Act, though this is legislated under the *Adoption Act 2009*. Adoption is a permanent order which grants the adoptive parents permanent, legal parental rights for a child and removes the legal relationship between the child and their birth parents and family. If a child is adopted, the Chief Executive is no longer involved.

A child's experience of permanency across the three dimensions is largely dependent on the type of order and their permanent guardian. A child will experience the greatest permanency when they are placed with a relative that shares their culture.

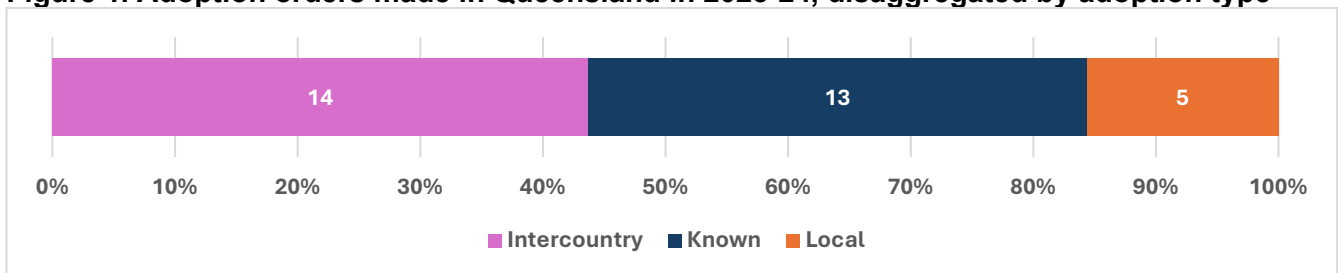
## Current use of adoption

Over the last 50 years in Australia, adoption numbers have significantly reduced for a multitude of reasons, including:

- improved access to birth control and reproductive health care
- reduced stigmatisation of single or unwed parents
- increased financial and social support for families
- reduced forced adoption without parental consent
- greater understanding of the negative impacts of forced adoption.<sup>57</sup>

These social and legislative changes have resulted in few adoptions occurring in Queensland. Figure 1 outlines adoptions in Queensland in 2023-24.

**Figure 1. Adoption orders made in Queensland in 2023-24, disaggregated by adoption type**

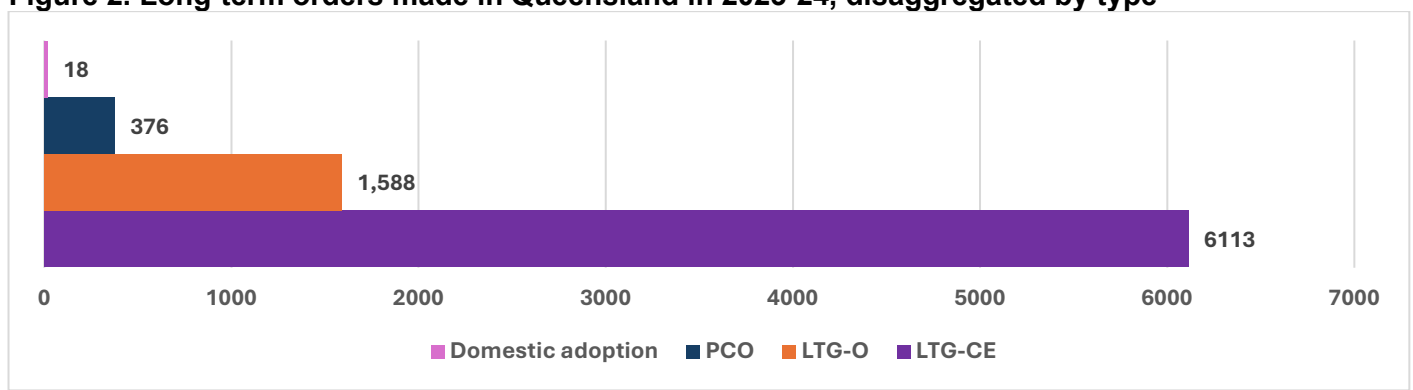


Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2025).<sup>58</sup>

The small number of known adoptions that do occur are often to kin or step-parents. Across Australia in 2023-24, 59 adoptions were to relatives or step-parents, consisting of 34 per cent of domestic adoptions in that year.<sup>59</sup> In Queensland in 2020-21, of the 14 domestic adoption orders made, six (43%) were to step-parents.<sup>60</sup> Adoption to strangers generally only happens in extreme or unique circumstances, with parents otherwise unlikely to consent to adopting their child to strangers.

In comparison, other long-term orders are used significantly more than adoption, as seen in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Long-term orders made in Queensland in 2023-24, disaggregated by type**



Source: Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. (2025).<sup>61</sup>

This data shows that the pathways currently available to provide permanency for children are being utilised frequently. This includes adoption, although in very small numbers. The limited use of adoption as a means to achieve permanency indicates that when considered in the context of the best interests of the child, which all decisions relating to children must be, it is determined not to be the most suitable option for achieving the short-, medium- and long-term safety of most children.

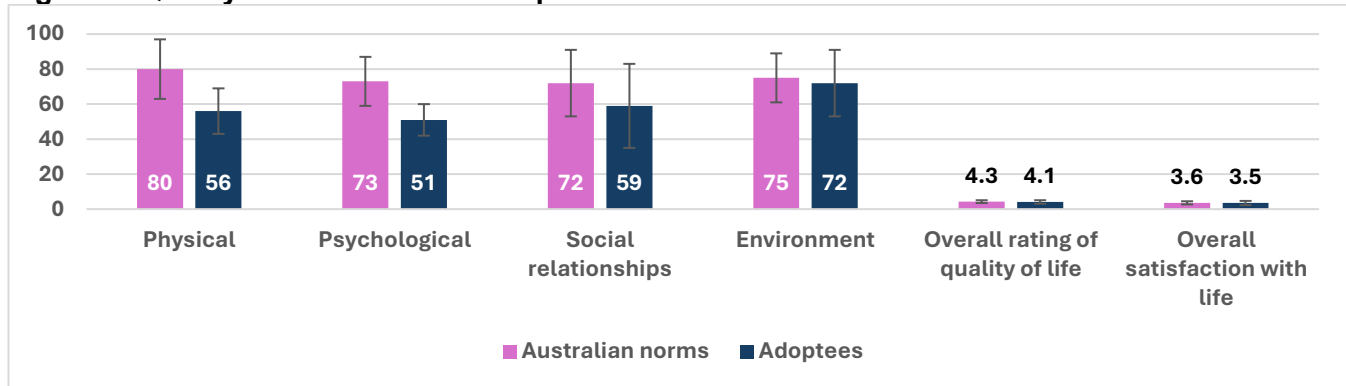
## Past use of adoption and its effects

In 2012 the Queensland Government formally apologized for its involvement in past forced adoptions, as did the Federal Government in 2013.<sup>62</sup> Both apologies followed a recommendation made by the *Australian Government Senate Committee Inquiry on the Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies*.<sup>63</sup> Reports from this senate inquiry highlighted negative experiences of adoptees, including:

- physical, emotional and sexual abuse
- loss of or difficulty with identity and belonging
- feelings of abandonment or unworthiness
- issues with attachment and relationships.<sup>64</sup>

The adoptees who shared their experiences emphasised that these impacts were not contained in childhood. Many shared that as adults their adoption experience affects their health, relationships, employment, education, and finances, amongst other things. One report compared quality of life for adoptees against the 'Australian norm' using the *World Health Organisation Quality of Life Instrument*. The comparison identified that although the adoptees had similar overall quality of life scores, they had significantly lower scores across the physical, psychological and social relationships domains.<sup>65</sup>

**Figure 3. Quality of life scores for adoptees versus Australian norms**



Source: Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2012).<sup>66</sup>

Four years before, in 2008, the Federal Government apologised to the survivors of the Stolen Generations.<sup>67</sup> The apology came following a recommendation from *Bringing them home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (Bringing them home)* released in 1997.<sup>68</sup> *Bringing them home* also shared the impacts of forced removal on taken Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, many of which echo the harm caused by other forced adoption practices. Alongside those shared impacts, survivors of the Stolen Generations experienced racism, complete denial and denigration of their identity, culture, and language, and institutionalisation, of which the effects are still felt by survivors and their families today.<sup>69</sup>

The intent of the two national apologies and the Queensland apology was not only to acknowledge the harm caused by the governments to those who were taken and their families, but also to ensure the public knew the impact of these practices, **endeavouring to never repeat the harm.**

We resolve, as a nation, to do all in our power to make sure these practices are never repeated. In facing future challenges, we will remember the lessons of family separation. Our focus will be on protecting the fundamental rights of children and on the importance of the child's right to know and be cared for by his or her parents. (Julia Gillard, 2013)<sup>70</sup>

It must also be acknowledged that adoption does not only cause harm if it is forced. The severance of a child's identity and their relationships with parents and family remains common with current adoption practices, causing lifelong harm to a child. The impacts are like those of forced adoptees, including struggles with identity and belonging, attachment and relationships, and health.

Plenary adoption cancels the original birth record and replaces it, creating a legal fiction that erases a child's first family. This erasure contributes to lifelong grief, loss, identity confusion and relational challenges reported across generations of adopted people, with intergenerational repercussions. Rebranding adoption as 'open' or 'voluntary' does not change its structural effects when plenary orders remain the default. Public narratives that present adoption as a modern fix for social issues or instability ignore this evidence and risk re-creating harm. (Jigsaw Queensland, 2026)<sup>71</sup>

## Appendix B: Queensland's legal and policy framework relevant to adoption and permanency

Queensland's child protection and adoption legislation is generally compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* and international law. Both the *Child Protection Act 1999* and the *Adoption Act 2009* stress that any decision made must be made with the enduring best interests of the child as the paramount consideration. The *Child Protection Act 1999* expands on this through the principles for achieving permanency for a child, with the preferred action being that which achieves the three dimensions of permanency (relational, physical and legal). The Act also outlines an order of preference for placement decisions:

- a) *The first preference is for the child to be cared for by the child's family;*
- b) *The second preference is for the child to be cared for under the guardianship of a person who is a member of the child's family, other than a parent of the child, or another suitable person;*
- c) *If the child is not an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child – the next preference is for the child to be adopted under the Adoption Act 2009;*
- d) *The next preference is for the child to be cared for under the guardianship of the chief executive;*
- e) *If the child is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child – the last preference is for the child to be adopted under the Adoption Act 2009.*

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) also applies under the Act. The ATSICPP is an important safeguard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, providing structure to the State in exercising its child protection powers. Aligned with the articles of the UNCRC and UNDRIP, the ATSICPP outlines the need to:

- prevent entry of children into out-of-home care through provision of support to families
- ensure participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decision-making
- partner with communities in service design and delivery
- prioritise the placement of children with family, kin or community
- maintain connection to culture, family and community.

The ATSICPP does not prevent any particular order type, including adoption, but rather provides a guide for the State to ensure children's identity, relationships and connection to culture are not severed. Considering the history of harm inflicted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families through forced child removal, and the ongoing disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, the ATSICPP is a necessary principle to ensure the holistic consideration of children's safety. A further exploration of the ATSICPP can be found [here](#).

The *Adoption Act 2009*, as well as outlining that adoption may only occur if it is in a child's best interests across their life, states that the consent of both parents is required to proceed with an adoption. This is unless the Supreme Court finds that a parent cannot be located, lacks capacity, has abandoned the child or is not meaningfully exercising parental responsibility. In line with Article 12 of the UNCRC, the child's views must also be considered.<sup>72</sup> The *Adoption Act 2009* also clearly sets out that Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander people must be involved in decisions made about Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children, and that it is in the best interests of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child to:

- be cared for within an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community
- maintain contact with their community or language group
- develop and maintain connection with their Aboriginal tradition or Island custom
- have their sense of identity preserved and enhanced.

Each of these safeguards are essential to ensuring children’s rights are upheld. The clear and structured statutory framework aims to ensure the threshold for adoption is high, in recognition of the permanent and possibly negative impacts adoption may have on a child’s legal identity, parental, family and community relationships, and culture – impacts that we know from the *Australian Government Senate Committee Inquiry on the Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies* and the *Bringing them home* report can be lifelong and generation-spanning.<sup>73</sup>

## Appendix C: Relevant UN General Comments

Instrument	Key content	Relevance to adoption
<b>United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child – General Comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration</b>	<p>Established that assessment of best interests must consider the short-, medium- and long-term effects of actions on the child.</p> <p>Established that the best interests cannot be met without participation of the child.</p> <p>Established that continuation of the child’s identity, including culture and religion, is desirable and in the child’s best interest.</p> <p>Established that separation of a child from their parents must only be a last resort, and that if separation does occur the State has a responsibility to preserve a child’s identity, and relational ties.</p>	<p>Requires the State to keep orders, such as adoption, that separate a child from their parents, sever ties with identity and family, and have ongoing negative impacts on a child as an absolute last resort.</p> <p>Requires the state to consider and involve the views of a child in decisions about their best interests, including placement.</p>
<b>United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child – General Comment No. 11 (2009) on Indigenous children and their rights under the Convention</b>	Established that assessment of the best interests of a First Nations child must include consideration of the child’s cultural rights, including their individual and collective rights.	Requires the State to holistically consider the best interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the context of their culture.

- <sup>1</sup> United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, arts 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld); *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld), including enduring best interests, parental consent, child's views, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child provisions.
- <sup>2</sup> United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, arts 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld); *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld), including enduring best interests, parental consent, child's views, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child provisions.
- <sup>3</sup> United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, arts 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld), including enduring best interests, parental consent, child's views, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child provisions.
- <sup>4</sup> United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, arts 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2009). *General Comment No. 11: Indigenous children and their rights under the Convention*.
- <sup>5</sup> Commonwealth of Australia. (2012). *Commonwealth contribution to former forced adoption policies and practices*; Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2012). *Past adoption experiences: National research study on the service response to past adoption practices*; United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, arts 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld), including enduring best interests, parental consent, child's views, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child provisions.
- <sup>6</sup> United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld), including enduring best interests, parental consent, child's views, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child provisions.
- <sup>7</sup> United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld), including enduring best interests, parental consent, child's views, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child provisions.
- <sup>8</sup> Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. (2025). *Our Performance: Permanency for children*; Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. (2025). *Our Performance: Children on orders*; *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld), including permanency principles and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle provisions.
- <sup>9</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2023). *Adoptions in Australia over time*; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2025). *Adoptions Australia*; Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. (2026). *Adoptions*; Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. (2025). *Our Performance: Permanency for children*; Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. (2025). *Our Performance: Children on orders*.
- <sup>10</sup> United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, arts 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld), including enduring best interests, parental consent, child's views, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child provisions.
- <sup>11</sup> United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, arts 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). *General Comment No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration*; *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld), including enduring best interests, parental consent, child's views, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child provisions.
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