Winter is coming!

While the cooler air is finally making its way to Queensland, there are no White Walkers in sight (a little reference for the Game of Thrones fans) but still plenty of Framework activity.

In April 2016 Minister Fentiman released the Supporting Families, Changing Futures strategy which outlines the reform priorities for the next two years. The Framework for Practice features clearly in these priorities as does the Engaging Fathers project, an initiative that actively reinforces the Framework’s values and seeks to increase the engagement of fathers in child protection casework. Include dads in your work with families posters are about to be distributed to all Child Safety Service Centres, Regional Intake Services, Placement Support Services and FACC services.

The Framework’s values of cultural integrity and strengths and solutions are also values which we will see in a number of upcoming strategies and events, including NAIDOC Week.

NAIDOC Week 2016

NAIDOC Week - 3-10 July 2016

NAIDOC originally stood for ‘National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee’. This committee was once responsible for organising national activities during NAIDOC Week and its acronym has since become the name of the week itself. This year the theme is Songlines: The living narrative of our nation.

NAIDOC week is an opportunity for us to talk about how we highlight the value of cultural integrity in our work.

What NAIDOC Week means is summed up in a couple of following staff quotes:

“NAIDOC provides an opportunity for the Aboriginal Community to celebrate their culture and invite others in to share this celebration with them. It also provides a valuable gateway for services to promote their programmes. For me it is an opportunity to take off my government ID and just be part of the community.” (Caroline Slade, SW region ATSIPL)

“NAIDOC Week is really important for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff as it is an opportunity to share our history, our stories and to educate fellow workers and the wider community about our cultures. It is an opportunity to generate respect and understanding of our cultures and come together to celebrate our rich and diverse history. For us it is about bringing family and community together, strengthening connections and keeping our cultural integrity, but also it about encouraging the wider
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Community to join us in partnership, learn about our culture and build on our strengths together.” (Bobbie Gadsden, Quality Practice Officer)

Making NAIDOC posters and events visible in our workplaces and foyers is a message of respect for Indigenous staff and families we work with. For more information about NAIDOC and this year’s theme go to: www.naidoc.org.au.

12 Month Framework Review

In March 2016 the Framework for Practice 12 month review process was undertaken by just over 50 departmental workgroups, both regionally and centrally. In most workgroups Managers led a critical reflection process with their teams to examine how the Framework for Practice was being implemented. Regional Executive Directors also undertook the activity as a group, reflecting on their roles as leaders. Questions included:

- how well do we know the elements of the framework?
- how do the values and principles of the Framework influence the way we do our work?
- how enthusiastic and positive are we as a workgroup re the Framework?
- do we use the Framework tools?
- how engaged with the Framework are our supervisors and administrative staff?
- how do we engage with our children and families?
- how do we partner with other agencies?

These elements have been identified in other jurisdictions as the critical foundation to a successful Framework implementation. Feedback regarding the process has been really positive with staff appreciating the time to pause and consider their progress and to plan with their teams to take the next steps. The picture of our progress has been used to identify a number of key themes:

What’s working well:
- training has been beneficial
- it’s a better way to work with families
- staff like the tools and how they aid conversations with families

Challenges:
- the demands of high workloads
- time away from the office at training
- the time needed to change practice direction

What’s needed:
- more time to practise and gain confidence in using the tools
- support and coaching for those in leadership positions
- streamlining processes to create more time and space for staff.

What’s happening around the state?

Here we share and highlight some of the statewide projects that are focused on incorporating the values and principles of the Framework for Practice:

- Updating the High Risk Alerts procedure for Unborn babies – to improve information exchange between the department and Queensland Health.
- Qld Child Protection Parent Perspectives Study - being undertaken by Griffith University to highlight the voices of parents regarding child protection transactions.
- Stakeholder Engagement Survey - managed by Systems Performance unit, the survey has been completed by 509 NGOs with results re levels of satisfaction with the department to be released soon.

Upcoming Training

- Leading Practice II training: 27-28 June, 25-26 July
- Family Group Meeting Convenor Training II: 20-22 July
- IPMS Modules 13 and 14: 1-2 & 12-13 September

Want more?

Contact the Practice Leadership Unit at: PLUmailbox@communities.qld.gov.au