If Child Safety is working with you or your family to make important decisions about your child, the Family Participation Program can help you have your say.

The Family Participation Program service can provide an independent Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander facilitator to support you in a family led decision making process.

This process can help your family develop a plan to keep your child or young person safe at home, or identify a family member who can care for your child.

The Family Participation Program service workers can also support you in any contact you have with Child Safety, to help you be involved in decisions.

It is important to note that the Family Participation Program services are run by independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations, and are there to support families to lead/make decisions.

What is Family Led Decision Making?

Family led decision making processes recognise that families know their own strengths and the challenges they are facing better than anyone else.

By bringing key family members together and talking through the issues and worries, families can often develop plans that can keep the child or young person safe and connected with their family, their community and their culture.

If the child or young person cannot remain safely at home in the short term, family led decision making can identify family members who can care for the child.

In a family led decision making process you can have time alone, without Child Safety present, to talk openly about ways to keep children and young people safe and connected to their family and community.

This process will be facilitated by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person outside of Child Safety who will work to create a culturally safe space for you to participate and have your voice heard.

If your child or young person is in care, family led decision making will allow you a say in the case plan, strategies to keep your child or young person connected to their culture, or plans to return your child or young person to you or other family members.

How can the Family Participation Program help?

The Family Participation Program service can facilitate a family led decision making process when a decision is required about the safety or care of your child or young person. The service can empower you to feel heard and supported to ensure everything you want to say and express is heard.

They can help you understand Child Safety’s concerns and support you to find solutions that provide safety and wellbeing of your child or young person and your family.

The service can also help you identify and organise family members who might be able to support you at the family meeting.

A Family Participation Program service worker can facilitate this meeting to ensure everyone has their say, including your child or young person.

In addition, they can help you develop a family plan and discuss that plan with Child Safety.
Feedback

Once your case is closed with the Family Participation Program, you have an opportunity to give feedback on how you felt about the support provided, and whether it helped you play a part in decisions about your child.

You will be asked to answer two questions about how involved you believe you were in making decisions about your child, and whether it resulted in a better outcome for you, your child or young person and family.

All feedback is anonymous and will help us to improve the services and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

The Family Participation Program service will not be able to see or identify your feedback. However they will receive a summary of the feedback from all of the families they supported over a period of time.

For further information, please email: ATSIfamilies@csyw.qld.gov.au