

Submission to the Family Law Council

from

Macarthur Legal Centre

We respectfully submit that in our experience, to improve the Child Protection and Family Law sectors and the interface between the two jurisdictions that:

1. Funding should be provided to local communities for service delivery in these areas rather than a more generic statewide approach. This would allow for the tailoring of service provisions to the specific needs of that particular community.
2. There should be a model of case management between the service providers such as the Children's Court, Family and Community Services, the Family Court, relevant NGO's and community sector organisations.
3. This model would provide a more holistic approach at the early stages of any matter and prevent and moderate the need for litigation and the escalation of issues relevant to each individual matter.
4. In principle there needs to be more consultation, mediation and collaboration in the sectors and jurisdictions as opposed to the adversarial Court system.
5. Our local region would benefit from the provision of a Family Court that could work and complement the existing Children's Court.
6. There needs to be provision of legal representation and advice for all parents in Care and Protection matters regardless of their eligibility for Legal Aid.
7. The sector must be adequately resourced as at present, the system is not as effective and as efficient as it could be, as the chronic under resourcing has resulted in unmanageable workloads for the service providers.

Thank You.