

### FOSTER CARE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA POSITION:

It is important to ensure that children and young people have an accurate record of their family background and history. A key part of this background and history is information about the child or young person's cultural and religious heritage. This includes information about their birth parents' culture, ethnicity, religion, language, and life in their country of origin. It should also include information about the child's relationship to their cultural and religious heritage. This can all be documented in a Life Story Book for the child.

This tool can be used by workers and carers to identify pertinent aspects of a child or young person's cultural and religious heritage that need to be explored. The document also provides a list of useful sources of information on countries of origins, culture and religion.

### What to find out about the birth parents:

- What country/city did the birth parents/family come from?
- What is the country/city like?
- What is the ethnicity of birth parents?
- Where were they born?
- What did they do?
- When did they come to Australia?
- Why did they come to Australia?
- How did they come to Australia?
- What is their religion?
- What are their key religious beliefs/practices?
- What language(s) do they speak?
- What are some holidays and special events associated with their culture and/or religion?
- What are some national foods and dress associated with their culture and/or religion?

### What to find out about the child's relationship to and experience of their cultural and religious heritage:

- How did the child participate in the culture and religion of their birth families?
- What was their experience of it? e.g., did they participate in cultural and religious events and how? Do they have any memories of this?
- What language(s) did the child speak when they were living with their birth parents?
- For children and young people who were born overseas:
  - What country was the child born in?
  - When did they come to Australia?
  - What do they remember about life before coming to Australia?
  - What they liked, what they didn't like?
  - What are some unique aspects of their experience – What foods did they like?
  - What games did they play? What were their friends like? Who were the important people in their lives?
  - What was it like for them when they got here?

(Adapted from NSW DOCS Practice Guide for funded Out-of-Home Care Services)

## Cultural support plan – identity activity

Practitioners should try to understand the child's world view and develop a cultural support plan to their developmental level.

My favourite foods are:	My Name is:	My favourite memory:
	Favourite thing I like doing:	
	About my family:	
About my culture:		
I speak		
I like to wear		
I like music/dance		

For more activities like this, and more information, please see:

<http://www.jkdiversityconsultants.com.au/PracticeGuide/Culturally-Sensitive-Practice-in-Out-of-Home-Care-Practice-Guide-KaurJ-2014.pdf>