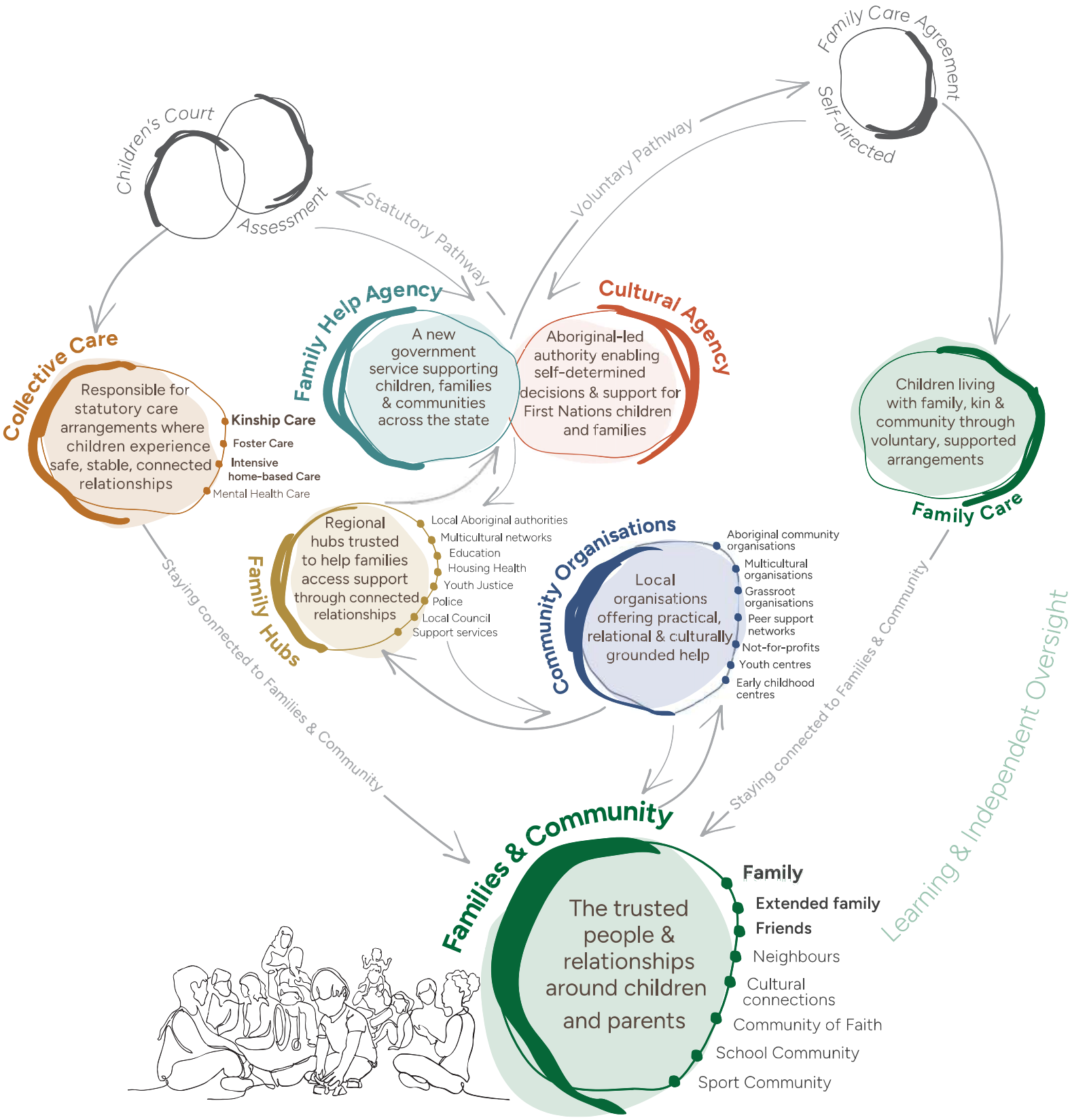
CHILD CONNECTION SYSTEM

A Child Connection System is designed so every child is surrounded by people who know them, stay alongside them, and help them thrive. It is built on a shared commitment to put relationships at the centre of how children and families are supported.



Centre for Relational Care

Child Connection System explainer

Families & Community

Children are best supported within their families, kin and communities. When parents need extra support, the people around them step in to help, drawing on trusted relationships, and forming new ones.

Community Organisations

Provide practical information, support services and spaces to connect. They recognise when someone needs extra help, and can work alongside other organisations to strengthen a network of care around children, young people, parents and families through early practical and relational support.

Learning and Independent Oversight

Focuses on understanding and improving. It strengthens the relationships that keep children safe and connected, builds long-term support for families and communities and upholds cultural authority and self-determination for First Nations people.

Family Hubs

Work alongside ACCMs & local organisations to help people get support beyond assessment and referral. Hubs respond to what families need: helping with urgent issues, building trusted relationships, strengthening the practical supports around them, and funding community-led responses.

Family Help Agency

Its purpose is to help children and families. It sets direction for early and relational responses and allocates funds through Family Hubs to back community-led solutions.

Cultural Agency

Enables decisions about support to be made with authority grounded in each Nation. When chosen by a First Nations family, it leads responses shaped by culture, community governance and self-determination.

Voluntary Pathway

The priority for children is to remain safely with kin or an agreed community member through voluntary arrangements, supported by the Family Help Agency or the Cultural Agency.

Family Court Agreement

Where helpful, voluntary guardianship arrangements with ongoing support through the FH/ACCM, can be formalised through the Family Court, without transferring to statutory state responsibility.

Family Care

Care arrangements with extended family or community members that sit outside statutory intervention. Where needed, these arrangements are formalised through the Family Court and supported financially and relationally by Family Hubs.

Statutory Pathway

Only when local support and voluntary arrangements cannot be agreed or sustained does the Family Help Agency and the Cultural Agency assess whether involvement of the Children's Court is necessary.

Children's Court

Engagement with the Children's Court occurs only after assessment and agreement, and parental responsibility transfers to the state. Where appropriate, Cultural Agencies retain parental responsibility.

Collective Care

Trusts and supports attuned adults closest to the child to form and embed enduring relationships around them, with connection to family, culture and community. Care with kin is prioritised, followed by foster care, other forms of intensive home-based care and a small number of psychiatric support places.