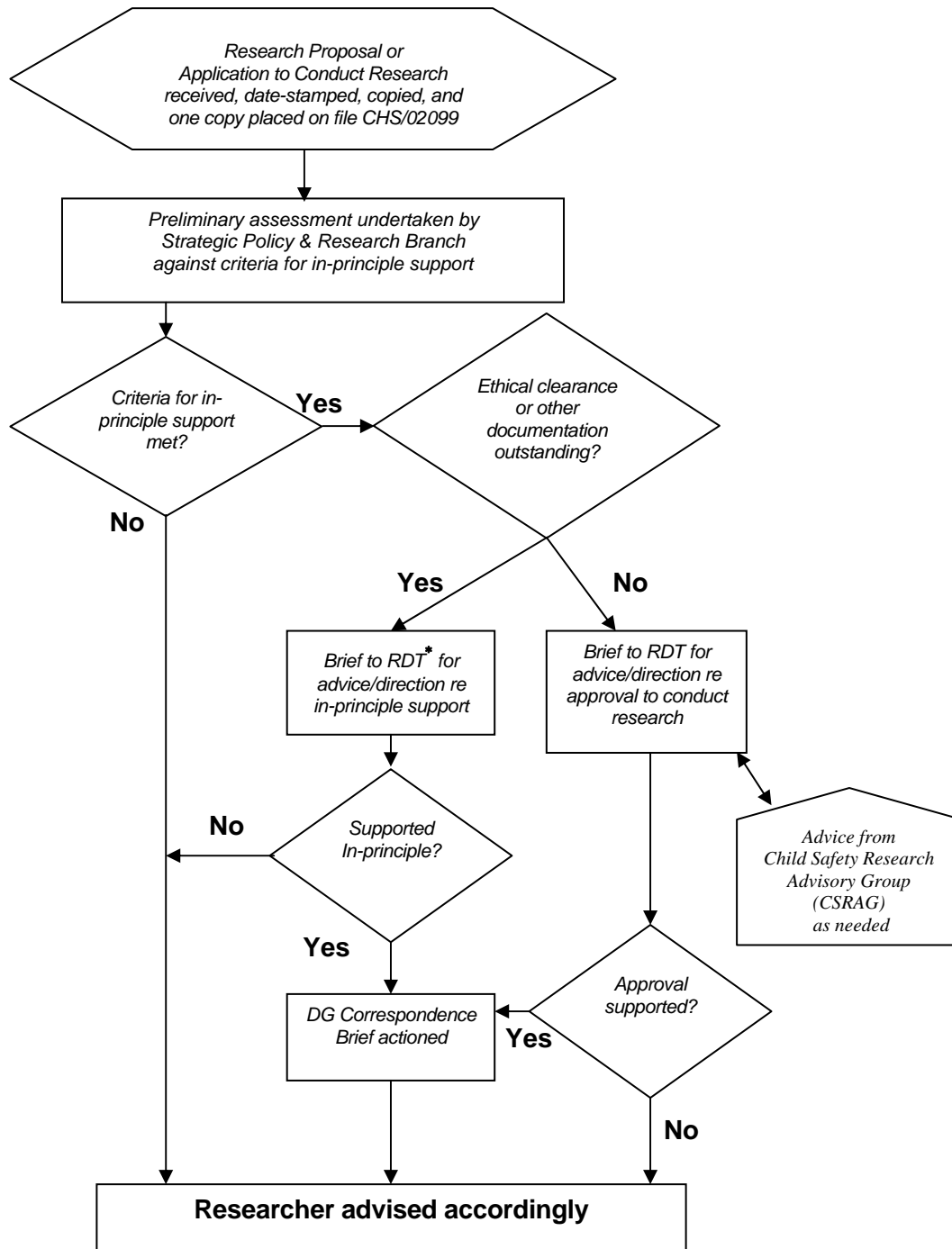


## Research approval process

The following flow chart outlines the process developed by Strategic Policy and Research Branch to administer and evaluate research proposals/applications submitted to the Department of Child Safety. The department is committed to an efficient process and progressing submissions in a timely manner.

### Administrative steps



**NOTE:** RDT denotes the department's Research Development Team, which presently comprises Executive Directors of the Policy and Programs, Service Delivery Partnerships and Child Safety Services Divisions.

Researchers may submit a **Research Proposal** and/or an **Application to Conduct Research** involving departmental clients, data, personnel and/or service providers. Evidence of ethical clearance from a university human research ethics committee is not required when submitting a Research Proposal as the aim of a Research Proposal is simply to gain **In-Principle Support** from the department.

**In-principle support** is formal confirmation that the proposed research:

- is relevant to the department's research strategy and priorities; and
- has potential benefits for the department/clients in terms of policy/practice enhancement.

**Importantly, in-principle support from the department does not permit or enable a researcher to commence his/her study.**

Research involving departmental clients, data, personnel or service providers cannot commence without the Director-General's formal approval. This can only be obtained by submitting an **Application to Conduct Research**. Proof of ethical clearance from a Human Research Ethics Committee, a copy of the ethical clearance application, and copies of all research tools (if applicable) must accompany an Application to Conduct Research.

The interim research approval process has been designed to:

- allow for postgraduate student researchers to satisfy institutional requirements for external agency 'support' prior to applying for ethical clearance;
- accord with CSRAG's position that ethical clearance for research remain a matter for determination by a properly constituted Human Research Ethics Committee;
- be manageable within the department's allocation of resources to research management;
- provide for CSRAG advice and input in the research approval process, at the discretion of the department; and
- ensure executive oversight of research approval and management procedures and decision-making via the Research Development Team.

The Strategic Policy and Research Branch currently assesses the merits of Research Proposals and Applications to Conduct Research against the following criteria.

1. Does the proposal aim to inform:
  - I. Policy/strategy/program /service development to address Indigenous over-representation in the child protection system
  - II. Improvements in service responsiveness to the needs of children and young people who have been harmed or are at risk of harm
  - III. Enhancements to the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) System
  - IV. Expansion/enhancement of suitable and culturally appropriate placement options for children in protective care
  - V. Increased placement stability for children in protective care
  - VI. Development of effective provisions for neglected/abused children and young people to participate in decisions affecting their lives
  - VII. Effective recruitment/ training/ retention of Child Safety personnel or quality care providers
  - VIII. Development/implementation of responsive, effective therapeutic interventions or reunification services for children in protective care
  - IX. Cost-effective and sustainable allocation of child protection resources
  - X. Development/delivery of quality adoption services
2. Does the proposal make provision for Indigenous participants?
3. Does the proposal seek to offer new knowledge and/or build on current/past research?
4. Will the proposed methodology benefit or present no risk of harm to participants?
5. Does the researcher possess appropriate expertise and credentials to conduct the research?
6. Has the researcher sought/gained support/sponsorship from organisational units affected by the research methodology?

On the basis of this assessment, the strengths and limitations of an application or proposal are identified and a recommendation is made to the Research Development Team with respect to in-principle support or approval to conduct research. The Research Development Team considers the likely impact of the proposed research on departmental operations/ service capacity, seeks the advice of CSRAG members as required, and advises whether or not to recommend in-principle support or approval to conduct research. A Brief is then prepared for the Director-General based on the advice of the Research Development Team. If a research proposal gains the Director-General's formal approval, a separate Corporate File linked to the main file is established, for project tracking and management purposes.