



## Early Intervention & Placement Prevention program

# Summary of child, youth and family support service model

### Outcomes

The child, youth and family support (CYFS) early intervention service model aims to deliver a broader range of less intensive early intervention services to meet the needs of vulnerable children, young people and families who fall below the new threshold for statutory child protection intervention. The service model seeks to deliver the following results and outcomes:

- children have a safe and healthy start to life
- children develop well and are ready for school
- children and young people meet developmental and educational milestones
- children and young people live in families able to meet their physical, emotional and social needs
- children and young people are safe from harm and injury
- children, young people and their families have access to appropriate and responsive services if needed

Links between young people, their families, friends, school and community are maintained or re-established, where appropriate.

### Key features of service model

The child, youth and family support service model targets low to medium risk children, young people and families where presenting problems, if left unattended, would likely escalate to the point where either:

- a more intensive service, such as that provided by Brighter Futures, would be required or
- risk of significant harm is identified.

Families may be experiencing number of vulnerabilities, however the primary focus of CYFS services will be on accessing families early and providing appropriate, short term supports to address identified issues and prevent escalation of problems.

The model is structured to deliver two streams of service provision:

- Child and family support, targets families with children aged 0 – 12 years
- Youth and family support, targets young people 12 to under 18 years or families with young people in this age range. Parents will be engaged in early intervention services provided for young people under this service model.

This structure seeks to support delivery of high quality and responsive services and enable service providers to build on established expertise in a community. Participation in local service planning partnerships and collaboration with other service providers will strengthen the delivery of integrated, responsive and timely services, and ensure that service duplication is avoided.

The child, youth and family support service model targets:

1. Children, young people and families experiencing low to medium risk issues, that can be addressed by providing appropriately targeted, short term supports early to prevent escalation of these issues. The nature of the issues experienced by this client group means that they are below the ROSH threshold, and do not require the higher level of services provided by the Brighter Futures program.

However children, young people and families in this group will benefit from assistance and support to prevent escalation of issues. Where case plan goals are not achieved at the end of the agreed period of service, an additional short term intervention can be offered on the basis of a revised case plan.

2. Families with children and/or young people aged under 18 years. These families will be experiencing low to medium risk issues that are, or have the potential to impact on their capacity to adequately care for and protect their children and young people if not addressed.
3. Young people aged under 18 years.

The important point to note in regard to the age range is that as these services are focused on providing early intervention support specifically targeted at preventing children and young people from entering the child protection system, the age range has been brought in line with the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

4. Typically universal services do not meet the needs or are unable to be accessed by these children, young people and/or families
5. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families will receive priority of access to services under the child, youth and family support service model.

### **Components of the service model**

The components outlined under this service model are descriptive of the types of activities that will be provided by services funded under this model. Two points to note are that, firstly, it's not expected that each and every young person or family receiving services will necessarily receive all of the components in the model. In fact, services should be tailored to meet the client's needs.

Secondly, funded agencies will not necessarily provide all of the components of the model in the services they offer. Agencies will generally be funded to provide advice and support and one or more of the other service components which may or may not include case management. Where case management is a core service component provided by an agency, case management is likely to be primarily focused on:

- assessment of need
- coordination of referrals and promotion of linkages to specialist and other mainstream services to address identified needs
- monitoring the impact of accessed services in terms of the agreed case plan goals.

This may include referral to other CYFS funded agencies for access to one or more of the other service components funded under the CYFS service model. Services can continue for a further three months if the client is re-assessed as needing a continuing service to achieve agreed goals

Effective engagement is the cornerstone of building relationships to facilitate family participation and change, and is an ongoing process that is integrated into interventions from the first contact

through assessment, case planning, service delivery and exit planning. Strength-based, collaborative, early intervention approaches to child welfare involve young people and families in decisions regarding their welfare and wellbeing, and engagement is an essential component of effectively supporting young people and families to identify and achieve their goals.

### **Advice and support**

This component of service delivery includes single or short-term occasions of service, for example two or three occasions and interventions up to three months duration. Typically, this will involve providing advice and/or support around issues like child behavioural management, financial difficulties, or unemployment. Activities could include, for example, providing:

- assistance to a family with budgeting or changing utility providers or plans
- advice and support to a parent/s about how to respond to a child's behavioural issue that is problematic
- advice to a young person regarding the types of jobs that might be suitable given their skills and interests and then providing a referral to a job seeking skills group or local employment support agency.

Services can continue for a further three months if the client is re-assessed as needing a continuing service to achieve agreed goals

### **Case management**

Case management will usually be provided to young people and families who require additional and ongoing support to access appropriate services, and will be for an average duration of three months. Case management includes one worker in partnership with an individual and/or family undertaking activities such as:

- initial assessment
- the development of a case plan
- providing support for the family to implement the case plan
- monitoring the case plan
- reviewing progress and adapting the case plan as needed
- exit planning and making referrals as appropriate to local universal or specialist services.

### **Parenting support**

This includes parent skills groups and parent support groups. Parent skills groups are structured programs running for between 6 – 12 weeks duration. They focus on helping parents improve their capacity to build positive relationships with their children and support parents' development of specific skills in responding to children and young people's needs and appropriately addressing challenging behavioural and emotional issues.

In line with the overall goal of the Early Intervention & Placement Prevention service continuum of achieving outcomes for children, young people and families, services will be required to provide parent skills groups that have been demonstrated to achieve effective outcomes for families, that is, evidence-based programs.

**Parent support groups** are either facilitated or self help groups, and will typically run for up to 12 weeks. An example of a self-help group would be *Parenting with depression*.

## Skills development groups

Skills development groups include activities such as one-off or short term (e.g. between 2-12 weeks) practical/skills development groups. This could include skills development for parents such budgeting skills or cooking skills, or for youth such as social skills development.

Multi-component programs for youth fit into this category of service as they typically include one or more skills development components. Multi-component programs typically address risk and protective factors in a number of settings, for example the home, school and community.

They are tailored to meet the needs of the young person. In addition to skills development groups, activities can include psychosocial support, relationship development, building connection to family and educations, and specialised care or treatment. Multi-component programs for youth have been demonstrated to produce more positive outcomes than single component intervention.

## Home visiting

Home visiting is a highly valued and accepted strategy for the provision of parenting information, family support and case management services. In the child and family support service model, 'home visiting' also refers to the delivery of a structured parenting program that is delivered to individual families in the home or alternative site. In this model, structured home visiting programs only apply to parenting support for families with children 1-12 years (child and family support stream) and can be provided for up to three months.

An example of a structured home visiting program is the PAT (Parents As Teachers) program which focuses on enhancing parents understanding and capacity to respond appropriately to child developmental needs and to promote child development. Note: This time frame will limit the types of parenting programs that can be provided under this service model.

## Counselling

Counselling services will be provided for children, young people, adults and/or the whole family, for up to three months which can be extended if a case review warrants. Counselling refers to a structured, formal process of specialised intervention with an individual or group (e.g. family) that is aimed at facilitating the resolution of identified issues or problems.

In line with the overall goal of the Early Intervention & Placement Prevention service continuum of achieving outcomes for young people and families, counselling will need to be provided by professionally qualified and skilled workers using evidence based models of counselling intervention.

## Child youth and family support services unit costs

It is expected that the costs for service delivery will vary depending on the service and the support needs of the family. The costings presented are average unit costs across a large number of clients/families. Averages take into account, and allow for, the varying intensities of service provision and the range of needs between clients.

Table 1 provides estimates of the benchmark average costs per family in the child youth and family services service model. It has three broad service types.

**Table 1 - Summary average unit costs per client**

Service type	Stream	Average unit cost per client *
--------------	--------	--------------------------------

<b>Advice and support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Child &amp; family</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Youth &amp; family</b></li> </ul>	<b>\$530</b>
<b>Child and family parenting programs</b>	<b>Child &amp; family ONLY</b>	<b>\$3,840</b>
<b>Youth and family parenting groups</b>	<b>Youth &amp; family ONLY</b>	<b>\$2,560</b>

\* Rounded to the nearest \$10