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# Service Models - RYSS

Primarily, RYSS provides support and arts programs for young people of the Central Coast. The main program areas within RYSS are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Program Type | Income Source | Funding Name |
| Support | Family and Community Services (FACS) | Early Intervention and Placement Prevention (EIPP) – Child and Family |
|  | (FACS) | EIPP – Youth and Family &Abilities Team |
|  | Juvenile Justice (JJ) | Supported Housing for Youth (SHY) |
| Arts | Arts NSW | Annual Arts Funding Program |

The source and nature of the income has a significant impact on the services that are provided. Money is generally provided to implement specific programs and this comes with expectations regarding services – their purpose, their structures, their target groups and their accountability mechanisms. FACS has recently moved to a ‘purchasing’ as opposed to ‘funding’ model with consequent impacts on contractual arrangements between service providers and the agency. This has made its expectations regarding what is done, when and how, much more explicit and structured.

When RYSS receives income for the services it will provide it brings its own ways of doing things to the delivery of that service. This is equivalent to an individual being employed to do a particular job – they are to do the job they have been engaged to do, at the same time, their experiences, personality and general style influence how that job gets done. In the section that follows, the programs and their components are outlined and a brief description of RYSS ways of doing things is presented. This aims to marry the two areas of structure and style.

 In both support and arts program areas there are a range of sub-programs or components. The diagram below shows the primary programs, and their component activities. This is a very basic diagram and does not depict the full picture of what goes on at RYSS. Each of these program areas and their components is described in greater detail below.

Through the range of options available within and external to RYSS, a multi-component service system can be engaged to address many of the needs of young people. RYSS acknowledges that multi-component programs are an effective means of addressing the needs of young people. Multi-component programs typically include one or more skills development components, combined with the practical and/or emotional support needed to establish a platform for effective learning. Multi-component programs typically address risk and protective factors in a number of settings, for example the home, school and community. They are designed to meet the specific needs of the individual 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.

## Referrals

Before providing specific information on RYSS programs, referrals to RYSS are briefly described. This discussion applies equally to support, arts, or other programs that are provided through RYSS.

All referrals to RYSS are considered voluntary, in that there are no mandated programs provided through RYSS. Yong people can self-refer (i.e. they can make contact with the service themselves) or can be referred by another source (e.g. another agency or a family member). Any referral requires an assessment that the young person is eligible for the service they are seeking to access, and that RYSS is able to provide the service that the young person needs. The length and the thoroughness of this assessment depends on the nature of the referral being made. But, all referrals in or out of RYSS do need to be documented.

When a young person makes contact with the service for themselves the relevant processes are covered in the “Advice” section, below. This is the same when another person contacts the service on behalf of a young person, but the following points apply. Firstly, if a referral is received from someone other than the young person themselves, only act with the young person's consent. This means:

* Only contact the young person if you have an indication that they want you to do, or if they are an existing or previous client. (Otherwise inform the person making the referral that the young person should approach the agency themselves or to bring them in).
* Only make an appointment or other arrangement for a young person when you have their consent.
* Ensure that the young person wants to use our agency and understands that they can end the relationship at any time.
* Ensure that the young person, and if necessary the person who made the initial referral, understands the privacy statement. In particular, that we will not disclose any personal information to the person who made the referral, without the young person's consent. (Personal information even extends to whether the young person has become a client or not).
* If it later becomes clear that the person who made the initial referral supports the goals and can assist the support work process, then if appropriate try to gain the young person's consent for you to disclose information to that person so that you can involve them.

RYSS may also make referrals for a young person to other services. In this case, *Referral* is equivalent to an introduction to the other service and does not mean that the young person automatically becomes a client of that service. Referral includes:

* *formal written referral*: writing a letter to the other agency or using an electronic referral system
* *verbal referral*: contacting the other agency yourself or with the young person
* *informal referral*: giving the young person the information so they can contact the other agency themselves.

As much as possible you should make referrals based not just on the publicly available information about an agency, but on your understanding about:

* how accessible and youth-friendly the agency is
* the values informing the agency's interactions with young people
* how successful the agency is at achieving young people's goals

## RYSS Intake and Assessment

RYSS utilises a structured referral, intake and assessment form with young people who access the service. This provides a single point of reference for key information regarding the young person. It supports case planning and allows the development of an effective mix of services to meet the young person’s identified needs, strengths, developmental abilities, other resources and goals. The assessment form also contains information for the young person about the ways that RYSS works, and provides space for the young person to sign the form to acknowledge that they have been told and understand aspects of the service such as Information Sharing – the communication between RYSS staff and with other agencies about the young person.

Assessment should be considered an ongoing process with information gathered over a period of time and the most effective outcomes being the result of levels of trust and a degree of comfort with the worker and the service.

The assessment is completed on a paper form which is kept on the young person’s file, with the information then transferred to the RYSS electronic data system.

## RYSS Service Flow Chart

In – Referral

Self – young person or parent

Referred – family or agency

Advice, information, referral

Referred to other service – directly accessed by young person/parent or supported by RYSS

Intake – initial assessment

No further service provided

Arts programs

Case Management

Mentoring

Skills Development

Review

No further service provided

Re-entry to specific service components as appropriate

## Early Intervention and Placement Prevention (EIPP)

RYSS receives substantial amount of its funding under the Early Intervention and Placement Prevention (EIPP) Child Youth and Family Support streams. EIPP is the outcome of a substantial restructure of the former Community Services Grants Program (CSGP). It is a highly structured and prescriptive service purchasing approach that outlines the target groups, eligibility criteria, service components and expected outcomes. It seeks to address the needs of children, young people and families across the spectrum from earliest intervention through to those children and young people at risk of Community Services intervention to secure their care and protection.

RYSS receives funding for both Child and Family Support, and Youth and Family Support program areas under EIPP. These service activities are available for children, young people and families were risks may be considered low to medium and intervention in a limited form is required to prevent these risks from escalating. Within these streams the service components that RYSS is funded to deliver are:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Advice | Case Management | Mentoring | Practical/Skills Development Groups | Counselling | Home Visiting | Parenting Skills Groups | Parent Support Groups |
| Child and Family | Yes | Yes |  | Yes |  | Yes |  |  |
| Youth and Family | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |  |  |  |  |

Each of these service components is described briefly below. A more detailed description can be found in the EIPP Child Youth and Family Support Service Model document which can be found in the resources section of this policy document.

## Advice

### EIPP Framework

Under the EIPP framework, “Advice” aims to provide to young people and their families/carers information, advice and referrals that assist them to understand their options for addressing identified needs, access appropriate services and provide an entry and referral point for other services providers.

Clients may either be self-referred or referred by another agency, service or person. 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:

* informing the young person or their carer about the services available through RYSS and assessing if these can meet their needs
* providing information or assistance to access local mental health or drug and alcohol support services (where these exist)
* providing initial information or assistance that can help to address financial issues such as contacts for budgeting assistance, contact information for services that help to address fines, referral to the RYSS Living Skills program, etc.
* helping a young person understand their legal rights in a dispute or providing access to information that achieves this
* providing information 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.

### RYSS Practice Approach to Advice

Stay up-to-date:

Do not rely on an written information manual (e.g. compilation of flyers and service brochures) unless you can keep it up-to-date:

\* Use of online resources can be beneficial if they are reliable sources.

\* There are numerous youth-specific sites providing information, as well as government and health sites.

Gather as much relevant information about the person and their situation as you possibly can. Provision of advice is most useful when it is consistent with all of the information known about a person and/or their situation. This includes knowing their capacities, understanding the issues being faced, and other things that might be impacting on their situation. While it can be very difficult to develop a full picture during the brief interactions that often characterise advice and referral, outcomes are strengthened by the degree to which this can be done.

Document as much relevant information as possible using the RYSS referral and assessment forms. This is vital for RYSS data collection as well as reducing the need for a service user to tell their story multiple times to different people in the service. This information will become part of ongoing case planning and case management processes if that person becomes a user of other parts of the service.

Information provided must be:

* information which you are confident is accurate
* information which you are qualified to give (eg. don't give legal or medical advice)
* do encourage young people to get qualified advice (eg. from lawyers and doctors) when needed.
* provide it promptly with timely follow up as necessary.
* it should be comprehensive, factual and accurate and include referral to other services as appropriate.
* it should be provided in a manner that is respectful, strengths based and maintains each child’s, young person’s and family’s privacy.
* provided in a manner that respects and values each child’s, young person’s and family’s cultural heritage.
* accessible, including communicated appropriately for the individual, accounts for broader needs such as child care, transport and cost

If you are assisting a (young) person to access services this should not detract from that person’s ability to do this for themselves, but help to build their overall capacities. This means not to take over the process but to help the person learn to do it for themselves while providing the assistance that is required.

## Case Management

### EIPP Framework

Under the EIPP framework, case management services provide assessment of needs and strengths, planning and coordinating a mix of services to address identified needs, monitoring the case plan and evaluating the degree to which the services provided are meeting the young person’s needs. Case management can be provided for a three month period during which time case review should identify the young person’s progress, any ongoing need for service, and assess any potential benefit from providing further periods of service. Service users can access further periods of case management depending on identified need and service capacity to meet these needs.

### The Focus of Case Management

Case management in Regional Youth Support Service main focus areas are:

* To support the young person to ensure that they successfully meet their goals within the case plan
* The involvement of the young person's family and/or significant other individuals or agencies in the young person's case plan
* The coordination of services within and outside RYSS to maximise their potential benefit to the young person, and their effective and efficient use.

Provide seamless case management services to those young people who move from a community to a custodial setting and then return to the community.

### RYSS Practice Approach

RYSS is committed to case management in which workers engage young people to participate in identifying meaningful and achievable goals, and to collaborate with others to enhance their capacity to reach them. This is focused on actively supporting young people by acknowledging their strengths, enhancing self-worth and resilience and assisting with their overall social capacities (such as education, budgeting, understanding systems such as Centrelink and access to health services, etc.).

Assessment is the cornerstone of effective case planning. The quality of assessment is improved by the degree of engagement that has been achieved. RYSS assessment forms follow from initial intake forms and provide both a structure for assessment as well as an effective tool for documenting and communicating the assessment process and outcomes. The assessment should identify both the issues that need to be addressed (the case goals), all those people (e.g. workers or family and friends) implicated in the issues or their resolution, and the resources (both personal and external) for achieving them. Ecological assessment models that consider personal, family, community and social factors are extremely helpful. This sets the scene for a case plan that is specific to the person, comprehensive – addressing multiple aspects of wellbeing – and based on reliable information.

It is important to know that assessment can be a process of discovery for everyone involved – young person, family, workers, etc. The young person, though they are living with the issues every day, may not have put all of the pieces of the puzzle out on the table in the way that is done through effective assessment.

Case plans are developed through the assessment, in negotiation with the young person and any other stakeholders, and guide work together. The case plan is a negotiated process with the young person having as much input as possible. It should be clear about roles and responsibilities, the intended outcomes, strategies for achieving these, and anticipated timeframes. In this way, the case plan becomes a document that guides the work, assists the worker and the young person to stay on track, and helps with assess progress and success.

Achieving the goals that have been identified in the case plan requires effort from the young person and those supporting them – family, friends or worker(s). Workers can’t achieve goals for the young person and much of case management may be a process of assisting them to recognise and activate their capacities to achieve the agreed goals. A second component of case management may involve working with other agencies assisting the young person so that all are heading in a consistent direction with the young person and not working at cross purposes.

Case review is a critical process of case management. It is both informal ongoing and formal occasional processes of matching progress against intentions and needs. It also includes monitoring unexpected changes or new issues that arise in the course of working together. Formal case review forms the basis for completing work with a young person or recommending that case management be extended. This involves gathering information from a range of other sources who may have been working with the young person in order to develop a clear picture of progress and the more or less helpful things that have been tried.

The outcomes of case review and any adjustments to the case plan are documented using the RYSS referral and assessment form. In this way, a general picture of the work with the young person is developed over time and collected in a single location. This is helpful for future service provision with that young person.

### Skills involved in effective case management include:

* Accurate risk assessment skills
* Ability to challenge anti-social behaviour
* Capacity to acknowledge the young person’s strengths and achievements
* Competence to coordinate and work in partnership with a variety of stakeholders
* Ability to prioritise caseloads whilst offering an effective service to all young people
* Responsiveness to the changing needs of the young person through reassessment of the case plan
* Ability to provide the young person with choices about how they can achieve case plan goals
* Ability to advocate for and obtain the resources required to address the needs of the young person
* Ability to model pro-social behaviour throughout the case work intervention
* Capacity to monitor and evaluate their own work practice
* Accurate file maintenance and electronic data collection

### EIPP Case Management Model

RYSS case management practice is aligned with the EIPP service model. Case management, provided in collaboration with the young person and/or family/carers as appropriate, will:

* focus on strengths-based, child-centred and family-focused practice. This includes the meaningful and age appropriate involvement and participation of young people and their parents/guardians
* support self-determination for Aboriginal children, young people and families and appropriately involve Aboriginal staff, communities and service providers.
* deliver services in a culturally competent and respectful manner
* promotes and supports partnerships between service providers.
* co-ordinates and monitors the delivery of a suite of flexible services consistent with the established case plan.

During the case management process the worker will ensure the establishment of a case plan that:

* builds on the child’s, young person’s and family’s strengths and addresses the identified needs
* Identifies and records goals, objectives and tasks are regularly monitored and reviewed for progress/achievements and updated as appropriate
* achieves continuity of support through appropriate referral, transition and follow-up.

A review at least every 3 months to review clients progress to achieving goals and determine if the continuation of case management is required or other services or support to reach the goals of the client.

The following have been highlighted in research as key requirements for good practice for effective case management with young people:

* The central importance of relationships – positive relationship is the most important predictor of change for young people
* A sensitive and compassionate understanding of the young person’s story/history while maintaining a focus on the future and outcomes
* Demonstration of empathy, honesty, humility while also being caring, authentic, flexible and practical as well as creative, a good listener and non- judgemental
* The skills and capacity to work with young people and their families
* The skills and commitment to work effectively and in partnership with other agencies

### Practice points relevant to aspects of case management

[points below utilise the work of Stephen De Groot]

Strategies to assist in developing meaningful Case Plans [Based on *Relationship Based Strength Approach* (De Groot)]

#### Initial Meeting with the Young Person

Environment

Within reason workers should try and make the environment the most comfortable and conducive to meeting and engaging successfully with the youth. Give the youth a voice and choice; make it collaborative and youth specific.

* How would the youth be the most comfortable?
* How and where would the youth like to meet?
* Would they prefer others present during the meeting (worker, family, friend) or not?
* Would it be helpful to let them have a smoke, a pop, a slush, a snack, etc.?
* Would being indoors or outdoors (walk, drive) be more likeable for the youth?
* Where would the youth prefer to sit, stand?
* Does the youth know that they can take a break if it is getting ‘tough” or they are anxious?

#### Engaging with Young Person

* Take a genuine interest in the youth. Comment on their appearance their dress, or make “small talk” about something you feel they may be interested in (music, art, school, their last placement, sports…..).
* Utilize Appreciative Statements and Questions
* Stay relaxed, positive and have a sense of humour.
* Keep in mind that this may be difficult for the youth, and do not take “resistance” or negative feelings/behaviour personally. A relationship will take time.
* Take your time, go slow, and give the youth the space that they need. Silences are OK.
* *An important aspect of relationship building and successful meeting is* CLARITY *of* PURPOSE. The worker should be very clear about WHO they are and WHAT the purpose of the engagement is.
* Thank/Compliment/Affirm the youth’s participation in the meeting.

#### During this interview a worker:

* Should try and establish the young person’s understanding and interest level in their participation with the service/program/training.
* Gather as much information as possible that is valuable and influential in identifying goals and activities required for program planning.

The following questions are guides and can be modified to best meet the situation and/or youth needs. These questions are also in the RYSS *Assessment and Case Plan* form.

* What is your understanding of the reason for your referral to the program? Or How/Why is it that you were referred to the program? Or What is your understanding of our service or program?
* What did you like about other placements/programs/training/services/ specific living situations that you have been involved with? What was Better?
* What kind/type of activities did you do, or like to participate in? What are some of your interests, hobbies, etc.?
* Who were the workers or staff that you have liked the best? Were there some workers that were BETTER? What was it that they said/did that you liked or appreciated the most? What made them BETTER?
* What would you like to accomplish (what would you like to work on, get support for, etc.?) in the our program?
* Imagine you’ve been in a RYSS program and things are much BETTER in your life, what will be happening? What will you be doing, saying, or who will you be hanging out with?
* What kinds of things would you like to be BETTER in your life in 1, 3, 6, or 12 months?
* How would you be interacting with family, peers, residents or workers? What would you be doing together?
* How would we know that our program was helpful or, that we were helpful for you? What would be BETTER that would tell you/us that?

## Skills Development Programs

### EIPP Framework

In addition to Advice and Case Management, RYSS may work with young people by providing skill development programs. These programs are aimed to assist young people develop the skills that they need to achieve independent community life. Skills development programs include activities such as one-off or short term (e.g. between 2-12 weeks) practical/skills development groups. This could include skills development such as budgeting, cooking or social skills development. Programs may be undertaken individually, or in groups.

### Practice

Programs to target:

* Anti-social attitudes and behaviour
* Offence related behaviour
* Poor problem solving skills
* Violence, substance abuse, sexual and other abuse
* Poor impulse control
* Limited cognitive skills
* Lack of work and employment skills
* Limited pro-social leisure and recreational skills
* Development of new skills
* activities, with practical application to real life problems
* Provision of multiple opportunities to practice new skills
* Utilisation of cognitive and behavioural approaches
* Utilisation of a range of techniques within the one program to accommodate different learning styles

As with other effective interventions, skill development programs also acknowledge the young person’s protective factors. It is possible that an agency or program may provide the young person with skills to build upon:

* supportive family relationships;
* pro-social peers;
* ducation, employment or training; and/or
* recreational skills.

All interventions and referrals within a young person’s case plan are to be based on consultation with and the participation of the young person.

The development and delivery of skills building programs requires understanding of effective education processes. As such, staff should have knowledge and skills in the areas of adult education strategies. This might be achieved through a recognised qualification such as Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

### Living Skills Program

As a specific component of skills groups, RYSS provides Living Skills programs. This program was designed to address specific areas of information or skills that assist a young person to act independently in the community. It was developed in collaboration with Fair Trading NSW, The Smith Family and other service providers and has been fine-tuned through the feedback of participants and worker observations over its years of delivery.

To support young people’s independent living skills this program concentrates on the need for young people to understand their tenancy rights and responsibilities, have an understanding of financial literacy as well as participating in a range of group discussion sessions covering relationships, job seeking skills, parenting, drug and alcohol issues as well as anger management.

## Mentoring Programs

RYSS aims to develop mentoring programs which provide young people with support and guidance through planned relationships with caring adults, which purposefully focus on young people’s social and learning development. These programs are designed to assist the young person in the development of qualities such as:

* a positive outlook
* high self esteem
* strong problem-solving and decision making skills
* ability to improve relationships with family and friends
* feeling more a part of their community
* to access local services
* a sense of humour

The mentoring model is consistent with the EIPP guidelines, and includes the following elements shown to result in positive youth outcomes:

* A good program structure and planning
* Consideration of mentor-mentee interests in the matching process
* Development of a mentoring strategy on a case by case basis where the interests, abilities and developmental needs of the mentee are at the foreground of planning
* Frequency of contact between mentor and mentee
* Fosters caring, supportive and enduring relationships
* social and academic activities (especially social activities) that help build trust, and adopt a ‘youth driven’ or developmental approach to the relationship
* Includes activities to develop community participation
* Young people are helped to understand what they can expect from the relationship.
* That the progress and outcomes of the mentoring are monitored and information gained is incorporated into the specific situation as well as the mentoring program overall.

Referrals for mentoring support come through Case Management but participation is, as with all RYSS services, voluntary on the part of the young person and dependent upon service capacity.

## Arts Practice

### Introduction

Arts Programs at RYSS are generally integrated with the space known as the Youth Arts Warehouse and are, in the main, funded by Arts NSW. The Youth Arts program supports the creative development of young people, young emerging artists and professional artists through arts programming in three core disciplines: Visual Arts (ARTEYE), Music (ARTBEAT) and Theatre/Film (ARTPLAY). Through this RYSS offers a multi-disciplinary range of art practices devised in consultation with community partners and designed to work in coordination with other Central Coast Arts service providers. ARTHOUSE mentors and supports youth music events and provides a professional arena for young people to perform to a live audience and exhibit their work professionally.

The primary objective of RYSS Arts Programs is to support and foster young people’s arts and cultural development opportunities in the Central Coast region. These opportunities may include:

* first-contact with different art media as participants or consumers/audience
* skill development programs
* learning from arts-industry leaders
* promoting positive recreation and entertainment

Arts programs at RYSS assist with young people’s visibility in the Central Coast cultural landscape as well as being part of the cultural development of the broader Central Coast community.

The primary target group of RYSS arts programs is young people aged 12 to 25 years of age. Secondary to this, the wider community is supported through events for people of all ages. Wherever possible, RYSS Arts programs are provided free or at low cost. Other aspects of access are also supported through full disability access to the venue, programs that cater for people with disabilities, and events that reflect community diversity.

Workers at RYSS recognise that young people accessing support services may benefit from the educational or expressive opportunities offered in the arts programs, and young people accessing arts programs may require support from a youth worker. RYSS workers ensure young people in their programs are aware of the other aspects of the service and how these might assist with their development or support.

### Practice

RYSS Arts Programs are developed through an ongoing conversation between young people, workers/practitioners, other agencies, community members and parents. Channels for this conversation include feedback during and after programs and events, online responses to Arts Warehouse blogs, inter-agency meetings (such as the Central Coast Arts Consortium, and Youth Interagency). IN addition, tutors and the Arts coordinator engage in an ongoing conversation with parents whose young people have undertaken programs. Although more difficult to achieve, conversations with young people who do not access the service are also undertaken at community events or points of contact such as school visits.

Access is supported through deliberate engagement of (young) people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and other groups that might not get opportunities to engage with open arts expression such as ‘queer’ young people. Programs are also undertaken in alternative venues or community locations in order to achieve an ‘outreach’ component to the program, and increase access. The benefits of this access are extended through opportunities to exhibit or perform in safe setting and to a supportive audience, as well as to record or document the events using suitable media. An example of this may be to audio and video record a live music event using the professional editing suite where the performers can take away a copy of their performance to share or send to industry representatives.

Arts workers and tutors in the RYSS Arts program combine expertise in their arts discipline as well as experience in training and working with young people. This supports skill development for young people in the program as well as ensuring effective learning strategies, safety for young participants, as well as youth-friendly programming. It can also provide access to the professional networks or opportunities that might extend the young participants’ outcomes from YAW initiatives.

## Joint Support Program (JSP) (formerly: Supported Housing for Youth (SHY))

The Joint Support Program (JSP) case work program provides an accommodation focused casework service to support young people exiting custody, at risk of entering custody, or assessed by Juvenile Justice as needing general support or supported housing. JSP supports a young person’s access to housing and provides case management and living skills programs to increase their abilities in independent living. The JSP program works in close collaboration with Juvenile Justice and with the housing provider, Pacific Link.

JSP provides a highly structured case management and housing support program which is similar to the case management structure outlined above, though it does have some differences. Firstly, the young person’s primary case management remains with Juvenile Justice, with JSP providing only specified aspects of service. These aspects are primarily related to housing and the living skills that support independent living, including access to education or employment. A second difference is the degree of intensive casework support. JSP undertakes frequent case management meetings and home visits with the young people in the program, especially in the earlier stages. Thirdly, there are regular meetings between the service partners – RYSS, Juvenile Justice and Pacific Link – who meet to discuss the progress of the young people in the program and to resolve any issues before they escalate. Additionally, it is part of the RYSS funding agreement that the case notes regarding the young people in the JSP program are provided to Juvenile Justice on a regular basis. Fourth, young people progressing successfully in the JSP program can be supported for up to 12 months.