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# SERVICE MODEL - CASEWORK

## Background to the service

RYSS has provided services to young people in a range of formats across many years – this has included information and advice, general support, and casework. In 2008 RYSS became the auspice for Supported Housing for Youth (SHY), and a Casework program. Since that time further casework services have been added through the Early Intervention and Placement Prevention (EIPP) replacement of the Community Services Grants Program.

## Background to this service model

Material in this service model is based on the existing SHY and Casework service models, and integrates direction from the Family and Community Services (FaCS) EIPP service model. It also incorporates knowledge from the many years of RYSS casework practice experience.

## Purpose of Service

**The purpose of Casework services at RYSS is to provide planned, direct and person-centred support to young people, and their families. RYSS casework services are designed to be flexible and tailored to meet individual needs.**

Under the FaCS-funded EIPP program, RYSS casework services, as a component of the Child Youth and Family Support (CYFS) stream, help children and young people experiencing low to medium risk 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.

Under the Joint Support Program (JSP), which is funded by Juvenile Justice, RYSS casework services support young people who are:

* living in the community under Juvenile Justice supervision, who have a medium to high level of offending related risk and need
* in transition into the community from custody
* in need of ongoing community support when exiting Juvenile Justice supervision.

Under the Abilities Team Program, which is funded by ADHC or NDIS, RYSS casework services support young people who:

* Identify with a disability or mental health diagnoses that qualify for ADHC or NDIS support.
* Be 17 to 24 years of age.
* Be suitable for the Mentoring, Casework or Supported Accommodation being sought

## Principles of Service

In addition to the principles and values of the auspicing agency (RYSS), casework activities are guided by the following principles:

* comprehensive – casework activities consider the multidimensional nature of the young person and their families; that the young person’s presenting issues may be linked to other aspects not immediately obvious at the point of first meeting and that the resources the young person has to draw upon to address the issues may also be multiple, interconnected and not immediately obvious
* client-focussed – casework activities are shaped around the wishes of the young person
* strengths-based – the strengths and abilities of the young people who are engaging with casework services will provide the guiding star to casework planning and implementation
* structured – RYSS casework processes are planned and based on a structured process of assessment, implementation, monitoring and review
* individually-tailored – all casework activities, including plans and implementation will be based on the needs, strengths and abilities of the young person (as an individual, and a family and community member)
* collaborative – in the process of casework activities RYSS will seek to work with other service providers in order to achieve casework goals with the young person

## Key Terms

In this document there are a range of key terms which are identified below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Referral | Contact from a young person, family member or other service provider requesting casework services for that young person |
| Intake | The initial process of engaging with a young person who has expressed an interest in undertaking the casework program. This is a two-way process that introduces the young person to the way that RYSS casework program works, and associated expectations. |
| Assessment | The process of determining the wishes, needs, strengths, resources, and potential risks of working with a particular young person. |
| Case planning | The process of developing a plan to address the needs of the young person, based on the strengths of the young person, with the young person. |
| Case plan | The documented outcome from the case planning process. |
| Implementation | The process of putting the case plan into action. |
| Monitoring | The process of maintaining information flow from caseworker to Casework Supervisor regarding the case plan implementation |
| Review | The process of regularly (approximately every 3 months) checking progress of casework implementation against the case plan |
| Practice frame | The understandings and agreements within which casework services are provided. These are both structural (based on the relevant RYSS policies and procedures) as well as inter-personal (how the caseworker and the young person work out their practice relationship.  This might also be considered ‘professional boundaries’ or the casework relationship. Whether consciously discussed or not, this working relationship will be established through the process of meeting and working together. The more explicitly it is talked about and negotiated, the greater the chance for a positive working relationship that can model effective and respectful practice. |

## Key Roles

RYSS staff with key roles in casework are identified below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Service Manager | Responsible for overall service delivery at RYSS, and responsible for initial organisational response to issues that might arise in casework. |
| Operations | Responsible for the day to day running of the casework program at RYSS, and for general staff management and support. The Casework Coordinator is also responsible for signing off all case plans and for approving changes to service delivery strategies, such as meeting in alternative locations, or meeting outside general operating hours.  The Casework Coordinator is responsible for communicating any issues arising in casework, to the Service Manager. |
| Caseworker | Responsible for intake and assessment, negotiation and implementation of the case plan. The caseworker is responsible for ongoing communication between all parties and for communicating any issues in the casework process, to the Casework Coordinator or the Service Manager.  The Caseworker is responsible for developing and updating case plan documents, for ongoing documentation of the casework process, and for maintaining case files. |

## Service Processes

### Client Group

Under the EIPP program, RYSS casework services are available to young people who:

* are between 12 and 18 years of age
* do not reach the threshold of risk of significant harm (or by negotiation with the young person or FaCS, some level of casework support may be provided or continued)
* are 18 to 25 years old, and are pregnant or caring for children

Under the Joint Support Program, RYSS casework services are provided to young people who are referred by Juvenile Justice to the program. These young people may be:

* living in the community under Juvenile Justice supervision, who have a medium to high level of offending related risk and need
* in transition into the community from custody
* in need of ongoing community support when exiting Juvenile Justice supervision.

RYSS may also provide contract casework services to specific agencies to meet the needs of young people. This form of service provision is contingent upon service ability and capacity to meet the young person’s needs, and the availability of sufficient funding to meet the costs of these services.

### Referral

* For EIPP funded casework services, referrals may come from young people directly, from their families or friends, and from other service providers.
* For JSP services, referrals come only from Juvenile Justice.
* For contract casework services, RYSS may be approached by an external service provider, with a request to purchase services for a specific young person, or group of young people.

### Intake

A caseworker will contact or meet with the young person directly to discuss their interest in accessing the service, what the service can provide and how services are delivered. If appropriate, the young person can have a support person (such as another service provider) or a family member present.

If appropriate, during this meeting any specific conditions of service provision such as RYSS management of personal private information, sharing information with other services and child protection responsibilities, may be discussed. If these are not discussed during the first intake meeting then they should be undertaken before the assessment process is begun.

The intake meetings are also the beginning of developing the practice frame within which the casework will be undertaken. This occurs both explicitly and implicitly. The intake meetings provide the opportunity for a positive working relationship to be established and this is best achieved through discussion of expectations and preferred ways of working. The intake process is concluded when the young person agrees to participate in the service and the conditions upon which it is provided.

Additionally, for JSP service users, intake with involve communication between Juvenile Justice and RYSS workers (and other service providers, if necessary) to ensure the young person’s appropriateness for the service, share information necessary to effective case management service, and negotiate other aspects of the service, if required.

For contract casework services, intake will involve meetings to negotiate case plan direction, and sharing of information between the service contractor, RYSS and the young person.

### Assessment

Casework assessment is undertaken using the Assessment Framework. This is a strengths-based process and a strengths-based tool. It is expected that assessments will occur over a number of meetings and that it may require further information from other service providers in order to complete the process. For example, health and specialised assessments may be required to enable a clear guide to assist the skills and capacity building within a young person’s casework. The assessment process and the outcomes from it will be documented and kept on the young person’s file.

Risk assessment will partially be undertaken during the assessment process with the young person. Additional risk assessment considerations include the caseworker who will be working with the young person and the contexts within which casework is proposed to occur. Risk assessment is informed by the Risk Assessment policy and procedure, and the relevant Risk Assessment tools.

The final step in the assessment process will be agreeing on initial casework goals and needs. While it is expected that these will change over the course of casework, defining goals at the beginning of the process can give the young person and the caseworker have a shared direction in which to work.

### Case planning

Case planning is a process of matching the young person’s needs and goals, with the activities needed to achieve them and the resources available to assist this achievement. Case planning should occur at the end of the assessment process but may be a general transition to a different focus, rather than a completely different meeting or activity. Case planning is undertaken with a developmental focus. That is, in the process of case planning the young person should be given as much responsibility as they are reasonably able to manage, keeping in mind that the caseworkers may be required to undertake support and advocacy roles when the young person is trying to negotiate other service systems, or entrenched issues. Where ever possible, case planning should include other workers (whether within RYSS or external to it) who are working with the young person, in order to develop a shared approach and avoid duplication. Case planning will also identify and nominate roles, tasks and responsibilities for achieving the casework goals. The tasks are shared between the young person, their family, RYSS caseworker, and workers from other services.

### Case plan

The case plan is a document capturing the outcomes of the case planning process. It is not static or prescriptive, but is a guide to be revisited or renegotiated through the course of the casework implementation. The case plan is updated as changes are made. The case plan also serves as the reference point for monitoring and review of casework progress. To assist with this, times within which goals hope to be achieved, and indications to show how the achievement of goals will be recognised, will be included in the case plan. Before it can be implemented or changed, the case plan must be reviewed with the Casework Coordinator, and approved – the case plan must be ‘signed off’ before commencing or changing the case plan.

### Implementation

Implementation involves taking the actions that were agreed in the case planning process, and documented in the case plan. There is flexibility in the processes of implementation such as where might be the best place to implement living skills activities. It may be that accompanying the young person to the supermarket for shopping or undertaking a home visit, may be the best locations for learning about or demonstrating ability to budget and manage domestic tasks. There is some flexibility, within reasonable business hours and RYSS workplace policies, for when the casework tasks are undertaken, especially where this is aligned with the young person’s activities such as education or work. The case plan can be implemented once the Casework Coordinator has provided approval, including the various strategies proposed, and locations and times of meetings agreed. Where new casework locations or times are proposed (such as home visits) during the implementation process, they must be discussed with the Casework Coordinator, and approval granted.

### Monitoring

Monitoring involves generally checking the degree to which implementation is aligned with the case plan, and informal review of progress towards the case plan goals. This occurs through conversations with the young person, the Casework coordinator, the young person’s family, and other workers. It is also undertaken during casework supervision. Where there are changes that are required due to implementation not being well enough aligned with the case plan, the proposed changes are to be discussed with all the parties and agreement about the changes, reached. This may be done by email (where agreement for this has been given) or informal conversation, rather than formal meeting.

Any agreed changes to the case plan will be documented such that the case plan is updated, and all parties can be informed.

### Review

Review is the formal process of checking casework implementation and progress, against casework goals, as described in the case plan. It is generally undertaken through a meeting of all parties, though other options may be considered (e.g. email) if there are logistical issues that prevent this.

Casework reviews should include all parties related to the case plan, including the young person, their involved family members, RYSS caseworker and Casework Manager, and workers from other services who have been participating in the case plan implementation.

Casework reviews may be linked to tenancy reviews where this is appropriate (such as in the Supported Housing for Youth (SHY) program). They may also represent a phase of service use and identify whether service use needs to continue in the upcoming period.

Reviews also provide an opportunity to celebrate achievements of the young person in overcoming challenges that they are facing, and a dedicated moment to recognise and celebrate these achievements should be considered. Asking the various parties to reflect on the young person’s progress will encourage people to come to the meeting prepared and help to provide a more fruitful process.

Any agreed changes to the case plan will be documented such that the case plan is updated, and all parties can be informed.

## Key Policies and Procedures

While all RYSS policies and procedures are relevant to RYSS casework staff and providing service to young people, the polices that have specific relevance to casework include:

* Child Protection
* Privacy
* Risk Assessment
* Case Files and Related Documentation

### Youth Work Practice Tools

### Genogram

A genogram is a diagram that represents family relationships across one or more generations – it is a form of family tree, overlaid with information about the quality of relationships. At their base, genograms are simple diagrams, but they can accommodate a great deal of complex information if required. They can combine large amounts of information about a family, and help to identify family patterns such as communication and relationships, ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ people events and other information into a one page document. Genograms can be a tool for workers to understand who is who in a young person’s family, as well as being a tool for the young person to describe the nature, quality and complexity of their family relationships. As family make-up and family relationships change over time, genograms can be used as a living document, updated as a family composition changes, or the relationships and connections change

It is important to consider cultural difference in the development of family maps or genograms. Workers developing genograms with young people or their families, must be aware that individuals and single houses do not hold the same significance for all cultural groups. Being sensitive to individual and cultural difference means that workers should consider family may be more important than the individual, houses may be less a symbol of home than country, and homes maybe places where many people come and go in quick succession.

For Western or Westernised young people, where the individual is the centre of their frame of reference, a genogram usually has one person or relationship as its focus. Where the quality of relationships are depicted in the genogram, it is the focus person’s experience of these relationships that is the starting point. In addition, the home dwelling is a significant site for these young people, and it is important to note those people who are living in, or moved out from, that location. For young people who are Indigenous, family needs to be considered in terms of ‘kin’, which will have both biologically and non-biologically related people holding equal relevance in a young person’s life. In addition, country or home should be identified as significant on the genogram. For culturally and linguistically diverse young people, extended family (generally biologically-related) may take on significant roles in a young person’s life.

Symbols for drawing the genogram or family tree  
http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Female symbol - name, age | Female symbol - name, age |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Male symbol - name, age | Male symbol - name, age |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Unknown gender | Unknown gender |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/geno_married.gif | Married - add the year or ages |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| De facto relationship - commencement date or ages | De facto relationship - commencement date or ages |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Separation - date or ages | Separation - date or ages |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Divorce - date or ages | Divorce - date or ages |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| List children in birth order and put names and ages either within the symbol or underneath. | |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Death - a small cross in the corner of the symbol (record date if known) | Death - a small cross in the corner of the symbol (record date if known) |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Dotted circle - this can be used to enclose the members living together currently, for example, who the young person is living with. | Dotted circle - this can be used to enclose the members living together currently, for example, who the young person is living with. |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Conflictual relationship | Conflictual relationship |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Very close | Very close |
| http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif | http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/img/blank.gif |
| Distant Relationship | Distant relationship |

These symbols were taken from <http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/workers/families/genograms.html>

Example

The diagram below shows the genogram for a 16 year old young person with two younger sisters who have the same mother but different fathers from each other. The young person has recently left home. The young person’s dad is in prison, and his grandmother and grandfather, on his father’s side, both died in a car crash last year. He has a positive relationship with his mother’s older brother (his maternal uncle). [Note: where one person is considered the primary subject of the genogram, they can be shown with a stronger or coloured line around their shape (as below).]

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### Case Planning

(Guide for Facilitators)

1. Be sure to take charge of the meeting and maintain it, from the beginning to the end
2. Introduce yourself (who you are and what your role is) and ask others to do the same
3. Give an overview as to why you are there (purposes of planning life plan goals, objectives and activities). Emphasize that all participants are attending and participating for and on behalf of the youth.
4. Let those involved know what they can expect, or not expect (this is the point where you may be required to set certain boundaries if necessary – what may or may not be discussed, expectations for conduct, etc.)
5. Before you proceed, ask if there are any questions before you begin.
6. [Note: if there are individuals, within the system (youth, family member, etc.) that require validation or affirmation of their experiences, you may need to allow this to happen to the extent that it does not become too negative or disruptive. Planning may not be successful if the system is not feeling heard, validated or understood. Also, if they have concerns or issues that require addressing, ensure that they will be addressed in the process of the planning meeting.]
7. Because this is a Planning Meeting, BRIEFLY review the presenting problem(s) or concern for programming; reason for entering the program and the overall goal. It is important that the overall goal be clearly identified and specifically defined at this point in the process
8. With the above in mind, you can start by asking the youth and youth system, “WHAT WERE YOU HOPING TO ACCOMPLISH BY BEING HERE AT THIS MEETING TODAY?” Or “WHAT HAS TO HAPPEN SO THAT AT THIS END OF THIS MEETING YOU CAN SAY, “WOW, THAT WAS DEFINITELY WORTH THE EFFORT?”, or variations of these questions. You may also ask, “WHAT WERE YOU HOPING TO COVER, OR DISCUSS HERE TODAY?”
9. You may ask the youth – “What do you think about the overall goal?”

**Or**

You may ask the youth – “Are there other things that you would like to accomplish or work on while in the program?”

1. Answers to the above question (s) may put you on a direct path to setting Objectives for approximating or accomplishing the overall goal. Additional Objectives can be specified by the youth and youth systems.
2. However, before you get into amending or setting new objectives for programming, you may want to ask about **PROGRESS;** “WHAT’S BEEN BETTER SINCE THE LAST TIME WE MET?”, “WHAT IS GOING WELL?” “WHAT HAVE PEOPLE NOTICED?” “WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS (PROGRESS) HAVE BEEN MADE?”

Note: This is the point in which you facilitate a discussion of **exceptions, strengths, personal resources, progress, positive programming changes, efforts**, etc. Everybody should have a chance at answering this question, starting with the youth, youth system and then helpers. **Try to generate as many contributions** (What else have you noticed? What’s even a little better?)

If the proper PPQ has been accomplished and or this is the second or subsequent Life Planning Meeting, there should be a lengthy and growing list of STRENGTHS to be reviewed at this juncture of the meeting.

The focus on PROGRESS should be done in light of the objectives and activities established in the most recent life plan. You may review the past life plan – It is helpful to have this completed prior to the meeting (See *Planning Preparations*)

**If, by any chance things are the same, or worse, ask participants “How come things aren’t even worse than they are** (they can always be worse) – **this may generate a search for exceptions and strengths.** A key area to check out could be whether goals or objectives have been well-formed (SEE CRITERIA FOR WELL FORMED GOALS). Goals and objectives may need to be redefined or amended. Also, if the problem(s) was not clearly identified from admission, this may cause planning difficulties (problem(s) should be clearly defined from the youth system’s perspective). Ensure that the objectives are important to the youth, or at least the youth sees the objectives as meaningful.

Following a discussion of progress (if second or subsequent meetings), **this part of the planning meeting should entail a thorough review of the youth’s strengths that all notice, appreciate or admire.** Ensure that all participants contribute and then ask the youth if they would like to add to the list.

\*\*\* It is important at this point to take the time to identify and understand HOW, or WHAT, contributed, led to, or resulted in identified strengths, exceptions and successes. This information is critical to future successes and program gains, as it directly illuminates and emphasizes **IDENTIFIED RESOURCES** necessary to recreate, continue, or bring about increase successful outcomes.

If identified resources are not apparent, you may ask people to give this some thought and return to this at the end of the meeting.

Following a discussion of strengths etc., you can review stated objectives. If they have not been fully established, you may re-initiate the setting of objectives by asking PREFERRED OUTCOME QUESTIONS also known as BETTER Questions. – “How will you and your family know that the program made a difference for you?” “What will be happening in your life that will tell you, that really helped and things are BETTER?” or “If I was to run into you at the mall, in 6 months, what would you tell me, or what would I see you doing or hear you saying that would indicate that things are BETTER for Jimmy?”

Note: These questions may need to be asked in a way that makes sense to the youth. If it is not producing the desired response, change the wording, phrasing, or how the question is asked. You may need to use alternative questions that elicit a detailed account of what and how things will be better for the youth and the identified youth system when they no longer require support from your setting.

**If youth does not engage, the participants may have to refer to the Pre-planning questionnaire, or the previous Life Plan**.

1. Prioritize the objectives. What are the most important goals that require the most attention? Which Objectives are the most important to the youth? List the Objectives in order of importance.

Are the objectives:

* Important to youth and youth system
* Realistic
* Achievable
* Described as the presence rather than the absence of something
* Concrete, behaviourally measurable terms
* Multiple targets (these may be the activities within your identified objectives)

NOTE: If there are concerns (objectives) that helpers have identified (depression, medication, drug use, etc.) that the youth does not feel are important, a discussion should ensue regarding how the youth perceives these issues. If the youth still feels that these concerns are unwarranted, let he/she know that the identified area will be noted, observed and reviewed at the next meeting. This should be captured on the Life Plan in the “**Additional Concerns”** section of the Life Plan.

As the overall objectives emerge, it is time to initiate the setting of activities which are required to meet overall program goal and program / youth system expectations.

This can be accomplished by returning to each Objective one by one and asking all involved, “What needs to happen, or what can we do to bring about the successful attainment of this particular objective?”

Note: Activities as identified should be defined in terms of WHO will do what, HOW, and by WHEN. Other key elements are who is going to provide support to carry out this objective and subsequent activities, and what exactly is that going to look like. These objectives and activities should be developed in the understanding that they are IMPORTANT TO THOSE INVOLVED, REALISTIC, ACHIEVABLE, CONCRETE AND BEHAVIORALLY MEASURABLE, AND IF POSSIBLE, TIME DRIVEN.

If necessary, return to step # 9 regarding **Identified Resources** so that these may be captured and recorded.

Once objectives and activities have been developed (as best as possible), you can summarize the efforts and accomplishments in the meeting. Ensure that one of the staff have captured the goals, objectives and some of the activities on the ***Life Plan Summary.*** Ask if all participants understand and agree to the plan. Have the youth sign the ***Life Pan Summary***.

Make sure to acknowledge and compliment the efforts of all participants involved.

Thank everyone for coming.

Set the next planning meeting and let participants know approximately when they can expect to have a copy of the Life Plan.

### Planning Meeting Preparations

**RBSA – Life Planning Meetings- Meeting Preparations Australia, 2012**

Preparation of Staff

1. Ensure that a staff or several staff are clearly identified for completing preparations for youth and participating “systems” (family and collaterals)
2. Make certain that all staff involved are aware of the Youth’s Life Plan and Planning meeting particulars
3. Key staff should be identified and/or designated for completing specific tasks such as; accomplishing the PPQ; reviewing the Life Plan, contacting participants such as family, and other collaterals and; if possible, attending and participating in the planning meeting and/or follow-up
4. Ensure that designated staff contact key players that have been identified as attending and participating in the youth’s planning meeting
5. Ensure that designated staff prepare social worker, family and collaterals for participation (see below) in the youths Planning Meeting

Note: It is not important, at this point, to have other “systems players” (Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Doctor, Probation Officer, Teacher, Supervisors) at the youth’s Planning Meeting unless identified or requested to participate by the youth. This particular meeting is “owned” by the youth. Systems meetings can be established or scheduled at any other time. The planning meeting is not the place to discuss the specific agendas of other agencies/systems.

If aforementioned collaterals are required to be at the meeting, it is critical that they are prepared to participate within the spirit, intent and process of your life planning meeting.

Preparation of Youth

1. Ensure (ASAP) that the youth is informed of the approximate date of their Planning Meeting. Co-plan with the youth around specific dates, times, refreshments, participants, etc. – this may be on-going up until the meeting.
2. Ensure that the youth has completed a Pre-Planning Questionnaire (PPQ).
3. Ensure that a staff informs youth of Planning meeting structure and process and is able to answer questions and concerns to the youth’s satisfaction
4. If it is the second or subsequent meetings ensure that a staff and the youth have completed another Preplanning Meeting Questionnaire and reviewed the most recent Life Plan.
5. Be sure to cover:

a) What has been accomplished since the last meeting

b) What has not been accomplished since the last meeting (why)

c) Note progress in specific areas of life plan

d) Note areas of Identified Resources

e) Note any new Objectives or Activities

1. Co-consult with the youth on Planning Meeting preferences such as time, refreshments, participants (Supervisor or designate and Social Worker attendance and participation are non-negotiable), etc.

Preparation of Social Worker (as Legal Guardian):

1. Designated staff to contact social worker regarding the date, time and location for the upcoming Planning Meeting
2. Preferably the Supervisor or Team Leader should provide, to the social worker, an overview of the program, its orientation and way of working with youth
3. Inform the social worker of what they can and can-not expect at the Planning Meeting (goals and expected outcome (s))
4. The social worker should be informed of who will be facilitating the Planning Meeting and how it will be facilitated
5. The social worker should be encouraged to consider approximately 5 – 10 strengths regarding the youth that they have noticed, admired, or can acknowledge – and to be prepared to share this at the meeting
6. The social worker should be encouraged to consider specific goals and objectives for the youths programming, and bring these forward to the meeting
7. \*\*\* It is critical that the social worker be informed that there should be “NO Surprises”, meaning any new, unanticipated, or potentially distressing information. If they wish to do this, it can be done following the Planning Meeting or at another date. It is important that the Planning Meeting be as positive and productive and as free of anxiety and stress as possible
8. Ask the social worker if they have any questions or concerns regarding the Planning Meeting Process and address these as best as possible
9. Convey to the social worker their value as a team member and that you are looking forward to meeting with them and co-participating with them in the Planning Meeting

Preparation of Family and/or Collaterals:

**\*\*\*** Steps 1 – 9 above are equally as relevant and important to family and collaterals that are attending and participating in planning meetings.

## Client Participation and Social Inclusion

### Policy Statement

RYSS is committed to empowering and supporting clients to fully participate in the community and in this organisation

The organisation will:

* support clients to participate in communities and activities of choice respecting their choices and plans regarding employment, education, leisure and their social lives
* enable clients to be involved in decisions that affect them and the services they receive
* encourage and support clients to be involved in service development, evaluation, planning and organisational management
* seek client input regarding client participation information strategies, assistance and support, service involvement and development.
* develop links with other groups to promote greater opportunities for connections and meaningful participation in the community.

### Procedures

Information strategies

Information about participation opportunities is provided to clients through the following mechanisms:

* client service charter
* Information about client participation to enable clients to decide what areas they would like to contribute to
* Personalised introductions into the service by abilities staff

To ensure clients can easily access these documents they are available in multiple locations. These documents are available on RYSS website, service information, client information packs.

Clients are also provided with information about participation opportunities at each stage of service from intake, assessment, service review].

### Assistance and support

Strategies to support and assist client participation are reviewed quarterly with clients and updated as necessary. Clients are actively supported to participate by:

* Volunteering
* Consulting on services and projects
* Regular review of goals.
* Specific assistance to clients who may experience cultural or language barriers, or who may need specialised advocacy or support to take full advantage of the opportunities

The strategies might also include:

* Training workshops for clients – developing self- confidence, skills building
* Developing a toolkit for staff – on how to support client participation
* Covering expenses of participation
* Providing information in a range of mediums (written, images, verbal, video)
* Provision of a support person

### Self reliance and social inclusion

RYSS work from a strengths based approach building on client’s personal strengths, skills and motivation to enhance self-reliance and social inclusion;

The strategies might include:

* Training workshops for clients – developing employment related skills
* Providing clients with information and support to enroll in courses which would enhance their independence e.g. training in basic budgeting, cooking
* Identifying areas of social interest of clients and encouraging and assisting them to develop their social networks (e.g. joining a local club or attending a local community college course
* Provide training for staff and volunteers – to understand, respect and support clients in their skill development
* Providing opportunities for clients to take part in social and educational activities
* Encouraging clients with special interests to link up with a group in the local community
* Provide specific social and employment opportunities for people exiting the criminal justice system

### Service development and organisational management

Clients are encouraged and supported to become involved in service development and organisational management, if they choose to do so.

These opportunities might include:

* taking part in client surveys and feedback forums including design of surveys and forms
* input when new services or activities are being developed
* representation on client committees or groups
* attending training or conferences