

**Child & Family Welfare Association of Australia Inc.  
2005 National Symposium**

**'Their Lives, Our Work: Critical questions in child, youth and family services'**

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**Slide 2            Aim of the Session**

The aim of this session is to:

- Explore 'good practice' via three models of education support targeting 'at risk' children & young people, and
- Explore innovative ideas and practical approaches to achieve education outcomes

**Slide 3            Session Plan**

In this session we shall discuss the:

- Background to Western Education Services
- Approaches to working with children & young people 'at risk'
- Education Needs of Kids in Out of Home Care
- Achieving goals & education outcomes

**Slide 4            Practice Frameworks**

MacKillop Family Services' (MFS) practice is guided by respect for the inherent dignity and value of the human person, by a conviction that who we are is informed by relationships with communities, by a commitment to offer excellent services that meet people's needs, and by a vision for a just society free of disadvantage. If you refer to the attachment, you will see at Point 9, that today is very much about learning and advocacy.

All staff working with adolescents in our organisation need to be familiar with, and practice according to our Adolescent Practice Framework. If you refer to the attachment you will see that it is based on a Building Block approach adapted from the Circle of Courage model (developed by Brendro & Seita). It focuses on supporting young people to successfully overcome past difficulties and develop strengths in relation to belonging, competency, independence, and sense of community.

**Slide 5            Background to Western Education Services**

MFS provides education and training to approximately 250 children and young people throughout the State of Victoria. We have a number of services that I will describe briefly.

In the Barwon (Geelong) region we have:

- **St. Helen's Special School-** a registered Catholic primary school catering for up to 8 full time children.
- **St. Augustine's Special School incorporating:**
  - St. Augustine's School-** a registered Catholic secondary school for up to 12 full time students.
  - St. Augustine's New Street-** a training program for up to 16 young people aged 14-16 years who have experienced difficulty in mainstream schooling and are transitioning to employment and training.
- **Outreach Services incorporating:**
  - EMU (Education Mobile Unit) -** provides both in-school support and part time attendance for up to 14 primary (years 5&6) and 14 secondary students (years 7-9), with the aim of maintaining them in mainstream schooling. Students continue to attend school and attend the EMU program one day a week.
  - YEP (Youth Adventure Program)-** an outreach active learning program for up to 8 young people 12-16 years who are disconnected from mainstream schooling.
- **Children in Residential Care (CIRC)-** An Education Support Worker provides support to children and young people in residential care and is located with the Residential Care Team

In the Melbourne Metropolitan Region we have:

- **Rice Education and Youth Services**

Rice is a specialist statewide service providing intensive intervention for young people between nine and fifteen years of age with challenging behaviours. It aims to provide holistic intervention in their lives through education, residential, and case management services.

Rice includes the St. Vincent's School that has 20 young people, with up to 12 students residing in residential units, and up to 8 day students. All students are referred from the Department of Human Services.
- **Children in Residential Care (CIRC)-** An Education Support Worker provides support to children and young people in residential care in the Northern suburbs of Melbourne.

## **Slide 6 Western Education Service Model**

Our team currently consists of a coordinator, five education support workers, and one community development worker. Backgrounds of workers have often been teaching, social and youth work, pastoral care, and psychology.

The Western Educational Services engages children and young people who are at risk of leaving school or who are disengaged from school. Services are tailored to meet the individual circumstances of each child / young person, whilst also supporting parents / carers, and teachers to sustain the child / young person to achieve their learning goals.

## **Slide 7 Services Provided**

Most children / young people in the service have a history of poor learning outcomes. This often results in low self esteem and behavioural issues within a school setting. Practical educational assistance to the child (for example, education testing, tutoring, purchase of educational supplies, and provision of transport to school) therefore needs to be balanced within therapeutic approaches to questions of identity, self esteem and relationship issues. The educational plan which is developed for each child may also identify educational goals, employment pathways, access to alternate school settings and courses, participation in local community activities and leisure and educational support requirements.

Many children /young people at risk may also have parents who are disadvantaged from their child's educational needs. Staff can link parents into parenting programs and groups, disability services, literacy programs and family support services. The Education Support Worker supports parents to engage with the school so they can advocate and support their child more effectively and build a better relationship with the school.

Finally the service offers direct support to teachers and the school as a whole. This support is offered with a strength-based framework that encourages teachers to continue to engage children at risk and keep them within the school community. Assistance is again both practical and supportive.

## **Slide 8 Who are our clients?**

- Children and young people who are at risk of leaving school or who are disengaged from school
- Majority of our clients are on Statutory Orders and may be still living at home, in Residential Care, or Out of Home Care.
- The majority of the children and young people we work with have a history of trauma & abuse

## Slide 9      **Their Issues**

When requests are made for educational support, children and young people often present with one or more of the following issues:

- Intellectual
- Emotional
- Behavioural
- Physiological
- Numerous Placement/School Changes
- Parenting/Carer Issues

## Slide 10      **Model is Based on the Belief that:**

Addressing disadvantage cannot be achieved without the coordination of support in a holistic approach.

Through our work in education we can say that our children and young people are:

- **Self-regulators-** For example, children regulate stress by disengaging from situations, such as school, which often have difficulty providing for their needs.
- **Advantaged-** For example, children develop a range of capabilities and insights, from adverse experiences and circumstances, upon which they can build
- **Engaging-** For example, children successfully engage adults by expressing (acting out) feelings.
- **Successful-** For example, children successfully adapt skills and capabilities to negotiate a range of inadequate situations.
- **Resourceful-** For example, children compensate for inadequate provisions, emotional and physical, in a range of ways.

The children and young people we work with have a desire to participate more effectively. That is to be better self-regulators, more advantaged, more engaging, more successful, and more resourceful.

We have found that:

- Punitive responses to the way children self-regulate, diminish their capacity to manage a range of situations
- Engaging children in activities, which mitigate stress & enable efficacy, encourages them to develop self-regulatory behaviours, which are rewarding.

## Slide 11      **Approaches to working with children & young people ‘at risk’ Service Models**

Western Education Services consists of three teams- Western Education Support Team, Western Education Centre, and Melbourne/Moonee Valley School Focussed Youth Service. Each provides a slightly different model of service.

**Slide 12      Approaches to Working with Children and Young People ‘at risk’  
Western Education Support Team (WEST)**

A joint venture between MacKillop Family Services and the Salvation Army Westcare, this is funded both state and federally under the Children in Residential Care Program (CIRC) and Education Support Services. It provides specialist educational services on a daily basis to 39 school aged children and young people on statutory orders in the Western region. They may have significant educational needs, require intensive educational support or perhaps not be attending school. WEST endeavours to have strong collaborative working relationships with teachers, principals and education support staff to support the school’s capacity to work with educationally disadvantaged students as well as providing links with case managers, caregivers and community services. It has a brokerage budget to meet the needs of its students.

**Slide 13                      Service Approach  
Work with individual children and young people**

Work with individual young people may include to:

- Coordinate and access various specialist services on behalf of young people (eg: mentoring, mental health, and drug and alcohol services)
- Develop, implement and assess curriculum programs appropriate for the development level of the identified child / young people.
- Develop a Student Education Plan with each young person within four weeks of engagement.
- Provide centre based therapeutic, remedial and behavioural modification programs.
- Identify services and or equipment to be purchased through brokerage funds to address the educational needs of the child / young person (this may include tutoring services, educational assessments, self esteem classes etc).

**Slide 14                      Work with Parents**

Work with Parents may include to:

- Work in partnership with parents on all educational needs of their children.
- Provide advice and consultation to parents and various service providers regarding support for children / young people with high educational needs.
- Support parents to access parent groups (Including CALD groups) education and literacy groups via the Regional Parenting Service.
- Support parents to participate in the school life of their children.
- Support the development strategies and projects that support parents in their involvement in their children’s education.

## **Slide 15**      **Work with Schools**

Work with schools may include to:

- Liaise and negotiate with schools, educational and vocational settings regarding the needs of children / young people.
- Provide one to one withdrawal, supporting the teacher to achieve the child's learning goals whilst having some time to concentrate on other members in the class.
- Provide advice and secondary consultations to schools as required, negotiate with the Department of Education and Training for children and young people facing exclusion.
- Assist schools in their applications for Integration Aide Funding.

## **Slide 16**      **Work with Communities**

Work with Communities includes:

Maintaining formal and informal partnerships to support children and young people becoming involved in the community and responding to the educational and social needs for children, young people and their families.

## **Slide 17**      **Case Study/Issues**

### *Doorbells & Transport*

It would not be unusual for the Education Support Workers in the service to be at families' doors ringing the doorbell to get them up and mobilised. I recall ringing a bell 50-60 times to get the family up so I could transport a boy to school. This is part of the problem. If you haven't the support from the parent or parents in getting their children up for school, what happens in the long term? Clearly having a family support service or parenting service working with the family, while the ESW engages the child/young person can provide more positive outcomes.

### *Year 12 Students and Students Leaving Care*

It is important to remember that often when young people are doing Year 12 **and** they are in care, not only do they have the pressures of study and exams, most often they will be experiencing high anxiety at the prospect of leaving care at the age of 18. Often, these young people will have to think about where they are going to live?, how they will pay for their education?, who will they turn to for support when they have had workers to provide advice and guidance? Some will not be ready for independent living.

We had a young man who was turning 18 and leaving care. We had him enrolled in a one week bar course, which he did not attend. In a casual meeting which included his case manager, the conversation went a bit like this:

Me "Did you attend your course?"

Young Man "No"

Me "Do you think you may have got the 'hebbie geebies'?"

Young Man "Yes"

Me "Would it be more helpful if one of the workers come with you for the first couple of days and maybe walk with you to the door when you get there?"

Young Man "Yes"

Me "Mmm, do they have special clothing or uniform that you're expected to wear?"

Young Man "Yes, a white shirt, black pants, and black shoes".

Me "Do you have these things?"

Young Man "No".

Me: "You actually need a few things- how about a makeover?"

Young Man "What do you mean"

Me: "Well , it seems to me that you will need to have a change of clothing, and possibly some other types of clothing that may help you get employment in the hospitality industry. We could also take you to the hairdresser if you are interested, and get you a new look. Would you be interested".

Young Man "You bet!"

Brokerage funds were provided to buy this young man new clothing and new hairstyle. We negotiated with the course to hold his enrolment and that he try attending again. His case manager transported him for the first couple of days and he successfully completed his course. He was so encouraged by this completion, that he enrolled in additional courses in the one month before leaving care.

***Another example is the case of Pearl.***

Pearl had moved to a new area with a carer, and wanted to attend a mainstream school. We negotiated with the local secondary college that she attend, and on day two was suspended from school for telling the Vice Principal "where to go" (had she swore at another teacher, she would have been counselled as the first step in the Code of Conduct).

There were ongoing issues around language, behaviour, and attendance. In term two she only attended five days. The crunch came when she threw a can at a teacher and was facing expulsion.

We knew that we had to explore other options. The only alternative setting in the area took 15+ years of age and Pearl was 14. We negotiated with this alternative setting to take on Pearl under what is known as a "Memorandum of Understanding".

This involved negotiations with the school, young person, alternative setting, carer, and case manager.

The school would keep her enrolled and provide follow-up and pastoral care. They would pay out of their global budget to the alternative setting \$5.16 for every day that

she attended. The longer term view was that the school would consider her re-integration back to the school.

Pearl attended the alternative setting during the third term and was coping for a while. Issues for staff were around lunchtime supervision, as all the other, older, students were allowed to go out at lunch-time. Pearl would at times come back “stoned” from lunch. By the end of the year, Pearl had decided that she wanted to give the school another go.

All the professionals were concerned about Pearl’s negative reception at the school. The Principal had insisted on a contract which we had thought unreasonable. Our service had made 10 drafts of the contract before it was acceptable to all parties. We felt that she was being set up to fail. Within two weeks of attending the school Pearl was suspended.

By this time Pearl was 15, and chose to attend the alternative setting and give it another try. She excelled and completed her Certificate in General Adult Education (year 10 equivalency), and was accepted into a prestigious hospitality training facility.

The young woman’s motivation and survival through struggle, support from her carer at home, support from the professionals in her life working collaboratively, and the willingness of a training service prepared to build on her strengths, all contributed to her success.

**Slide 18      Approaches to Working with children and young people ‘at risk’  
Western Education Centre**

Funded by the Catholic Education Office as a “Special Education Setting” this provides outreach based educational support to children, young people and adults whose families are receiving other services from MacKillop Family Services.

Educational support- given to Primary and Secondary children (4-16)  
Social and Emotional Support is also seen as vital for the children experiencing home difficulties, as this often impacts upon academic endeavours.

At the commencement of this Service, a meeting is held with the class teacher, welfare coordinator, parent and Educational Support Centre Staff, to carefully outline particular areas of concern, which could be attended by our Educational Program.

**Slide 19      Service Approach  
Academic, Emotional, and Social Needs**

The overall goal of the service is to have each child/young person integrated into a mainstream school, classroom, or educational setting, which can fulfil their academic, emotional and social needs.

#### Academic Objectives:

- Identify specific learning needs and develop individual plans for each child.
- Arrange for further assessments as deemed necessary.
- Assist classroom teacher with school based program.
- Strengthen the child's learning capacities in creative ways using aids to simulate and involve interest.
- Integrate the child within the classroom.
- Assisting with transition from Primary School to Secondary Schools

#### Emotional Objectives:

- Create boundaries with a pleasant relaxed atmosphere
- Meet some of the child's emotional needs eg: stability, individual attention and affirmation
- Widen horizons by extra curricular activities
- Provide space for a sibling of a disabled child to explore feelings, family dynamics and have a place to play.

#### Social needs / Self – Concept-objectives:

- Build up self worth by working with achievable goals.
- Empower each child to overcome personal difficulties.
- Maximise children's particular gifts.
- Involve children in after school activities, camps, community groups and holiday programs.

#### **Slide 20      Key Strategies**

Some of the key strategies in implementing the Program are:

- Activities which enhance the child's feeling of being special, giftedness, and general pleasure. Eg: Cooking, use of strength cards, artwork.
- Routines- this is an important aspect of the program. By providing the same weekly session time, pick up route, car used, familiar toys and activities and table routine, we are able to create a sense of security and predictability for the child.
- Individual work at appropriate academic level- focus on language and maths skills.
- General activities to improve co-ordination, body concepts, concentration.
- Art activities to release emotion, build self worth and creativity.
- Computer work- a safe, non –threatening, non-judgemental fun way to learn.
- School holiday group activities and excursions to improve socialization skills.
- Games to help children join in play together and cope with winning and losing.
- Woodwork, puppets, table etiquette, and other activities often provide the children with new and creative ways to express themselves and learn new necessary life skills.
- Dress ups for creative expression.

## Slide 21 Results for 2004

	WEST	WEC
Special School	3	0
Pre-prep	0	3
Prep	2	6
Year 1	0	3
Year 2	1	4
Year 3	1	7
Year 4	4	3
Year 5	6	1
Year 6	2	2
Year 7	4	2
Year 8	2	0
Year 9	3	1
Year 10	2	0
Year 11	2	0
Year 12	1	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Other</b>		
Course Attendees	4	0
Alternative Programs	14	0
Completed Education	1	0
Employed	1	1
Not Attending	18	0
Unknown	1	0
<b>Sub- Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>33</b>

105 children & young people assisted with Education & support

On looking at our figures, the majority of our students were in their Middle Years. It was a great success for us to have three students doing Years 11 and 12.

The Western Education Centre provided 497 two hour sessions to 10 individual students and 23 sibling groups of students. This averaged to 15.6 sessions.

## Slide 22 Adult Learning

Our Up Close and Personal- Reading Together Project is seeking to enhance the parent's ability to assist their children with reading and basic homework skills. We hope that parents will have:

- Increased participation in their local communities such as regular use of the local library.
- A more confident attitude when approaching schools or when approached by schools concerning their children. (This has been found to effect the family as the parents are often reluctant to approach schools when there is a problem and have difficulties in solving issues that schools pass on to them)

Each adult was asked to name three goals to work towards. They were broken down into two basic categories. The following results:

<b>Adults Personal Goals:</b>		<b>Goals for: “Helping Children with.....”</b>	
Returning to secondary school:	2	Establishing homework routines	2
Write letters to teacher	2	Helping understand my children	1
Getting Drivers / Learners Permit.	2	Story writing for the child	1
Develop employment skills/	7	Help child with maths/ spelling	11
Computer skills		/ homework.	
Basic cooking	1	How to talk about death	1
How to read / spell	6	Handling children’s behaviour	6
Writing my life story	1	Encouraging more speech from my toddler	2
Read newspaper /	1	Speech for deaf child	1
Magazines			
Use a phone book	1	How to read to my child	5
Writing a letter to my Child	1	How to potty train	1
Better communication between partners	1	Pre school activities	1

Self rating scale: each client self rated their progress against each of their specific three goals. Consistently the parents have rated their achievements as 80%.

Some of the parents’ achieved goals:

- Re-engaged with an employment agency.
- Bought her toddler a nursery rhyme book.
- Played a game each night with her new blended family.
- Used books to engage her toddler in speech.
- Wrote a short story for her child.
- Went to court and retained two of her school age children.
- Proudly played computer games with her children.
- Actively played a family game (Dad included) each Monday after School instead of TV.

Conversational Language Classes for Vietnamese Parents were also held and we are currently exploring services to the Horn of Africa communities.

### **Slide 23 Client Feedback**

Feedback from the Vietnamese Parents’ Group were highly positive:

- “My children can speak English and the classes are a chance to learn without my children watching me”
- “I can practice words without my children correcting me”.
- “Mummy you didn’t say it right” ..now I can ask the teacher ‘How do you say...?’

**Slide 24      Results for 204/2005  
31 Adults**

With regards to the 31 Adults provided with a service under this project, the initial reason for referral to Family Support Services for 19 of them were:

- Domestic Violence
- Drug & Alcohol
- Mental Illness
- Failure to protect children
- Behavioural issues of child

***Place of sessions***

Clients Home 71  
Educ. centre 28

Total            99 sessions

***Conversational Language Classes for Vietnamese Parents***

12 Parents  
24 Sessions over 9 months

Average group size 3-5 women

**Slide 25      Project Learning**

- Parents experiencing family difficulties, actively want to assist their own children with homework, but often feel unable
- Each adult seemed “privately shy” about their lack of literacy and was most appreciative of a personally designed program in the privacy of their own environment
- Twice weekly sessions led to greater participation

**Slide 26      Approaches to Working with Children & Young People ‘at risk’  
School Focused Youth Service**

Greg Woolford is currently the School Focused Youth Service Coordinator for Melbourne and Moonee Valley. Greg has a background in social work having spent 16 years working with families and youth, with a key component of this being related to community development.

The following presentation will provide an 1) overview of School Focused Youth Service (SFYS), 2) the Relevance of the Role to family work, 3) how to access program brokerage and 4) give examples of successful projects.

**Slide 27****School Focussed Youth Service  
What is School Focused Youth Service?**

The service is a joint initiative between the Department of Human Services and the Department of Education.

The service targets all 10-18 year olds at risk of falling out of the school system or wanting to reconnect-this includes Government, Independent and Catholic schools.

The initiative is Statewide with 42 coordinators across Victoria. The Programs overall focus is on prevention and early intervention. This is achieved through encouraging partnerships between schools, agencies and communities to develop systemic responses to support young people at risk.

**Slide 28****School Focused Youth Service  
Where does the School Focused Youth Service fit in the  
Victorian Service System?**

1. Funding service gaps that exist in the overlap between Educational and Community Services. Both sectors can apply for individual students funding as well as funding to run programs.
2. Making links: A key component of SFYS is to build links between schools/ agencies and communities. This is done through a variety of approaches e.g. networks, forums, education, pathways planning groups.
3. Secondary consultation to schools/ agency workers
4. Advocacy in relation to policy within DE&T, DHS etc  
Advocacy for development of programs as well as needs of individual young people
5. The program also has a significant emphasis on targeting student wellbeing.

**Slide 29****School Focused Youth Service  
Individual Brokerage**

**Brokerage is provided on an individual and program level.**

Individual brokerage is targeted at 10-18 year old young people, with the goal of keeping them connected or reconnecting them to school.

Brokerage is a one off payment after all other options have been exhausted and can include a variety of options eg Travel fees, tutoring, counselling, tests (Speech Pathologist), camp fees, glasses, linking volunteers/ mentors.

**Slide 30****School Focused Youth Service  
Program Brokerage**

There is a clear process for applying for SFYS Program brokerage. The key components are best explained in point form to prevent confusion

1. Attend an SFYS information session on program brokerage. These are held at specific times of the year, prior to the annual funding round and for details of these dates you are best to contact your local SFYS coordinator, who is listed on the SFYS website.
2. Identify an issue in your region that is either relevant to your client/ target group or community/ school setting.
3. Find like-minded parties who have a vested interest in collaborating with your program proposal eg schools, community agencies.
4. Explore different models that would address the identified issue. Models can be found through discussion with your SFYS coordinator, websites etc. SFYS has produced a booklet called The Good Stuff Guide (see SFYS website). This document summarises a large number of programs that have been run in Melbourne's Western suburbs. By replicating one of the suggested programs saves considerable time and resources in developing a program (see below).
5. Program funding amounts vary-\$300-\$6000 (some \$20, 000 projects)
6. Some examples of past programs have been related to children whose parents are chronic drug users, family therapy, self esteem groups, CALD communities, bullying as well as film and art projects around legal/ same sex issues.

**Slide 31****School Focused Youth Service  
The Good Stuff Guide**

This Good Stuff Guide has been produced by four Western suburbs SFYS Coordinators and captures one year of projects across Melbourne's West.

The Guide is currently used by schools and agencies as a starting point for planning. Interested parties simply need look up there specific issue in the booklets index, read the different practice examples and then contact your local SFYS Coordinator, who can put you in contact with the service that ran the project.

**Slide 32****School Focused Youth Service  
Sample Projects****Sample SFYS Brokerage Funded Projects****Lawn Bowls (and linking the local school)**

Based in a rural setting this project tackled the problem of youth having limited sport options and subsequently opting for activities which placed them at risk. In developing a response, the school decided to partner the local Bowling Club in a recreational and community building program.

At a cost of \$300 for equipment, the students visited the bowling club where they engaged the elderly members and participated in lawn bowls. Building links between youth and the broader community the project has been a great success with students currently participating in games on weekends.

**Drumming Workshop**

This anger management project used drumming as a means of expression. Targetting at risk and regular students, the combination of music workshops and sharing experiences helped a group of adolescent males participate in a productive activity. Combining a school teacher, youth worker and local musician the project cost \$800 and helped change social dynamics within the students as well as increasing school connection for the students.

**Slide 33****School Focused Youth Service  
Photographic Booklet**

This project was partnered by the Western English Language Centre and a local school. The target group was forty four refugee and immigrant youth between 5-18 years. The young people were from 15 different language backgrounds representing a myriad of cultures and experiences.

An external photographer in conjunction with school staff provided the young people with disposable cameras (from Kodak). The kids were then asked to shoot something that was special to them in their new lives in Australia.

Over a five week period the photographer taught the children how to photograph in a variety of settings.

Shots were then discussed and written about in class (often with interpreters). After 5 weeks the photographer sat with each child to identify their favourite shot. These were then compiled, created in a book format, copies shown to the children's families and the related community.

The subsequent gains for youth were in the shared experience, shared learning's and the sense of achievement through participation as well as community linking and belonging.

### **Slide 34 Education issues and needs of kids in out of home care**

In a survey of MacKillop staff some ideas on the education needs/issues of children/young people in care included:

#### ***Placement***

*Create a stable environment:*

Find consistent carers and long term placements. Placement discussions need to take into account where the young people are going to school, as a distance can make it difficult to sustain them in their educational setting. Have clear boundaries and consistency in placement and residential units and with the educational setting (Eg: consequences for inappropriate behaviours) Use rewards for positive behaviours rather than punitive measures. Ensure constant communication between the residential units and educational setting.

Ensure the residential staff are appropriately trained on educational issues to cope with the issues as they arise. Strong support is required from placement (including assistance with transport, waking up, reminders, and encouragement) Involve the family of origin. Their support can help swing a child / young person from negative to positive.

#### ***Professional Collaboration***

As mentioned throughout this presentation professional collaboration is essential in assisting these children and young people in their educational endeavours. Considering when to pull a child out of class for appointments can impact on their success and attendance.

*Develop in house solutions:*

Young people not attending school miss out on social skills development and important networks. We need to think outside the 'square' and impart basic living skills which will prepare them for life. Short, sharp sessions with a mix of activities, including life skills, (cooking, budgeting / shopping, maths, reading for employment) could be of greater use to these young people.

An education kit could also be developed to cover the basics, in a format which suits young people (i.e. comics, computer games which are based on math/English skills).

*One worker commented:*

*“Getting hold of two hours of work for a kid to do each day is difficult at the best of times. If you have no training in this area, it's almost impossible to engage the child. We need help in this area as quickly as possible.”*

Children/young people in care need to be more resourceful and adaptable than those who are not. A “kit-bag” of skills (social, hygiene, and stress management) could be invaluable to them.

For those attending school, a residential care homework club could be a consideration. Having somewhere after school where the young people who wanted help could meet together with a worker and discuss their homework, be given direction in study skills, and have access to resources including the internet to assist them would be great.

### ***Schools & Alternatives:***

#### ***Professional Development***

The right school / teaching staff can make such a difference if they are committed to kids who live in care. They need to understand the issues, behaviour patterns, attachment/ bonding issues, relationship barriers, trauma, etc. If the school does not have this commitment, it will not work.

The experience of children in out of home care should be included in teacher training as schools are often not equipped to manage traumatised students. The majority of schools still manage children and young people within a punitive model.

#### ***Appropriate Education Plans***

Flexible school programming, without pressure on the student, consistency between all parties around boundaries, and programs that capture the interest and skill level of the child are what is required. More interactive, hands on, alternative education programs are urgently needed for children and young people who do not fit into mainstream education.

We need similar school settings and opportunities for the child / young person people to have a forum within school and to talk about what is going on for them, maybe in the form of mentor relationships.

A positive relationship is still the most powerful attraction for re-entering the education system.

### **Slide 35      Funding & Resources**

Funding can be used to provide:

- Brokerage Services : assisting children with fees, books, resources, computers
- Integration Aide Funding- when Aide funding is sometimes not enough, we can use our brokerage to top up the time allotted a student.
- Tutoring- In 2004 we brokered approximately 800 hours of tutoring.
- Computers-We try to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in education with regards to access to resources. Without a computer to

access, many of our children and young people would be disadvantaged in their education.

- Education Support Workers- can be an added bonus to any service which caters for children, young people, and their families.

### **Fundraising Trusts & Foundations**

For agencies or schools who are interested in looking at alternative sources of funding beyond SFYS there are a large number of Trusts and Foundations that can be approached.

However with all funding applications, there still remain a series of key corner stones to start from. Briefly these are:

- Start the process with planning & timelines
- Create Program with clear outcomes, outputs and impacts
- Create Proforma for your agency to capture key components of the project
- Partnership- always work in collaboration with others.
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For details around these corner stones, see attachment 3.

### **Slide 36      Achieving Goals & Education Outcomes**

In closing, we can say that some of the best ways to achieve educational outcomes would be :

- To build trust
- That every child/young person wants to be liked
- Create a safe environment-understand stress, anxiety, trauma and coping mechanisms
- Collaborate/cooperate
- Assessments, Plans & Resources

If you have any queries about the information provided in this workshop, please contact Brenda Carmen, Coordinator of Western Education Services, MacKillop Family Services, Victoria, Australia via email at [brenda.carmen@mackillop.org.au](mailto:brenda.carmen@mackillop.org.au)

If you have any queries about the School Focused Youth Service please visit the contact Greg Woolford via email at [greg.woolford@mackillop.org.au](mailto:greg.woolford@mackillop.org.au) or visit the website at [www.sfys.infoxchange.net.au](http://www.sfys.infoxchange.net.au).

Or visit our website: [www.mackillop.org.au](http://www.mackillop.org.au)

## Attachment 1



### MacKillop Family Services Overarching Practice Framework

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All practice at MacKillop Family Services is guided by an Overarching Practice Framework. This framework is characterised by the following interlocking elements:

- 1. Personal and relational** – All our practice is interpersonal and relational.
- 2. Client focus** – The involvement of clients and families in decision making and service design should be facilitated wherever possible.
- 3. Family focus** – MacKillop Family Services practice is based on the connection of children and adolescents with their family networks.
- 4. Community focus** – Our services aim to empower individuals to participate in community networks, but also aim to resource and advocate among communities so that they can be open to isolated individuals.
- 5. Holistic and ecological** – Our practice is based on a holistic assessment of client needs, and is ecological in as much as the causes of social isolation are effectively addressed.
- 6. Acknowledging diversity** – Each client should receive a service that is sensitive to, and respectful of, his/her identity, cultural and linguistic background and values.
- 7. Strength based** – Our practice is directed by a competency based and solution focussed approach that emphasises the empowerment of individuals, families and communities.
- 8. Professional excellence** – The best possible service includes not only personal commitment and respect, but also professional practice that achieves the highest standards.
- 9. Learning and advocacy** – Our practice should include reflection, research and evaluation, so that we can better understand needs, improve our services, and advocate for the needs of our clients and communities.
- 10. Innovative, effective and accountable** – Our practice should be innovative, effective, achieve tangible results, and be open to external review.

11. **In partnership** – MacKillop Family Services has a strong commitment to a spirit of partnership with clients, their families and their formal and informal networks, as well as with other service organizations.
12. **Ethical** – A person’s well-being is of unique value and it is always wrong to intentionally and directly cause harm to a person or to intentionally cooperate in such harm.
13. **Duty of care and confidentiality** – All reasonable care is taken to avoid placing someone at risk of injury or harm and to preserve confidentiality of personal information.

## Attachment 2



### MacKillop Family Services Adolescent Practice Framework

MacKillop Family Services has developed a framework for working with young people. All staff working with adolescents need to be familiar with this framework and are expected to base their practice on it.

The framework is based on the belief that every young person:

- ✚ Should be treated with dignity, empathy and respect.
- ✚ Has within them a wealth of strengths and resources – both known and unknown – that can be used to resolve difficulties.
- ✚ Needs to be encouraged to develop confidence and belief in their own capabilities to achieve solutions for themselves.

It is based on a Building Block approach, adapted from the Circle of Courage model.<sup>1</sup> This approach focuses on supporting young people to successfully overcome past difficulties and develop strengths in four major areas – **belonging, competency, independence** and **sense of community**.

**Belonging** is the fundamental building block, and is vital for young people to develop trust and confidence that their basic physical, social and emotional needs can be met consistently and positively. Young people learn that they can trust others. If we develop a strong foundation of belonging and continue to reinforce this constantly, our efforts with the other building blocks are more effective.

**Competency** focuses on encouraging growth by the development of skills so that young people learn that they can achieve.

**Independence** is encouraged by creating choices in a safe environment so that young people feel that they have control over their lives.

**A sense of community** is achieved when young people can step out and think beyond themselves. By contributing to others they see that there is a purpose to their lives.

Most of the young people receiving services from MacKillop Family Services will need to build strengths in each of these areas, and staff may need to work on more than one building block at a time. They initially focus on belonging and continue to return to this as the fundamental building block, but because success in any area can reinforce strengths in another, they grasp opportunities to develop strengths in each area as they arise. Young people are encouraged to move between the different blocks as they continue to build on their strengths.

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<sup>1</sup> Developed by Brendtro and Seita. This philosophy of child development is from the traditional Native American Indians and is described in Brendtro, L.K. and Seita, J.R. *Kids who outwit adults* 2002. (sopris West USA); and Brendtro, Larry K; Brokenleg, M; Van Bockern, S *Reclaiming Youth at Risk* 2002 (National Educational Service, USA).

Establishing positive relationships with young people, based on mutual respect, responsibility and appropriate boundaries is the crucial determinant of the success of work with the Building Blocks. The aim is to bring the emotional and developmental stages of young people closer to their chronological stage and to achieve the goal of a successful transition to positive community participation.

## Attachment 3



Fundraising Trusts / Foundations

These can be a major source of funding outside of State or Federal funding

### 5 Steps

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#### 1. Planning and timelines

- + where possible develop a team
- + use a whiteboard - map stages / times tasks etc  
i.e. partners / requirements / supporting documents takes time

#### 2. Create program components

- + outputs
- + outcomes
- + impact

These three components can be summarized as

- ⇒ What measurable differences will your program make to clients?  
Example-indicate you will measure the distance travelled for recipients.  
Do this through using before and after surveys-then progress can be measured and illustrated as a percentage change
- ⇒ Go beyond mother statements-generic terms about sweeping change are pointless unless backed up with concrete evidence of how you will achieve these outcomes.
- ⇒ Give concrete numbers
- ⇒ Send information / dialogue with funder to check you're on target and revisit this to ensure you are staying true
- ⇒ Develop programs that can be evaluated
- ⇒ Be aware some trusts will want to be on your committee
- ⇒ Return the evaluation / outcomes on time otherwise can not be refunded or re-apply

#### 3. Create an Agency / Service proforma to develop a profile of the project

- + Helps develop a common terminology
- + Creates a resource to revisit when doing future applications
- + Helps to clarify you have listed key needs/ components of application

4. Consult with co-workers in the development of programs so you can see if it's possible to truly respond to guidelines-also they will reveal insights for your application

5. Rule of Thumb

- ✚ Once a project application has been discussed it can take anything from 3-9 months to get \$ to roll it out

### Trusts / Foundations

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- ⇒ The Australian Directory of Philanthropy-\$65 hard copy, online \$100
- ⇒ Our Community-lists Grants / Foundations i.e. local government, \$500 – 10K
- ⇒ Telstra
- ⇒ Honda Foundation
- ⇒ Westpac
- ⇒ Myer

If you want to become proficient in grant seeking contact *Vanessa Meachern* – *Philanthropy Australia*

Duration: 1/2 day course

Cost: \$165

Purpose: Introduction to trusts and how the sector operates  
How to research a funding application  
How write a good submission

Phone: 9620 0200 Courses are periodically run interstate

Email: [www.philanthropy.org.au](http://www.philanthropy.org.au)