

# Showcasing Youth Homelessness Services in the ACT



To view the program use the QR code or visit: [youthcoalition.net/yhhfshowcase](https://youthcoalition.net/yhhfshowcase)



# Youth Engagement Team & Raw Potential Woden Community Services



**YOUTH  
WORKER  
PRACTICE  
NETWORK**





# Woden Community Service

Youth Services (CYFSP) – Raw  
Potential

Youth Housing and Homelessness Forum

# Raw Potential



# Who we are

Raw Potential works with young people, 12 to 25 years old, from within the Canberra region, who are experiencing homelessness. Raw Potential supports the young person to explore safe housing options, whilst addressing and breaking down the factors impacting their lives and wellbeing. This is achieved through a range of mechanisms.

# Who we are (cont.)

- Raw Potential was created in 1986 under the name “Open Family ACT” with a clear goal: to offer the at-risk and vulnerable youth of the Canberra region a future. Later becoming YouthCARE and then Raw Potential
- Raw Potential is not centre-based or region-specific.
- Raw Potential is not an accommodation service but does work closely with them to connect young people with accommodation options.
- Raw Potential has the advantage of being fully funded by donations and is able to be creative in its work.

# What we do

- Primary Focus - Provide a flexible Outreach model of Case Management that assists the young person with service connection and navigation.
- Advocate for the individual needs of young people.
- Provide additional opportunities for young people to positively and proactively engage with their community, including:
  - Access to training and education such as RSA, RCG, Hospitality
  - Dentistry
  - Our leadership program, Raw Connection
- Raw Potential partners with other local youth services, to facilitate training, health and wellbeing initiatives, increase education and employment options, and social inclusion activities.

# What we do – Raw Connection



# What we do – Raw Connection



# What we do – Dental Rescue Days



# What we do – Training and Education



# What we do – Events and Partnerships



# What we do - Fundraising



Q and A

Any Questions?



**CRS**

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE



## MISSION

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To provide evidence based dispute resolution services for children, youth and family reunification.



# Core Purpose



## **PRESERVE**

Prevent family breakdown and maintain safe, secure family connections.



## **REUNIFY**

Reestablish and strengthen relationships between young people and their families.



## **RESTORE**

Enhance family functioning and decrease family conflict.



## Family and Youth Programs

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- Family Support Program
- Family Connections Program
- Safe and Connected Youth Program



## Alternate Dispute Resolution

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- Family Dispute Resolution
- Business Mediation
- Workplace Mediation



## Training

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- Client Engagement Training
- Leadership & Management
- Customised Training



## Justice Services

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- Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC)
- Bimberi Youth Justice Centre (Bimberi)
- Mediation services for the Magistrates Court



## Family & Youth Programs

Youth centred. Family focused.

- ✓ Young people are our primary clients.
- ✓ We involve everyone in the family who wants to be involved and is safe to be involved.
- ✓ We recognise that family systems are unique, and we don't dictate who is considered a family member or who the immediate family is.



# Family and Youth Programs



**Family Connections  
Program**



**Family Support  
Program**








**Safe & Connected Youth  
Program**



Safe &  
Connected  
Youth

# Safe and Connected Youth Program

-  Children and young people 8-15 and their families
-  Improves family connection and repair to reduce the risk of child and youth homelessness
-  Funded through CSD
-  Duration: 6 to 12 Months
-  Referrals: Online ([crs.org.au](https://crs.org.au))



# Program Principles

1

We prioritise the safety, wellbeing and the best interests of young people in the first instance, and families in the second instance

2

We assume that living with their family is possible for a young person, and in their best interests, until we have evidence it is not

3

We work with the whole family, as defined by the family

4

We engage with family complexities and assist families through them

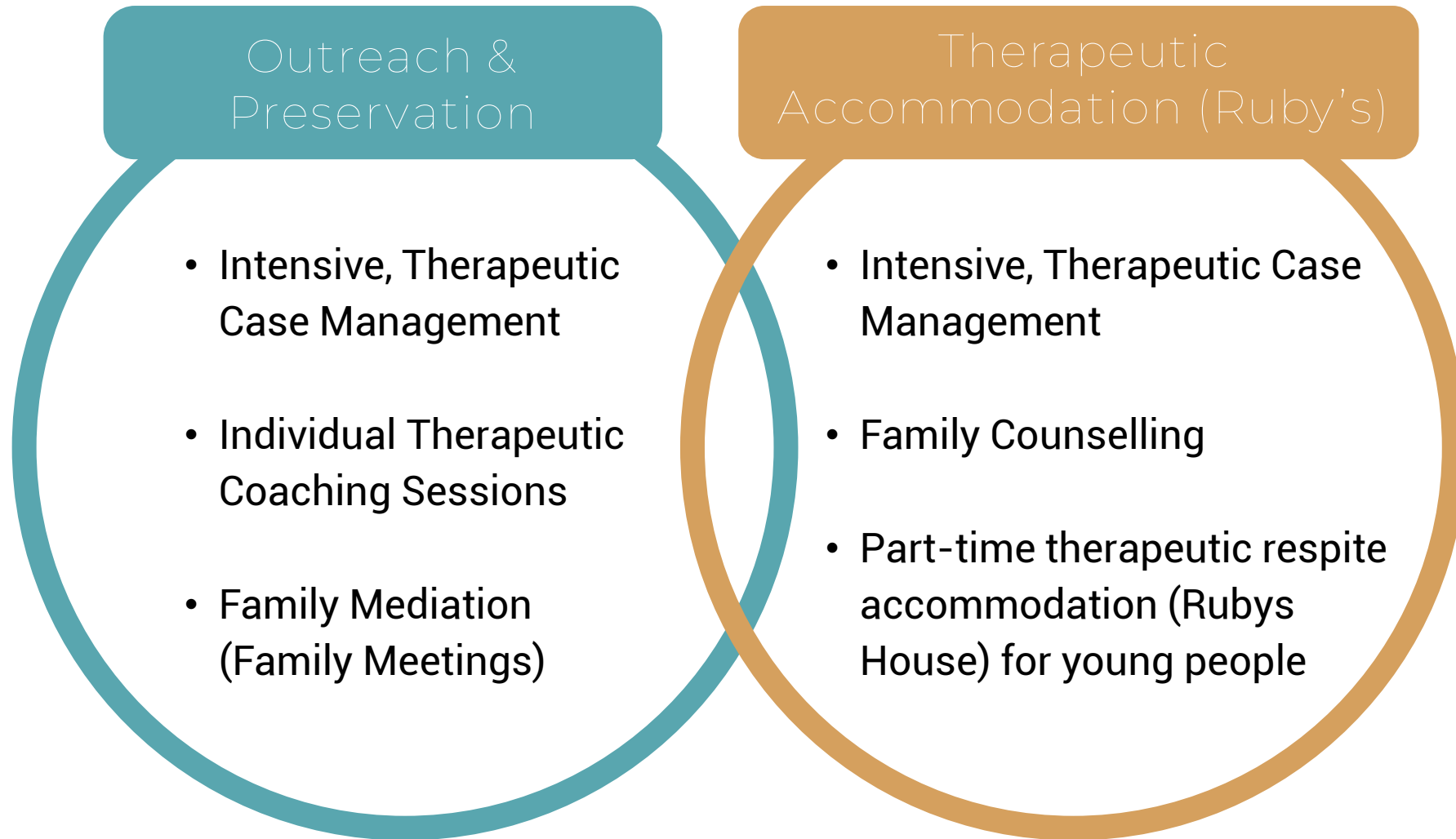
5

We support relationships that have respect, trust and open communication

6

We support a family to leave the service with the networks and connections they need to maintain a healthy family life

# Two Program Streams





Ruby's has been running in Canberra, since September 2022.





# Family Connections



An ACT Government funded initiative

# Program Snapshot



For families with  
young people aged  
15 -24



Aims to reduce  
conflict leading to  
youth homelessness



Case Management  
Family Mediation  
Family Counselling



12 Months  
duration

**Multicultural  
young people  
15-24 & their  
families**

The infographic features a central white circle with a thick, multi-colored border (teal, yellow, green). To the right, a vertical line of five colored circles (orange, blue, orange, blue, orange) is connected by a thin black line. Each circle is linked to a text block describing a service. The background has abstract, colorful brushstrokes in shades of blue, yellow, and pink.

Funded through  
**SHS Funding**

Improves **family functioning**  
through connection to culture

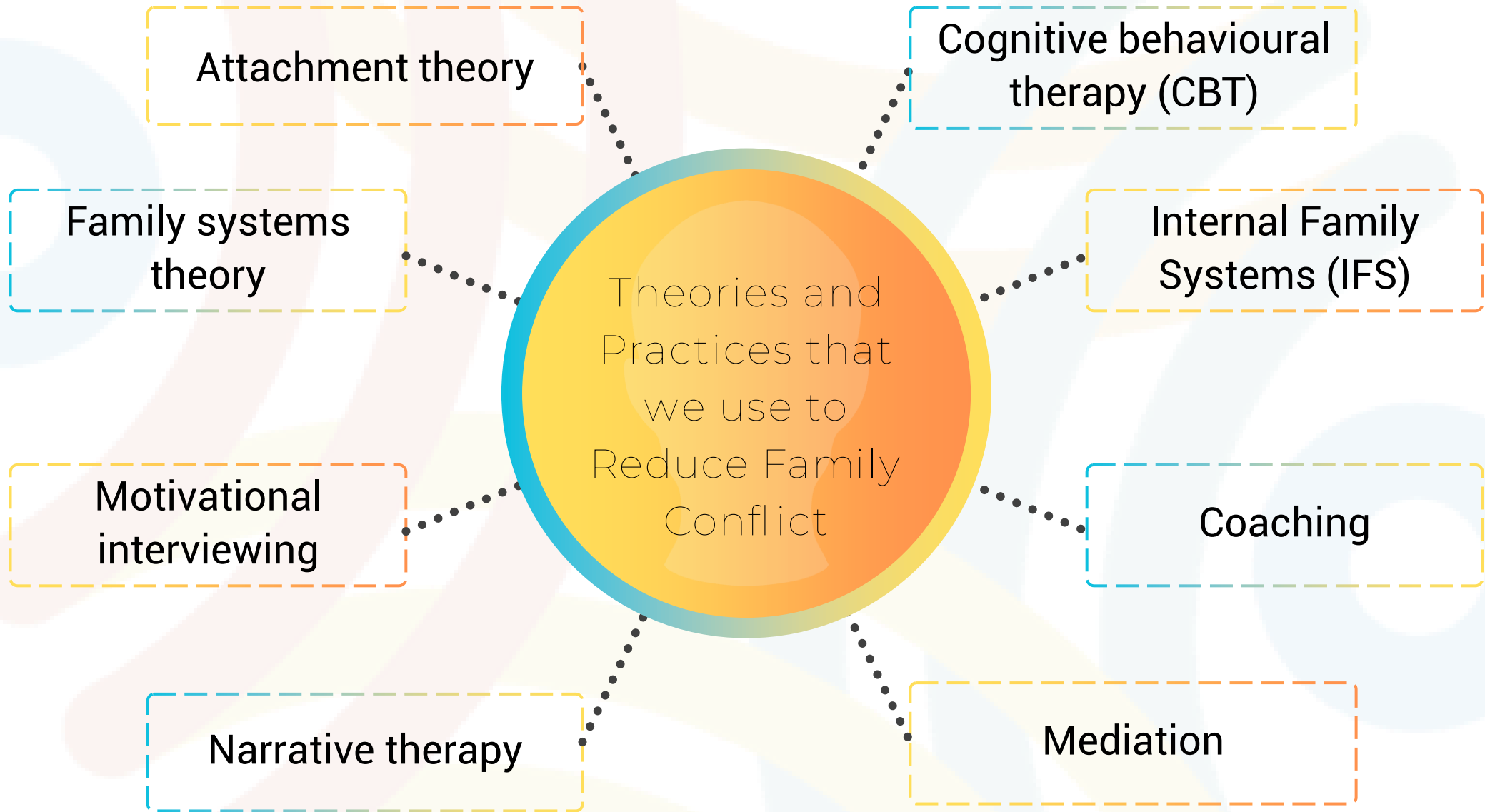
Intensive, **Therapeutic**  
**Case Management**


Family **Mediation** & Restorative  
Conferencing

Individual and Family  
**Counselling**

# Two Worker Model

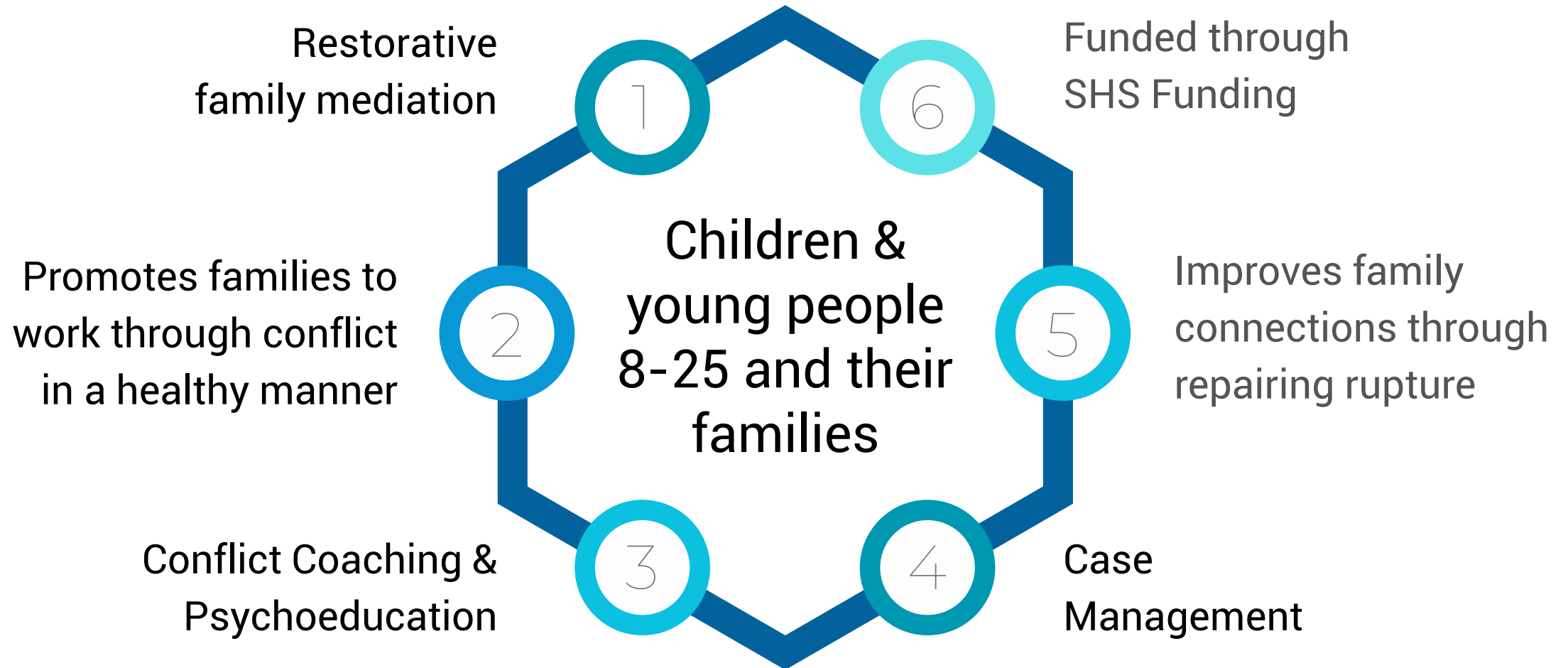






# Family Support Program

# Family Support Program





Get in touch  
With Us

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02 6189 0590



[familyandyouth@crs.org.au](mailto:familyandyouth@crs.org.au)

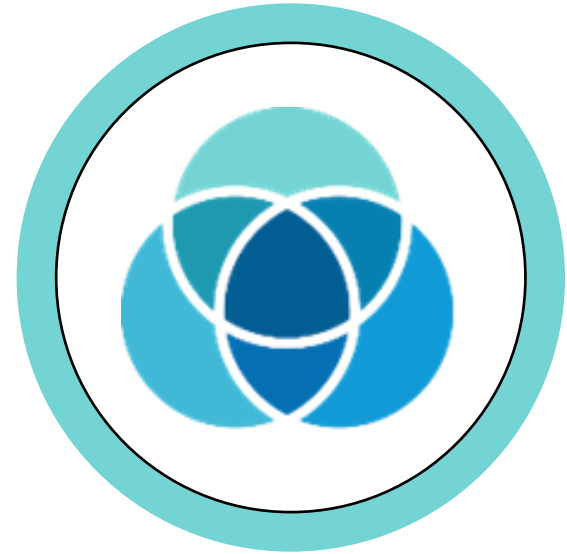


[crs.org.au](http://crs.org.au).



1/32-38 Townshend Street  
Phillip, ACT 2606

Thank You



# Our Place Youth Foyer

Who we are and How we work



**Barnardos Australia acknowledges the  
Traditional Custodians of the land on  
which we live and work.**

We acknowledge Elders past and present, and acknowledge the children  
because they are our future.

We acknowledge that this land was and always will be Aboriginal land.

# About Our Place Youth Foyer

**Home** = A material structure + sense of security + sense of home + everyday practice

**Our Place Youth Foyer** = Home + Case management/Youth coaching + Tenancy assistance + Community development program

## Our Place:

- is a medium-term (2 year) accredited Youth Foyer service located in an apartment complex in Braddon, ACT;
- has 12 shared units/ 24 beds and 1 x 1 bedroom unit
- has capacity to take young parents with children
- Target group is 16–21- year old young people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness;
- supports residents make a successful transition to independence and achieve their educational/vocational goals.

Dinning Room



Community Garden

Office Room



Community Room

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# Model Overview





# Eligibility

- Age: 16 – 21 years old.
- Experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Capable of living independently.
- Have an adequate source of income (e.g., Youth Allowance).
- Motivate to work towards their education and employment goals.
- Engage in full-time education or work-based training.
- Willing to participate in the Our Place program.
- Can stay up to 2 years.
- Willing to live in share accommodation.



[www.onelink.org.au](http://www.onelink.org.au)

1 800 176 468

Monday to Friday

8 am to 6 pm

[info@onelink.org.au](mailto:info@onelink.org.au)

## Referral Pathways

# Contact for More information

- Siobhan Cosgrave [scosgrave@barnardos.org.au](mailto:scosgrave@barnardos.org.au)



**Thank you**



# Reconnect Multicultural Hub

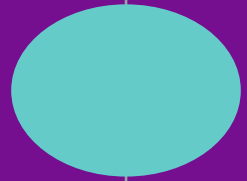


**YOUTH  
WORKER  
PRACTICE  
NETWORK**



# Reconnect Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation





OneLink

# OneLink

- OneLink is the central intake service for people accessing housing and other community supports in the ACT
- Three central functions:
  1. **Information**
  2. **Referral**
  3. **Data**
- OneLink operation:

OneLink is contracted to operate every calendar day except for public holidays:

Day	Open	Close
Monday to Friday by telephone	8.00 am	6.00 pm
Monday to Friday in person	9.00 am	5.00 pm
Saturday and Sunday by telephone	12.30 pm	5.00 pm
Public Holidays	Not applicable	

# Accessing OneLink

- **Four ways to access OneLink:**

1. contacting OneLink directly by phone on 1800 176 368
2. dropping into HACT or making a face-to-face appointment with a worker
  - Nature Conservation House hours are 9am-5pm M-F
3. receiving a referral from a connected service
  - Online referral form or emailing enquiries to [info@onelink.org.au](mailto:info@onelink.org.au)
  - Supportlink referrals
4. contacting OneLink through:
  - Email
  - Contact form at Housing ACT

# Scope of OneLink support

- OneLink operates as an information and referral service
- We are not a crisis service – but respond to people in crisis
- We are unable to refer to services where:
  - there is no capacity
  - young people do not meet eligibility/criteria for support
  - where service does not exist (e.g. independent crisis accommodation for lone persons)
- OneLink supports well over 500 individuals and families in any given month
- Ideally, we are having one conversation with people to connect to support – reality is we need to be creative in identifying a pathway

# Changes to OneLink

- OneLink processes and repositioning within the sector as a collaborative service
- Over the last 12 months we are looking at how we triage and work with services
- Previous policy was to connect those who need it most at the time – this created issues in relationships with services
- Repositioning to walk with services to support successful service delivery
- Triageing – length of time waiting for support, Indigeneity, access to other services, domestic violence and current accommodation arrangement

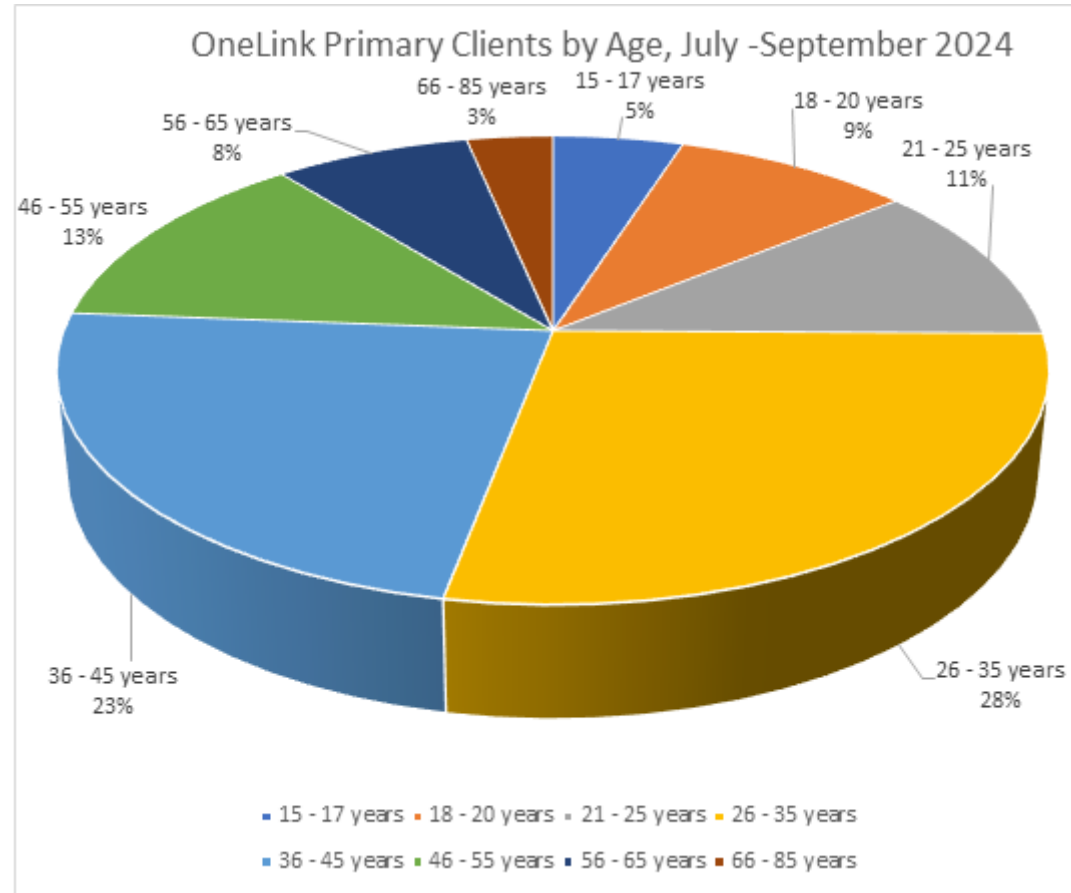
# Changes to OneLink

- A strong focus on our scope of practice and our limitations
- Being clear on this assists with providing clear expectations for service users and the sector
- Advocating to funding body to implement better phone system – callback feature, position in queue, voicemail system
- Being more responsive vs. reactive – booking appointments, sharing core functions across the team, rewriting and documenting processes and messaging

# Relationship with Housing ACT

- We work closely with Assessing Team and Allocations Team at Housing ACT
- We are unable to influence decisions made by Housing ACT
- We can:
  - Act as a conduit between case workers and Assessing Officers to assist with information transfer
  - Highlight risk and vulnerability
  - Provide case workers and service users with information to assist with a Housing ACT application

# Relationship with Housing ACT



# How can the sector help?

- Remaining trauma-informed & client-centred
  - Assist young people to connect to OneLink through providing as much detail as possible/practical to help inform our assessment
  - Avoid retelling of story
  - Avoid revisiting traumatic experiences
- Empowering young people to take action and support self-agency can be through:
  - Supporting a young person to engage in initial phone call
  - Supporting a young person to contact post-referral
  - Preparing a young person to engage with external support
- Working cross-service and exploring other avenues for support
  - Are there other services/accommodation options young people can access?
  - Working through OneLink to consult/identify alternative pathways?
  - Learn from each other

# Central Intake Service – beyond May 2025

- Woden Community Service is operating the Central Intake Service with a current end date of **30 April 2024**
- The Central Intake Service tender is active with a closing date of **12 November 2024**
- Details of the tender can be found at:  
<https://www.tenders.act.gov.au/tender/view?id=277849>
- For further information, please contact [tendersact@act.gov.au](mailto:tendersact@act.gov.au)



# RECONNECT



PRESENTED BY



**PETER WILLIAMS**

Reconnect Family Liaison Officer  
Wiradjuri Wolgalu Mob of Tumut



**CYNDY NEWMAN**

Reconnect Family Liaison Officer  
Wiradjuri Mob of Griffith, Condobolin & Forbes  
Dharug Clan of Blue Mountains



# OVERVIEW OF RECONNECT

The Reconnect Program is funded through the Department of Social Services and is an early intervention program targeting First Nations youth aged between 12 - 18 years, who are vulnerable to homelessness or have recently become homeless.

Reconnect is a client centered service, to empower clients to make positive and sustainable choices towards their goals/case plan and is one program at Gugan Gulwan surrounded by wrap around services from other programs including Drug and Alcohol/Mental Health, and Child, Youth and family support team and group program delivery.

Gugan Gulwan provides a specialised and specific Reconnect service that is tailored to young First Nations Young people that delivers and supports healing and strengthening young people and their families through an early intervention focus. A specific challenge in delivering the Reconnect program is the complex and co-morbidity of issues presenting for young people and their families including but not limited to past and present inter-generational trauma. A success of the program is our geographical scope (outreach), our organisational ability to be flexible and consistent in our client service delivery, our professional relationships/networks and ongoing efforts to identify and build further pathways of support for young First Nations people.

Reconnect continue to network strongly with schools, accommodation services, and other relevant agencies to provide the best possible care and outcomes for young First Nations people.

# WHAT ARE THE ISSUES FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES THAT WE SEE FAMILY BREAKDOWN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BECOMING HOMELESS?

Families may be facing issues including unstable housing

- temporary accommodation
- staying with family
- relocating
- waiting for long term housing
- struggling to sustain a social housing tenancy
- relationship break downs family crisis.
- Accessibility to services

This can have a flow on effect for the young person, resulting in issues such as;

- disengagement in education especially if they are changing schools, or having trouble getting to school
- isolation from the community
- difficulty in relationships with parents or care givers because of family conflict or crisis within a family.

These issues may be directly related to financial difficulties, alcohol or other drug issues, family violence.

Each family is a unique case, which needs to be taken into consideration when planning goals within the case management process.

# HOW DO WE DELIVER A SPECIALISED RECONNECT PROGRAM THAT RECOGNISES THE IMPACT ON SOME OF THESE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR A YOUNG PERSON?

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Accommodation arranged for the young person homeless or at risk of homelessness i.e. kinship care, staying with extended family members, refuges.

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Mediation with the young person and their family to reach a common goal

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Practical support to the young person and their family, such as advocacy and or client assistance to overcome barriers that may be blocking the goal. i.e. school uniform, discrimination, bullying

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Referrals to other services include but not limited to: counselling, doctors, education, tutoring, mentoring, school holiday programs, cultural knowledge and practice, leadership groups

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Strengthen engagement in Education, by linking with schools, building relationships with teachers, meeting with the young person at the school or enrolling the young person in other education if appropriate.

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Improve engagement and individual sense of belonging in the community. Through programs, events and young person's interests.

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Provide youth and their families with access to services, helping the family link in with any services that may be relevant and appropriate to their situation.

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Supporting the entire family through processes with other agencies, such as Care and Protection, ACT Housing, Centrelink.

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# WHAT WE ARE DOING WELL



Creating and  
Identifying  
Opportunities

- ACT Housing
- Centrelink/ Medicare
- Financial counselling/ banking
- Workforce/ job providers/ job agencies
- Department of Education/ School information/ Learning pathways/resources
- Identification such as birth certificates, confirmation of Aboriginality
- Healthy relationships
- Building resilience, capacity and self-determination

# WHAT COULD WE DO DIFFERENTLY OR BETTER??



- Identifying opportunities to work and strengthen relationships with parents/carers and young person to build their skills, including understanding child's development stage, behavioural strategies, setting boundaries, positive decision making
- To strength family capacity in education, workforce and community involvement.
- Promotion of Gugan Gulwan service
- Collaboration/outreach to strengthen and improve engagement with education services/organizations
- Response by reconnect workers within 24-48 hours
- Improve in communication with clients/stakeholders etc.

# AIM AND OBJECTIVES FOR RECONNECT 2024

- To increase participation of young First Nation clients in care and education to improve school readiness
- Increase school attendance by liaising and advocacy on behalf of client/families.
- Improve/explore employment/work experience opportunities
- Family reconciliation – positive family relationships and establishing a viable support system for the independent young person that includes a member of their family
- Improve sense of self and positive self-worth and self resilience
- Reconnect to assist year 10 students with transitioning to college

# COLLABORATIVE

Reconnect to network and develop effective working relationships with other services and schools to facilitate a streamlined service system including (but not limited to)

- Working with a range of core services including schools (IEO's), community agencies, and specialized services
- Participate in relevant interagency networks/training and forums
- Sharing of relevant information, where consent from the client has been obtained, to facilitate seamless referrals and improve the services clients receive
- Working in a co-case management context to support young people at risk and partner with other organizations to improve outcomes for young people.

# WORK PLAN/PRIORITIES 2024

- Maintain the online DEX data reporting system for the Reconnect Service. Utilise administration time allocated on Friday afternoons of each week to update information.
- 54 families per annum x 2 staff (27 families per annum each staff member)
- Provide active case management to clients of the Reconnect Service as per Gugan Gulwan Case Management Guidelines.
- Complete Partnership Approach data set in DEX for all clients
- Identify Action Research in conjunction with Deputy Director to identify action research through case management and in consultation with Deputy Director
- Maintain and attend fortnightly supervision with Deputy Director as well as staff meetings

# Oasis Youth Housing and Support Program ACT

Informed by Housing First for Youth (HF4Y)

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Supporting Young People aged 15 to 24 years



Australian Capital Territory



# Principles of Housing First for Youth (HF4Y)

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1. Immediate access to housing with no preconditions
2. Youth choice and self-determination
3. Individualised and client driven supports with no time limits
4. Social and community integration



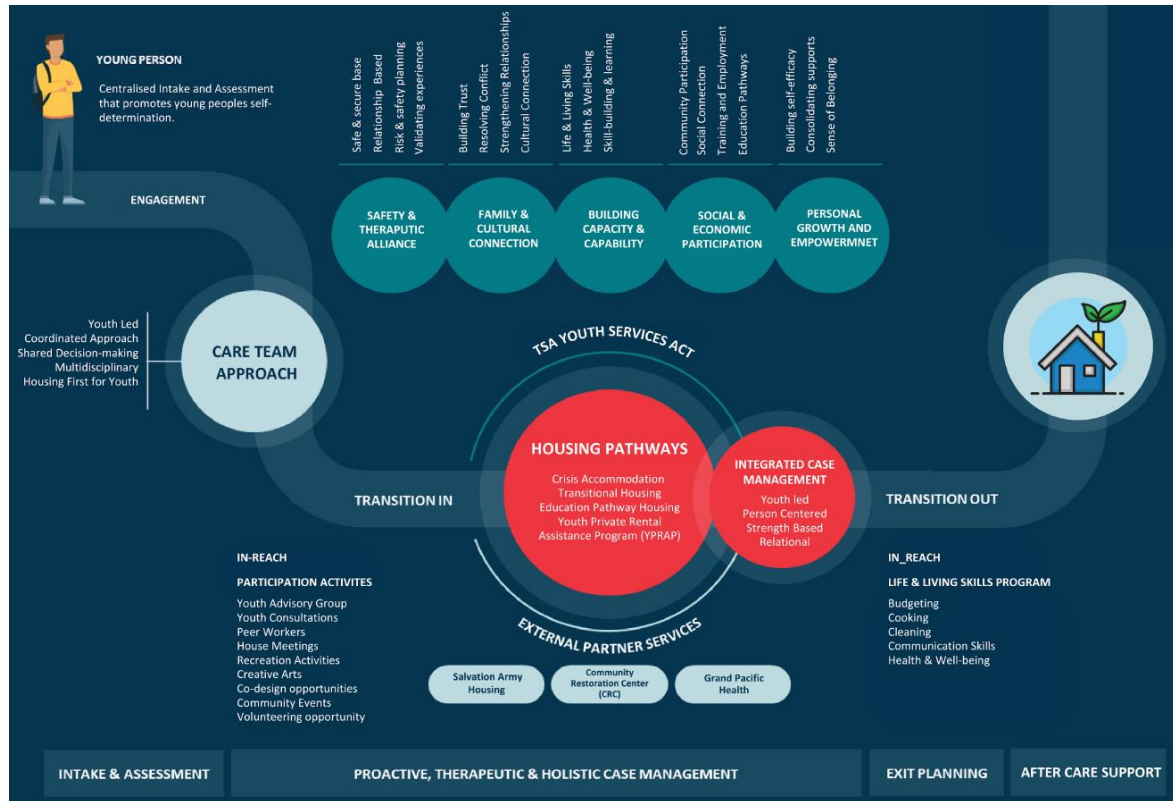
# Youth Consultation

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## Key insights:

1. Access to consistent and ongoing support from Case Managers
2. Support with accessing and maintaining specialist mental health support
3. Help with acquiring practical life skills
4. Assistance with creating and maintaining healthy relationships



The model focuses on **rapidly rehousing** young people with appropriate safe, supportive housing options, **coupled with the delivery of specialist therapeutic interventions** that address the developmental, biological, social, and psychological factors that may have led to homelessness.

The model **employs participatory approaches** that foster a sense of belonging, promotes aspirational goals, empower young people’s self-determination, and develop the necessary skills to **thrive in all aspects of their lives.**



# Partnership Model

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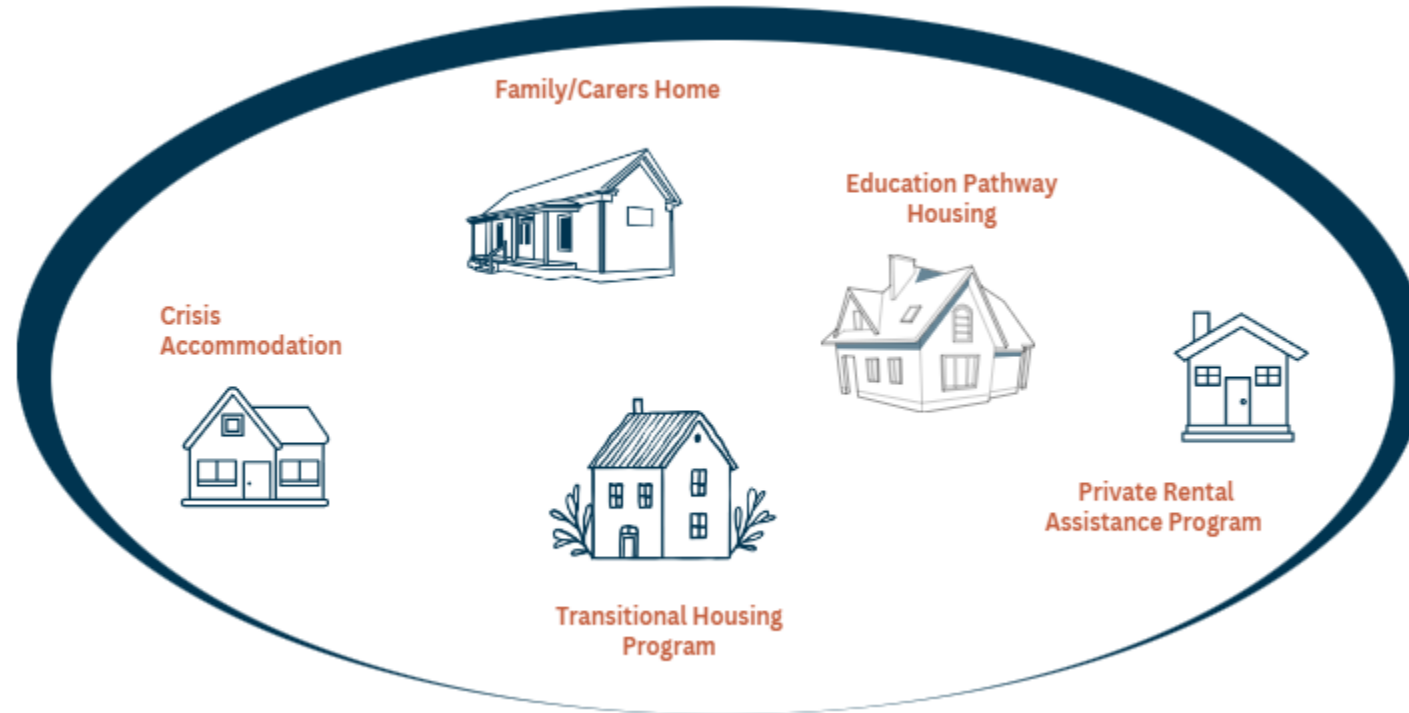


## Who have we partnered with and why?

- **Salvation Army Housing** - Salvation Army Housing (SAH) is a community housing organisation that provides homes for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- **Conflict Resolution Services (CRS)** - CRS provides specialist family mediation and conflict resolution services designed to prevent young people from entering the specialist homelessness system and/or providing pathways out of homelessness through family reconciliation.
- **Grand Pacific Health (GPH)** - Headspace offers a range of services to support the mental health and well-being of young people aged 12 to 25.

# Housing Pathways

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A range of housing options that work together as a larger system aimed at delivering a complete Housing First for Youth program

# Housing Pathways

Crisis Accommodation	Transitional Housing	Education Pathway Housing	Youth Private Rental Assistance Program (YPRAP)
<p>6 beds at Tuggeranong 6 beds at Belconnen 6 beds at Weston Creek (2 beds specifically for 15- to 17-year-olds)</p> <p>18 crisis beds, reduced from 24 beds</p>	<p>11 x 1 bed properties 18 x 2 bed properties 3 x 3 bed properties 4 x 4 bed properties</p> <p>Total 72 beds across 36 dispersed properties</p>	<p>Unit complex at Narrabundah 30 single bed apartment style units</p>	<p>YPRAP will support approx. 10 young people per annum in the private rental market, providing brokerage for tapered rent assistance over a 12-month period.</p> <p>Option of Salvos Housing acting as an intermediary, facilitating the transfer of tenancy to the young person after a 12-month period.</p>
<b>Suitability</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people requiring immediate accommodation</li> <li>• Young people who require higher levels of staff support (24/7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any young person who does not require 24/7 staff support</li> <li>• Can include young people/couples with children, couples without children or siblings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people who are maintaining sustained engagement in education, training or employment.</li> <li>• Young people with no children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft transition pathway for young people exiting program</li> </ul>
<p>Across all housing pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people must agree to engage with a Case Manager</li> <li>• If young people have an income source, they are expected to contribute to rent</li> <li>• Tenure will be determined by a young person's duration of need</li> </ul>			



# Centralised Intake and Assessment

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- Dedicated Intake, Assessment and Planning Worker (IAP)
- Liaising with OneLink as a central referral pathway.
- Promptly responding to referrals on the same day, completing an initial assessment with each young person
- Young people experiencing primary homelessness or are at high risk of harm, will be provided a same day response.
- Young People not requiring Crisis Accommodation will be provide a comprehensive assessment within 72 hours

*By adhering to the Housing First Principle, our central intake and assessment process will prioritise securing stable and safe housing as the initial step towards addressing any additional challenges young people may be facing.*



# Integrated Case Management / Working Collaboratively



***Young person is central to the case management process. Their needs, goals and preferences drive the entire process.***

# Life and Living Skills Program

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Life and living skills development is an area of significant need for young people who have experienced homelessness and is an area of development often disrupted by other forms of adversity.

Supporting young people's life skills development is critical to supporting young people to exit homelessness and to sustain positive housing outcomes



# Youth Participation

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When we talk about participation, we are referring to the active involvement of young people who access our services in decision making and/or service delivery.

- Holiday programs, recreation programs and community events
- House meetings and focus groups
- Volunteering or engaging in community projects
- Edible garden program and social enterprise opportunities
- Engagement in recruitment and service design



# Youth Advisory Group

The *Participation & Living Skill Worker* will also be responsible for establishing a *Youth Advisory Group*. This group will consist of young people, aged 15-24, from diverse backgrounds who will actively contribute to service planning, implementation, and evaluation of projects.





# Questions

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# Toora Women



**YOUTH  
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NETWORK**



# Ted Noffs 350 & the Street University Program



YOUTH  
WORKER  
PRACTICE  
NETWORK



# Karinya House



ACT Government

# Youth Program

Housing ACT

# Youth Team at Housing ACT

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# Youth Program at Housing ACT

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Eligibility:

16-25 Years

Placed in Out  
of home care  
by CYPS

Involvement  
or exiting  
youth justice

# Youth Program at Housing ACT

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On a case by case basis the Youth Team may take applications outside of the above:

Transient history

Disability

Trauma background

# Referral to the Youth Program

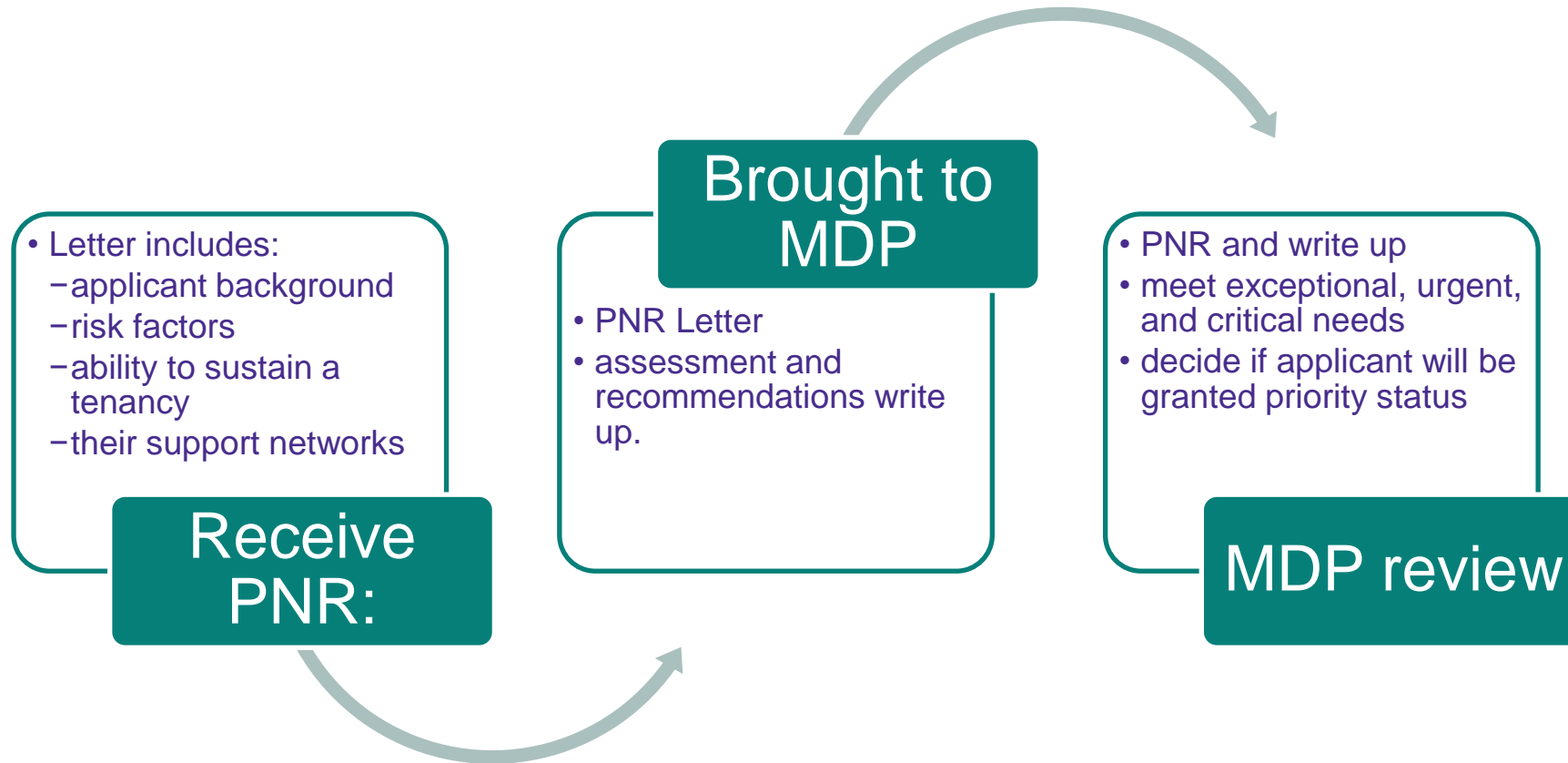
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Referral to the Youth Program  
is an internal process

We triage applications based  
on risk and eligibility

# PNR (Priority needs recommendation)

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# Multi-Disciplinary Panel

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# Exceptional, Urgent, and Critical Needs

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## Exceptional

- risk factors affecting young person

## Urgent

- time constraints on need to house young person

## Critical

- how these relate to need for housing young person

# When PNR is not possible

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Write to risk factors

Write to background

Write to their circumstance and experiences

- ie. Support letter from people they stay with