
Appendix four – TFM pilot programs

Key reform programs

The TFM Unit, with partner agencies and funded service providers, developed trial packages to provide targeted assistance and wraparound supports to some vulnerable groups with similar needs and experiences in pilot locations. These groups, or cohorts, include:

- children under 12 in residential OOHC who are not co-located with a sibling
- vulnerable young parents, aged 25 years and under
- vulnerable children aged zero to five
- Aboriginal vulnerable young parents aged 25 years and under and their children, aged zero to five years
- children aged ten to 17 that are in contact with the juvenile justice system, with a focus on children in remand
- children aged five to 12 in OOHC with behavioural or psychological needs and/or a disability and may be in contact with the justice system
- children aged 14–16 in non-residential OOHC and with non-custodial contact with the justice system.

Known as 'cohort service solutions', the TFM packages aimed to build linkages between existing programs and services and fill service gaps, with the broader state and Commonwealth service systems in mind (see Exhibit 16).

Exhibit 16: Cohort service solutions

Thriving Families NSW

Aimed to enhance the wellbeing of vulnerable families and decrease the likelihood of them reaching crisis point by ensuring young parents have access to age-appropriate, strength-based wraparound services, which meet the needs of the entire family. Thriving Families NSW draws on services from across NSW Government, including NSW Health, the Department of Communities and Justice, and the Department of Education, as well as NGOs to deliver antenatal and postnatal health services, assist parents to continue with their studies, and to assist participants access any other required governance assistance. Thriving Families NSW was being piloted in Western Sydney, and as of March 2020 had assisted 53 clients.

Thriving Aboriginal Families

Aimed to work with Aboriginal communities to enhance local service systems supporting families experiencing vulnerability. Communities are co-leading the design with TFM, placing the lived experiences of families at the centre of the work. Service design will be place-based and embedded in the local service system to improve access for families displaying early signs of health, educational and social vulnerability. Thriving Aboriginal Families NSW was being piloted in two DCJ districts, and in March 2020 was assisting 28 children.

A Place To Go

Supports children and young people aged ten to 17 in contact with the juvenile justice system, with a focus on children and young people in remand. A Place to Go draws on services from across NSW Government, including the Department of Communities and Justice, the Department of Education, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network, as well as other non-government service providers. It aimed to connect young people with suitable study options, provide legal assistance, necessary healthcare and assistance to find short-term accommodation. A Place To Go was being piloted at two courts, and as of March 2020 had assisted 682 children.

Source: Department of Communities and Justice.

The TFM Unit also adopted a 'try, test, learn' approach to select and trial a range of pilot programs to better support vulnerable children and families (see Exhibit 17). Some of these pilot programs are adaptations of evidence-based programs which have shown promising results overseas. The pilot programs are being trialled in a few select locations and will be formally evaluated before decisions are taken on further resourcing and rollout.

Exhibit 17: Current pilot programs

Functional Family Therapy - Child Welfare (FFT-CW)

Launched in August 2017, FFT-CW is a home-based family therapy model focused for at-risk families. It aimed to address the underlying trauma that results in harm to children and families. FFT-CW was delivered by six NGOs in ten DCJ districts across NSW. As of April 2020, 2,449 vulnerable children had participated in FFT-CW.

Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST-CAN)

Launched in October 2017, MST-CAN is a 24/7 home-based treatment model for families with substantiated cases of physical abuse and/or neglect of children and young people between six and 17 years. MST-CAN was delivered by six NGOs across five DCJ districts in NSW. As of April 2020, 225 vulnerable children had participated in MST-CAN.

LINKS Trauma Healing Service

Provides a range of therapists (such as Aboriginal Mental Health Clinicians, Psychiatrists, Occupational Therapists and Speech Pathologists) to provide trauma-focused, evidence-based support to children in out-of-home care. LINKS was provided in two DCJ districts and as of March 2020 had assisted 390 children.

OurSPACE

Provides individually tailored therapeutic intervention for children and young people, working in partnership with carers, their support agencies (if available) and the relational networks which are important to them. OurSPACE was provided in 16 DCJ districts and, as of March 2020 had assisted 2192 children.

Treatment Foster Care Oregon (TFCO)

Launched in July 2018, TFCO provides a strength based, relational approach based on social learning and behaviour modification principles, aimed at changing the negative trajectory of behaviour that gets in the way of experiencing positive relationships, stability of placement and engagement with education, peers and the community. TFCO was provided in two DCJ districts and as of March 2020 had assisted 13 children in placements.

Futures Planning and Support

Announced in February 2020, the Futures Planning and Support program aims to provide additional support to young people 17–24 years who have been in out of home care. It offers additional support, above the universal support already provided, to young people with higher, more complex needs to support them to achieve goals they have identified. Futures Planning and Support was planned to be piloted in one DCJ district. The TFM Unit expected services to commence in March 2020, however, it advised this has been delayed due to COVID-19.

ID. Know Yourself

Launched in February 2019, ID. Know Yourself was an Aboriginal-led mentoring program for Aboriginal young people aged 15–18, soon to exit the out-of-home care system. It aimed to support Aboriginal young people to become strong and resilient and prepare them to reach their full potential in life after care. ID. Know Yourself was provided in one DCJ district and as of March 2020 had assisted 20 children.

Nabu

Launched in July 2019, Nabu is an Aboriginal co-designed program that works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to preserve, and if required restore, families wherever possible. Nabu was provided in one DCJ district and as of March 2020 had assisted 42 clients.

Youth Action Meetings

Facilitated by NSW Police, Youth Action Meetings (YAMs) provide the opportunity for local-level collaboration to provide better interventions to children and young people (aged ten to 17 years) at risk of harm, re-offending or re-victimisation. In July 2019, TFM funded two Coordinator positions to provide secretariat support, case co-ordination, monitoring and review of youth action plans developed for children and young people referred to the YAM. As of March 2020, these meetings had assisted 14 vulnerable children.

Broadmeadow Children's Court

Launched in July 2019, the Broadmeadow Children's Court pilot aimed to provide alternative service pathways for children and young people entering and or exiting the justice system by facilitating collaboration with government and non-government agencies that will support decisions, assessments, and interventions to reduce offending. As of March 2020, this project had assisted 324 vulnerable children and young people.

Source Department of Communities and Justice.

The TFM Unit has also piloted projects to improve the rate, quality and appropriateness of responses provided to children and young people reported to be at ROSH and their families, including through connecting them with other supports and services (see Exhibit 18).

Exhibit 18: Access system pilots

Collaborative Supported Pathways

Launched in October 2018, the Collaborative Supported Pathways was a pilot in South-Western Sydney which restructured the processes around intake and assessment of children reported to be at risk of significant harm (ROSH) to receive an appropriate service response. As at December 2019, the pilot had triaged 9,455 reports on vulnerable children.

Northern NSW Helpline

Launched in October 2018, the Northern NSW Helpline pilot aimed to support the Community Services Centres to provide a timely response and assessment to children and families who meet the ROSH threshold, as well as link children and young people who do not meet the ROSH threshold to appropriate supports earlier. As of January 2020, this pilot had actioned 4,953 unique cases relating to vulnerable children and families.

Source: Department of Communities and Justice.