



Government of **Western Australia**
Department for **Child Protection**
and **Family Support**



Department for Child Protection and Family Support

At Risk Youth Strategy

2015-2018

Supporting vulnerable youth to reach their potential



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1. Introduction

The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (the Department) promotes the safety and wellbeing of young people by providing support to individuals and their parents, families and communities.

Young people who are identified as being 'at risk' due to a variety of behavioural, situational and educational factors (see Figure 1) are the focus of this *At Risk Youth Strategy 2015-2018* (the Strategy). The Department has a role with these at risk young people including those who are in the care of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Department will provide protection and care to a young person in cases where existing support is insufficient to create safety and promote the wellbeing of that young person within their family.

The Strategy has been developed to guide the Department's ongoing role in planning and delivering services that support and encourage young people to reach their potential and promote safety in the community.

This Strategy builds on the achievements of the first *At Risk Youth Strategy 2011-2014* and responds to emerging issues and trends relating to at risk youth.

1.1 Aims

The Strategy aims to guide the work of the Department in planning and delivering services to at risk youth by outlining a framework and actions to:

- 1. Increase the Department's presence and involvement** in the across government and community service sector organisations that relate to at risk young people, including where appropriate taking a lead role in the coordination of the activities and initiatives of these groups.
- 2. Improve the Department's internal coordination of service delivery** of at risk youth programs by bringing together the experience of the Department's district offices, funding and contracting, case practice and policy areas to achieve a unified position on how best to respond and deliver services to at risk youth.
- 3. Outline a series of programs and activities to address localised issues** facing at risk youth and adopt learnings from formal and informal evaluations of local initiatives. This includes integration with the community services sector and other government agencies.

The Strategy guides the Department's role in the coordination of service provision within the Department, across government and in partnership with the community services sector. This includes planning and prioritising the funding and models of services provided.

Aboriginal youth

A strong focus is placed on addressing and preventing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system, particularly those who are in the care of the CEO or are open cases to the Department.

2. Background

2.1 Current situation

The Strategy sits within the context of the Department's lead role in creating safety for young people at risk. The Department shares this responsibility with other government agencies, community services sector organisations and the broader community. See Appendix A for an illustration of the service delivery continuum and each type of service provision ranging from primary to tertiary services.

As well as the direct delivery of services, the Department contracts community services sector organisations to take a primary role in delivering a range of services to at risk youth. See Appendix B for details.

2.2 Definition of 'at risk youth'

A definition of 'at risk youth' is shown below to provide a common understanding and context for the information presented in this document. It is acknowledged that the meaning of this term can and does vary across organisations, programs and services.

At risk youth

Historically, a reference to 'youth' includes young people aged between 12 and 18 years old. To reflect the increasing trend of younger children identified as at risk, reference to 'youth' in this Strategy will extend to children as young as 10 years old.

Details of the various risk levels of 'at risk' youth are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – At Risk Youth risk factors table

Level of Risk	Definition
"At risk"	<p>Behavioural indicators - truancy, emotionally unstable, disruptive behaviour, displaying suicidal intent or self-harm, antisocial behaviour, violent or aggressive in the community, social isolation, juvenile offending, vandalism, drug and/or alcohol abuse, rejecting parental support, low self-esteem, lack of social and communication skills.</p> <p>Situational indicators - unemployed, homeless, socially disadvantaged, family and domestic violence, alcohol and other drug use in the home, family breakdown, transient families, lower socio-economic families, abused children.</p> <p>Educational indicators – underachieving academically, not coping in classroom situations, poor literacy and numeracy skills, suspended from school or excluded.</p>
"At extreme risk"	Where any of the above indicators are severely affecting a young person's functioning or indicate a possible risk of harm to themselves or others.
Not "At risk"	Not exhibiting at risk behaviours beyond normal adolescent behaviour and experimentation.

3. Strategic Directions

Below are the three key focus areas of the Strategy, along with the underlying principles that set direction in working with at risk youth and their families. These focus areas align with the Strategy's aims.

1. Coordination of Department, across government and community services sector initiatives
 - Foster stronger partnerships and collaborative approaches that include connections with the community at a local level.
 - Facilitate integrated networks and community partnerships when providing services to at risk youth.
 - Improve interagency communication, collaboration and support to young people who are known to multiple government agencies including the Department of Corrective Services (Corrective Services), Western Australia Police (WA Police) and the Department of Education (Education).
2. Internal Department coordination of service delivery and funding
 - Enable integrated and sustainable service delivery and reduce fragmentation of funding and resources.
 - Reduce the gaps in service delivery that prevent continuous and uninterrupted service delivery to at risk youth.
 - Increase focus on case management provided by contracted services and evaluating the outcomes.
 - Facilitate opportunities for district offices to input into the planning for funding of local services.
3. Local solutions
 - Develop local solutions in partnership and collaboration with the community services sector, corporate sector and local offices of relevant government agencies.
 - Target solutions to the needs of at risk youth within the particular community which are flexible enough to be tailored to individual circumstances.
 - Include built-in performance management and evaluation mechanisms in local programs and initiatives.
 - Support local solutions to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal young people involved in the child protection and/or juvenile justice systems through the provision of culturally appropriate alternatives that reduce the likelihood of youth engaging in at risk behaviours.

4. Actions

This section describes current Departmental activities within each of the three focus areas of this Strategy and identifies action items for implementation during the next three years.

4.1 Coordination of Department, across government and community services sector initiatives

Strengthening partnerships with key government agencies that intersect in the delivery of tertiary services to at risk youth – such as WA Police, Corrective Services and Education - will promote more efficient and effective service delivery.

The Department participates in a number of high level interagency groups working to improve the way services are provided to at risk youth. The Department's ongoing involvement in, commitment to, and, where appropriate, leadership role in these groups assists in coordinating strategic decision making in this area across government and with community services sector organisations.

4.1.1 Participation in high level interagency groups

The aim of coordinated decision making at a strategic level is the development of consistent approaches, both centrally and regionally. To support this aim, the Department is actively involved in a number of high level interagency groups that facilitate connected and coherent service delivery to at risk youth.

Child Safety Directors' Group (CSDG)

The CSDG aims to ensure that all relevant state government agencies work together when helping vulnerable children and young people, and their families. It is composed of executive level officers from state government agencies that provide direct services to vulnerable children, young people and their families. The CSDG is accountable to the respective Ministers and Directors General and is chaired by the Department's Director General.

The CSDG has a work plan that includes focus on key programs including Family Support Networks and the Strong Families program, to respond to at risk Aboriginal children, youth and families and reduce the numbers of Aboriginal children who enter care.

Community Sector Roundtable

The Community Sector Roundtable is an advisory body to the Director General of the Department that aims to strengthen the relationship between the Department and the community services sector. Through the provision of advice, the Community Sector Roundtable is a mechanism for better aligning services to respond to the needs of at risk youth.

Partnership Forum on Youth at Risk Working Group

The Department's Director General co-chairs the Partnership Forum on Youth at Risk working group. With across government and community services sector participation, this initiative aims to form a joint approach to identify best practice in the development, delivery and funding of services to youth at risk. Input has been sought from local managers' groups comprising representatives from the Department, other government agencies and the community services sector organisations who have identified a number of case studies of existing and developing practice approaches.

Action 1

Participate in and lead strategic across government and community sector services coordination and joint initiatives.

Action 2

Incorporate the principles and guidelines developed by the Partnership Forum – Youth at Risk project in the development, delivery and funding of services for youth.

4.1.2 Operations with WA Police in response to young people on the street at night

The Department has a role in initiatives to assist and protect young people who are on the street at night in conjunction with WA Police and community organisations.

Youth at Risk Initiative

The Youth at Risk Initiative is a collaboration between WA Police, Mission Australia's Youth Beat Service and Crisis Care to respond to young people present on the street at night. It operates across the metropolitan area on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. The three agencies involved operate through the *Partnership Understanding Agreement 2013-2016* that sets out roles and responsibilities.

Carnarvon and Kununurra Youth Services

The Department has negotiated the provision of services for young people at risk and street present in Carnarvon and the Kimberley region. The Carnarvon Youth Service and the Kununurra Night Patrol and Youth Service provide a range of early intervention and diversionary strategies to keep young people who are at risk and street present at night safe.

Action 3

Strengthen and identify additional joint operations with WA Police and community organisations directed at youth present on the street at night.

4.1.3 Parent Support and Responsible Parenting Agreements

The Department's Parent Support service assists parents to develop capacity to effectively manage the behaviour of their children and prevent the need for a child protection response (see Appendix B). In 2013, as part of the *At Risk Youth Strategy 2011-2014*, Parent Support was refocused to target hard to reach families of school aged children and young people displaying criminal or anti-social behaviour. There was renewed focus on improving partnerships and the majority of districts are now engaged in local interagency coordination groups to respond to and integrate work with identified at risk young people and their families.

Responsible Parenting Agreements

The refocus of the Parent Support service introduced a requirement that a Responsible Parenting Agreement (Agreement) be made in every case. These Agreements are designed to provide support to parents to manage the challenging behaviour of their children and originally fell under the *Parental Support and Responsibility Act 2008* (PSR Act). As part of the legislative amendments to the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (CCS Act), the PSR Act and associated regulations are being repealed and the CCS Act amended to include provisions for Agreements.

The revised Agreement provisions in the CCS Act expand the circumstances in which Agreements can be developed. Agreements can be developed with carers as well as parents and the age group of young people who are the subject of an Agreement is raised to 17 years, in line with the refocus. The introduction of broader powers of delegation provides greater flexibility for Agreements that have a specific focus on education. The inclusion in the CCS Act also provides broader information sharing provisions that can be utilised when making Agreements and the inclusion will be complemented by training to promote and support its implementation and use.

The legislative reform gives the Department, Education and Corrective Services even greater opportunity to effectively support parents to create a positive change for young people engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour. It also contributes to addressing the ongoing concerns of increased numbers of children and young people disengaging from formal education.

Action 4

Work with and support Education and Corrective Services to further increase the use of Responsible Parenting Agreements and, where necessary, make referrals to Parent Support.

4.1.4 Coordinated service provision to young people with offending behaviours

A significant number of young people involved in the juvenile justice system are in the care of, or are open cases to the Department. To effectively provide services to these young people the Department needs to build on the work of the *At Risk Youth Strategy 2011 - 2014*, including the development of joint young offender management groups and the revision of bilateral Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to strengthen the partnership with Corrective Services.

Aboriginal young people in juvenile detention

The Commissioner for Child and Young People has reported that in 2012 an Aboriginal child or young person was 40 times more likely (based on proportion of population) to be placed in detention than a non-Aboriginal child or young person. As at November 2014, Aboriginal young people made up 87 per cent (55) of the 63 young people detained at Banksia Hill who were in the care of the CEO or an open case to the Department. A total of 49 per cent (27) of these Aboriginal young people were from regional or remote locations and 51 per cent (28) were on remand.

The Department aims to enhance local solutions to work with Aboriginal young people and their families and communities to reduce offending behaviours. The Department also aims to reduce the number of children in detention on remand due to a lack of suitable and available bail placement options.

Action 5

Work with Corrective Services and relevant community sector services to explore additional bail placement options for young people and to reduce the number of Aboriginal young people and young people in remote locations who are remanded in Perth due to lack of appropriate bail accommodation.

Case management of young people in detention

As at 11 November 2014 there were 20 young people in the care of the CEO and another 43 young people who are open cases to the Department, detained at Banksia Hill Detention Centre (Banksia Hill). The high number of open cases who are shared clients indicates the increased investment of the Department in working with at risk young people.

The Department has conducted a three month project of a co-located liaison officer at Banksia Hill. The role of the liaison officer was to assist and support children in the care of the CEO detained at Banksia Hill and improve collaboration and communication for shared cases, particularly for young people under the age of 14 years. Improvement in interagency collaboration and support for children in the care of the CEO or with cases open to the Department was noted. Further opportunities for coordinated work are being explored.

As part of the *At Risk Youth Strategy 2011-2014*, the Department updated a number of protocols and Memoranda of Understanding with Corrective Services.

Joint management of young people's physical and mental health needs who exit detention back into the care of the CEO can be strengthened. Processes need to be developed to allow sharing of medical records about treatment received by young people in the care of the CEO at Banksia Hill.

During a young person's period of detention, Corrective Services assumes the case management role even where the young person is in the care of the CEO. It is important that child protection workers maintain relationships and continue to work with and plan for young people in detention. Where a young person was previously not engaging with the Department, a period in detention should be an opportunity to re-engage with the young person in anticipation of their release.

Action 6

Review and enhance collaborative case management and arrangements to better support young people in the care of the Department at point of entry and who are exiting Banksia Hill, to assist in this transition. This will include maintaining relationships with the young person while they are in detention and engaging in pre-release planning to make arrangements to address medical, educational, housing and other issues.

Case Study 1

Case management protocol

Many young people who appear before the Children's Court of Western Australia present with complex issues, have a disadvantaged family background and are likely to require services from the Department and Corrective Services. In October 2011 both agencies endorsed the 'Reciprocal Policies and Procedures – Case Management and Child Protection'. These procedures set out the case management responsibilities of each department when a young person is involved in both the juvenile justice and child protection systems.

4.1.5 Links with the Aboriginal community

Given that over 50 per cent of young people in the care of the CEO are Aboriginal, there is a need to maintain and strengthen links to Aboriginal communities.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations such as the Aboriginal Medical Service are often well positioned to engage with Aboriginal families and young people. Partnerships with these organisations will assist the Department to more effectively engage with at risk Aboriginal young people and their families.

Action 7

Engage with Aboriginal young people and their families by supporting links between Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

4.2 Internal Department coordination of service delivery and funding

The services funded by the Department contribute significantly to the support of at risk young people in the community. The partnerships formed, as well as the local knowledge and experience in the districts and directorates who have direct exposure to the needs of the various communities, should be utilised to inform and influence planning for the funding of services for at risk youth.

4.2.1 Collaborative redevelopment of youth services

The Department's procurement process can be used to negotiate improved and better coordinated youth services to meet the needs of young people in individual districts, as identified by consultation between districts and the community services in the region.

The Department undertakes a procurement process for the re-contracting of youth services every three years in consultation with the community sector. The Department will undertake its next procurement process for youth services in 2016.

Districts have used written feedback to the Department's Non-Government Policy and Funding area to influence the procurement of services for young people at risk. Increased direct participation by districts and policy areas in the non-government policy and funding planning and procurement processes of the Department should enable better targeting of local needs and service gaps. New processes to achieve the principles of collaboration, individualised case management and design, and delivery of the program embedded in community are to be explored.

Action 8

Facilitate the additional provision of direct input from districts into the planning, design, development and procurement of at risk youth services with community services sector organisations to reflect and connect procurement to local partnerships and initiatives.

Case Study 2

West Kimberley district

In January 2013 the district director and contract manager in the West Kimberley district commenced consultation with the three main youth service providers funded by the Department in Broome and completed an analysis of the services being provided to at risk youth in the region. The outcome led to a more innovative Youth Hub being developed through the agreement of the services to combine, which led to better coordinated delivery of a suite of targeted services to at risk young people.

4.2.2 Increased coverage of available services in line with identified needs

Consultation with the districts and community services sector organisations has identified areas for improvement in service delivery to young people. These include the delivery of services to young people with trauma related mental health issues, services directed at addressing parent-adolescent conflict, and creating continuity of services for young people from secondary services delivered by the community services sector to tertiary services delivered by government agencies.

Case Study 3

Armada Family Support Network (FSN)

The Armadale Family Support Network (FSN) is funded by the Department to provide services in response to the needs of high risk individuals and their families, subsequently preventing the need for tertiary intervention by the Department. The FSN also received capacity building discretionary funds during 2014 to respond to identified gaps or excessive waitlists. The Steering Committee of partner agencies for the Armadale FSN identified a lack of services to address parent-teen conflict and negotiated release of discretionary funds by the Department. Centrecare was funded by agreement to employ an outreach counsellor to work with families who are experiencing parent-teen conflict, where this results in an increased risk for the young person. This is a positive example of a model in which local and joint planning can respond flexibly to service need and overcome historical competitive processes.

Young people with mental health issues

Many of the young people who come into contact with the Department experience mental health issues as a consequence of previous trauma. Mental health services often classify these issues as behavioural related to trauma as opposed to a mental health diagnosis, which can mean that these young people fall outside the qualifying criteria for particular mental health services. To respond to this concern the Department, in collaboration with the Child and Adolescent Health Service and WA Health, is committed to the State Government endorsed Rapid Response initiative.

The Rapid Response action plan includes the development of a submission to fund services for a prioritised multidisciplinary response to meet the medical, psychological and emotional needs of children in care. The funding submission will initially target the provision of support for children in care with severe emotional and behavioural problems and extreme support needs. The secondary target will be children in care with complex support needs.

Action 9

Collaborate with community services sector organisations to provide a comprehensive continuum of services within existing funds.

4.2.3 Recruitment, training and retention of Aboriginal employees

Given that more than half of the children and families that the Department works with are Aboriginal, a priority is increasing the number of Aboriginal employees in the Department's workforce across all classification levels.

Aboriginal staff

Since 2007 the rate of Aboriginal employees in the workforce has remained relatively static, around 8.5 per cent (as at 30 June 2014). The Department plans to implement a number of strategies in an attempt to retain, recruit and provide additional training opportunities to Aboriginal employees with the aim of providing additional culturally appropriate support to the Aboriginal young people and families it has contact with.

Action 10

Implement additional strategies to recruit, train and retain Aboriginal staff at all classification levels.

4.2.4 Transitional high needs placements

Transitional high needs placements are funded on a fee for service model and are a rostered model of care provided to children who are in crisis. A young person may require a high needs placement as a consequence of leaving secure care or detention, a placement breakdown, or because they are unable to remain in residential care. These children often experience mental health issues and have engaged in drug and alcohol abuse, have trauma based behaviours, juvenile offending and self-harm.

Additional models of transitional housing placements

As part of the *Out of Home Care Five Year Strategic Plan*, being developed in partnership with the community sector, the Department is looking to create a continuum of placement services. This will include investigating options to allow community services sector organisations providing placement services to build their capacity through a restructure of existing funding. Additional models of high needs transitional housing placements are expected to enable the Department to respond more rapidly where at risk young people are in crisis situations. These arrangements should have the flexibility to accommodate and stabilise young people in crisis in a range of circumstances such as following a placement breakdown, while relative or other care options are being explored, particularly for large sibling groups and those requiring a bail placement.

Action 11

Investigate alternative options to develop multiple purpose transitional houses to accommodate young people at risk or in crisis.

4.3 Local solutions

By focusing on local solutions, the Department is able to address localised issues facing at risk youth and adopt learnings from the evaluation of these initiatives.

4.3.1 Programs with a cultural focus

The Department acknowledges the importance of Aboriginal young people having Aboriginal role models and a strong connection with their culture and community. This is reflected in the principles of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* and the *Aboriginal Services Framework*.

Cultural focus for programs directed to at risk Aboriginal young people

Programs directed to at risk Aboriginal young people should have a strong focus on culturally relevant activities and, where possible, be developed in consultation with community elders. Where a young person is not linked in with the local community or lacks Aboriginal role models, programs should endeavour to make these connections.

A strength based model should be utilised to respond to the emotional, developmental and cultural needs of the young person and activities should be in line with their expressed hopes and aspirations. Emphasis should be on supporting services and programs that re-engage Aboriginal young people in training pathways and employment opportunities, and diversionary activities directed at reducing overrepresentation of Aboriginal young people in the juvenile justice system.

Action 12

Support the development and delivery of local solutions that emphasise cultural and community links.

4.3.2 Flexible local solutions tailored to the needs of the individual

For services to be effective they need to be tailored and responsive to the needs of the individual and the community they belong to.

A person centred case management approach

A person centred or individualised case management approach facilitates contribution by the young person and their family to the development of an appropriate service plan for that young person. Programs that are relevant and are in line with a young person's ambitions and self-identified needs will increase the likelihood of engagement. Consultation suggests that more intensive and persistent programs with a case management focus are often the most successful. Services that have both drop-in centre and outreach components have a greater ability to adapt to the needs and lifestyle of the target group of at risk youth. In remote communities this may include community outreach.

Collaboration in developing person centred plans

Care should be taken so that person centred case management plans and approaches are developed collaboratively to avoid several plans being operated simultaneously for the same young person and family. The Strong Families model is a good example of how this coordination can be achieved. It is also important to engage with key members of the community to promote a level of community ownership over the issues facing young people.

Action 13

Focus on person centred case management and flexible, tailored service delivery.

4.3.3 Local coordination of services

Local coordination of service delivery and pooling of resources across government and community services sector agencies promotes greater service coverage for existing resources within the district. Local initiatives work on the premise that community members and local organisations are best placed to identify the social issues facing their community and work towards appropriate solutions.

These initiatives should include the development of private sector partnerships along with joint initiatives with the community services sector.

The majority of the Department's districts have developed local coordination groups to target specific at risk or offending young people to discuss avenues for working better with shared clients. Districts should continue to build on the work of these groups which are facilitated provisions in the CCS Act that support enhanced information sharing.

Local coordination projects

A number of localised projects to coordinate local service delivery to at risk youth more generally are being trialled, to enable better coordination at the early intervention stage to reduce the escalation of problems to a point where tertiary intervention is required. Local groups that coordinate all services to at risk youth across government and the community services sector are more likely to achieve relevant outcomes for these young people and their communities.

Case Study 4

South East Corridor Youth Partnership Project

Save the Children is the lead agency in the South East Corridor Youth Partnership Project, a two year pilot project to work with at risk youth in the south-east corridor which is made up of Armadale, Gosnells and Belmont. This program aims to establish a new collaborative governance mechanism at a local level between community organisations, businesses, state and Commonwealth government agencies, local government and the Aboriginal community. The aim is to build effective linkages between services providing social support and services providing assistance with jobs, training and education. The project is intended to create a client centred approach to service delivery through the pooling of resources, identification of common clients and reducing overlap of services. The pilot project will be formally evaluated.

5. Next steps

During the next three years regular reviews will be undertaken to measure achievement and progress on the implementation of this Strategy's principles and actions. These reviews will provide for learning, acknowledgement of achievements and the possibility of new directions for the Strategy in response to contemporary issues.

5.1 List of all action items

Focus area 1: Coordination of Department, across government and community services sector initiatives	
1	Participate in and lead strategic across government and community sector services coordination and joint initiatives.
2	Incorporate the principles and guidelines developed by the Partnership Forum – Youth at Risk project in the development, delivery and funding of services for youth.
3	Strengthen joint operations with WA Police and community organisations directed at youth present on the street at night.
4	Work with and support Education and Corrective Services to further increase the use of Responsible Parenting Agreements and, where necessary, make referrals to Parent Support.
5	Work with Corrective Services and relevant community sector services to explore additional bail placement options for young people and to reduce the number of Aboriginal young people and young people in remote locations who are remanded in Perth due to lack of appropriate bail accommodation.
6	Review and enhance collaborative case management and arrangements to better support young people in the care of the Department at point of entry and who are exiting Banksia Hill, to assist in this transition. This will include maintaining relationships with the young person while they are in detention and engaging in pre-release planning to make arrangements to address medical, educational, housing and other issues.
7	Engage with Aboriginal young people and their families by supporting links between Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.
Focus area 2: Internal Department coordination of service delivery and funding	
8	Facilitate the additional provision of direct input from districts into the planning, design, development and procurement of at risk youth services with community services sector organisations to reflect and connect procurement to local partnerships and initiatives.
9	Collaborate with community services sector organisations to provide a comprehensive continuum of services within existing funds.
10	Implement strategies to recruit, train and retain Aboriginal staff at all classification levels.
11	Investigate alternative options to develop multiple purpose transitional houses to accommodate young people at risk or in crisis.
Focus area 3: Local solutions	
12	Support the development and delivery of local solutions that emphasise cultural and community links.
13	Focus on person centred case management and flexible, tailored service delivery.
14	Strengthen and improve interagency service delivery to at risk youth and implement learnings from formal and informal evaluations of local initiatives, including the outcomes of the evaluation of the South East Corridor Youth Partnership Project.

Appendix A - Service delivery continuum

While the Department has a lead role in creating safety for young people at risk, this responsibility is shared with community services sector organisations, other government agencies and the broader community. The figure below illustrates the service delivery continuum and each type of service provision ranging from primary to tertiary services, in line with the severity of risk.

Primary or universal services respond to all young people and are directed at addressing general and low risk social factors that contribute to young people being at risk.

Secondary services work with at risk young people and their families to reduce risk factors and prevent the need for tertiary intervention.

Tertiary intervention is usually in the form of statutory child protection and juvenile justice intervention and responds to immediate and extreme risk to young people that cannot be alleviated by providing secondary services.

Service delivery continuum

Increasing child safety and wellbeing concerns							
Category	Primary/ universal	Secondary	Tertiary		Tertiary		
	All families and children	Those at risk, in crisis or vulnerable	High risk or need, problems occurring		High risk or need, problems occurring		
Service	Universal parenting and family services	Secondary Family Support Services	Intensive Family Support (IFS) Services	Family Support	Child Protection	Children in care	Intensive Family Support (IFS) Services
Response	Varied parenting programs Parenting and family helplines	Family Enhancement, Indigenous Family Program, counselling, FDV, homelessness, youth, financial counselling	Tertiary Family Preservation Service	Child Centred Family Support	Short term intervention	Children in care reunification	Tertiary Family Reunification services
Target group	General population	Children and families with needs too complex for universal services and require a targeted secondary service to prevent entering the child protection system	Families with children at immediate risk of being taken into provisional protection and care as a result of child protection concerns/neglect	Families where there are already child protection concerns (placement prevention) and is also used in reunification	Children and young people who require protection from abuse and neglect	Children and young people in the CEOs care	Children and young people where reunification is planned
Delivered by	Varied organisations	Community service sector	Community service sector	CPFS	CPFS	CPFS	Community service sector
		<p align="center">Responsible Parenting Services Parent Support, Best Beginnings, Youth Family Support Worker and Community Child Protection Worker At-risk, complex and/or hard to reach families needing parenting or family support. Delivered by CPFS -All areas utilise the <i>Signs of Safety Child Protection Practice Framework</i>-</p>					

Appendix B – Current situation

The Department directly delivers services and funds community services sector organisations to deliver services to at risk youth.

Services directly delivered by the Department

Parent Support

Parent Support is a service that works with families to increase their capacity to parent and establish parental responsibility. The target group is parents of school-aged children and young people who are involved in criminal activity, anti-social behaviour or truancy (in combination with the other behaviours). Parent Support is usually involved with families who have older children.

Strong Families

Strong Families is a planning and coordinating process for families with complex issues receiving services from two or more agencies. Strong Families seeks to engage Aboriginal families to enable them to make changes and achieve positive outcomes for their children. Youth and Family Support Workers (YFSWs) work with Aboriginal young people at risk and their families to increase safety and wellbeing. YFSWs work across family support, child protection and children in care, through consultative, co-working and mentoring activities.

Young People with Exceptionally Complex Needs (YPECN)

YPECN, introduced by the Department in 2012, aims to improve the wellbeing of young people with a combination of mental health issues, substance abuse or disability. The Department is the lead in this program that is jointly funded by the Disability Services Commission, Mental Health Commission and the Department.

Funding of community services sector organisations

Services for young people at risk

The Department provides funding to community services sector organisations to provide 42 services for young people at risk. In 2014-15 annual funding for these services was \$6.6 million. These services work with young people to build their skills and abilities, enhance their strengths, develop their resilience, and connect them with appropriate services, family members and peers in their communities.

Youth at risk service

In addition to the above noted services, the Department also funds Mission Australia to operate the Youthbeat Inner City Outreach and Youth At Risk Strategy service. In 2014-15 annual funding for this program is \$0.8 million.

Youth counselling services

The Department funds community services sector organisations to provide seven youth counselling services. Youth counselling services employ a case management approach to the provision of counselling/mediation services to assist young people at risk, and their families, experiencing relationship or personal problems. Young people and their families are assisted to build on their skills and abilities, resolve conflict and find solutions to problems through discussion and mutual agreement. In 2014-15 annual funding for this program was \$1.6 million.

