

# Casework Support Program

## Program Specifications 2021-24

### WHAT IS THE CASEWORK SUPPORT PROGRAM AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

Youth Justice NSW (YJNSW) funds non-government organisations (Providers) to deliver the Casework Support Program (CSP) to young people being supervised by YJNSW. This includes those in the community, young people transitioning from custody into the community, and young people with a Youth Justice Conference (YJC) referral.

The CSP delivers socio-cultural and welfare-focused services to complement the offence-focused case management undertaken by YJNSW's staff to address offending behaviour. The CSP is focused on young people identified as needing additional support to achieve their YJNSW Case Plan goals<sup>1</sup> or YJC Outcome Plan. It is designed to address practical issues, such as:

- Income support and accommodation
- Returning to school
- Applying for work or training courses
- Attending medical or counselling appointments.

**It is important to emphasise here that the Casework Support Program complements and supports the work of Youth Justice NSW. CSP Workers must not discuss a young person's offending with them. This is the role of YJ NSW staff only. If a young person initiates a conversation, please advise them that it is something they must speak with their YJNSW Caseworker about and that CSP Workers have a different role.**

Each referral will have **CSP referral goals** which must directly link to the YJNSW case plan goals or YJC Outcome Plan. These goals must be developed in collaboration with the YJNSW

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<sup>1</sup> The YJNSW Case Plan goals are developed to address the criminogenic risks/needs that are identified as a result of the YLS/CMI-AA<sup>1</sup> (Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory – Australian Adaptation)<sup>1</sup> assessment conducted by YJNSW.

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caseworker, the young person, the young person’s family or carers (where appropriate) and the CSP worker at the **Intake Meeting**. The **CSP referral goals** must be reflective of any cultural-specific goals in the young person’s YJNSW case plan.

The CSP may provide up to 12 weeks of service but, if the **CSP referral goals** are achieved earlier, the referral can be finalised early. The referral can also be extended (for a short period e.g. up to 4 weeks), or the young person can be referred again if necessary. In addition, the referral can be temporarily put “on hold” if needed – e.g. in the instance where an Aboriginal young person may need a few weeks to deal with Sorry Business.

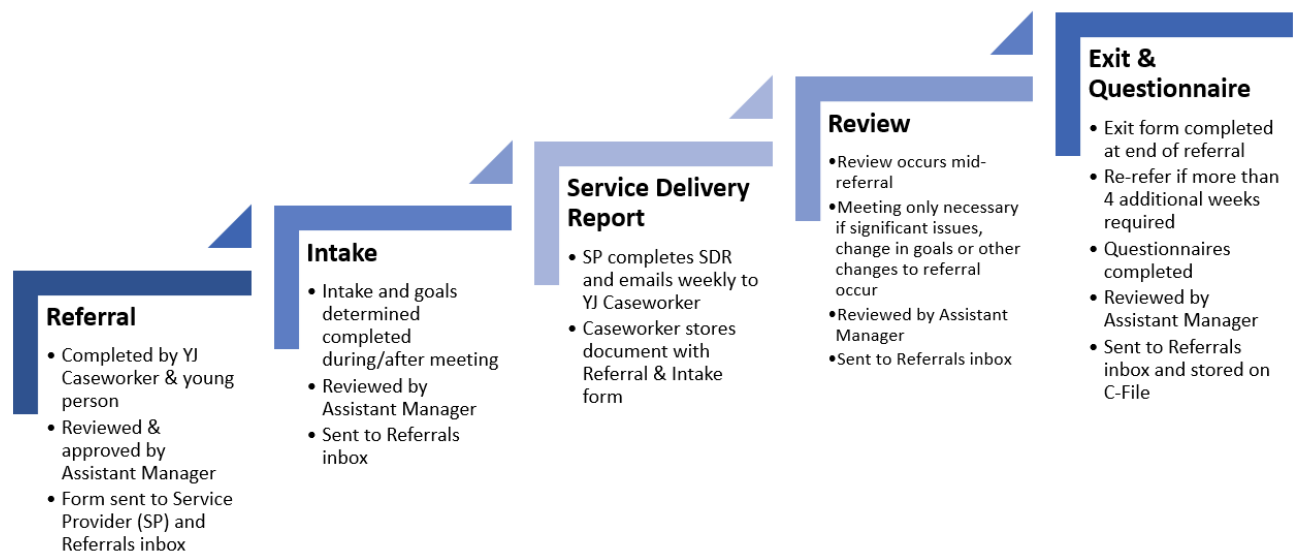


Figure 1: Flowchart of CSP Referral Process

Generally, it is expected that each CSP worker will have a caseload of 4 to 5 young people at any one time, with each receiving 4 to 6 hours direct Casework Support per week. **Direct Casework Support** includes meetings with the young person either in person or by audio-visual means, as well as time spent organising referrals and appointments. Program flexibility allows for the differing needs and circumstances of individual young people to be addressed through negotiation with the YJ Caseworker.

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The **Service Delivery Report** is completed by the Provider and submitted weekly to the YJNSW Caseworker. It details the work that has been done with the young person and progress towards achieving goals. It is expected that the Provider will detail frequency of contact with the young person, and any challenges or highlights for that week.

**The Provider is to discuss with the YJNSW Caseworker if they believe there is a need for further or additional assessment of the young person at any stage during the life of the referral.**

A **Referral Review** is completed around the half-way mark. It reviews the progress on goals, any achievements, and if changes to the goals are needed. A **Referral Review** meeting isn't necessary unless there is a significant change in the young person's circumstances, goals need to be revised, or other issues have been identified. If a meeting is necessary, this can be by phone or video call. The **Referral Review** should also be used by YJNSW Caseworker to obtain feedback from the young person regarding the services being provided.

Prior to the young person exiting the CSP, the YJNSW Caseworker will arrange an **Exit Meeting** with the young person, the CSP worker and the young person's family or carers. The purpose of the meeting is to confirm the **referral goals** achieved as well as to discuss if there is a need for a further referral to CSP and/or referrals to other services.

The **Exit Meeting** also provides an opportunity for feedback from the young person regarding the service provided by the CSP.

### WHAT OUTCOMES IS THE PROGRAM CONTRIBUTING TO?

YJNSW is responsible for delivering programs and services that contribute to the NSW State Outcome of *Reduce Reoffending*. Our current business plan identifies:

- Two areas of focus under the theme "*Safety and Wellbeing*":
  - Our staff feel safe, engaged and well at work
  - Young people in contact with Youth Justice feel safe and supported.

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- Three areas of focus under the theme “*Delivering Outcomes*”:
  - Reducing the number of young people who reoffend following a Youth Justice Conference, a custodial order, or a supervision order
  - Reducing the average daily number of Aboriginal young people in custody
  - Reducing the number of juvenile domestic violence reoffenders each year.

The CSP contributes to the delivery of these strategic priorities through facilitating access to services to support young people’s financial, educational, accommodation, cultural, health and employment needs as well as assisting with improving their community connections and support. The CSP also contributes indirectly to other State Outcomes (safer communities, active and inclusive communities, children and families thrive) and Premier’s Priorities (reducing DV reoffending, reducing recidivism in the prison population, protecting our most vulnerable children, reducing homelessness).

The effectiveness of the CSP will be demonstrated through the measurement of outcomes based on the seven domains of the Human Services Outcomes Framework (HSOF) (see figure 2). Aligning the CSP service delivery with the HSOF will assist YJNSW demonstrate the value of its services and help to inform future decisions in relation to services offered.



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Figure 2: Image taken from [https://www.finance.nsw.gov.au/human\\_services](https://www.finance.nsw.gov.au/human_services).

### PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. Aboriginal Cultural Responsivity

Aboriginal Cultural Responsivity refers to how individuals and organisations work and adapt to deliver and maintain culturally safe and effective practice for Aboriginal people. It includes the approaches we take in engaging with Aboriginal young people and how we act to embed what we learn in practice. It is the means by which we achieve, maintain and govern cultural safety.

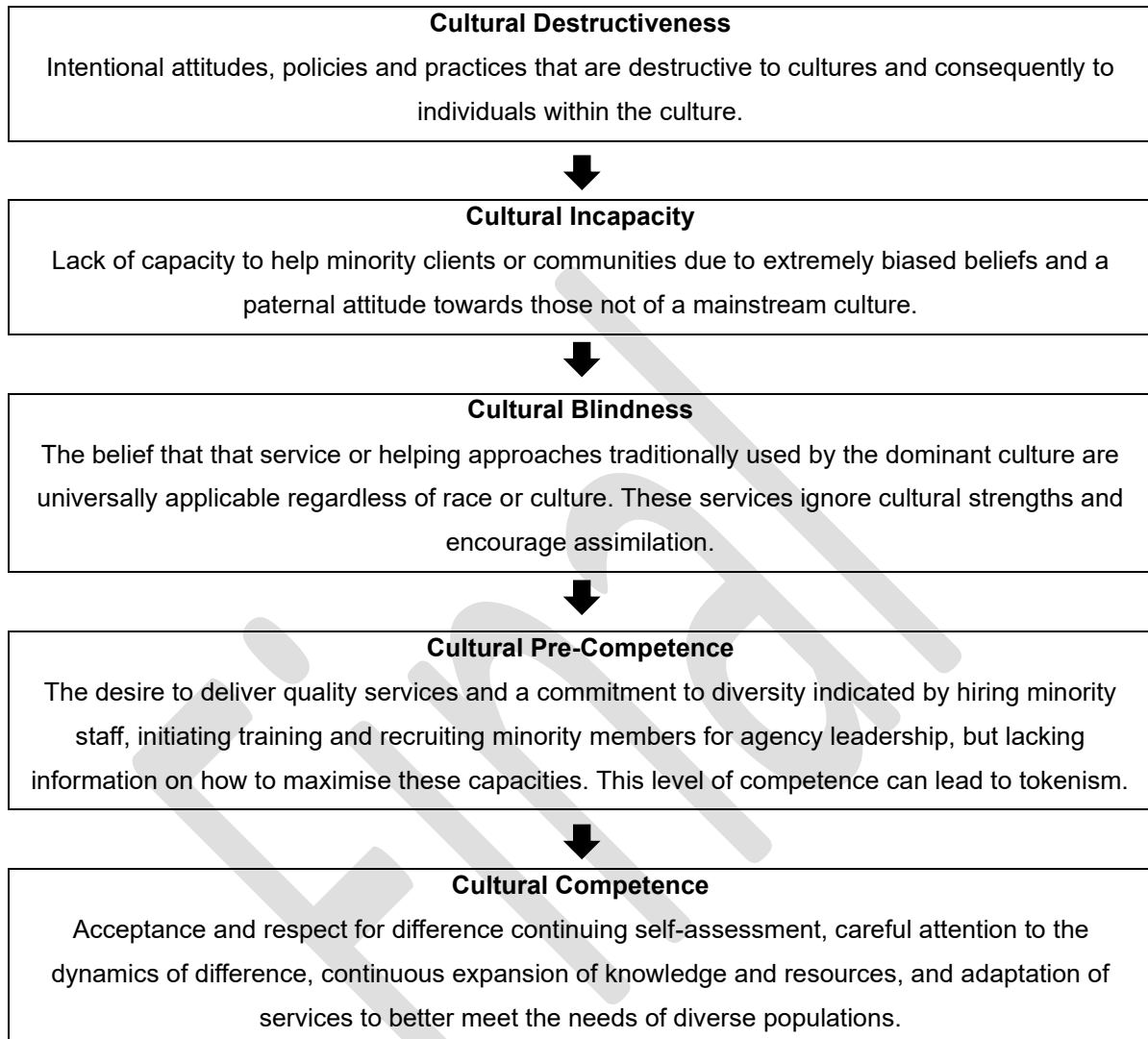
In 2019-20 Aboriginal young people made up more than half the referrals to the CSP, and in some locations were 100% of accepted referrals. To reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal young people in the YJNSW system there is a clear need to ensure the CSP is specifically designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal young people.

It is important to recognise the importance of cultural connection in our relationship and work with Aboriginal young people and their families. Young people's individual choices need to be respected and considered in their cultural journey.

To assist YJNSW staff and CSP providers to do their work in a way that is culturally responsive and supports cultural practice, the *Youth Justice Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Good Practice Guide, 2020* (the Good Practice Guide) has been developed. Cultural Competence can be viewed as a Continuum as outlined in the Good Practice Guide.

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## The Cultural Competence Continuum



*Source: Youth Justice Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Good Practice Guide, 2020, p.9-10*

The annual **Aboriginal Participation and Outcome Plan** is to be developed in collaboration with local YJNSW staff. The plan is to include measurable deliverables regarding working in partnership with local Aboriginal organisations and community groups to assist young people to achieve their cultural goals.

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The Provider will be responsible for fee for service payments to Aboriginal organisations and Aboriginal community members contributing to the achievement of CSP referral goals and cultural activities for the young people.

It is highly recommended that as part of the plan, Providers do a self-assessment as to where they think their organisation is placed along the Cultural Competence Continuum and what steps and actions will be taken to improve cultural competency, particularly at a local level.

**Performance Measures** regarding Aboriginal Cultural Responsivity (including cultural respect, cultural safety and cultural competency) are to be incorporated into the plan and will need to be met throughout the life of the Agreement.

Achievement will be assessed through evidence and examples provided in the Quarterly Management Reports submitted as part of the regular meetings with YJNSW, as well as feedback from young people and Youth Justice staff.

Examples of evidence may include:

Examples of Evidence of Aboriginal Cultural Responsivity
1. CSP staff participate in local Aboriginal cultural events of significance
2. YJNSW young people participate in cultural programs and activities with local Aboriginal organisations or community members
3. CSP staff network and collaborate with Aboriginal organisations and community members to develop local culture knowledge and ensure culturally appropriate service delivery
4. There is an Aboriginal Employment Strategy that has increased the number and retention of Aboriginal staff across all levels of the organisation (including Board of Management)
5. Involvement in interagency meetings, Youth Justice Aboriginal Community Consultative Committees (if applicable), or other consultations with Aboriginal community organisations
6. There are organisational policies, strategies and ongoing learning and development initiatives regarding cultural respect, cultural safety and cultural competency

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### 2. Responsivity to the Diverse Needs of Young People

Providers are to be outcomes-focused in meeting the needs of young people and be responsive to their individual circumstances. As an integral part of core service delivery, strategies are to be in place to ensure the needs of young people are met, regardless of background, gender, disability and sexual preference.

An annual **Equity Plan** is to be developed in collaboration with local YJNSW staff. A report on the achievements of the Equity Plan is required every six months as part of the regular meetings with YJNSW staff.

The purpose of the Equity Plan is to outline how the service will meet individual needs of young people, including:

- **Young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.** Providers are required to be sensitive to the needs and requirements of young people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds. In areas where young people come from CALD backgrounds, Providers are expected to engage with local CALD organisations to focus on improving the cultural identity and belonging for those young people.
- **Young people with disabilities** – Providers must identify young people with a disability and provide appropriate supports and services, including young person's engagement and participation in the NDIS. Further, programs, activities and interventions are inclusive of young people with disabilities to participate.
- **Girls and young women** – have equitable access to a full range of services, programs, activities and interventions appropriate to their needs, and Providers are inclusive and enable their participation. Providers are to work with specialist services, such as mental health, trauma counselling, domestic and family services, specialist homelessness, and drug and alcohol services.

**LGBTQI+** – inclusive policies are to be in place for working with gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual people. It is important to identify and engage with local LGBTQI services and networks to improve LGBTQI identity and belonging



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for those young people. This can include meeting and interacting with other LGBTQI people to develop a sense of community, connecting with other LGBTQI people, and assist with feelings of isolation and loneliness. This is particularly relevant in rural areas where young people may experience feelings of isolation, lack of social acceptance and lack of visibility. In some cases, young people may need assistance with contacting these services. In cases where there may not be a local network, Providers should provide information about services in metropolitan areas that will provide phone support.

**Performance Measures** regarding the Responsivity to the Diverse Needs of Young People are to be incorporated into the plan and will need to be met throughout the life of the Agreement.

Achievement will be assessed through evidence and examples provided in the Quarterly Management Reports submitted as part of the regular meetings with YJNSW, as well as feedback from young people and Youth Justice staff.

Examples of evidence may include:

Examples of Evidence of Responsivity to the Diverse Needs of Young People
1. Involvement in interagency meetings and linkages with community organisations that provide specific services to meet the diverse needs of young people
2. CSP staff actively network and collaborate with key organisations to develop strong linkages and appropriate service delivery
3. Young people are supported where appropriate to participate in programs and activities with local organisations to address their specific needs e.g. Women's Health Centres, Disability Programs, NDIS, Multicultural and LGBTQI+ Groups and Networks.
4. Young people are provided with details of appropriate services and events e.g. available resources, services, local organisations, websites to assist.
5. There are organisational policies, strategies and learning and development initiatives regarding meeting the needs of girls and young women; Young People with Disabilities, CALD backgrounds and LGBTQI+

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### **3. Listening and responding to the Voice of Young People participating in CSP**

Engagement with young people, their families and carers is key to understanding what is important to them, how they make and act on decisions in everyday life, and what influences those decisions.

Listening and responding to the voice of young people is critical for designing and implementing services that better meet young people's needs. Importantly, by involving young people, we can empower and support them to shape and influence their own lives and the services they access.

Feedback can be obtained through consulting, involving or collaborating with young people and their families and carers, using various methods of engagement including: surveys (on-line or paper); interviews (on-line, phone or face-to-face); focus groups; workshops; submissions and codesign.

As part of the regular meetings with YJNSW staff, Providers will need to provide evidence of how they have sought feedback from young people referred to CSP and provide examples of how this feedback has informed and changed service delivery.

### **4. Service staffing**

Each caseworker is required to have the minimum qualifications or experience of a Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHADS) Modern Award, Social and Community Services employee level 4 Paypoint 4. Section B.4.3 of the Award outlines the qualifications and/or skills and experience required for a Casework Support Worker. Please see the Glossary for a full definition.

Wherever possible, the staff mix should reflect the cultural mix of the Service Area i.e. an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, or other cultural groups that are prevalent in the area where services are provided.

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Staff must have the capacity to work closely with YJNSW Caseworkers to achieve **CSP Referral goals** and provide a quality service to the young person.

Staff must be provided with regular professional development, training and supervision to ensure a high standard of service delivery. Cultural competency training should be undertaken by all staff to ensure the cultural needs of young people and their families are met.

### CASEWORK SUPPORT PROGRAM DELIVERABLES

#### Key Performance Measures

The CSP will be measured against state-wide standards and performance measures that Providers are required to meet including:

CSP Key Performance Measures	Targets Frequency
Percentage of accepted referrals	90%
Percentage of young people accepted into CSP who received the service	80%
Percentage of CSP Referral Goals achieved	80%
Frequency of contact per young person	Average Weekly
Satisfactory submission and review of <b>Quarterly Management Report</b> at the meetings with YJNSW Area Managers	Quarterly
Evidence of obtaining and acting on feedback from young people	Quarterly
Evidence of successful completion/achievement of outcomes identified and agreed ' <i>Aboriginal Participation &amp; Outcome Plan</i> '	Quarterly
Evidence of successful completion/achievement of outcomes identified and agreed ' <i>Equity Plan</i> '	Quarterly
Submission and approval of ' <i>Aboriginal Participation &amp; Outcome Plan</i> '	Annually
Submission and approval of ' <i>Equity Plan</i> '	Annually

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Satisfactory completion of Funded Services Annual Performance Report	Annually
Reporting and other requirements are met as requested	100%

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
<b>Aboriginal Cultural Responsivity</b>	Aboriginal Cultural Responsivity refers to how individuals and organisations work and adapt to deliver and maintain culturally safe and effective practice for Aboriginal people. It includes the approaches we take in engaging with Aboriginal young people and how we act to embed what we learn in practice. It is the means by which we achieve, maintain and govern cultural safety.
<b>Aboriginal Participation and Outcome Plan</b>	<p>The plan is completed annually in collaboration with YJNSW local staff. The plan must include measurable deliverables regarding working in partnership with local Aboriginal organisations and community groups.</p> <p>A report on the achievements (including evidence) relate to the plan activities is to be submitted as part of the regular meetings with YJNSW staff. The format of the plan and report will be developed and provided by YJNSW.</p>
<b>Annual Performance Report</b>	The format of the report will be developed and provided by YJNSW.

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<p><b>Casework Support Program (CSP)</b></p>	<p>YJNSW funds non-government organisations (Providers) to deliver the Casework Support Program (CSP) to young people being supervised by YJNSW. This includes those in the community, young people transitioning from custody into the community, and young people with a Youth Justice Conference (YJC) referral.</p> <p>The CSP delivers socio-cultural and welfare-focused services to complement the offence-focused case management undertaken by YJNSW's staff to address offending behaviour.</p> <p>The CSP is focused on young people identified as needing additional support to achieve their YJNSW Case Plan goals or YJC Outcome Plan. It is designed to address practical issues, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income support and accommodation</li> <li>• Returning to school</li> <li>• Applying for work or training courses</li> <li>• Attending medical or counselling appointments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CSP Referral goals</b></p>	<p>Goals which directly link to the YJNSW case plan goals or YJC Outcome Plan. These goals must be developed in collaboration with the YJNSW caseworker, the young person, the young person's family or carers and the CSP worker at the Intake Meeting. These goals need to adhere to SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) principles.</p>
<p><b>Cultural Blindness</b></p>	<p>The belief that that service or helping approaches traditionally used by the dominant culture are universally applicable regardless of race or culture. These services ignore cultural strengths and encourage assimilation.</p>

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<b>Cultural Competence</b>	Acceptance and respect for difference continuing self-assessment, careful attention to the dynamics of difference, continuous expansion of knowledge and resources, and adaptation of services to better meet the needs of diverse populations.
<b>Cultural Destructiveness</b>	Intentional attitudes, policies and practices that are destructive to cultures and consequently to individuals within the culture.
<b>Cultural Incapacity</b>	Lack of capacity to help minority clients or communities due to extremely biased beliefs and a paternal attitude towards those not of a mainstream culture.
<b>Cultural Pre-Competence</b>	The desire to deliver quality services and a commitment to diversity indicated by hiring minority staff, initiating training and recruiting minority members for agency leadership, but lacking information on how to maximise these capacities. This level of competence can lead to tokenism.
<b>Direct Casework Support</b>	Direct Casework Support includes meetings with the young person either, in person or by audio-visual means, as well as time spent organising referrals and appointments
<b>Equity Plan</b>	<p>The Equity Plan is to outline how the Provider will meet the individual needs of young people, including: Young people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Backgrounds; Young People with disabilities; Girls and Young Women; and LGBTQI+.</p> <p>The Equity Plan is to be completed each year in collaboration with local YJNSW staff. A report on the achievements of the plan is required every six months as part of the regular meetings with YJNSW staff. The format of the plan and report will be developed and provided by YJNSW.</p>

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<b>Exit Meeting</b>	Meeting arranged by the YJNSW Caseworker with young person, their family or carers and the CSP worker at completion of the referral.
<b>Intake Meeting</b>	<p>Meeting with YJNSW Caseworker, young person and their family/carer, and the Providers held to discuss and agree on the CSP referral goals after receipt of the referral.</p> <p>It is important to seek agreement about the goals and time frames at this meeting and ensure everyone understands the referral goals.</p>
<b>Program Flexibility</b>	Program flexibility allows for the differing needs and circumstances of individual young people to be addressed through negotiation with the YJ Caseworker. It allows for a flexible approach towards the timing and length of referrals to assist meet the young person's needs and goals.
<b>Quarterly Management Report</b>	A management report provided to YJNSW Area Manager and includes a summary of the referrals received and accepted, reporting on the Aboriginal Participation and Outcome Plan and the Equity Plan as well as any management or procedural issues.
<b>Referral Review</b>	<p>Reviews the progress of goals, any achievements, and if changes are needed. A Referral Review meeting does not need to occur unless there is a significant change to the young person's circumstances, goals need to be revised, or other issues have been identified.</p> <p>The Referral Review should also be used by the YJNSW Caseworker to obtain feedback from the young person regarding the services being provided.</p>

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<p><b>SCHADS Modern Award</b></p>	<p>The CSP Provider must engage staff with expertise in working with adolescents, preferably adolescents with complex needs, with the minimum qualifications or experience of a Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHADS) Modern Award, Social and community services employee level 4 Paypoint 4.</p> <p><b>Section B.4.3 of the Award is as follows</b></p> <p><b>Requirements of the position</b></p> <p><b>a) Skills, knowledge, experience, qualifications and/or training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. knowledge of statutory requirements relevant to work;</li> <li>ii. knowledge of organisational programs, policies and activities;</li> <li>iii. sound discipline knowledge gained through experience, training or education;</li> <li>iv. knowledge of the role of the organisation and its structure and service;</li> <li>v. specialists require an understanding of the underlying principles in the discipline.</li> </ul> <p><b>b) Prerequisites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. relevant four-year degree with one-year relevant experience;</li> <li>ii. three-year degree with two years of relevant experience;</li> <li>iii. associate diploma with relevant experience;</li> <li>iv. lesser formal qualifications with substantial years of relevant experience; or</li> </ul>
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	<p>v. attained through previous appointments, service and/or study, an equivalent level of expertise and experience to undertake a range of activities</p>
<b>Service Delivery Report</b>	<p>Is completed by the Provider and submitted weekly to the YJNSW Caseworker. It details the work that has been done with the young person and progress towards achieving goals. It is expected that the Provider will detail frequency of contact with the young person, and any challenges or highlights for that week.</p>
<b>YJ Case Plan</b>	<p>Goals that are developed to address the criminogenic risks/needs that are identified as a result of the YLS/CMI-AA (Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory – Australian Adaptation) assessment conducted by YJNSW.</p>

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Final