



Government of Western Australia
Mental Health Commission

Young People Priorities Framework Consultation with Department of Education

Wednesday, 28 October 2020; 9:30am – 10:30am

MS Teams/ MHC, Gascoyne Meeting Room, 1 Nash Street, Perth

Objective of the Consultation

To discuss the development and progress of the Young People Priority Framework (YPPF).

Attendees

Kim Lazenby, Mental Health Commission (MHC)
Amanda Hughes, MHC
Leanne Pizzino, MHC
Catherine Shepherd, Department of Education
Ian Anderson, Western Australian Primary Principals' Association
Julia Moore (proxy for Rebecca Collopy), Independent Education Union of Australia
Pania Turner, Western Australian Council of State School Organisations
Armando Giglia, Western Australian Secondary School Executives Association
Pat Byrne, State School Teachers' Union of WA
Michael Norman, YouthCARE
Liesil Mahood, YouthCARE

Apologies

Natalie Hatton
Bevan Ripp
James Milne

Introduction

- Both the Western Australian Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015 – 2025, and the Commissioner for Children and Young People's (CCYP) 'Our Children Can't Wait' report from 2015, highlighted the need to improve services available to support young people with mental health and/or alcohol and other drug (AOD) issues. Young People are identified as a priority cohort in the [WA State Priorities Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs 2020 – 2024](#) document released by the Minister for Mental Health in March 2020.
- According to the [WA COVID-19 Recovery Framework](#) published by Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) in August 2020, mental health is the issue of greatest concern to young Western Australians, with 88% of all survey respondents saying they were concerned about their mental health.

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Western Australia.*

- In response to growing community concerns and expectations of urgent action, the Mental Health Commission (MHC) is developing a Framework to guide the mental health and AOD sector, and State Government agencies, in supporting and responding to the mental health and AOD needs of young people aged 12 to 24 years. This Framework will inform the development of new initiatives for investment and consideration by Government and new ways of working across existing services to achieve better outcomes for young people.
- The Framework will build on existing knowledge, modelling and reports, and to update this by consulting with young people and their families and carers, clinicians, service providers and other relevant stakeholders and updating data wherever possible.
- The Framework aims to address the mental health and AOD service system from prevention and early intervention, through to more acute treatment within the hospital setting. This includes considering the primary care setting and services for young people.
- There is a considerable body of knowledge from a wide range of reviews, surveys and reports that highlight gaps in the system and suggested solutions to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people. The MHC will use this body of knowledge as a basis for further stakeholder engagement to gain a consistent, clear and current understanding of the issues and gaps and prioritise suggested responses.
- The **Young People Priority Framework** is planned to be completed and released by the end of 2020. More detailed implementation planning for the Framework will be ongoing during the life of the Framework.
- MHC will be considering the needs of children under 12 years in 2021.
- YACWA shared key insights from work undertaken through direct engagement with young people. Accessibility to services (clearly demand is not fully met); lack of services in regional and remote areas; parenting and early intervention services is a key requirement; and there is a high need for skill training and development. This report will be available on the MHC website in conjunction with the Framework.

This report is a summary of the discussions and is not intended to be a verbatim record.

Summary of discussion

- Would like to note the importance of mental health literacy to be communicated to parents of students.
- Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP) Speaking Out Survey found there is a need to support young people in schools.
- Mental health issues have been rising in the past 7-8 years, hard to tell what is COVID related; school leavers and other young people are not as resilient as they used to be.
- Seeing mental health issues in primary school children, years 4-6; a system is not in place to support these young children.
- Agencies don't have processes in place to support children and this can lead to behavioural problems in young people; collaboration between agencies is vital, not just government agencies, all agencies need to work together.
- These issues are exacerbated outside the metropolitan area.
- How will the increase in mental health issues for young age be addressed in the teaching system? What support is being provided to teachers in the classroom who are teaching these young people so that teachers can identify problems early?
- Early intervention and good support structures are required e.g. psychologist; social workers etc, together with well trained logistics and support staff.
- We have a deficit-based model and education support staff (e.g. education assistants) need to be well trained in best practice support.
- Mental health first aid training involving the whole school community is an example of good practice. A specific school forum looking at mental health may also be useful.
- Feedback from parents or families is that they struggle to cope with young people's behaviour.
- Some attendees were more concerned about year 10-11 students than year 12 students. Year 12 students have had lots of support and are in a good space. However, this year has been disruptive for everyone due to COVID-19, and year 11 is a foundation year for year 12; more support in schools for students in year 10 and 11 is needed; this includes in-school careers officers, to show young people the pathway ahead.
- Refer to the Shergold report – *Looking to the Future: Report of the review of senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training*.
- To help students cope with COVID-19 impacts, we need to help give them agency/take power back so that they can face the reality of the COVID-19 environment and economy; schools need to give young people a voice and control so that they can build resilience; to do this, schools need to be well equipped and supported.
- Need to target mental health literacy.