



Australian Government

**Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**

**FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM
FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
Part C: Youth in Communities**

Preface

The Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA or the Department) has a suite of Program Guidelines which provide information relating to the Family Support Program (the Program). They provide the key starting point for parties considering whether to participate in the Program and form the basis for the business relationship between FaHCSIA and the funding recipient.

They are:

- **Part A: Program Guidelines** which provides an overview of the Program and the Activities relating to the program.
- **Part B: Information for Applicants** which provides information on the Application, Assessment, Selection and Complaints processes; and Financial and Funding Agreement arrangements.
- **Part C: Application Information** provides specific information on the Activity, Selection Criteria, Performance Management and Reporting. This part should be read in conjunction with the [Terms and Conditions](#) – Standard Funding Agreement.
- The **Application Form** which is completed by applicants applying for funding during a selection process.

FaHCSIA reserves the right to amend these documents from time to time by whatever means it may determine in its absolute discretion and will provide reasonable notice of these amendments.

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Program Overview

The Australian Government helps to support families, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged families, to improve child wellbeing and development, safety and family functioning through the provision of integrated support services.

The Family Support Program (FSP) funds a range of non-government organisations to provide preventative and early intervention services, support focussing on family relationships, and parenting and a range of family law services to help navigate life's transitions and to help families who are vulnerable to poor outcomes to build their resources and capabilities to enable more positive family functioning.

The FSP provides broad-based services that complement other Australian Government programs such as family payments and child care. The FSP also provides more intensive assistance in disadvantaged areas that complements the important roles of other programs and agencies, including the statutory responsibility for child protection held by state and territory governments.

The FSP comprises the following two streams:

The **Family and Children's Services** stream aims to provide services to families, particularly those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged or in disadvantaged communities to improve family functioning, safety and child wellbeing and development.

The **Family Law Services** stream aims to provide alternatives to formal legal processes for families who are separated, separating or in dispute to improve their relationships in the best interests of children. These services are funded through the Attorney-General's Department.

1.1 **Program Outcomes**

All FSP services work towards the following objective:

- To provide integrated services for families, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged families, to improve child wellbeing and development, safety and family functioning.

To achieve this, the following five outcomes are relevant¹:

- Families function well in nurturing and safe environments.
- Children and families have the knowledge and skills for life and learning.
- Families, including children, especially those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, benefit from better social inclusion and reduced disadvantage.
- Organisations provide integrated services and work in collaboration with other services and the community.
- Services focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged families and children.

1.2 **Aims and objectives**

The FSP aims to provide integrated services for families, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged families, to improve child wellbeing and development, safety and family functioning, and to help build stronger, more resilient families and communities. To achieve this aim, FSP services must have an emphasis on family, be child focussed and work as part of a collaborative service delivery system with links across FSP providers and the broader sector to provide an integrated suite of local services.

For more information refer to **Part A** of the Family Support Program Guidelines **Section 1.2 Program Aims and Objectives**.

¹ These outcomes have been developed with reference to a range of documents, including the FaHCSIA Portfolio Budget Statement; *Protecting Children is Everyone's Business – The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020*; *Investing in the Early Years – A National Early Childhood Development Strategy, Time for Action – The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2009-2021*; *The National Compact – Working Together Between the Commonwealth and the Non-profit Sector*; *Closing the Gap*; and *The Social Inclusion Agenda*.
Family Support Program Guidelines
PART C: Youth in Communities
Version V1- May 2012

2 Activity Overview

Youth in Communities funding is provided directly to individual services to deliver early intervention, prevention and diversionary initiatives in the Northern Territory for young Indigenous people who are at risk of: substance misuse, suicide or intentional self-harm, entering or re-entering the criminal justice system and disengaging with education, training or employment. Services are directed towards improving life choices and outcomes for young people through engaging youth in positive activities that improve resilience and promote pathways to better health and wellbeing, education and employment.

Services promote strong peer and family relationships, improved personal capacity, self-esteem and resilience, improved social connections, reduced isolation, improved support and educational outcomes. They also assist young people who experience barriers to accessing other community resources.

Organisations are funded to meet community needs, building on community strengths, organisations' networks and resources, and making use of strong evidence of what works in early intervention and prevention. Youth in Communities activities allow for tailored approaches at a local level so communities can develop flexible and innovative approaches that best reflect their circumstances.

The following activities are delivered under Youth in Communities:

Youth Workers and Indigenous Youth Worker Trainees

The scope of projects to be funded under this element could include the employment of full-time workers, part-time trainees and the costs of employing, training and supervising locally engaged Indigenous people in youth work. The appointment of regionally based workers in Shire Councils, or the placement of youth workers in NT government departments, may also be considered as suitable projects for funding.

Youth Focused Activities

Where practicable, activities will be funded in conjunction with the employment of the local youth workers.

Youth Focussed Activities provide a wide range of holistic activities for young Indigenous people that focus on improving life choices and outcomes for young Indigenous people by engaging youth in positive activities that improve resilience and promote pathways to better health and wellbeing, education and employment.

Youth Focussed Activities in scope include the provision of services that:

- improve the health and wellbeing of young people through; promoting strong peer and family relationships; improving personal capacity, self-esteem, resilience and social connections; education and awareness training in healthy eating and personal care, conflict resolution/mediation, social media, drug and alcohol and suicide/self-harm prevention;
- provide targeted diversion activities and case management for young people at risk of entering/re-entering the criminal justice system and support provision of improved pathways for youth returning from juvenile detention, drug and alcohol rehabilitation services;
- improve educational outcomes for young people through supporting education/training/employment pathways and providing case management and support services to young people at risk of disconnecting with school; and
- build on youth leadership and mentoring skills through supporting strong relationships with leaders and elders, supporting family connections and participation in cultural activities.

Where possible, an effort should be made to improve case management and referral services to Indigenous young people, especially those at risk of disconnecting with school, offending or reoffending, suicide and self-harm, and alcohol or substance abuse.

Service providers will be required to develop local youth plans that identify local service needs for youth and map benchmarks relevant to each community/target group.

Funding under Youth in Communities may also be provided for research to build the evidence base or resource development to educate young people and their families in relation to drugs and alcohol, healthy eating, personal care and wellbeing; youth leadership and mentoring, cultural activities and conflict resolution/mediation.

2.1 *Aims and objectives*

Key objectives are to improve life choices and outcomes for young people by aiming to:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of young people through targeted diversion activities and education, awareness and training initiatives;
- Improve and support educational outcomes for young people;
- Build on youth leadership and mentoring skills, supporting strong relationships with leaders and elders, family connections and participation in cultural activities;
- Provide targeted diversion activities and case management for young people at risk of substance misuse, suicide or intentional self-harm, entering or re-entering the criminal justice system and disengaging with education, training or employment.
- Reduce the impact of barriers relating to isolation by providing appropriate referrals and assistance that meet the needs of young people and support a linked up and holistic approach to accessing community resources and services; and
- Support the delivery of youth services through the employment and training of youth workers and Indigenous youth worker trainees.

2.2 *Participants/clients/recipients/target group*

Participants and clients include young people in urban and remote communities in the Northern Territory who are at risk of substance misuse, suicide or intentional self-harm, entering or re-entering the criminal justice system and disengaging with education, training or employment. Youth in Communities services are aimed at young Indigenous people aged 10-20; however, relevant strategies are delivered to support services for both the younger and older cohorts of young people.

Indigenous clients represent a specific target group because of the Australian Government's commitment to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage. Closing the Gap is a national priority and progress towards achievement of the six closing the gap targets is being monitored by the Council of Australian Government (COAG).

Service providers are therefore required to ensure Indigenous Australians are a priority consideration in the development and delivery of their services. It is also necessary for service providers delivering activities and services under Youth in Communities to develop different approaches, emphases and focus to meet the needs of young people in individual communities and appropriately target both girls and boys (young men and young women).

2.3 **Service provider eligibility**

The following entity types are eligible to apply for funding for this activity:

- a) Incorporated Associations (incorporated under State/Territory legislation, commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc' in their legal name);
- b) Incorporated Cooperatives (also incorporated under State/Territory legislation, commonly have "Cooperative" in their legal name);
- c) Companies (incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* –not-for-profit proprietary company (limited by shares or by guarantee) or public companies);
- d) Aboriginal Corporations (incorporated under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*);
- e) Organisations established through a specific piece of Commonwealth or State/Territory legislation (many public benevolent institutions, churches, universities, unions etc);
- f) Partnerships ;
- g) Trustees on behalf of a Trust; and
- h) Local Governments.

2.4 **Funding for the activity**

The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has overall responsibility for Youth in Communities.

Where the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) has invited applications for funding, the final decision about Activity Delivery Areas, sites and proposals for service delivery will be made by the Minister.

Funding for the Youth in Communities will involve a two staged process.

To ensure continuity of services currently delivered under Youth in Communities during the transition to a facilitating partner model, existing service providers will be invited to apply for funding for a period of up to two years (2012-2014). A total of \$10 million is available per year. When applying for funding, applicants should take into account that it is anticipated the service delivery footprint for Youth in Communities will be at a similar level to previous years.

Youth in Communities will transition into a new funding model in 2014/15, and the period of funding for future activities will be reviewed. To align with the Australian Government's directions under Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory, future funding arrangements for Youth in Communities will be progressively transitioned into a remote Communities for Children funding model from 2014/15.

Funding periods for future activities will be reviewed as part of the transition into the new funding model. State or Territory FaHCSIA officers will negotiate funding agreements in consultation with preferred applicants based on the outcomes of selection processes.

2.5 **Eligible activities**

Development and delivery of Youth in Communities services may be based on the following types of activities / areas of needs:

- Information and Referral;
- Counseling;
- Resource Development;
- Support;
- Intake and assessment;
- Social inclusion;
- Education and Skills Training;
- Outreach and Home Visits;
- Coordination; and
- Community Capacity Building and Development.

Services should have a particular focus on vulnerable young people (refer to Vulnerability - **Part A** of the Family Support Program Guidelines **Section 6 - Program Glossary**).

For definitions and further information on eligible activities, please see **Part A** of the Family Support Program Guidelines **Section 6 - Program Glossary**.

2.6 **Fees**

Unless an exemption has been granted by the Department, Youth in Communities must be provided free of charge.

2.7 **Information, Support and Referral**

Youth in Communities service providers must:

- Support “one contact” or information exchange to minimise the number of times clients are required to provide personal information or retell their story;
- Ensure vulnerable clients receive greater levels of active assistance to engage additional services which may take the form of warm or supported referrals (where for example clients are accompanied to their first appointment); and
- Provide explanations and examples to clients during intake sessions of the circumstances where additional services may be engaged without client consent (for example in cases of suspected child abuse).

Information and referral processes must take into account how the service is delivered (eg face to face, telephone and/or online), the support sought from the service (eg seeking information or wishing for more in-depth services) and the skill level of staff interacting with youth (eg point-of-first-contact staff, support workers and practitioners, etc).

Youth in Communities service providers are expected to collaborate with other agencies for example other FSP providers, local schools, Northern Territory Government departments, community groups, and other organisations that support the community.

2.8 **Activity links and working with other agencies and services**

Effective links with other agencies and services provide the opportunity to raise awareness broadly and on specific issues. Youth in Communities service providers must build and maintain effective relationships with a broad network of services.

Youth in Communities service providers are expected to collaborate with other FSP providers, local schools, Northern Territory Government departments, community groups, and other organisations that support the community.

2.9 **Specialist requirements (e.g. Legislative requirements)**

Youth in Communities service providers must comply with all relevant State, Territory, and Commonwealth legislation.

2.10 **Information technology**

The service provider is expected to have systems in place to allow them to meet their data collection and reporting obligations.

2.11 **Performance management and evaluation**

Service providers are encouraged to undertake internal evaluations of their own accord in order to promote quality service delivery. FaHCSIA periodically undertakes evaluations and reviews to ensure services are high quality, effective, efficient and appropriately targeted to the needs of children and their families. FaHCSIA will notify funding recipients of:

- The intention to conduct an evaluation;
- The purpose of the evaluation;
- Who is conducting the evaluation;
- The time frame in which it is to be conducted; and
- Any involvement sought from the service provider.

Further information on performance management and evaluation is available in Part A of the Family Support Program Guidelines **Section 4.2 Research and evaluation** and the FaHCSIA Standard Funding Agreement Terms and Conditions available at <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/grantsfunding/general/Pages/default.aspx>.

2.12 **Activity performance and reporting**

The purpose of the Performance Framework (Framework) is to define a consistent approach to monitoring and reporting performance across the FSP – drawing on a common set of high-level results and performance indicators.

The FSP Framework was implemented from July 2011. The Framework asks four key questions about service delivery:

- Did we make a lasting difference? (intermediate outcomes/impacts);
- Did we make an immediate difference? (immediate outcomes/impacts);
- How well have we done it? (service delivery quality); and
- How much did we do? (service outputs).

Much of the data required under the Framework is collected from Youth in Communities performance reports provided by funding recipients to the Department. Collection of new data where required will be phased in and some data may be collected through occasional surveys.

The reporting for Youth in Communities will be required at minimum on a quarterly basis. A template will be provided to providers to assist with streamlining reporting requirements.

Service Providers will be required to develop local youth plans that identify local service needs for youth and map benchmarks relevant to each community/target group.

For more information on performance and reporting requirements the service provider should refer to the Family Support Program Performance Framework Service Provider Help Guide available at www.fahcsia.gov.au.

Further information on performance management and evaluation is available in **Part A** of the Family Support Program Guidelines **Section 4.2 Research and evaluation** and the FaHCSIA

3 Application Process

3.1 Overview of the Application Process

To ensure continuity of services currently delivered under Youth in Communities during the transition to a facilitating partner model, existing service providers will be invited to apply for funding for a period of up to two years (2012-2014).

The process will be a direct selection process. A direct selection process is where an approach is made directly to an existing, high performing provider to expand their current service delivery activities or deliver new services. It involves assessment of provider's current performance and an assessment of a provider's capacity to deliver an expanded service or capability to deliver a new service through use of selection criteria.

The funding period will be for a period of up to two years (2012-2014). Youth in Communities program will transition into a new funding model in 2014/15, and the period of funding for future activities will be reviewed. State or Territory FaHCSIA officers will negotiate funding agreements in consultation with preferred applicants based on the outcomes of selection processes.

More information on the types of selection processes can be found in **Part B** of the Family Support Program Guidelines 'Information for Applicants'.

FaHCSIA will assess applicants for funding primarily on the basis of the information provided in the Application Form. FaHCSIA *may* use information about an applicant that is, or becomes known to FaHCSIA in the course of FaHCSIA's business, as well as any publicly available information.

Decisions on the parameters and methodology for assessment of applications will be final.

Following the application Closing Date, the Department will assess all applications. Applications will be assessed using the equally weighted criteria in section 3.2.

Applicants may expect to be informed on the outcome of the process within three weeks of the Closing Date.²

3.2 Selection Criteria

3.2.1 Describe how your proposed service delivery model will appropriately meet the Youth in Communities aims and objectives

Describe how the service model proposed:

- Is evidence informed and outcomes focused;
- Provides for ongoing assessment and review to ensure the activities being undertaken continue to achieve the desired outcomes for the full period of the funding agreement;
- Demonstrates an awareness of the specific needs of the target group and or the community in which the service is to be delivered; and
- Provides for linkages and collaboration with other organisations and service providers.

² It is anticipated that this is the maximum period of time and applicants may be advised earlier.

- Realistically addressed delivery constraints, risks and incorporates flexibility in delivery consistent with achieving outcomes being the primary objective

(These dot points are provided as suggestions to assist you to develop your responses)

3.2.2 Demonstrated experience or demonstrated capability in providing quality and culturally competent services for families, young people and children

- Provide details of your organisation's experience in managing this type of program.
- Provide details of how your organisation maintains a credible record of good governance, efficient service delivery and effective stakeholder relationship management and a sound record for collaboration.
- Provide details of how your organisation engages with the community when planning and delivering services.

(These dot points are provided as suggestions to assist you to develop your responses)

3.2.3 Demonstrated expertise and qualifications of staff to achieve quality outcomes in delivering services to the target group for Youth in Communities

- Describe how employees of the organisation are to be appropriately skilled and competent to undertake the required work. Where appropriate and required, the organisation invests in training, development and employment of Indigenous workers.

(These dot points are provided as suggestions to assist you to develop your responses)

3.2.4 Demonstrated ability of your organisation to manage programs/services to a high standard and to achieve quality outcomes for Youth in Communities target group

- Describe how the organisation will work with FaHCSIA to ensure the agreed activity meets the objectives, with demonstrated ability to manage, deliver and report on the project.

(These dot points are provided as suggestions to assist you to develop your responses)

3.3 How to submit an application

To apply for selection under this process, applicants will need to complete the application form and respond to selection criteria as detailed at above. Applications must be received by the closing date and time as detailed at 3.6 below.

Applications are to be submitted by email, please refer to the contact information provided at section 5 below.

The Department will not issue Application Forms or accept completed applications by fax.

3.4 Questions and Answers during the Application period

The Department will only respond to requests for information that seek clarification of issues to allow them to better understand the requirements of the Application Form and Program Guidelines.

To apply for selection under this process, applicants will need to complete the application form and respond to selection criteria as detailed above. Applications must be received by the closing date and time.

3.5 Questions after the application period

The Department will *not* accept or respond to any applicant's requests for information or correspondence about the status or progress of their application during the assessment phase.

3.6 Closing date and time

Applications will open on 29 May 2012 and close on 15 June 2012 at 2pm AEST. The applications must be received by FaHCSIA within the application period to be considered.

3.7 Application Acknowledgement

Unless prior agreement has been reached with FaHCSIA an application will not be considered until it is received by FaHCSIA. The applicant will receive email notification from FaHCSIA within 24 hours of an application being lodged correctly. If the applicant has not received notification in this timeframe, the applicant should contact FaHCSIA to confirm that the form has been lodged correctly.

4 Contact information

Youth in Communities – State Office Programs
Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
GPO Box 9820
DARWIN NT 0800
Website: www.fahcsia.gov.au
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