

Families ACT and the Youth Coalition of the ACT Briefing Meeting with Senior Manager, Strategy and Purchasing, OCYFS, CSD

15th February 2012

Background

This is a summary of the briefing meeting of 15 February 2012 between the Acting Senior Manager, Strategy and Purchasing, Office of Children, Youth, and Family Support, and the two sector peak bodies, Families ACT, and the Youth Coalition of the ACT.

Attending: Sue Mickleburgh, Emma Robertson, Will Mollison.

Staffing

Emma and Will welcomed Sue Mickleburgh to her new role as Acting Senior Manager, Strategy and Purchasing. Sue's appointment is for a three month period; she will continue meetings with the peaks to aid sector communication.

Peaks Meeting with Executive Director Christine Nolan

At Christine Nolan's request, Emma and Will have met with her to discuss the implementation of the new service system. A number of issues were discussed including:

- Priority areas for work;
- Support for Youth and Family Connect (the Central Intake and Referral Service);
- OCYFS' relationship with the sector;
- Breakfast to celebrate the launch of the new service system.

Priority areas for work

The peaks are arguing the need to establish priorities as the best way of managing the work involved in the implementation of the new Service Framework. At present there is a substantial amount of written information which is being circulated for comment; not all of this needs urgent attention. An example is the Principles of Supervision paper; this area is a key component of the Practice Framework. This abundance of material can make it difficult to focus on the essentials.

As identified in Peaks Perspective (the joint newsletter of YCACT and FACT) referral pathways are one clear priority. The peaks will have a follow up meeting with Christine and Leanne to discuss this in further detail.

Sue undertook to get a draft work plan to Emma and Will for cross referencing & discussion of respective roles & responsibilities, priorities and communication opportunities (various meetings).

Support for Youth and Family Connect

The biggest change to the service system from 1 March will be the establishment of the centralised intake service. The peaks believe that Youth and Family Connect (YFC) will need substantial input and support from OCYFS, the peaks and the sector. OCYFS have had a productive meeting with Parentline to plan

information flow about YFC's operations. For their part the peaks have also met with Parentline to offer support in ensuring information is shared broadly.

OCYFS' relationship with the sector

At the planning day on 8th February concerns were expressed about the relationship between OCYFS and agencies implementing the new service framework. While the Directorate has said it does not expect the system to be fully functional by 1 March and that it will take time to bed down the new arrangements, this has not always been the message that agencies have heard when talking with OCYFS staff. Understaffing within OCYFS has resulted in significant stress among staff and this, at times, has manifested itself in terse dealings with the sector.

The peaks have emphasised that despite a less than ideal tendering process last year, there is still goodwill in the sector, but this can be quickly undermined if relationships are neglected.

Christine, Leanne and Sue have expressed their appreciation of this goodwill and understand the need to maintain positive working relationships.

Breakfast to celebrate the launch of the new service system

The Youth Coalition and Families ACT are holding a breakfast to mark the implementation of the new Child, Youth and Family Service Framework. Although the Youth Coalition and Families ACT recognise that services will still be in a transition phase during March, they would like to provide this opportunity to celebrate the official starting date.

Date: Thursday 1 March 2012

Time: 8.00am - 9.30am

Venue: Youth Coalition of the ACT, 46 Clianthus St, O'Connor

Cost: Free

RSVP: By Monday 27 February 2012 to erin@youthcoalition.net.

Contracts

While all organisations who will be contracted to provide services under the new Framework have received letters of intent from the Directorate, 19 agencies are awaiting draft contracts. Additional resources have been allocated to developing these contracts. Organisations will receive letters next week detailing measures being put in place for funds to be made available prior to March 1. Organisations receiving draft contracts will have until April 30 to negotiate any changes and sign off on them.

Peaks Newsletter

The Youth Coalition and Families ACT plan to release their second joint newsletter at the end of next week.