

Community Placements Program

Contact details

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Hours of service: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Acting Coordinator: Susan Goonrey

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About the program

Community Placements Program (CPP) provides *Intensive Foster Care*, *Supported Family Group Home* and *After Care* services.

Intensive Foster Care is designed to meet the needs of children and young people who are assessed as having high support needs, and for particular groups of children (like siblings) who together require a more complex caring role. Intensive foster carers have specialised training and support requirements and receive a higher level of reimbursement than general foster carers. The young people in the program have experienced major disruption to their lives, rejection and often loss of contact with family and friends.

Supported Family Group Home care refers to medium to long-term care that is provided for a specific group of children or young people who have low to moderate support needs. This includes sibling groups (including ATSI sibling groups and siblings from culturally and linguistically diverse [CALD] backgrounds) and adolescents including young people transitioning to independence. Children and young people are cared for in regular houses in the community in a family-like environment by carers who live in the home seven days a week. Children aged under 12 years will only be placed in Supported Family Group Home care if a sibling group needs to be kept together or the child has special needs that cannot be adequately met by foster or relative care.

After Care services are provided to help young people make a successful transition to independent living. This includes post adoption after care for children and young people who were in OOHC and whose case plan goal was adoption. After care support is provided to children and young people aged 15-25 years who have left care.

The program is committed to working alongside families and communities in order to provide young people with a sense of connection and belonging through placing them with families in local areas, as close as possible to the young person's *own* community.

Eligibility

- *Intensive Foster Care* provided to children and young people who are in statutory care and who are assessed as having high support needs, and for particular groups of children (like siblings) who together require a more complex caring role.
- *Supported Family Group homes* provided to sibling groups or a specific group of children or young people in statutory care, who have low to moderate support needs.
- *After Care* support arranged or provided to young people who are discharged from care at 15 years or over, until they reach the age of 25. Consideration may also be given for assistance to care leavers aged over 25 years.

Objectives

The program provides flexible, supported care arrangements to facilitate life opportunities in line with others of similar age. The service also provides support to young people during their time in care and allows those using the service the opportunity to access and develop relationships with their natural families.

Referral

Referrals are solely from NSW Family & Community Services as all service users catered to by CPP are in the care of Community Services.

Services

Each year, CPP works with up to 20 core service users, in Intensive Foster Care and 15 children and young people in Supported Family Group Homes. In addition, CPP accepts referrals in the form of Individual Client Agreements (ICA), which are negotiated in line with the header agreement between Community Services and non-government agencies.

CPP has five main service components:

Placement and Care – to recruit, assess and train suitable carers for the purpose of providing out-of-home care in a caring and supportive environment

Information and Referral – to provide young people in care aged 10-17 with access to information about their rights, responsibilities and related support systems. This service may be provided over the telephone or through face-to-face contact. To refer young people to appropriate medical, counselling or rehabilitation services where required

Support and Advocacy – to advocate on behalf of young people at the direct service delivery and the systemic level

Brokerage – to meet the needs of young people by purchasing support and other services depending on their individual needs

Access – all referrals into CPP are made by the funder, Community Services.

Funding

100% NSW Family and Community Services.

Key facts

Each young person's history and needs are individual, thus CPP bases work practices on the service user's individual needs. CPP attempts to place young people in their own communities so that they can maintain ties with school, work, family, friends and other supportive networks. CPP is committed to providing culturally appropriate care for service users, based on ethnicity, religion, kinship, and community. Stability of care placement and consistency of support is often an issue for young people. Workers at CPP offer options to young people, supporting them to make decisions regarding their own lives. They use modelling and negotiation as the primary ways of encouraging appropriate or desirable behaviour.

Planning: CPP believes that effective service delivery to young people must be well-planned, adequately resourced, proactive and service user driven. Weekly planning meetings are used as tools to empower the young person by encouraging them to take control of their own goals, and supporting them in measuring their own progress.

Caseworker: One worker is responsible for working with a young person on meeting their needs, and for coordinating that young person's activities towards achieving their goals. The Caseworker is the young person's main advocate within the service and builds a significant relationship with the young person.

Review: The work undertaken with young people is reviewed against their individual case plans and personal objectives every three months.

Care arrangements: Placements are chosen carefully to reflect the social, cultural and other needs of the young person. The young person has a voice with regards to their placement and the wishes of the young person are respected.

Educational: Many young people in care have trouble settling into mainstream schooling. Through negotiation and regular planning, CPP is able to help young people achieve some successes at school.

Cultural diversity: Approximately 60 to 80% of CPP service users are Aboriginal. A priority of CPP is to build an environment that supports culturally competent service delivery.

Life story: In conjunction with the caseworker, natural family and carers, each young person is encouraged to compile an album of items relating to life and memories that are important to them.