

LOST IN TRANSITION

Research to improve the lives
of young people with complex
support needs.

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Research
partners:



WE
LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS
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Project Partners

- The project is implemented by UNSW in partnership with:
 - Monash University
 - La Trobe University
 - Queensland University of Technology
- Partner Organisations:
 - Life Without Barriers
 - NSW Department of Family and Community Services
 - Berry Street, Victoria
 - Jesuit Social Services, Victoria
 - Community Living Association, Queensland



AIM: To make meaningful changes to the lives of young people undergoing transitions by investigating their transition support needs.



1. A clear picture of current policy and support approaches for young people with complex support needs in NSW, Victoria and Queensland, and the extent to which these are based on published empirical evidence.

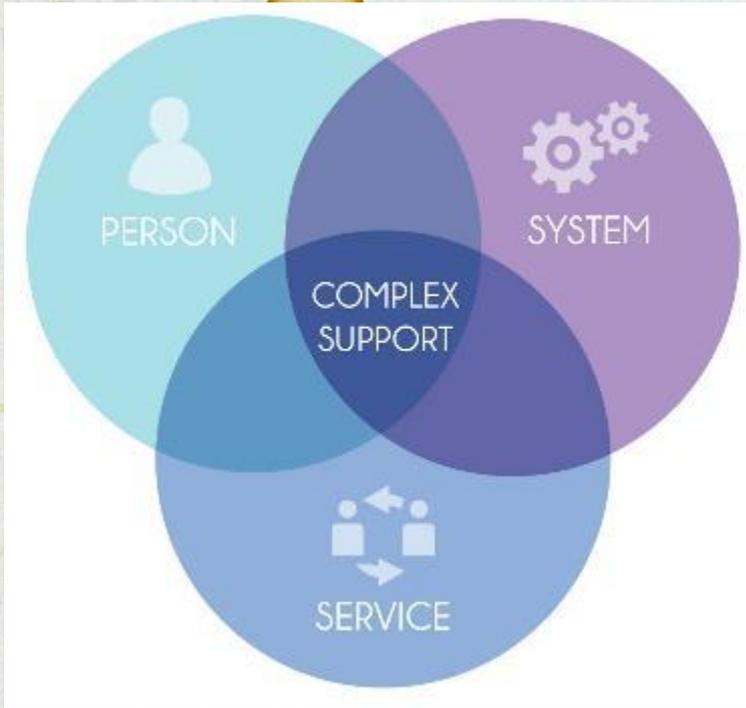


2. A conceptually coherent understanding of transition support for the diverse young people with complex needs, which is of utility to service providers with multiple areas of responsibility.



3. A framework for best practice in cross-sector intervention, case management and service delivery at key transition points to enable service provider peers to achieve better outcomes and utilise resources

What are complex support needs?



<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/research/intellectual-disability-behaviour-support-program/>



Why transition?

- Transition a popular topic in discourses around young people with complex support needs
- Usually conceived of as a movement from one place to another, particularly service settings
- Transitions in this sense are understood as particularly stressful times where a young person is at risk of 'dropping out' or disengaging with services.



Method

- Focus groups and interviews with 93 service providers in NSW, Queensland and Victoria, including a rural and/or regional site in each state
- Body mapping with 31 people in NSW, Queensland and Victoria, including a rural and regional site in NSW

Research partners:





Who Were the Service providers?

Representatives from child and family welfare, youth justice, education, disability, Indigenous-specific, alcohol and other drugs, health, mental health and generalist youth services.

Direct Practitioners - 66%
Managerial Roles – 25% Supervisory Positions – 10%



What does transitions mean to service providers?

- Transitions for service providers focused on:
 - young people's movements into and out of various care and containment environments (e.g. out-of-home care, youth justice)
 - movements between different educational settings or to post-school life
 - transitions from child and youth support systems into adult systems, such as disability, mental health or drug and alcohol services.
- A particular focus was the concurrent and multiple transitions experienced by young people with CSN



Key Questions:

1. Key issues and barriers for young people with CSNs who are experiencing transitions
2. Service, sector and systems barriers and enablers which impact these transitions
3. Models and strategies identified as conducive to better outcomes with this group of young people.



Service Provider Findings:

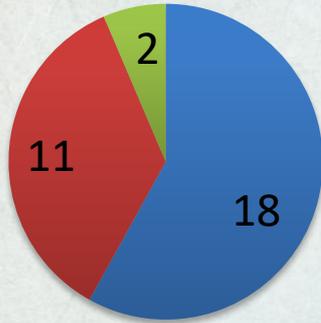
- Services and service systems are often poorly matched to the needs of young people with CSNs, as well as their families and carers
- Many young people are excluded, fall through the gaps, or ultimately 'give up' or disengage from services
- Transitions were described as stressful and destabilising for young people
- Mismatch between service provision, regulatory and funding arrangements and the need of young people with CSN
- There is a relationship between non-normative transitions and complexity i.e. CSN **leads to** non-normative transitions **which in turn leads to and reinforces** and intensify the level of complexity and support needs experienced by young people
- The numerous and often contradictory age-related expectations for young people with CSNs i.e. they are expected to be 'adult' and 'independent' which is inconsistent with their developmental age and young adults more broadly
- Young people with CSN need 'the right people' for the job, who were able to establish rapport with, and advocate effectively alongside young people

What is body mapping in research?



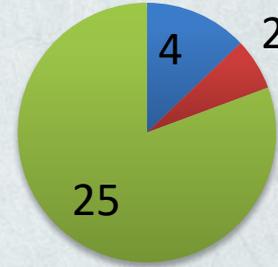
Young people sample: some demographics...

Gender



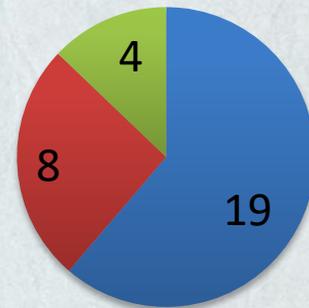
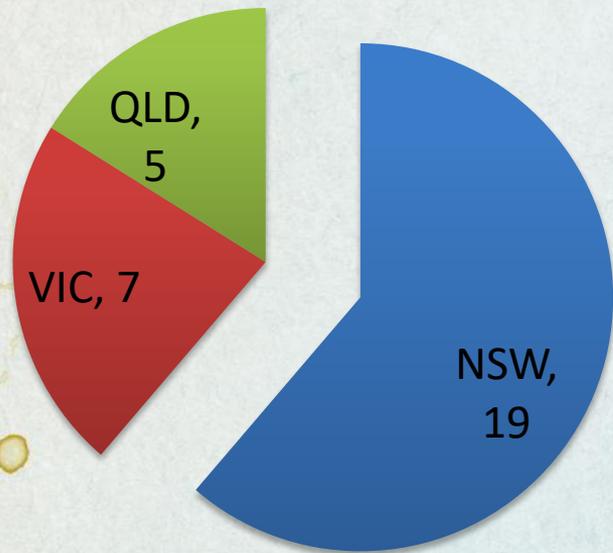
■ Male ■ Female ■ NA

Cultural Background



■ CALD
■ Aboriginal
■ Unacknowledged

Geography



- Urban
- Regional
- Rural/remote



Domain	Participants
Education	15
Housing	15
Mental Health	17
Income support	15
Disability	12
Family and domestic violence	10
Child protection	9
Health	9
Police contact	7
Drug and alcohol	6
Youth justice	1



Transition mapped	Participants
Housing related transition	6
Educational transition	3
Turning 18	3
Mental health related transition	3
Gender transition	3
Transitions between cultures	3
Death of a family member	3
Becoming a mother	3
Being removed from family by CP	2
Becoming employed	1
Coming off hard drugs	1



Stages of transition

Stage 1: Critical moments

Critical moment is an event which either the participant or the researcher believes has important consequences in a young person's life (Thomson et al, 2002)

Identifying critical moments was important to young people with CSN
Not singular

Breadth and depth – seen in context of other critical moments in life and the critical moments of others



Stage 1: Critical Moments: Example, Ronya





Stages 1: Critical moments for people with complex support needs

- Critical moments entangle and overlap in complex ways
- Entangled with critical moments of others – emphasised to Ronya ‘they’ll always be trouble around me’
- Clustering of critical moments – e.g around transition of becoming a mother
- Entangled with critical moments from her past – e.g the first time she got pregnant



Stages of Transition: Stage 2: Liminal periods

- Anthropologists Gennep and Turner (1967) used liminal period to talk about a stage in rite of passage where someone was 'betwixt and between.'
- In their body maps young people represented themselves as literally between two places or worlds
- Unlike Turner's (1967) studies of liminality, these young people often did not have a stable period before the liminal period
- Three ways in which young people represented this: stepping in between worlds, being foetal and drowning.



Stage 2: Liminal Periods: Examples Stepping in between, Ash



Stage 2:
Liminal Period: Example
Being foetal





Stage 2: Liminal Period, Example Drowning, Alice





Stages of Transition: Stage 3: Meaning making times

- Times when young people make meaning or sense out of change
- Importantly, these times are not stable, constant or permanent – for young people with CSN they often get interrupted
- Some things that facilitate these times are: Being seen by someone else,



Stage 3

Being seen by others

Example, Muhammed





Stage 3 Meaning Making Moments Seeing the self, 6Pac

'This is me...Now I know.'





Conclusions

- Service providers know a lot about the complexity of transitions for young people with complex support needs
- Body mapping with young people gives us symbols and metaphors to think about how transitions, and indeed trauma, are embodied and experienced.
- This perspective allows us to think differently about how young people with CSN going through transitions might be able to respond:
 - what would I expect of someone who's drowning?
 - what does that person need?