

# National Youth Settlement Framework:

## Applying good practice capabilities

This resource has been developed as a supplement to the MYAN Australia's *National Youth Settlement Framework* (NYSF), providing a detailed description of each of the NYSF Good Practice Capabilities and how these are applied in practice. While it can be utilised as a stand alone resource, it is best read in conjunction with the NYSF, in particular *Part 4: Achieving active citizenship through good practice capabilities*.

Good Practice Capability	What does it mean?	Putting it into practice
<i>Cultural competency</i>	<p>Cultural competency recognises that cultural dislocation is a significant factor in the migration and settlement experience. It also recognises the fundamental role that culture and cultural identity play in a young person's life, and the significance of negotiating cultural differences in the settlement process – both for young people and service providers.</p> <p>Cultural competency is not a point that is reached but something that individual workers and organisations work towards, continually improving and refining skills and knowledge. It involves understanding culture and how it impacts on our worldview and work practices with young people.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Workers can assist young people by also building their capacity to think and talk about the significance and impact of culture in their lives, and the challenges of managing bi or multi cultural identities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on cultural assumptions, at a personal and organisational level, and how these shape your worldview and work practices.</li> <li>• Engage in cross-cultural professional development.</li> <li>• Explore meanings of culture in a sensitive way with young people and learn about their cultural background – young people will be your best cultural teachers.</li> <li>• Regularly review organisational and program policies, procedures and practices to ensure they are culturally inclusive and responsive<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Establish and maintain links and partnerships with multicultural and other agencies involved in the settlement of young people.</li> <li>• Provide an inclusive and multicultural youth friendly environment through representations of cultural and language diversity.</li> <li>• Engage same-culture workers and interpreters wherever needed and provide written information in young people's first languages.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Pederson, P (ed.) *Multiculturalism as a fourth force*, Brunner/Mazel, Philadelphia, 1999

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, culturally inclusive organisational audit tool in CMY's *Inclusive Local Government Guide* - <http://www.cmy.net.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/Inclusive%20local%20government%202009.pdf> MYAN (Australia) NYSF Audit Tool for service providers

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<i>Youth-centred and strengths-based</i>	<p>A youth-centred approach recognises the specific needs and circumstances of young people and the ways in which young people experience the settlement process – distinct from adults and younger children.</p> <p>It recognises that young people need targeted support to best meet their needs, and achieve their potential as active participants in their community.</p> <p>A youth-centred approach considers a young person as the primary client, while maintaining a family-aware approach in providing support.</p> <p>A strengths-based approach recognises that young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds come to Australia with enormous strengths, resources and capabilities. These strengths and capabilities are fundamental to them becoming active participants in and contributors to Australian society.</p> <p>A strengths-based approach in service delivery involves supporting young people to identify and utilise their strengths, resources and capabilities in navigating settlement and becoming active citizens in Australian society. It also involves affirming young people's strengths in a range of aspects of their lives, across each of the domains of active citizenship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and respond to young people's particular needs – ensure your service model or program takes into account their psychological, familial, social, cultural, economic, political and historical dimensions of their experience.</li> <li>• Ensure you design your service or program around the particular needs of young people rather than applying a generic approach or model to the needs of young people.</li> <li>• Identify and utilise, in partnership with a young person, their strengths and capabilities, including: cross-cultural knowledge and experience, bi/multi-lingual skills, pre-migration employment, higher education and employment aspirations, commitment to family and community.</li> <li>• Encourage and support young people to see challenges as capacity building opportunities and to tackle these in a respectful, supportive and non-judgemental manner.</li> </ul>

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<i>Youth development and participation</i>	<p>A youth development approach applies youth work frameworks<sup>3</sup> and promotes and supports the equal participation of young people in society. It supports young people to build and exercise a sense of agency and recognises the importance of relationships between workers and young people.</p> <p>Youth participation approaches recognise the right of young people to participate in decision making that affects and shapes their lives. They are often best placed to identify their needs and should be supported to identify and advocate for solutions. It also recognises that the voices of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds are often marginalised in policy, advocacy and service delivery.</p> <p>Meaningful youth participation is not just about opportunity; it is about seeing young people as partners and equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and resources to effectively participate and influence policy and service delivery models.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve young people as active participants (rather than just recipients) in the design, planning, development, implementation and evaluation of services.</li> <li>• Provide information and resources to support young people to build their knowledge of and capacity to navigate the service system, including: income support, health, legal, education, training, employment, recreation.</li> <li>• Support and provide opportunities for young people to participate in decision making that affects their lives, without judgement. This could include personal decisions about education, employment or relationships, or informing the design, implementation and evaluation of programs.</li> <li>• Actively seek contributions from young people in an accessible environment e.g. regular group meetings or planned youth-friendly times and places, formal and informal feedback mechanisms.</li> <li>• Ensure gender parity and implement strategies to ensure young women's participation.</li> <li>• Seek opportunities to incorporate young people's feedback as a key element of service delivery and provide young people with timely feedback about how their input was used.</li> <li>• Respect young people's opinions and withhold judgement about their decisions or behaviour – they are valued, respected, active and contributing members of society now and in the future.</li> </ul>

3 Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (2013) The National Definition of Youth Work in Australia. Melbourne: AYAC. Available at [www.ayac.org.au/projects/youth-work-definition-2.html](http://www.ayac.org.au/projects/youth-work-definition-2.html)

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<i>Trauma informed</i>	<p>Trauma-informed practice recognises the trauma of the refugee experience and the significant ways in which it can impact on settlement and adolescence.</p> <p>Trauma-informed practice recognises the importance of core recovery goals as fundamental to supporting young people to manage and recover from trauma<sup>4</sup>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build your understanding of the impact and manifestation of torture and trauma for young people and strategies for supporting young people who have experienced torture or trauma – seek training from FASSTT agencies.</li> <li>• Explore how your service/program can support core recovery goals.</li> <li>• Ensure that young people feel physically and emotionally safe, by providing a safe, welcoming environment, as well as ensuring predictability, consistency, privacy and confidentiality.</li> <li>• Be aware that young people who are survivors of torture and/or trauma may need time to establish trust – use practical activities to build trust.</li> </ul>
<i>Family-aware</i>	<p>Family-aware practice recognises the impact of the refugee and migration experience on families and the critical role that family plays in a young person's life – wherever they are located.</p> <p>Relationships with family and community often provide young people with a sense of belonging and support in negotiating difficult challenges and transitions, connection to shared values, culture and history, and play a key role in decision-making regarding a young person's choices. This is particularly important for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds given the impact of the migration experience and settlement on family configurations and relationships.</p> <p>Family-aware practice recognises, legitimises and facilitates connections with family as a core part of support/service delivery models.</p> <p>Family-aware practice acknowledges that for refugee and migrant young people, the concept of family may be broader and more complex than Western constructs or understandings, and that family commitments, expectations and responsibilities are often key priorities in a young person's life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build your understanding of the impact of the refugee and settlement experience on families and intergenerational conflict.</li> <li>• Explore with a young person, in a sensitive manner, the role of family in their life.</li> <li>• Build relationships with family members to assist them in understanding youth services, programs and the broader service system. This will also help to facilitate a young person's choices, goals or participation in programs.</li> <li>• Avoid using young people as interpreters in meetings with family as this will compound the power imbalance between young people and older family members.</li> <li>• Strengthen family relationships wherever possible and support family members to understand the settlement experience and challenges for young people.</li> <li>• Endeavour to balance the needs and aspirations of young people and family members while supporting decision-making.</li> <li>• Undertake shared case management with family workers where appropriate.</li> <li>• Acknowledge that family-aware multicultural youth work practice can be complex and challenging – seek the support you need from your organisation and colleagues.</li> </ul>

4 The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc. et al. (1996) A Guide to working with young people who are refugees. Brunswick, Victoria: VFST. Available at <http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/WorkingwithYoungPeoplewhoareRefugees.pdf>

Good Practice Capability	What does it mean?	Putting it into practice
<i>Flexibility and responsiveness</i>	<p>A flexible and responsive approach to practice recognises that that young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds have specific and often complex needs, but that this group of young people comprise numerous heterogeneous subgroups. It recognises that their circumstances and needs vary, and that culture, as well as the settlement context, is dynamic and complex.</p> <p>Needs and issues vary substantially between and within groups according to cultural and religious background, English language proficiency, level of acculturation to Australian society, level of family support, migration experience and socioeconomic and demographic factors such as age and gender.</p> <p>Flexible and responsive service delivery involves adapting service delivery models to be responsive to a young person's needs and circumstances, rather than applying a 'one size fits all' approach. This includes addressing specific barriers to accessing services and support, including those that are specific to young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds – service unfamiliarity and complexity, language, culture, racism and discrimination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet young people at their point of need, as defined by them and develop responses accordingly.</li> <li>• Be flexible about where and how you deliver your services to ensure they best respond to the needs of young people - adjust service delivery approaches wherever possible.</li> <li>• Establish flexible service delivery times to cater for young people with needs that fall outside standard operating hours.</li> <li>• Have adequate staff to young people ratios to ensure young people receive the attention they need and outcomes are sustained over time.</li> <li>• Engage people significant to the young person in service delivery, ensuring you have gained a young person's consent to do so.</li> <li>• Engage in planned, regular outreach in recognition that most young people are not familiar with services or their relevance to their lives.</li> <li>• Consider a range of methods of engagement with young people (e.g. sport or art-based programs).</li> </ul>
<i>Collaboration</i>	<p>Collaboration recognises the challenges that young people face in navigating a complex and unfamiliar service system and navigating and accessing services is enhanced through coordination and collaboration between services. It recognises that settlement outcomes are affected by the type, nature, range and quality of services and programs available to young people, and the extent to which these services are coordinated or linked.</p> <p>A collaborative approach to service delivery involves workers, programs and organisations investing in collaboration – seeking opportunities to work together. A collaborative service delivery approach also acknowledges the value in sharing resources, knowledge, expertise and networks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish strong relationships with settlement agencies that have extensive contact with new arrivals.</li> <li>• Participate in inter-sectoral, inter-agency and inter-disciplinary partnerships to address service gaps, complexity, bureaucracy and fragmentation.</li> <li>• Share information and expertise to encourage the pooling of knowledge and resources, rather than service duplication.</li> <li>• Encourage inter-agency training and staff support (e.g. mentoring) amongst organisations working with and for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.</li> </ul>

Good Practice Capability	What does it mean?	Putting it into practice
<i>Advocacy</i>	<p>Engaging in individual and systemic advocacy recognises and responds to the range of individual and structural barriers that young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds face in accessing the support they need.</p> <p>Advocacy involves engaging in both individual and systemic advocacy, as well as supporting young people to develop their skills, confidence and networks to engage in their own advocacy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in individual advocacy on behalf of a young person to facilitate their access to services or supports (e.g. Centrelink, health care, legal advice, education, training, and employment). This might include advocating for interpreter services.</li> <li>• Support young people to build their skills, knowledge and networks to advocate for their own needs – both with individual services and systemically.</li> <li>• Inform and resource service providers to better meet the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. For example, providing information about young people and the refugee, migration and settlement experience.</li> <li>• Identify service gaps and collaborate with other service providers to document and propose solutions to addressing these gaps. This might include partnering to seek funding for a project/program or raising issues with local or state government.</li> </ul>