

Working Together Protocols

Smooth Transition Protocols for Transition Coach & Case Worker



Who is the guide for?

The guide is to support both a Transition Coach and a Child Protection Worker to understand how best to approach working together. It can also be used to help explain to a young person and their support circles how things work during the working together period from 17 ½ and 18 years of age.

Working together occurs once a young person has made an informed choice to be part of Home Stretch WA and completed the Consent to Participate form with the Transition Coach they are going to be working with.

The guide is a work in progress and is updated by the Home Stretch WA CoP District Office Working Group. If you have ideas or suggestions please contact Andrew.Kazim@anglicarewa.org.au or Colleen.Host@communities.wa.gov.au or speak to the Home Stretch WA Champion in your district office.

How might a Home Stretch WA Transition Coach and a Child Protection Worker support a young person to smoothly transition into the Home Stretch WA service?

A smooth transition happens when the Home Stretch WA Transition Coach and the Child Protection Worker have a clear understanding of how to work effectively together, maintain open and transparent communication, and have trust in each other as they work towards the goals of the young person.

Ideally this handover happens gradually and over an agreed time period, with attention to the psychological safety needs of the young person as they build trust with a new support person in their life. This period also allows the young person time to experience a positive end to their relationship with Child Protection Workers who may have played a significant role in their life over many years.

Young people who are referred at the age of 17 (Stage one referral via the District) begin working with a Transition Coach at 17 ½ while they are still in statutory care and under the guardianship of the Department of Communities and a Child Protection Worker.

For young people who return to a district office and Opt-In to Home Stretch WA after 18, the transition period may be much shorter and the capacity of the Child Protection Worker to work collaboratively with a Transition Coach may be significantly, if not completely, restricted to the referral process. Districts that have employed a Post Care Support Care would have greater capacity to support these transitions.

Principles to Guide a Smooth Transition

The following principles have been developed through extensive consultation with young people, Child Protection Workers and Transition Coaches involved in the Home Stretch WA Trial. They are insights into what works in supporting a smooth transition and should be the foundation for working together.

- The needs of the young person must be at the centre
- Young people must be able to make an informed choice about their engagement with Home Stretch WA
- Epistemic Trust and collaboration between the Transition Coach and the Child Protection Worker are a critical foundation
- Flexibility and a willingness to work together is needed from both Child Protection and the Home Stretch WA provider
- The Smooth Transition Process should not create additional work for a district office, beyond their responsibilities for leaving care planning and preparation
- The Transition Coach does not take over the statutory responsibilities of the Child Protection Worker
- Critical activities related to leaving care planning must be prioritised by the Child Protection Worker and then supported by the Transition Coach
- Safety and stability in living arrangements should be a priority
- By 18, the young person should have built trust and formed a stable connection with their Transition Coach
- By 18, the Child Protection Worker should have brought some closure to their relationship with a young person in a positive and trauma-informed way

What is the role of the Transition Coach?

Home Stretch WA Transition Coaches aim to provide continuity in support and resources for a young person, minimising the impact of ageing out of care on their lives and wellbeing. They are also working hard to earn the trust of the young person, following the practice principles that were designed by young people to guide their approach to work.

While their functional role is to take over the responsibilities of support to the young person from the child protection case manager, they are also intentionally working towards empowering a young person to grow their interdependence on other supports and their natural networks.

What is the role of the Child Protection Case Manager?

The Child Protection Worker are going to be continuing their primary statutory care responsibilities and preparing the young person for leaving care. There are a multitude of tasks that need to happen during this period, and many significant life transitions for young people.

The worker should also be supporting a strong connection between the Transition Coach and the young person, and the young person's support circles. Slowly

What about young people who have already left care and have returned after 18 to Opt-In to Home Stretch WA?

introducing the Transition Coach as a trusted support who increasingly takes on shared responsibility for support planning and assistance.

What about young people on the Unattached List who don't have a Case Manager?

Young people who are not currently connected to a case manager must be allocated to either a Team Leader or the Home Stretch WA Champion. The Transition Coach then assertively follows up and attempts to engage with the young person through their existing support networks.

Once the Transition Coach has engaged the young person, they support the young person to complete any critical Department led/specific resources or activities with someone from the district office with whom the young person feels safe.

Young people who reached 18 after July 1, 2022 have the option to return to a district office and seek a referral to a Home Stretch WA provider. While some districts may have a Post-Care Support Worker who can work together with the Transition Coach to create a smooth transition, other districts may not have that capacity.

Regardless of whether there is capacity in a district office, the Transition Coach follows their practice approach to engaging with a young person. This means that they seek to connect and understand a young person's support circle, and who might be best placed to support a smooth transition and a warm handover of support. In some cases, this might be a worker in a youth drop-in centre, a sibling, or a foster carer, or even a biological parent.

District office staff and Aboriginal Practice Leads can help by supporting a coach to connect with the people and places that might improve a young person's chances of engaging with the Home Stretch WA service.

Dimensions of Care Vs Life Domains for Transitioning from Care

Child Protection Workers use the Dimensions of Care as a holistic lens to plan and record the work they undertake with young people.

Transition Coaches in Home Stretch WA understand a young person's needs through the life domains defined in the National Framework for Transitioning from Care. The Home Stretch WA Model has slightly adapted and grouped some of these domains based on feedback from young people.

Both frameworks align with the needs of young people and can be mapped to corresponding domains in the other.

Child Protection	Home Stretch WA
Safety	Life and After-Care Skills
Care Arrangements	Housing
Health	Health [Physical, Sexual, Dental]
Education	Education, Training & Employment
Social & Family Relationships	Social Relationships and Support Networks
Recreational and Leisure	Wellbeing [Emotional, Mental, Self-Esteem]
Emotional & Behavioural Development	
Identity & Culture	Identity and Culture
Legal & Financial	Financial and Legal



Working Together

A Simple Guide for Transition Coaches and Child Protection

The following table has been developed by Home Stretch WA front line staff and Leaving Care Team Workers from district offices. It lays out some of the key activities which need to be completed before a young person ages out of care. Some of these tasks need to be done by the Child Protection Worker. Use it as a starting point for working together with the young person, make the most of the opportunity to get important things done prior to a young person leaving care.

Child Protection Dimensions of Care

Safety		
<p>TRANSITION COACH LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a Home Stretch WA Safety Plan Agreement with Home Stretch WA (Suicide, DV, Mental Health) 	<p>WORK TOGETHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand a young person's support networks in emergencies - Support a young person to manage their own safety 	<p>DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final Leaving Care Plan - Support young people's safety and helping to set limits around contact with people who might cause harm - Referrals to support services to improve professional resources - Manage any concerns or risks to children of young parents
Care/Living Arrangements		
<p>TRANSITION COACH LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Staying On Agreement - Housing Allowance Applications 	<p>WORK TOGETHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain safe and stable housing - Housing Pathway Plan - Identify and support applications for housing - Transition of supports to carers to Staying On Facilitator 	<p>DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing waitlist referral via Leaving Care Register - Priority Housing List Application, if eligible - Payments/Subsidies to support housing under 18 - Information about financial supports available to 25 around housing and setting up a house

Health

<p>TRANSITION COACH LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand future health support needs - Understand future treatment needs for young people accessing treatment for ADHD or other neuro/developmental conditions - Ensure young person has access to all of their treatment records, future plans and information about providers 	<p>WORK TOGETHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan and provision of practical support to access treatment services or specialist supports - Planning for ambulance cover after 18 - Support to attend health services and make mature minor decisions for a treatment plan - Empower a young person's support circle to assist with health needs - Supporting a young person and carers to navigate NDIS application process 	<p>DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend health appointments as a legal guardian - Dental treatment plan including orthodontics - Referrals or access to oral health centre for treatment - Ensure vision tests and glasses are current - Review current health needs and develop a plan to address unmet needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Chronic disease/health conditions, assessment for NDIS, nutrition, physio - Sexual/reproductive health, contraception - Support a young person to transition from paediatrician to psychiatry for relevant treatment planning (ADHD, Autism etc.) - Collate up-to-date health records and specialist reports (if consent is given) into child history file - NDIS Application Coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Application form, booking of specialist assessments, coordination of evidence for application
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Education

<p>TRANSITION COACH LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aspirational plan for employment, education and training - Maintain and complete education/training 	<p>WORK TOGETHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achiever Award application, if eligible 	<p>DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collate school reports and other education records into child history file - Consultation with Education Officers to
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and training pathway plan 		<p>ensure supports and plans are appropriate and met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter to school if young person is continuing in year 12 after age 18
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Social & Family Relationships

<p>TRANSITION COACH LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete Footprints Eco-Map and identify any plans to reconnect with biological family - Collect and collate historical information as needed from Department records 	<p>WORK TOGETHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support young person to maintain positive relationships with friends, carers and family - Identify people, places, communities of importance to young person - Encourage young people to build support circles 	<p>DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collate current and historic genograms into child history file - Collate information held in Care Plans around historic Supports Circles for Footprints Tool - Referral and funding for 'Who's My Mob' book - Friendships/Partners - Funding and Referral to Departmental Mentors, if eligible
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Recreation & Leisure

<p>TRANSITION COACH LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities to join or broker activities to build relationship - Support young people to maintain and grow connection to activities and community 	<p>WORK TOGETHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support driving lessons and licence 	<p>DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collate records and information regarding a young person's participation in recreation and sport activities
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Emotional & Behavioural

TRANSITION COACH LEADS	WORK TOGETHER	DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide opportunities for young people to define their own support needs - Seek permission for extent to which a young person would like the Transition Coach to be aware of their history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support a young person to access and engage with mental health and wellbeing supports and resources - Support and encourage a young person to manage their mental health and any mental distress - Maintain open and clear communication, and professional boundaries around risk and crisis response - Respect young people's right to limit information provided to Home Stretch WA and seek a 'fresh start' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review current mental health needs and develop plan to address unmet needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medication - Undiagnosed or emerging mental illness - Gender identity/dysphoria - New assessments for diagnosis - Coordinate of transition from paediatrician to psychiatrist for ongoing medication management, if required - NDIS Application Coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application Form - Book specialist assessments, coordinate evidence for application - Offender Register - await further legal response in regard to confidentiality of shared information - Sexual Health



Cultural & Identity

TRANSITION COACH LEADS	WORK TOGETHER	DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce Aboriginal Cultural Framework - Opportunity to access additional supports around culture through Home Stretch WA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support a young person to understand and strengthen their connection to community, family, culture and country when they are ready to do so (cultural reunification) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collate historic and current genogram for child history file - Collate information from Cultural Plans - Liaison and handover of information from Aboriginal Practice Lead to Home Stretch WA provider, as relevant - Explore current and future plans to travel back to country or meet cultural obligations as a young adult in community (funerals, lore, family) - Ensure Aboriginal young people have proof of Aboriginality - Ensure young people are aware of registration for Native Title entitlements with relevant prescribed body corporate



Legal & Financial

TRANSITION COACH LEADS	WORK TOGETHER	DoC CASE MANAGER LEADS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support a young person to complete a budget as part of Housing Pathway Planning or Staying On Agreement - Create a secure digital wallet with a young person to store copies of their identification documents - Support a young person to understand Invest In Me Funding - Support a young person to get a WWCC, if they are going to continue living with other children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage young people to access mainstream financial resources - Encourage a young person towards financial self-reliance - Ensure young people who may require a guardianship order after 18 are supported with due diligence to achieve this - In-reach support to Banksia Hill or other facilities to engage with young person around planning for post-release 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support a young person to apply for the Centrelink Independent Rate of Youth Allowance before age 18 - Provide a young person with a letter for Centrelink identifying them as a Child in Care and accessing extending support through Home Stretch WA - Support young person to register to vote - Review and referral of young person eligible for Criminal Injury Compensation Claims via legal query - Review young person's functional capacity, discuss with support circles - Support young person to complete a passport application and/or Photo ID card - Support a young person to receive certified copies and access originals of all identity documents as part of child history file - Provide written notification of Leaving Care Entitlements under Legislation - Provide information about TILA Grant and how to access - Support immigration applications for permanency or citizenship

Who pays for the financial supports and resources for the young person and their carer?

Young people under 18 are in statutory care and not eligible for Home Stretch WA financial supports until they reach the age of 18. This means that while the Transition Coach supports a young person to plan for their future financial needs, any payment must be authorised and paid through the district office and the Child Protection Worker.

After 18, young people should access financial supports primarily through their Home Stretch WA provider and the financial supports available to them directly through the provider. This support is called Invest In Me, and is a model of brokerage designed around building a young person's capacity to be financially self-reliant and access mainstream resources and supports beyond the Child Protection system.

The Invest In Me approach was co-designed with young people and district office staff, and has demonstrated good outcomes in building young people's agency and interdependence. Young people may not get everything they request fully paid for by their Transition Coach, and as part of the principles of Invest In Me they are asked to contribute to costs through a financial commitment or through building their skills or knowledge to overcome challenges. If supported effectively through Invest In Me, young people will have developed better financial planning skills and an increased knowledge of how to access mainstream resources as well as be confident in requesting financial assistance from any district office through the Leaving Care Fund.

Why is it important that we plan out financial supports together?

It is critical that the Child Protection Worker and Transition Coach work together to consider the financial support needs of the young person and agree on any high-cost items or services that need to be paid from the Leaving Care Fund post 18.

Young people involved in the design and development of Home Stretch WA identified they would prefer to access financial support after 18 through their Home Stretch WA transition coach, rather than having to also navigate accessing the Leaving Care Fund. The provision of financial assistance requires an intentional approach to working with a young person

The Child Protection Worker should be mindful of not attempting to create a plan to spend the Invest In Me funding in lieu of the Leaving Care Plan, but rather work together with the Transition Coach to help them understand what might be critical financial support needs. It is important for the Coach to understand where there have been long term planning and work towards a particular goal or outcome, or where there might be a significant future cost beyond the indicative limit of \$2,500 per annum per young person.

Access to financial support and resources from the Department of Communities Leaving Care Fund

What is the Leaving Care Fund?

The Department of Communities (Communities) established a Leaving Care Fund to support the needs of young people from the age of 15 until they turn 25 in their transition from out of home care to adulthood.

The Leaving Care Fund is not means-tested or capped and is not part of a district's allocated budget – it is a centrally managed fund. It can cover a range of costs required by a young person, for example, driving lessons, medical and dental treatment, and educational or training expenses.

Funding needs that can be met from other sources, such as public services and the Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA), should be used rather than accessing the Leaving Care Fund.

How are the financial costs for a young person leaving care identified?

As part of the leaving care planning process, the Child Protection Worker will consider the needs of a young person in the immediate years after leaving care (i.e., 18-21 years).

The proposed spending needs for a young person will be documented in the young person's Leaving Care Plan. However, even with thorough planning, young people may face unexpected circumstances after exiting care and will need assistance to address their current needs not previously identified in their Leaving Care Plan. Under current legislation, young people can seek financial assistance for needs that were not identified in their leaving care plan.

While a young person in the Home Stretch WA program will have access to resources and financial support from the Invest in Me Fund (up to \$2500 per annum per young person), some high-cost items may need to be met through Communities Leaving Care Fund.

What is the Invest in Me Fund?

The Invest in Me Fund is a key component of the Home Stretch WA service model. It gives young people engaged in the program the 'right' to a secure financial safety net to ensure they have access to resources to support them towards their aspirations and goals, as well as relief in times of crisis.

This fund provides timely access to goods and services, while encouraging a young person to contribute to costs through a financial commitment or through building their skills or knowledge to overcome challenges so they can become self-reliant.

Prior to using the Invest in Me Fund to purchase goods or services, the Transition Coach will explore with the young person any alternative sources offered as a core service through an agency or services that may be less expensive or free.

In some circumstances a young person may have financial support costs that exceed the Invest in Me funds they have available and will need to access the Communities Leaving Care Fund.

Who pays for financial supports and resources for the young person prior to 18?

Young people under 18 are in statutory care and not eligible for Home Stretch WA financial supports until they reach the age of 18. This means that while the Home Stretch WA Transition Coach supports a young person to plan for their future financial needs as part of the smooth transition to the program when they turn 18, any costs while they are in care must be authorised and paid through the Communities district office.

Making a Plan to Work Together

Where possible a transition coach and case manager should work together to support the young person to develop and update their Leaving Care Plan. While the Leaving Care Plan is an important tool for clarifying support needs and resources, it is critical that the young person is clear on the plan between the Transition Coach and the case manager about how they will work together and meet the needs of the young person, as well as their respective responsibilities.

The following documents provide examples of how a Transition Coach and a Child Protection Worker can work in a clear and transparent way, to ensure the young person's needs are met and there is both continuity in support planning, and a smooth transition to the Transition Coach as the primary support for the young person.



Smooth Transition – Working Together



Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Final Handover
<input type="checkbox"/> Rapport building	<input type="checkbox"/> Support Circle Eco Map	<input type="checkbox"/> Leaving Care Plan mtg	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Pathway	<input type="checkbox"/> Staying On Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> Child history file
<input type="checkbox"/> Joint session	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Map	<input type="checkbox"/> Invest in Me Bulk Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Allowance Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Celebration/letter
<input type="checkbox"/> Working Together Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> TC meets YP supports	<input type="checkbox"/> Review of future costs	<input type="checkbox"/> Centrelink application	<input type="checkbox"/> WWCC for Staying On	<input type="checkbox"/> ID documents
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Smooth Transition – Working Together



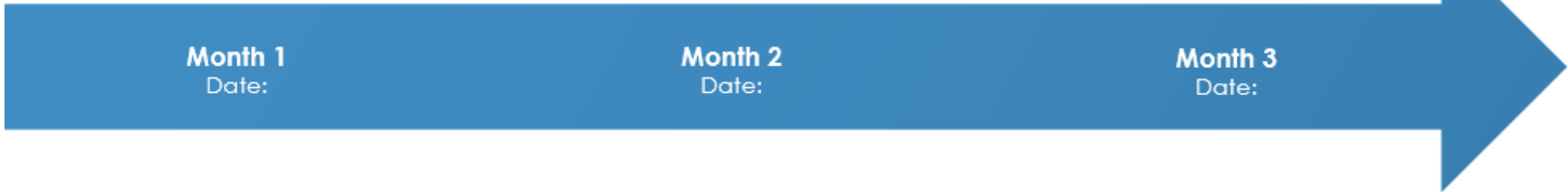
Handover Session	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5
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How to Smooth Transition

Working Together timeline



Use the Leaving Care Task Sheet checklists and Leaving Care Plan to allocate tasks appropriate for your young person into the following roles and timeline: Case Manager/District, Work Together and Transition Coach



	Month 1 Date:	Month 2 Date:	Month 3 Date:
Case Manager/District			
Work Together			
Transition Coach			