
1.1.7 Preparing Youth for Leaving Care

This section contains transition planning standards for services provided by mandated child and family services agencies.

[Standards](#)

[Policy](#)

[Legislation](#)

Standard

Age of Majority / Transitional Planning – The case manager is responsible for ensuring that all youth in care, regardless of legal status, at the age of 15, have a detailed transition plan with a view to them leaving care. The plan must involve the assessment and development of skills needed for adult living.

If the youth is 15 years or older and is expected to return to their family prior to their 18th birthday the transition plan will also reflect the family's involvement, where appropriate in the following process.

Preparations for becoming an adult include but are not limited to ensuring the youth can access the following if appropriate:

- referrals to appropriate adult services
- continued medical, dental and prescription coverage
- development of an [Agreement with Young Adults](#) to be offered for supported services which reflects the cultural background identified by the youth.
- ability to identify the process to secure safe and appropriate housing with additional support
- explore and identify future learning opportunities including post secondary education, trades and other training that would enable the youth to enter or continue in the workforce

- assistance and referral to available funding sources for continued lifelong learning

Preparation for becoming an adult includes but is not limited to ensuring the youth has the following skills:

- ability to perform basic life skills such as laundry, shopping and maintaining personal hygiene
- understand basic concepts of money management including banking, paying rent, budgeting and credit cards prior to and after transition planning is completed
- plan for employment readiness
- development of a stable social support network prior to and after reaching adulthood

All transition plans must include evidence of consultation with the youth and where appropriate, alternative care providers, legal guardians, educators, family of origin and/or any other applicable parties identified in the care plan by the youth.

Policy

[Planning Process](#)

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Planning Process

At the planning stage, the case manager and the key individuals identified at the assessment stage develop ways to address the needs and issues of the youth and where applicable the family. Based on the assessment, the outputs of planning are:

- specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely case goals
- service activities

Planning also ensures that any risk factors identified in the assessment are addressed so youth are safe and personal and family functioning are strengthened.

The case manager is ultimately responsible for the plan for a child in care however effective planning is more likely to occur when the youth, family members, and other members of the community, such as school and other service organizations, are actively involved in a process that results in a mutually agreed upon written plan. If there is a disagreement among the partners, there are agency/regional dispute resolution practices that are followed.

Plans must be flexible, reviewed regularly and revised to recognize successes and changing needs. To recognize success, outcomes must be described in measurable ways. For example, what will the partners be able to see that will let them know a change is taking place? Successful outcomes depend on a realistic plan that matches the needs of the family or youth with the resources that are available and work for them.

Planning Decisions

The case management decisions at the planning stage are related to questions such as:

- Can a youth be returned to his or her family? If so, when, how and what supports are needed? If not, how can the agency address the youth's need for continuity and permanency? What outputs/outcomes can the partners agree on?
- How can these outputs/outcomes be described so everyone knows they've happened?
- What services and resources will be provided and by whom to ensure the greatest likelihood of successful achievement of identified goals?
- How will the agency co-ordinate and manage these services?
- Who will coordinate the plan after agency involvement is finished?
- What are the responsibilities of the family members?
- What are the responsibilities of the other partners?
- What are the responsibilities of the youth? Consideration should be given to the capacity of the youth to participate.

Volume 1: Agency Standards
Chapter 1: Case Management
Section 7: Preparing Youth for Leaving Care

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Legislation

[Best Interests of the Child](#)

[Authority of Service](#)

Best Interests of the Child

[Subsection 2\(1\)](#) of *The Child and Family Services Act* and [section 3](#) of *The Adoption Act* define the best interests of the child. Under section 2(1), the best interests of the child is the paramount consideration in all proceedings under the Act other than proceedings to determine whether a child is in need of protection, and in determining best interests, the child's safety and security shall be the primary considerations. Best interests considerations include the merits and risks of any plan proposed by an agency that would be caring for a child compared with the merits and risks of the child returning to or remaining with the family.

Under both Acts, best interests include the child's sense of continuity and need for permanency with the least possible disruption, and the child's cultural, linguistic, racial and religious heritage.

Authority of Service

Under section 4 of the [Child and Family Service Authorities Regulation](#), the adult members of a family are entitled to choose an authority of service for the family. They may choose either the culturally appropriate authority or another authority.