



FRMP CONSULTATION WITH WARRNAMBOOL
18th AUGUST 2005

1. **Welcome**
Introduction and role in agency
2. **History of the FRMP and summary of Youth Homelessness Action Plan (YHAP) First Stage Report, & Project i Research**
3. **Introduction of the Family Reconciliation and Mediation Program (FRMP)**

FRMP Team and their roles

- Mandy Baxter – Manager
- Scott Dutton – Family Mediator & contact person for brokerage
- Yasmin Thomas – Senior Community Development Worker
- Linda Schwan – Community Development Worker

Overview of 3 Program objectives:

- a) To support the homelessness sector to assist young people, where possible and appropriate, to return home or to reconcile with family / significant others.
Reconciliation options include:
 - semi therapeutic interventions, such as counseling to assist a young person to 'make sense of' their experience of homelessness and family breakdown'. These services will be brokered from existing local services and accredited private practitioners where possible.
 - Up to 10 sessions / \$150 per session
- b) To provide a front-end family mediation service. Within metropolitan Melbourne, Scott Dutton will provide this service. In rural Victoria, local services will be utilised, or where gaps in service provision exist, services will be brokered-in.
- c) To establish pilot programs to support those young people who have experienced episodes of chronic / longer- term homelessness. This objective relates to the first two objectives, and will come from the first year's learnings.

4. BRAINSTORMING RECONCILIATION - What is reconciliation?

- Opening up
- With self, or relationship with others
- Building upon...
- Can include a spectrum of simple to formal processes – range of interventions
- Start of a means to an end

5. What reconciliation interventions do you / your agency practice when working with clients?

- Informing young people about the reality of living out of home (eg costs of independent living, responsibility of budgeting, and lack of existing housing resources)
- Explore young people's other options – using extended family supports (use of genograms helpful)
- Stating to young person that contact with their parent or guardian is required
- Listening

6. Constraints to reconciliation practices?

- Workers roles within SASHS are segmented – different workers for intake, crisis, HIR, outreach
- Workers not feeling that they are skilled in asking clients about 'family'. Raising the issue of family can result in a client opening up too much, and the worker not able to contain this. Client safety is an issue in this sense.

7. Brokerage

- Mediation, reconciliation, discretionary funding
- 10 sessions, up to \$150 per session
- There can be interventions of counseling between partners, as long as it is along side the intervention with the YP and their family. Can be linked to intergenerational patterns that exist between young person and how they were parented
- 20 agencies have accessed money to-date
- family therapy, mediation, counseling

Examples of successful reconciliation applications

Example 1

- **Service accessing brokerage:** Youth Refuge
- **Funding requested:** Reconciliation – individual counseling
- **Details of young person:** 17 year old male living in a refuge. Requesting individual counseling around issues of grief and loss, and assistance with relationship with father and stepmother.
- **Gaps in services:** *No services available*
- **Own provider / assistance:** *Worker has own contact to provide counseling*
- **Funds used for:** *Assessment & then family counseling with specialist*
- **Sessions requested:** *10 (3 for assessment)*
- **Cost:** *\$150 / session*

Example 2

- **Service accessing brokerage:** Youth Refuge
- **Funding requested:** Reconciliation – individual counseling
- **Details of young person:** 16 year old female living in a refuge. Requesting individual counseling to assist with dealing with issues related to her family, including trauma, protective services involvement, relationships with her siblings, refugee & CLD considerations.
- **Gaps in services:** *No services currently available*
- **Own provider / assistance:** *Worker has own contact to provide counseling*
- **Funds used for:** *Individual and family counseling*
- **Sessions requested:** *10*
- **Cost:** *\$150 / session*

Examples of discretionary funding

- A rural youth refuge identified that they have access to a bush house, to be utilized by young people and their families working toward family reconciliation. Specialists, including family mediators, family therapists and individual counselors visit the young person and their family whilst staying at the house. The only cost that cannot be financed over these couple of days is food for the young person and their family. FRMP agrees that as the family are engaging in a reconciliation process, discretionary funds may be accessed to cover these costs.
- Costs of a translator to assist in counseling session
- Babysitting provided for the children of young parents attending counseling

Group discussions around how brokerage can be accessed

Question

- *Can FRMP discretionary funds be used for young people to engage in recreation activities such as Ten Pin Bowling? Recreation is often an affective way for workers to engage with young people and begin discussions about family, and something that is lacking in rural areas.*

FRMP will be able to fund certain recreational activities, but this discretionary funding must accompany and compliment other family reconciliation interventions that the young person (and their family) is engaging with. The emphasis is on interventions that are of a semi-therapeutic nature.

Question

- *Can FRMP discretionary funds fund respite for young people and their families?*

FRMP can fund respite if it is linked to family reconciliation interventions, and is identified as necessary in order for the interventions to occur. See above example of discretionary funding.

Question

- *Can FRMP brokerage be accessed to fund behavior management interventions?*

Yes. FRMP has already funded anger management interventions for some young people. This behavior change may be funded separately under discretionary funding, or incorporated within other reconciliation interventions.

Question

- *Is there a limit for the amount of discretionary funding that may be accessed for one client?*

There are currently no limits on the amount of discretionary funding that may be accessed per client. It would need to be proportional to the amount of funding that is accessed re:

Question

- *Is there a limit on the number of applications that can be made on behalf of a client? For example, if a client doesn't engage with a counselor, can funding be provided to link a client in with another practitioner?*

Yes. FRMP funding follows the young person. In this circumstance, the funding attached to the young person would be ongoing and follow through to the next counselor they link in with. There are currently no guidelines relating to the number of times that a SAAP provider can access funding relating to the support of a young person. The only consideration is that the funding is semi-therapeutic and

not long term counseling (ie. it would fall outside the guidelines to apply for 10 sessions after 10 are completed).

8. Training Needs

- Advanced mediation
- Building rapport with young people – engagement
- Challenges of working with young people and their families when drug and alcohol issues are attached
- Blended families
- Single session therapy
- Cultural training (especially when working with Koori and Sudanese clients)
- Info kits for parents would also be good!

9. Website

All information regarding the FRMP Program (including brokerage application forms) available online: www.frmp.org.au

10. Publicity Material

- Stickers, posters, fridge magnets & a young person flyer are currently being developed
- A comprehensive Directory will be available on the FRMP website in the near future, detailing the location of: SAAP agencies, SAAP funded reconciliation workers, Reconnect workers, and private practitioners such as counselors and psychologists

11. Closing summary and questions

Action

To support the delivery of family mediation as needed within Barwon region. To do this it was identified that a skills audit of workers within the region needs to be completed first – this will provide an overview of who can and who is available to deliver mediation. The FRMP can then fund these mediations through brokerage. Yasmin will contact Marina and SAAP agencies from the areas surrounding Warrnambool within the next fortnight and assist in establishing this list. Workers believe this will be a really useful resource.