

ACTIVITY: Online and offline services

Drawing up a support chart

In this activity, you will be given an example of working with a young person to create a 'support chart' and be given some suggestions about the coordination of online support services.

Guidelines

In many case management settings, case or support coordination is a crucial element of the support you provide.

It is important to include online and offline services in this coordination for a number of reasons:

- to help map out when and how a young person will access support
- to reduce overlapping or duplication of services
- to give choice and plan support around what the young person requires and desires, and
- to ensure a young person is not at risk of being overwhelmed by support.

Suggestion from the field

Provided by a youth worker in a case management setting.

Often if one of my clients comes to me, feeling overwhelmed with appointments and professionals, I like to discuss how we can better plan services around them and suggest looking at a planning review meeting for all the services they are involved in (with their permission and full consent when there are no



risk issues present). I help the young person write up the services they access and when - I encourage creativity and a format that appeals to them, with some young people choosing to use computer programs and others taking the option to draw. I even had one young person create a wheel and colour code the multitude of services they accessed. When it is all there in front of them, some find it confronting - how dependant they may feel, and for others, it highlights how isolated they are and we can identify referral needs.

My suggestion then is to create a chart that maps out what support they access, when, how etc. It's funny, but I did this activity for years without asking whether the young person was using online services... then one of the young people I was working with queried if she could include an online service in the chart, so I started asking other young people and was surprised to see how many of them were using websites, programs and



services online and were wanting to talk about their experiences! Online services, for many, were the only crisis supports they used.

After creating the chart I suggest the possibility of a combined meeting with the relevant service providers and the young person, and we use teleconference, Skype, email with other services to make sure they have some input. Some young people are not into it, but others find it to be a positive and empowering experience as we are all meeting to support them and they can outline what they need from us. We have successfully conducted this type of meeting with offline and online supports either present at a meeting (either in the room or online) or they have provided an overview of what support they have offered and their intention of future support via email.

Whether we have a combined support review or not, charting the support that a young person accesses is a good assessment tool for them, it's a great tangible way to reflect and plan, and for me, it's helpful in planning what I can offer to support them and for future referrals.

Notes

Please refer to your agency or organisational **Shared Information Consent** policies for specific guidelines on informed consent and privacy, if you are asking the young person for referral or other information to be shared across agencies.

