



# Sunshine Project Insights Report

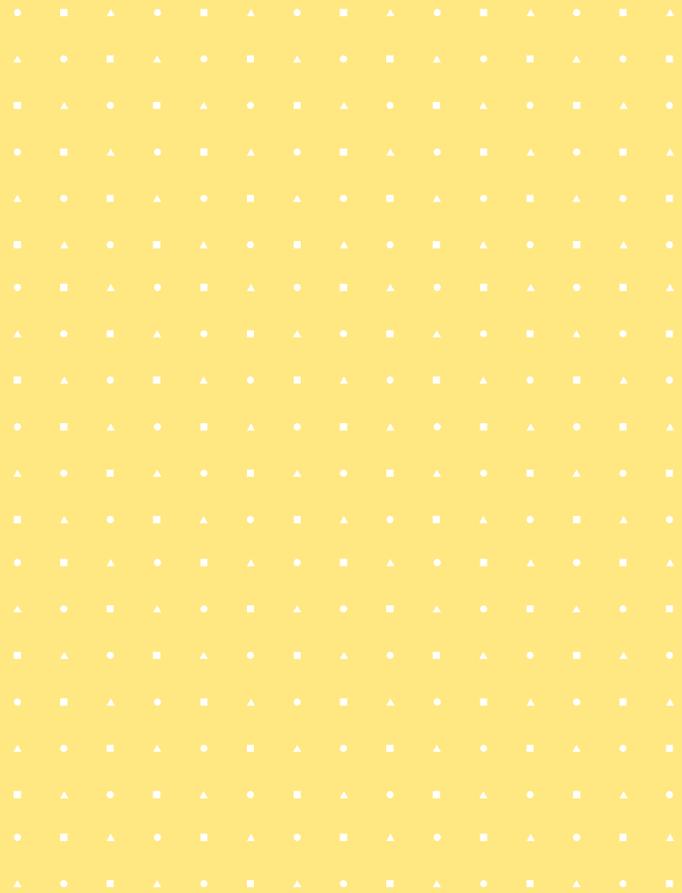
October 2022

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100 Families WA





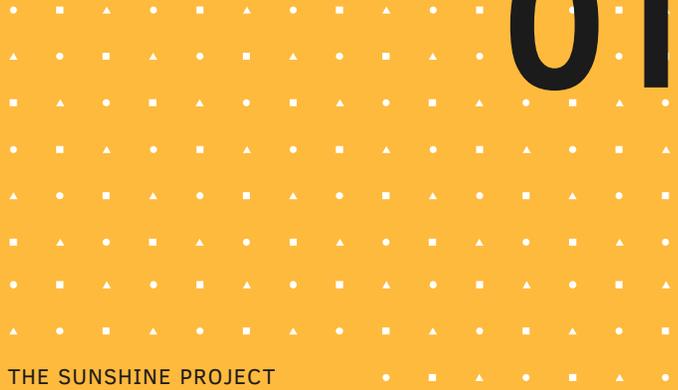
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THE SUNSINE PROJECT

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THE SUNSHINE PROJECT

# About the Project



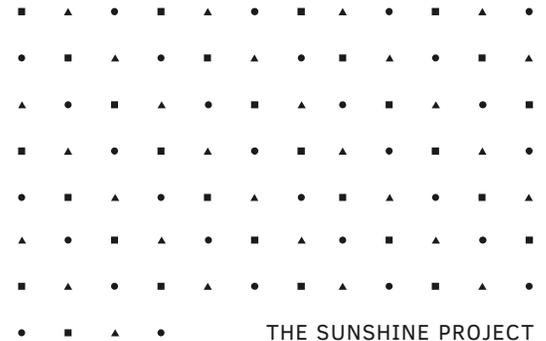
# Project Context

## Exploring the idea of radical help in practice

This is a 2-year action research project working with a small group of families in Rockingham/Kwinana to enhance their access to healing, supportive relationships, learning, opportunities, capital and other resources to find their way to the good life.



We acknowledge the Whadjuk and Bindjareb peoples as the traditional custodians and owners of the lands on which this project is taking place. We pay our respects to Elders of the past, present and emerging young leaders. We acknowledge the world is changing and that the challenges facing our society are often more deeply felt by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We recognise the important role of Aboriginal organisations and Eldership within place-based communities and are committed to collaboration that furthers self-determination and creates a better future for all.





# Executive Summary: High Level Insights

## Experience of Families

The weekly time, cost and emotional burden in seeking supports, gathering resources is high. The burden of coordinating many case workers and plans falls to families. Families show incredible ingenuity, knowledge and navigation, but the mental load is extreme. Lack of resources and adequate supports places families in compromised positions where they have to weigh up nuanced decisions and sometimes unsafe options to make ends meet and to try to protect their children from various ills.

## Wicked Problems

There are wicked problem loops at the system level which can prevent families being able to get traction and move forwards. The intersections of poor quality, unaffordable housing, limited mental health supports (including NDIS), insufficient income and being locked out of suitable employment combine with other factors to trap families in cycles of poverty.

## Commissioning for Single Issues

System challenges include commissioning designed for standardized offerings and efficiency. This works for families with straightforward needs, but for those with many intersecting needs, this fails to resolve

needs. Bespoke outreach services are seen as too costly, though the cost of failed attempts to seek help in mainstream services, along with the cost of crisis responses as need escalates often works out more costly in the end.

## Brokerage and ER

Emergency Relief and brokerage is constrained by ideology and judgement. Trust in families is low. Trust in worker discretion is low. Good workers often have to go outside the rules to provide a creative solution for a family. Outside the context of a longer-term coaching relationship or plan, these top ups are only really a band-aid.

## Informal Web of Supports

Missed opportunities- the informal local networks for food, contribution and other supports often run in parallel to the social service network, by volunteers, with minimal resourcing. Families are often contributing among themselves in unacknowledged ways. Place based groups- common interest groups, placemaking and community activation groups and Aboriginal cultural centres are trusted spaces where valuable work happens to grow the good life.

## COVID Experience

COVID response provided a glimpse into what happened when families were given access to resources. They had simple, modest goals. Some played catch up to gain the basics that they had been lacking. The loss of this money created further setbacks.

## Family Identity

Some families fall on hard times suddenly- an FDV relationship or missing out on a rental and finding themselves homelessness. It is a brief period of acute complexity, but they have a clear sense that with some support, they can find their way back to the good life. Other families have known hardship their whole lives. There is work to be done shifting internalized narratives or identities which hold them back.

## The Good Life

Families have modest goals for the Good Life and responded positively to framing around building the good life and what is needed to move towards it, rather than the narrow lens of fixing problems.



# Why this Project

## **We know the current social service system is not fit for purpose for changing times**

The [WA 100 Families](#) project elevated the voice of people experiencing hardship and highlighted the ways in which services and systems can make it hard for people seeking help to get it, with some clear calls to action.

These findings are mirrored by many other researchers, thought leaders and organisations around the world who highlight ways in which the current system fails to address root causes, and are experimenting with alternative approaches. The project draws inspiration from Hilary Cottam's [Radical Help](#) work with Participle in the UK to prototype new approaches to enable people to get to the good life.

## **Purpose and Intent of Project**

This project is a learning experiment. By the end, we want to achieve:

- Deep Learning- we will have learned more about what complexity looks like, what the vision of the good life is like, according to participating families, what else is working elsewhere and have some ideas for what could work in Kwinana/Rockingham
- Participating families will be better off in some way (by their definition and agreed measures)
- We will have tested some of our hunches and assumptions and have evidence about what worked/didn't work and why.
- Learning may inform advocacy and current service provision or may inform other initiatives.
- Partners brought on the journey- ability to influence sector learning, commissioning, policy and emerging practice.



# About the Project

The project is a partnership between Anglicare WA and Ruah.

- It is a spinoff from the 100 Families Project which seeks to honour its findings.
- 2 years for design and a further year for further testing/research
- Anglicare and Ruah have contributed their own funds for Design/Project staff time and a worker to support families.
- May seek additional pots of funds to test out specific prototypes
- We have lived experience representation on our Steering Group, and the intent of the project is to codesign and test solutions with participating families.

The Kwinana Rockingham area was selected due to the following factors:

- Both Ruah and Anglicare WA have an existing presence in Rockingham and service Kwinana.
- These communities face high levels of disadvantage across a variety of indicators
- These communities have a range of undervalued resources which could be better leveraged to grow opportunities for families,

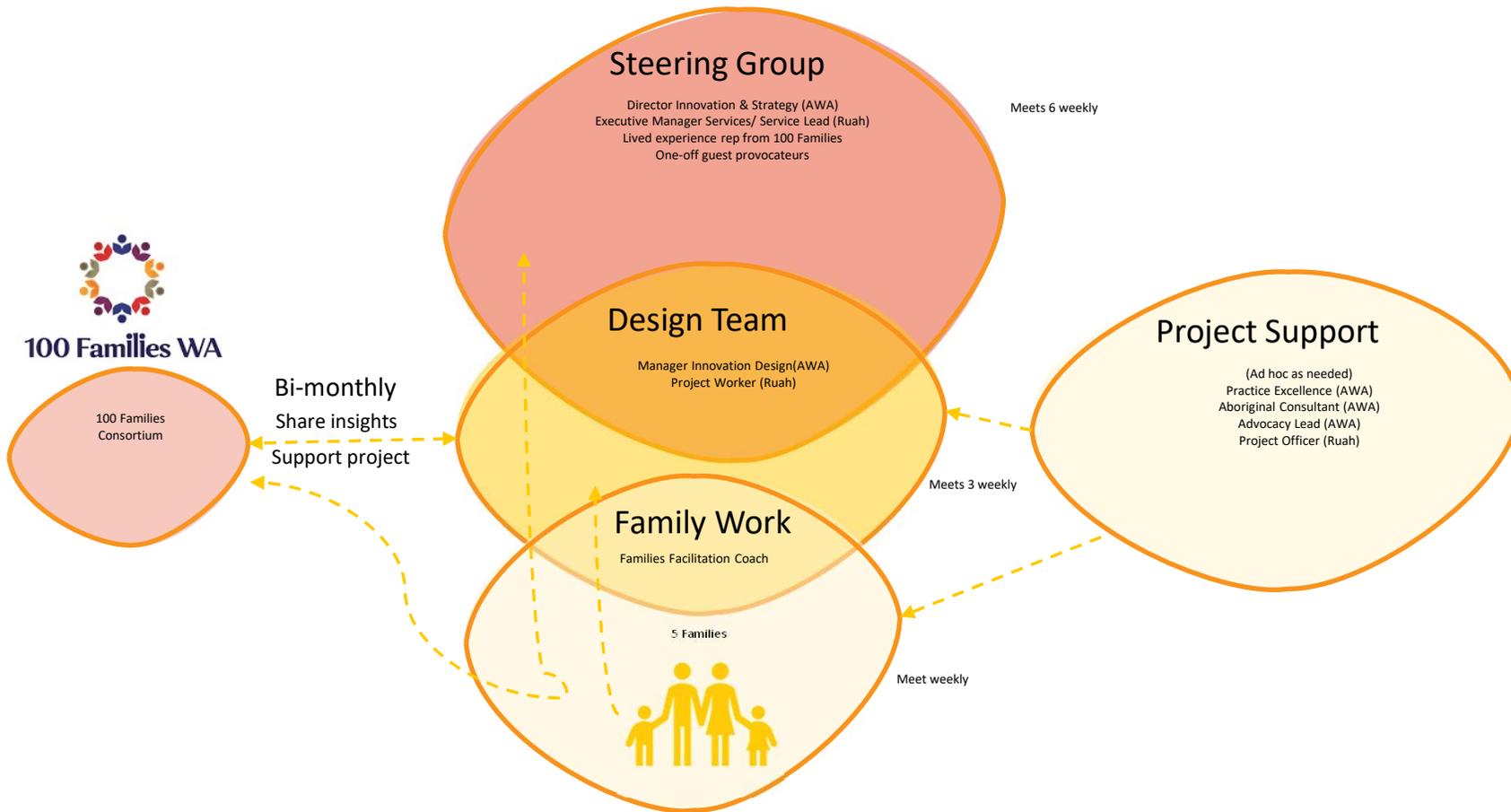




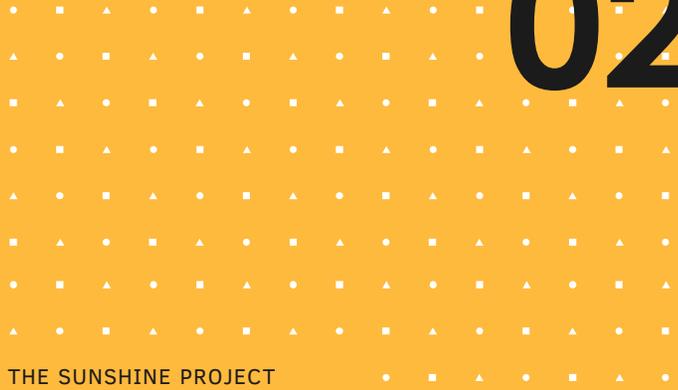
# Principles for Project

20 <sup>th</sup> Century Welfare	21 Century Radical Help
Fix the problem	Grow the good life
Manage Need	Develop capability
Transactional culture	Above all relationships
Financial focus- Audit money	Connect multiple forms of resource
Contain Risk	Create possibility
Closed/Targeted	Open to all: take care of everyone
Centralised Institutions	Distributed Networks
Individual	Social Networks

# The Sunshine Project Governance



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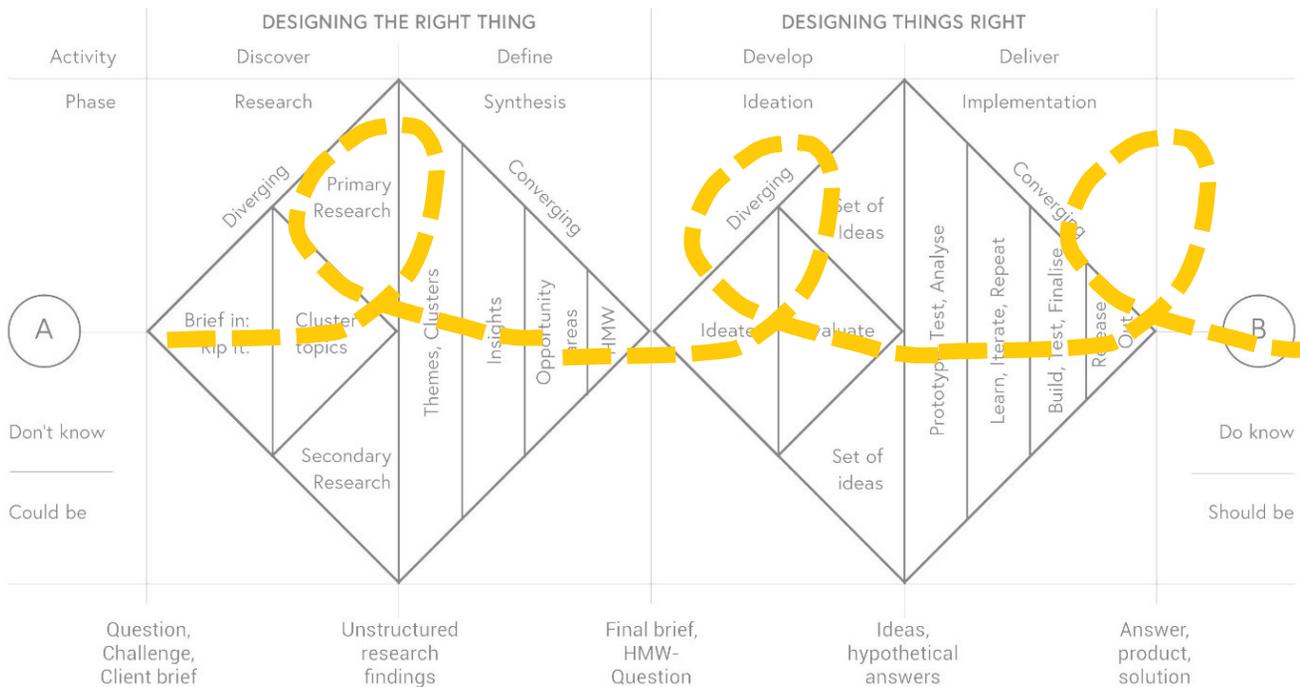


THE SUNSHINE PROJECT

## Project process



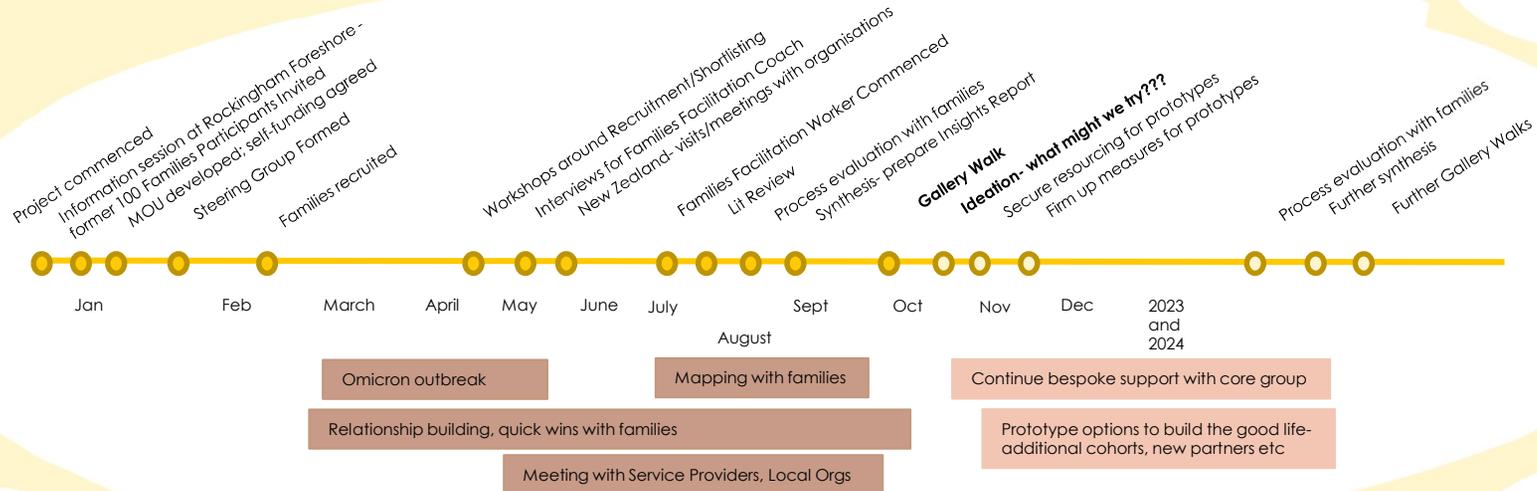
# HCD Process +



While using the double diamond approach as a framework for the overall project, we have included a separate, but connected Action Research function woven throughout.

This has enabled us to test out strategies to achieve quick wins with families along the way, rather than making them wait until three quarters of the way through the project before we would offer them any concrete support.

# Our Journey





# Mapping, Listening Deeply

## Co-design Mapping

We undertook interviews and workshops with families to understand what kind of role could be most helpful to have working with them to get unstuck, and what kind of person would be ideal for this role. Alongside ethnographic observation, being immersed in the families' day to day lives, we also facilitated more structured lived experience mapping with the lead help-seeker from each family to understand:

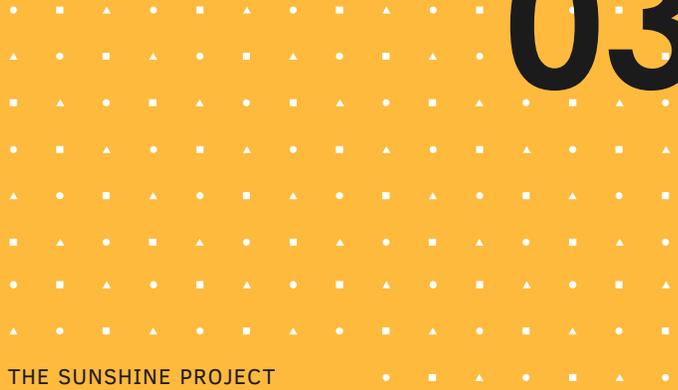
- Their journey so far- key events/reflections on service interventions so far
- Formal and informal social connections- Who helps them and who they help
- Getting resources when you need them- food, money and debt
- Impact of COVID on accessing services and resources.
- Their vision for what the good life could look like, what inputs and actions could help them move towards it and how we might know if it was working.

Our information gathering also included:

- Additional workshops with children
- Additional opportunities for other members of the household to share their perspectives.
- Site visits to New Zealand to meet with agencies doing work which resulted from 100 Families NZ
- Interview, site visits, meetings with other local service providers, community hubs, Local Government staff and grassroots community groups.
- Lit review and scan of other organisations doing radical work around poverty and disadvantage.



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THE SUNSHINE PROJECT

# Insights



# The Families



Clea's Family

Partner

Daughter

Daughter

### Superpowers

- Helps other people
- Organising other people
- Crochets up a storm
- High level of resourcefulness

**Motivated by** children having a better life

*"I'm like a car where the fuel light came on 100km back and there's nothing left in the tank. I'm just going on fumes, but I just keep going, getting up every day"*

### Pain points

- Not enough money- burden of time to meet needs
- Mental health supports not coordinated
- Want to access supports for healing from trauma
- Barriers to getting assessed for NDIS
- Cost of rental property causing rental stress
- Invasive weed taking over backyard
- Need access to tools to keep the yard clean
- Parenting is hard work
- Getting partner to seek help with needs
- Need respite and connection- camping
- Need to get on top of debts
- Organising house, routine with kids

### The good life looks like

#### Connection

- Big family dinners
- Having interests that the whole family is into, things the kids can have in common with their Dad.
- Connecting with the outdoors and a sense of adventure
- Growing old together

#### Contribution

- Sharing food/skills with community
- "A world where money is not a thing"
- Organising the house - having it in a way that I don't feel ashamed for people to come over



Bella's Family

Nan

Son

Daughter

### Superpowers

- Loves animals
- Creative
- Good at organising ideas into diagrams

**Motivated by** children having a better life

*"I want to use my voice so that I can make meaning of what happened"*

### Pain points

- Not enough money- burden of time to meet needs
- Overcrowding in house with Nan
- Lack of social housing availability
- Not allowed a pet
- Side effects of meds make me tired
- Parenting is hard
- Need respite and connection- camping
- Need to get on top of debts
- Organising house, routine with kids

### The good life looks like

#### Connection

- Being around dogs- having a dog, working with dogs
- Sharing my creativity- writing art etc.
- Being able to get away with the kids in nature
- Sense of purpose- using my voice

#### Autonomy

- Having our own place



# The Families



Son

Son

Son

## Superpowers

- Working with kids who have special needs

**Motivated by** children having a better life

*"All I have to do is get through the next 20 minutes"*

## Pain points

- Confidence and self worth are low
- Parenting 3 sons and looking after 3 dogs while working is hard
- Now ex partner is in jail, she loses all child support payments
- Limited healing supports for kids
- Sons processing own trauma, often refusing school
- PTSD affecting ability to work

## Silver lining

current employer is paying her even though she is taking a couple of months off to recover

## The good life looks like Respite and Healing

- Starting over with my kids
- Learning how to feel safe

## Independence

- Studying AUSLAN to build skills for work
- Getting a permanent job in my area of expertise
- Getting financially stable and getting out of social housing

## Charlotte's Family



Partner

Son

Daughter

## Superpowers

- Deep interest in child development
- High financial literacy-saves, avoids bad debt

**Motivated by** children having a better life

*"I'm learning to feel safe again and feel that I am worthy of love"*

## Pain points

- Confidence and self worth are low
- Health of current relationship
- Don't feel safe enough to go out
- Can't access timely CAHMS supports for son's behavioural issues and needs.

## Silver lining

Asset distribution from previous relationship will eventually see her get funds to get set up again

## The good life looks like

### Healing

- Learning to feel safe
- Learning to believe I am worthy of love and respect
- Building new connections.
- Opportunities for connection with my kids.

### Independence

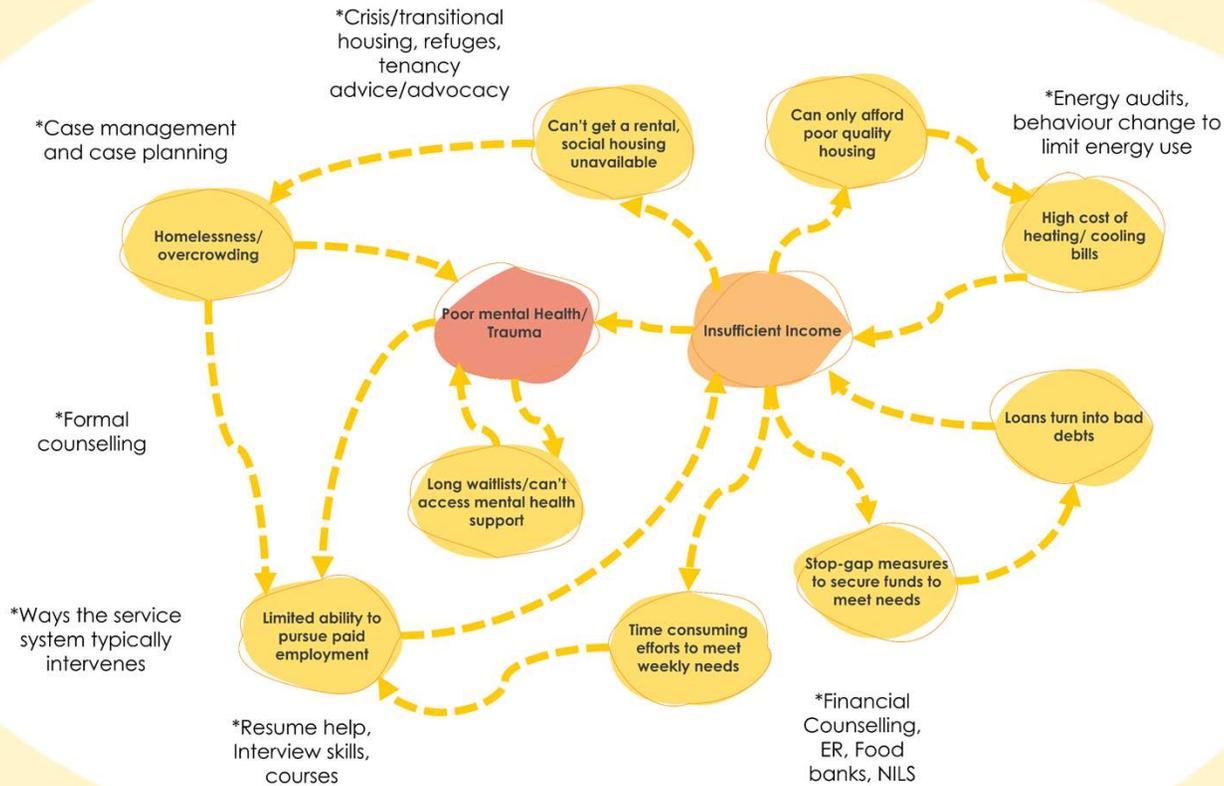
- Studying/Working in social services or children's work
- Getting financially stable
- Maybe saving for my own home

## Jasmine's Family



# System Loops

Based on the experiences of the families in the project so far, these are the loops that seem to be keeping the families stuck.



## Other impacts include:

- Pressure on family relationships, creates conditions for FDV, makes it harder to leave FDV relationship
- Difficulty meeting needs of children- adverse outcomes for kids, developmental delays
- Knowledge/skills/financial literacy/ability to self advocate
- Chronic health impacts/disabilities
- Involvement in the justice system- fines/charges
- Impacts of family identity, intergenerational narratives
- Racism/ intergenerational trauma- Impacts on cultural obligations



# High Level Insights: Insufficient Income

When we went out to see one family, she was sorting through bins at the local rec centre with her kids to get the 10c cans and bottles. She was weighing up whether it was worth the cost of fuel to go to the recycling centre relative to how much they would get back from cans.

## **Poverty is time consuming and exhausting**

The families' experiences highlight the daily reality of insufficient income. Families cycle through unappealing and time-consuming options every single week. This is not just a once off acute situation of needing some money to get through a crisis. This is a chronic weekly situation. "Poverty exhaustion" describes the exhaustion of having to go to great lengths to make up for insufficient income and to make ends meet, often having to make undesirable compromises, with no end in sight. The psychological distress of not making ends meet and seeing it slip further each week impacts all other life domains- mental health, relationships, parenting, ability to think about and plan for the future (survival mode). Families expressed feelings of shame that they can't provide children the same opportunities and experiences that other kids get.

## **Families are already doing the thrifty things you would expect and more**

Families demonstrated strong resourcefulness and ingenuity in making resources stretch. All of this speaks to resourcefulness and persistence. The mental arithmetic, persistence and hard work of getting by.

## **Asking family for help too often damages relationships**

While it may be possible to ask family for money a couple of times, many families in the same situation, and with the diminishing capability to pay them back, this can cause further conflict and that support is withdrawn.

## **Emergency Relief (ER) is limited and can lack dignity**

ER providers are valued but associated with judgement and hoops- there is often a requirement of paperwork to prove eligibility and need, pressure to see financial counsellors even though this doesn't help with chronic poverty.

## **Once the mainstream options are exhausted, next steps are risky**

From low-risk activities such as going without food, to options with more consequences such as leaving unpaid bills to escalate, pawning household items or accessing high interest loans through 'loan sharks' or breaking the law (driving unregistered car etc).

## **Access to the internet is an essential. Post-paid plans offer better value per Gig but prepaid gives flexibility when money is tight.**

## **Implications**

Poverty forces people to make choices between undesirable options and make potentially detrimental compromises to get by- choices about where to live, whether to leave a relationship, whether to return to an abuser, who to trust to look after your kids. This is the pointy end of rising cost of living impacts.



## High Level Insights: Informal Helping

Despite their own struggles, families recounted in passing many of the ways they are volunteering and helping each other. A sample of weekly examples include:

- Helping to run the breakfast club at the school
- Helping with classroom activities and excursions
- Sharing information about navigating services with families at the school who going through a tough time.
- Sharing food on Buy Nothing Facebook Group
- Dropping off frozen meals to neighbour up the street whose husband had died
- Providing moral support and picking up kids from school for a back fence neighbour struggling with a new baby.
- Letting friends use their washing machine.
- Driving friends without cars around and giving them driving lessons and helping them complete their supervised hours.
- Sharing food with sister when she is short of food, babysitting sister's children when she has to work.
- Reaching out to people in online forums who are depressed and giving them encouragement
- Making crochet items to cheer people up or thank them
- Being first responder for someone who had self harmed.
- Helping a friend whose child also has ADHD about how to understand and support the child
- Sharing expertise with a neighbour who has a child with special needs



# High Level Insights: Making Ends Meet

## Survival strategies for chronic insufficient income:

Ask Centrelink for an advance.	2-3 times a year
Go to the Foodbank and free food places to get some basics.	Weekly
Use layby, Afterpay or other delayed payment options	As needed
Go without food	Weekly
Let bills fall overdue, drive on expired rego, avoid debtors calls, hope for the best, hold off until next ER bailout or Centrelink advance.	Often
Go to Emergency Relief providers to ask for help with bills or expenses	Every 3 months
Apply for No Interest Loan	Once off
Look around the house for items which can be pawned.	As needed
Ask parents to loan money or help out with money	Rarely
Apply to payday lenders to get a loan	As last resort
Other grey area, less legal options	As last resort

“  
**Observation:** For those who have grown up in intergenerational poverty, there are narratives that seem to have been woven into their identity- repeated over and over. “Our family has always been on welfare and that’s just the way it is”, “everything bad happens to us, it never works out”, “There’s one set of rules for me, another set of rules for everyone else” “We are not the kind of family that can afford to have nice things”.

“  
**Observation:** For those who did not grow up in poverty, they had an expectation that their current financial experience was time limited and that they would find a way to get unstuck. They did however have other self-limiting narratives they were working to overcome about their worthiness of love or their right to safety.



## A story about COVID

"I We made a cardboard bus for the kids from the box that the couch came in. I've never had anything new so they never got to play in a big box before."

Clea's family benefitted from an extra \$550 a fortnight from increases to JobSeeker and other time limited increases to payments. They also took the opportunity to withdraw some of Clea's super.

*Before COVID our house was furnished with things we got off the side of the road. We had this yellow couch we got off the verge collection and walked home carrying it. The wood bracing was broken so you had to lean when you were sitting on it. We had a blow-up mattress, a porta cot and someone's old bar fridge. When COVID hit, and there was the opportunity to access some of my super.*



**We knew this might be the only chance in our lifetimes that we might get to buy new furniture and white goods, so we took it.**

*We took out \$10,000 from my super. I had some super from back when I had a job, before my mental health breakdown. We bought some real furniture. We got a fridge and a microwave, a washer/dryer, We got a new couch, the kids' beds were broken so the kids got beds and mattresses. We got a mop and vacuum, a TV, car seats for the car and cube storage units. And we did a big shop for food.*

*Because it was COVID we couldn't go into the store to look so we had to buy it all online. **I felt like a real adult because I could buy real stuff for the house.** It was really good when the furniture started getting delivered. I gave everyone who came over a tour of the furniture "If you walk this way you will see the fridge"*

**Increased Jobseeker and access to Super made a significant difference and enabled families to play catch up** and access some of the baseline items you need for a household. They had modest goals. This was their chance to get a taste of what the good life could be like:

***On a weekend, we used to take the kids to Gosnells Markets. We would go on the train. I might buy a scented candle and my partner might get a vintage video game. We would get the kids an ice-cream. We wouldn't be fighting. It was nice.***

They knew it was time limited, but cessation of payments left families struggling, right at the time rents and cost of living started escalating

*The struggle after COVID payments stopped was severe. The extra payments dropped down and then phased out. We couldn't manage food, bills etc. As the payments were dropping down, the cost of things was also going up for food, everything. I don't really cope well with change. We struggled a lot once the money was cut. We couldn't meet the kids' expectations, no more toys, no takeout, back to eating whatever we could get from Foodbank*



## High Level Insights: Sanctuary/Shelter

The weekly cost of a rented home in Kwinana has gone up 39% since the rental moratorium was stopped.

A report produced by Sustainability Victoria (2016) found that the average energy rating of pre-1990 houses was 1.57 Stars and post-1990 houses was 3.14 Stars.

### **Low-income families in the private rental market are under severe rental stress and at risk of being pushed out altogether.**

There is already an understanding that the current and growing cost to rent a house is pushing families into significant rental stress and even homelessness.

Anglicare's annual rental affordability snapshot along with Core Logic's rental availability stats show that the availability and cost of housing is at critical levels and that growing numbers of families are in housing stress (paying more than 30% of their income in rent). For Kwinana, rentals have gone up by an average of 39% since the start of Covid. One of the families was spending 60% of her income to stay in a rental property, which represents extreme housing stress. .

### **The social housing safety net is not there for those who fall through the cracks of the private rental market**

There are locations in Kwinana and Rockingham with families living in tents. Families in this project had been asked by friends if they could camp in their backyard. Services we met with are working with whole families living in tents with all their furniture, struggling to get the kids up and dressed each day to go to school. Some are working families who can afford to pay rent but just can't find a rental. In the absence of transitional or social housing, Anglicare services have been paying car registration so they can sleep in their cars. There is a dire need for interim measures, while long term solutions are pursued.

### **The power imbalance in the rental relationship prevents tenants from asking for basic dignities to create a home**

3-monthly Rent inspections add to the list of time consuming and stressful things to manage. Families struggle with the cost and logistics of getting access to mowers etc to maintain gardens. Many families are too nervous to request repairs to the houses as they worry that if they are difficult their leases will not be renewed, or the rent will be increased. They live with ovens with broken parts, invasive trees, broken shelving, and broken fences. The inability to have pets in rental properties is a source of sadness for some families. When asked about the Good Life, animals featured prominently more than just having a pet- Kids we spoke to who have been through trauma described having a bond with an animal as calming.

### **Poor quality homes mean higher costs of heating and cooling are passed on to renters.**

When living in substandard housing stock, families bear the additional hidden burden of the utility cost of heating and cooling inefficient dwellings. This further compounds the stress on household income and pushes families into poverty and debt. The only other option is to go without and suffer the impacts of heat exposure and cold on health, children's ability to rest well and subsequently concentrate at school, family conflict (it is well documented that rates of assaults increase in hot weather).

### **Renters are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and least able to make retrofits to the built form**

In a recent move the National Construction Code has upgraded its requirement for newly built homes to meet a minimum of 7-star NaHERS energy efficiency rating. However, this only impacts a small % of the housing stock in new builds. Much of the rental housing stock is well below the requirement for NaHERS star ratings. As climate change intensifies, we will see much hotter drier summers in Perth. Current services look to behavioural change and replacing appliances. Any conversation about the way forward for housing should consider not just the quantity of housing or its affordability, but also incentives and subsidies to retrofit for energy efficiency to minimise harm and hidden costs to renters who have little ability to modify the built form.



# High Level Insights: Food Insecurity

*"I just shop at Foodbank and get hampers where I can. Coles and Woolies feel like rich people shops- we would never be able to go there"*

## **Families maintain a high literacy and mental load about emergency relief providers and their constraints**

Families have high levels of knowledge of the free food places, what times they are open and how often you can go there. There is high level system literacy, navigation and help seeking skill. In addition to the mental load of remembering all this information, there is a significant cost in time and dignity in securing it.

## **The Emergency Relief system is limited and not designed to meet the needs of chronic food insecurity**

The emergency relief system is designed for those who may occasionally fall on hard times and need some one-off help. "Shopping around" to multiple providers is often perceived among ER providers as a sneaky or deceitful tactic to try to get more food. It is understood that allowing repeat visits builds dependence, which it does. However, for those in chronic food insecurity, knowing all the places you can go and when and what hoops you have to jump through is a coping strategy- the resilience to provide food for kids against insurmountable odds could be understood as a virtue.

## **The poor quality of food tells kids they are poor, despite parents' best efforts to protect them from it.**

The food that comes through hampers and foodbank can be unpredictable and hard to use.

## **As the cost of living is increasing, food insecurity is placing undue pressure of emergency relief providers and Food banks.**

Staff at one prominent food ER service noted that they are getting so many people seeking help that fist fights are starting to break out in the queue.

## **Not everyone can access food supports- informal sharing fills the gaps between formal services**

Families on working visas, international students and asylum seekers do not have health care cards, are not eligible for social housing, many other services. Feed it Forward was established by Māori community to meet a need for food and has rapidly scaled across WA with a wide network of volunteers.

## **While local churches form part of the helping network, there are often uncomfortable strings attached**

Families have expressed discomfort at feeling obligated to take part in prayer in order to receive food hampers and an unaccredited Christian financial counselling service has a reputation for giving unprofessional advice and charging families a cut of their income to help with budgeting.

## **Food is often one of the last things in the weekly budget**

After rent, automatic deductions and other non-negotiables are paid, there is often little money left for food. Many families are existing almost entirely on Foodbank and donated food. Some families shop almost exclusively at Foodbank. For most families in this group, they are regular users of free food services.



# High Level Insights: Family Domestic Violence

*"I wanted to give him the chance to be a good dad. If I had to choose between my own safety and my children's happiness, I would choose their happiness every time"*

## **FDV has increased drastically since Covid started**

Crimes against the person have increased year on year since the start of COVID. **WA Police Data shows that family Related Offences (assault and threatening behaviour) are up 19.1% against the 5-year average. (2021/22).**

## **There is a huge financial cost to leaving a violent relationship- which makes it riskier for women in poverty to leave.**

Many families in poverty can't afford to break up. There is an economic dimension to the relationship options- For people in high levels of poverty, the financial ability to leave a relationship is less than their middle-class counterparts. It costs on average \$18,000 to leave an abusive relationship (Australian Council of Trade Unions) which means simplistic notions of leaving at the first signs of violence are not something they can easily action.

There is an economic impact of perpetrator being held accountable- Loss of child support when ex goes to jail. Some families recounted instances of friends leaving violent relationships only to return as they faced homelessness. Many women have bad credit ratings as a result of their ex-partners actions.

## **There is a pattern of repeating violent relationships throughout the life journey**

Many of the families had experiences of violence as children and went on to be in violent relationships later, either as victims or perpetrators. Even after leaving a violent relationship, subsequent relationships have often also been violent or used coercive control. Services for children are scarce and poorly funded, however healing in the aftermath of violence may contribute to breaking the cycle.

## **Mothers are weighing up complex choices about what leaving vs staying will cost their kids**

They are doing a cost analysis about risks to themselves or the children in staying with the perpetrator relative to what it will cost them to leave. They are considering the impact of their children potentially losing their relationship with other parent, the disruption and shame of staying in a refuge, possibly having to move away from their school, community and social networks, financial hardship and loss of income to afford a normal life and the potential for homelessness. Many women know that the period when they try to leave is when there is the greatest danger of being killed by their partner.

## **Some people who have experienced violence do not wish to be defined by their lived experience.**

*As one mum commented "I hear people on the phone, and they say I'm a domestic violence survivor. I just can't say that. I don't want to be defined by that".*

## **The court process can be a way for perpetrators to further control and humiliate their victims**

**The effects of violence on mental health and functioning can be significant.**



# High Level Insights: Mental Health

*“the Psychiatrist was dismissive and rude. He had an aura of distaste as if he just wanted to get it over with. He did not at all seem interested in hearing about the client’s experiences of the side effects of the medication on her functioning.”*

**Many of the families who had experienced family domestic violence or other assaults had been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) amongst other significant mental health conditions which affected their daily functioning.**

**Families struggled to develop ongoing relationships with GPs and other mental health supports due to high staff turnover. There is a standard practice of rotating GPs every 12 months which makes continuity of care.**

The high turnover of service staff, GPs and specialists limits the ability for long term relationship and monitoring, which in turn:

- prevents people from maintaining a relationship long enough to undertake the end-to-end process of applying for the NDIS.
- Means that people are continually having to retell their stories over and over, which is not trauma informed
- Means that transitions between exiting and incoming supports can be abrupt, triggering abandonment issues.
- Increases the likelihood of administrative bungles, where files are not transferred to new practitioners.

One mother lamented that “I have to do all the work for people who are supposed to be helping me. Services constantly drop the ball and don’t follow up what they say they will- they don’t call back, they don’t process paperwork or referrals and I have to call them to remind them and keep pushing them to do their job.”

**It is particularly difficult for people with Borderline Personality Disorder to get help.**

Good practice responses for people with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) include having 1 lead worker coordinating the other support services. Many health professionals refuse to work with people who have BPD, making it difficult to co-ordinate their care effectively. Additionally, the rejection of constantly being refused and exited from services can trigger their acute fear of abandonment.

**Families with more significant traumas were not able to get adequate support to do the deeper work required to process their trauma and heal from it.**

*One person commented on her attempts to string together lots of 10 appointments across multiple agencies; “they will only ever give me 10 appointments and half of that time is spent bringing the person up to speed, but then the appointments run out, so I find another service and see if I can pick up where I left off with someone new to try to process what I’ve been through and how to heal”.*



# High Level Insights: The Service System

*"I wanted to give him the chance to be a good dad. If I had to choose between my own safety and my children's happiness, I would choose their happiness every time"*

## **The cost of seeking help is borne by those in deepest need.**

In addition to the stress of dealing with their life crises (insufficient income, food insecurity, mounting bills, bad debts, family conflict, children's developmental challenges, etc) families face additional costs in engaging with the service system:

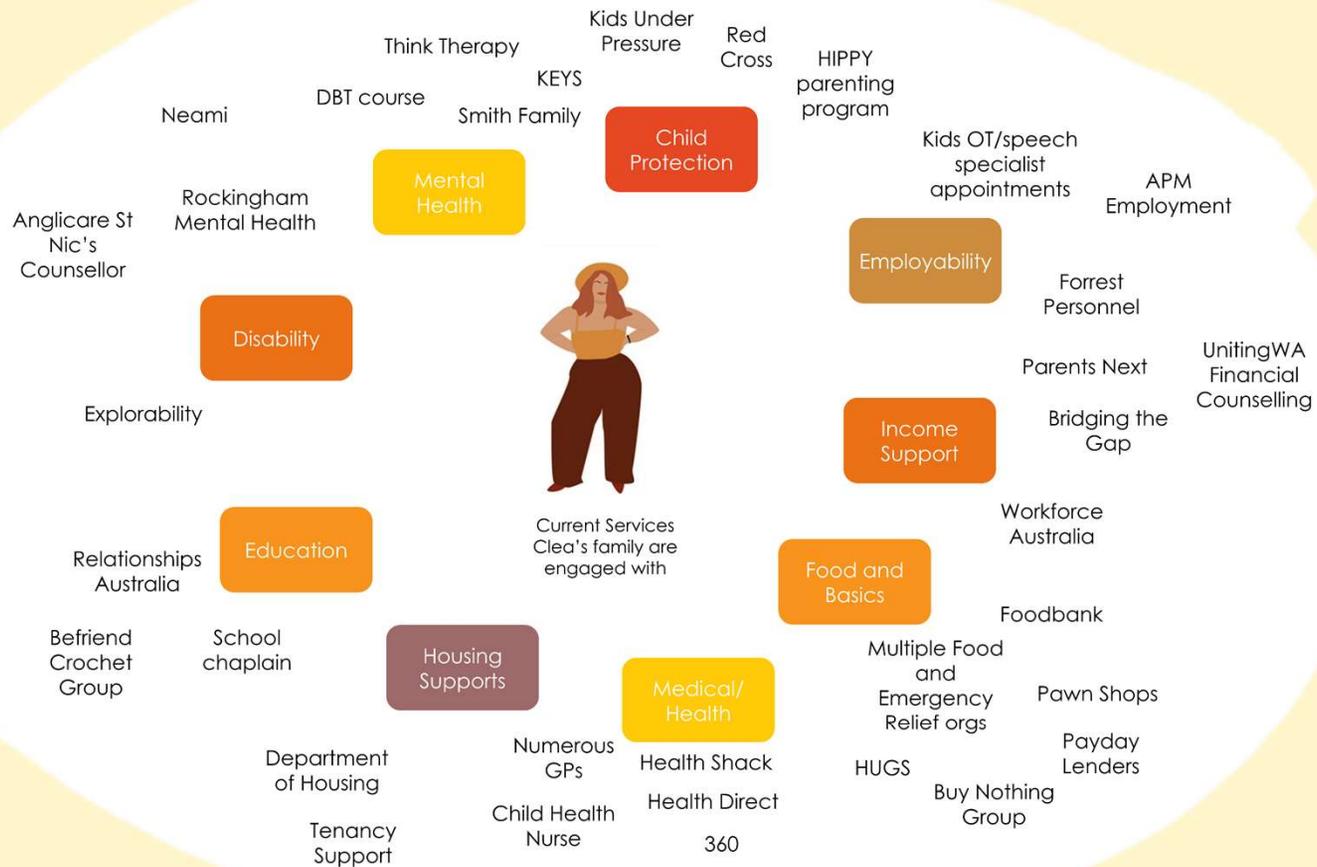
- There is a burden of knowledge- mental load of managing all the bits of resources- all these providers, when and where and what they offer, what hoops I have to jump through
- Work involved in booking, taking time, cost of travel to get to appointments, which are sometimes unhelpful.
- Emotional toll of dealing with practitioners who are not trauma informed, unkind or who distance themselves from complex need.
- There is an emotional and time burden for families in educating service providers about the complexity of their lives - this is particularly true where services offer a time limited service- 10 sessions etc. The person has to build the relationship, try to get help, and then when the nominated number of sessions is up, they repeat this with another service, to try to string together something that may help them.
- Emotional toll of failed attempts to get help- wasted appointment, no resolution or progress - these may or may not yield something which solves an immediate or practical need for the family. Some families are seeing a lot of services but their core needs aren't met.
- There is an additional burden on families of project managing services which have not followed through what they said they would, connecting dots between services and co-ordinating multiple case workers to get on the same page

## **To address disadvantage, we must address unjust systems rather than just framing it as a problem with the person.**

Many service program logics frame social issues as a deficiency of the person (lack of knowledge, skill or motivation) and the resulting service model then focuses its efforts on changing the person- the outcome being that the person has greater knowledge, greater skill. It is recognized that this framing arises from the constraints of the commissioning process. However, aside from the unspoken implication that the person's poverty is somehow a result of their own deficiency, this framing also fails to identify the maladaptive and unjust system mechanisms which cause people to find themselves trapped in complex disadvantage. For example, families rightly identified that the solution to homelessness is not just knowing more about housing or doing a course on how to be a better tenant- it is in increasing the supply of affordable housing and creating conditions which enable people to have a secure home.



# High Level Insights: Many services working at cross purposes



Multiple case managers, multiple case plans, frequent office-based appointments, surveys, assessments for each agency. So much work to stay afloat.



# High Level Insights: The Service System

"The 2021 Centre for Social Impact pulse report saw approximately 80% of the 500 service providers surveyed received requests for support they could not meet, with 15% experiencing a large number of unmet services for their clients or communities.

"Local services are seeing more clients, more regularly which reduces their capacity to engage more broadly with the sector" Kwinana Community Strategic Plan 2022-26

## **Services are inundated with demand**

As the cost of living continues to rise, services are increasingly having to turn people away. Due to the higher resource needs of families in complex need, these are the families most likely to be turned away. Staff burn out when the expectations placed on them relative to the resources provided are unrealistic- mirroring the experience of clients.

## **Services are constrained by models/contracts**

Services are doing the best they can within the constraints of funding contracts and the models of care. Rigid or unrealistic program logic models lock services into delivering a set suite of activities against a predetermined set of outcomes for the duration of the contract. There is little room to adapt to local contexts or to change tack if an approach is not working as well as it could. Models are standardized for ease of replication and management, and optimized for efficiency (minimum cost), which means high case loads, short time slots, families who are easily helped with a couple of appointments and a bit of one-off brokerage get helped. Complex families are too hard, too resource intensive and keep cycling through without getting the flexible support they need to get unstuck.

## **Statutory Services often experienced as negative or disempowering experiences.**

Some families described having "expert led" services done to them and experienced these as disempowering. Their interactions with statutory services such as DCP or Police usually coincided with a crisis response. While intervening in a crisis often requires quick and decisive action, the families noted that these services were sometimes insensitive and heavy handed and did not apologise for acting in ways that exacerbated their trauma.

- DCP- featured in families' stories as intermittent, terrifying and unhelpful contact. It is experienced as a spectre which hangs over families- the possibility that at any time, DCP could sweep in and take their kids. One mum described DCP repeatedly coming into her workplace unannounced to drug test her. She was not in fact using drugs and passed all the tests. She said the invasive tactics affected her standing in her workplace and the way her workmates and employer saw her. There was no apology made by DCP.
- Another Mum described attending a sleep clinic and as part of a routine check-up on her baby, it was claimed that she had broken her son's ribs and that DCP would remove her child. She fought back and insisted on a second opinion. It turned out the inexperienced doctor had read the X-ray incorrectly and her son's ribs were not in fact broken. There was no apology for this.
- Participants who reported family domestic violence described how police had encouraged them to downgrade assault charges against their partner so that it wouldn't have to go to court. While from one perspective this may save the victim the trauma of a court process, many expressed they found it invalidated the seriousness of the violence against them and meant that the offender was not held accountable.

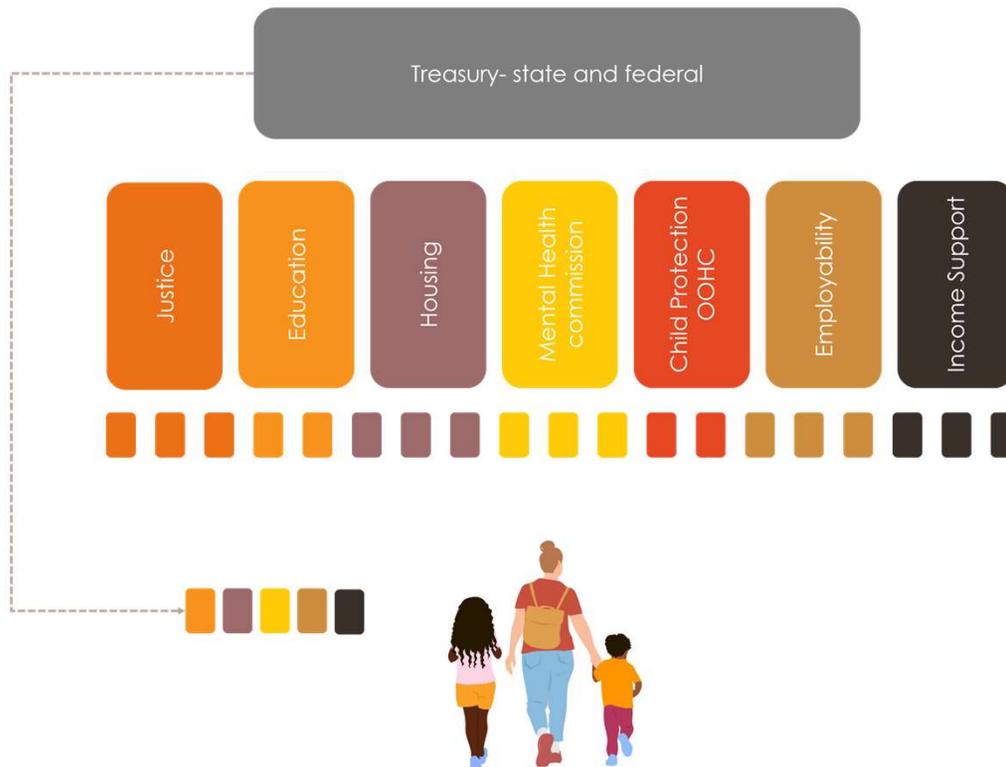


# High Level Insights: Scattered Pieces

## The expertise to collect up scattered pieces of the safety net falls to those in deepest need

Resources are segmented and siloed away into a complex network of pots/services that are hard to access and unlock, particularly for those whose needs are tied up with multiple intersecting issues.

How might we commission/deliver services in way that makes it easier for families experiencing multiple intersecting issues to more easily access timely, flexible, proportionate support?



The State's pot of money to provide a safety net for people who fall on hard times

Departments/ Funding siloed by single issue

Services funded by single issue

Families facing multiple intersecting issues have to do the time-consuming and frustrating work of navigating and coordinating the complexity of eligibility criteria and highly constrained offerings of multiple services to try to meet their needs, often with limited success.

The impacts of failed attempts to seek help include escalation of severity of needs- mental health, poverty, homelessness, FDV (resulting in need for more costly downstream/crisis interventions), diminished chances of children getting a fair start, diminished time/capacity to participate in education, employment and community life (some of the most protective factors for thriving).



# High Level Insights: The Service System

## **Bespoke services are considered a luxury rather than a vital tool and rarely funded.**

Families whose needs are considered to be “highly complex” require more dedicated time and resources if they are to be supported to resolve the tangled threads which are keeping them stuck. This might require more involved case-coordination, more generous or flexible investment of brokerage, the employment of staff who are more skilled in working alongside families in their contexts and who have the practice wisdom and authority to be able to adapt supports to resolve unique problems, rather than apply a standardised response. These things require greater resourcing and greater service maturity than standardised models which work for lower complexity clients. As such funders are reluctant to resource them. Exceptions to this include services such as Disability Local Area Coordinators and the Target 120 project.

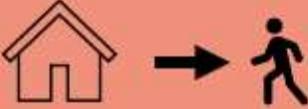
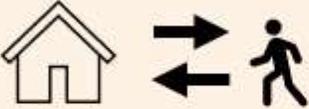
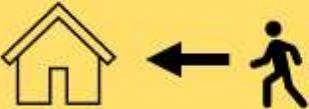
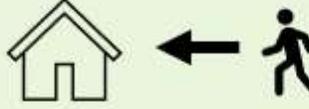
The result of this is that families with complex needs cycle through standard services, an experience which is frustrating and unfruitful for both service staff and families. They may cycle through multiple services, band-aiding some symptoms here and there but ultimately failing to get unstuck. They then end up entering the crisis response system, which is highly costly and highly disempowering for families. When we consider the cumulative economic costs of cycling through multiple mainstream services with limited success, along with the cost of expensive crisis interventions when their situations escalate, it may be that a bespoke service for families with complex need may in fact demonstrate better value for money in the long run.

## **Brokerage is highly constrained and judgement laden.**

In a standardized approach, the mindset is- what we do for one person, we should do for everyone, so we don't do it for anyone. Brokerage is highly constrained by the desire to distribute resources equitably, and to ensure that brokerage is not used for anything that another agency 'should' cover or anything which might be perceived to create dependence. Good staff are having to go outside of the lines to go the extra mile or help a family with something not typically supported. Because their flexibility is not formally endorsed, it makes it risky and the system does not reward them for this. There is a need for models which support professional discretion give greater authority and resourcing to staff to direct brokerage meaningfully..



# Universal services are not designed for families with complexity

\$\$\$\$	<b>Crisis Intervention</b>	 Service done to person	Risk Level is high E.g., DCP intervention, child removal, a mental health hospitalisation. Not offered until a problem becomes a crisis. “Come back when you’re worse”
\$\$\$	<b>Bespoke Support</b>	 Service or person initiate	Often written off as an “expensive luxury”. Practical support and brokerage offered which addresses multiple needs as identified by the person <u>as long as</u> needed. Can help families facing complex needs to avoid escalation to crisis <u>and also</u> avoids cycling through universal services without impact.
\$\$	<b>Universal Services</b>	 Person seeks service	Most services are universal. Relational but standardized offering, set number of appointments, ideal for someone with a single need (E.g., GP, housing worker, headspace counselling). “How much of what we do can we do for you?” Families in complex needs not well served.
\$	<b>Transactional</b>	 Person seeks service	Brief service where the person wants to get in and get out (E.g., sitting your Learners permit, getting help with a resume, using a computer). Should be easy and productive, no relationship needed.

Adapted from Mark Adam Smith model for Gateshead Local Council, UK  
<https://collaboratecic.com/the-tangled-and-the-trapped-d702d023bcb2>



# High Level Insights: Community Resilience

The Communities for Children Kwinana Community Strategic Plan recently identified, among other things that **people felt a lack of positive local identity in their place.**

**The social infrastructure of a community plays a critical protective role but is often unrecognised and underinvested. Informal community networks have huge value but are often missed in service mapping and networking.**

Social capital has been identified as a key contributor to positive life outcomes across every life domain, yet it is often framed as a nice to have. Involvement in contributing to the civic life of the local community is a strong protective factor against poverty, particularly in underinvested communities with high levels of poverty. We met with a number of these groups to understand their role and how they are helping to build the good life.

**There is a missed opportunity in working in partnership with informal, grassroots networks within communities.**

For the most part, the formal service system operates entirely apart from grassroots community work. Resourcing is most heavily directed to service provision in which a service provider provides a service to a client. The client/state relationship is the main lens through which people are engaged. There is a missing third strand in which people engage as citizens and community members in groups and activities in which they are equals and contributors. There is a role for greater crossover between placemaking/community development and social services work.

## **Social meetup groups**

Community groups such as **Befriend** create a supportive platform for multiple volunteer led groups to meet weekly across multiple locations and interests. They provide a scaffolding for people to discover and use their gifts, creating purpose and connection. For people who are more highly socially isolated, there is a need for additional bridging work for a friend or support person to introduce them gradually into local meetup groups.

## **Placemaking**

Town teams such as **Medina Residents Association, Wellard Village People and Women of Wellard-** play a valuable role alongside LGA place teams in activating their communities and building the social fabric. While LGA funds cover things like place planning, Meet Your Neighbour activations, local bush walk trails etc, these type of groups create activities such as long table lunches, laneway parties, community markets, murals etc. The work of grassroots groups can not only increase vibrancy and safety but also help form a positive local identity and give residents ways to take ownership of their place.

## **Online informal communities**

Local Facebook groups such as Name Your Barter, Buy Nothing, Feed it Forward etc contribute to the informal sharing of resources in the local community. Admins of these groups are often not recognised as leaders and organisers within community but their online volunteering builds social capital.



# High Level Insights: Community

*They send out all these white bureaucrats to tell you all the things you have to do to meet their criteria to get the funds. We never end up applying because its all too hard".*

## **Trusted Community hubs**

Place based hubs which are run by community have a unique value proposition. Often existing through tenuous peppercorn leases and the extensive work of volunteers, these hubs are often considered recreational or nice to have. Resources are largely concentrated with formal civic spaces run by Local Council or Formal service providers. In Kwinana, groups such as the **Kwinana in Transition** group (Based at Heritage Cottage/Sloane's Cottage) have done amazing work over the past 10 years. The **Medina Aboriginal Cultural Community** has been in their site for almost 50 years- delivering value in a trusted safe place for elders and community to meet. Lisa from Kooya provided some insights about enablers and blockers of good work happening:

## **Locating services in trusted places yields better engagement**

Waalitj were doing some employability work based out of the rec centre, but they weren't getting much engagement by Aboriginal people because they were shame to come past the formal reception to go in there. They moved it over to the MACC centre where people feel comfortable to walk in, and they are getting heaps better engagement now.

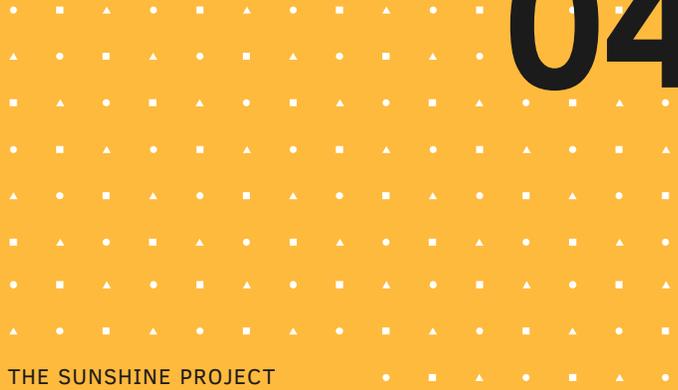
## **Government and other funders can make it hard for smaller community groups to access funds. On the other hand- Business support can make it easy for communities get the job done relationally**

I called up Cassie from Bunnings and said we want to do an Aboriginal mural design on the side of our building, but we have never done a mural before. She said leave it with me. She called around four of the other Bunnings stores and got all these staff to volunteer to come and help our guys to do the mural. They showed up on the day with paint, ladders, rollers drop sheets, everything you could possibly need to do a mural. We figured it out on the day- everyone loves it. Now one of the other community centres up the road got in touch with us. They said they saw our mural and they wanted to know how they can get one.

## **Smaller community orgs need investment in growing developing their back-office functions to do more of their amazing work.**

There is an identified need for some practical support with how to do the basic back-end admin and governance to meet the requirements for government funding

# 04



THE SUNSHINE PROJECT

# The Good Life



# The Good Life



I want to go on a road trip-escape and be alone for a bit

Being me- this is me

I love water- I am a pisces- I used to have a whole cabinet of dolphin statues until they fell down and broke

The tropical cabin is a chance to get away with or without the kids

I want to get free so I can stand up, speak up. I share with the world about how the justice is broken

I like being free like a bird. Free from the past and free from future worries. Staying in the now, living in the present.

I want to get the kids a pet. I have an image of Xmas and bringing my son a box that he opens and it has a collar in it and then I bring in the dog for him

My interest in UFOs is about these hidden connections between us. There are reasons for things.

I want to be able to speak up, have something to share my story

Looking at my vision board it already looks impossible

I want to share truth and have justice rather than people getting away with stuff

Self confidence to do my poetry, drawing- I haven't drawn for ages.

I want to swim with dolphins because this combines my love of water, my love of animals and the feeling of freedom

Dogs are there for emotional support

Music is my life.

Wanting to get a car is a vicious circle- I need a job to get money for a car but need a car to get a job

Keys to a new home, space for me and the kids

House is about my own space- nan owns it but it will go to her daughters ( mum and aunt)

We can't get a pet as Nan is worried about tripping over an animal

Doggy daycare- Animals are everything to me. This is my first year without animals. They help me be calm in situations. They like me







# The Good Life- Key Themes

Participating families expressed modest but compelling dreams which inspired hope for them. Most of the ideas are encompassed within 4 key themes:

## Meeting Basic Needs



- Having a way to have adequate income. For some that is about a job, others needing NDIS support, home business etc.
- Having a home which is affordable and comfortable, not pest infested, not falling apart, able to heat and cool affordably, where appliances/furniture aren't broken, which they can organise and make it feel homey- not feeling ashamed to invite anyone over.
- Mobility- driver's license, a car- having a way to get around with the shopping, to appointments, and to enable kids to participate in kids sport and get to training and games.

## Purpose/Contribution



- To not be trapped any more- "not this"
- To develop an identity as a person beyond solely being a parent
- Learning new skills- sometimes with a view to skills that could improve employability.
- Creative expression- having a way to use their voice- not silenced
- Use their stories to change policies and practices for the better
- Opportunity to work in fields where they can give back to others going through similar experiences.
- Informally sharing food and skills with others in the local area.

## Healing



- Being able to access treatments to address and heal from specific traumas, as distinct from general mental health
- Being able to access coordinated supports to manage ongoing challenges, such as psychosocial disability, ill mental health etc.
- Having correct supports in place- for some it was applying for NDIS, for some being screened/kids screened for developmental/mental health difficulties, and being able to put measures in place to heal/correct meds
- Time and opportunity to participate in wellbeing activities- walking, preparing healthy food,
- Timely therapeutic services for kids
- Being able to feel safe again

## Connection



- Re-establishing attachment and connection with their children after trauma.
- Having loving, functioning relationships- not fighting, not feeling scared, family dinners together, camping holiday, the occasional date.
- Having common interests as a family. Being able to go on an outing or purchase a nice toy for the kids birthdays. Being able to host a birthday party for the kids and invite other school families
- Time and opportunity to connect with nature.
- Ability to have a pet and have that unconditional connection and the calming influence that animals can bring



# The Good Life- Children's Voice

House of Good Things and House of Dreams

**The wellbeing of their children is the biggest underlying motivator cited by families.** We wanted to give the children a space to share their perspectives. They had all seen and taken great interest in the vision boards that their mums had done and were interested to do their own.

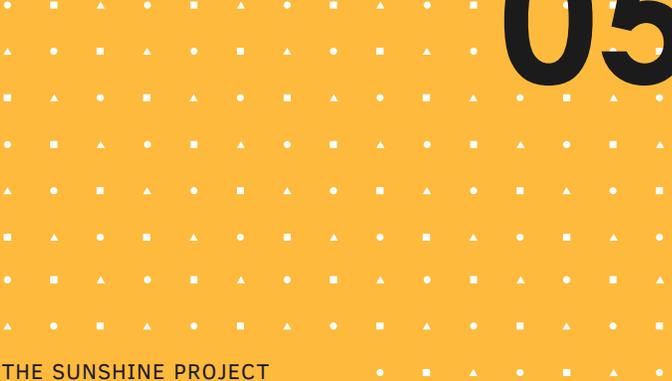
**The activity was adapted from an activity called the Three Houses. We tailored it for children aged 4 and above.** As most of the children are in counselling for trauma, we were conscious not to delve into topics which could be upsetting, so we focused on just two of the houses-

- **The House of Good Things**, a chance to draw what is good in your family and in your home, what you love about it.
- **House of Dreams**- Children were asked to choose a picture, or pictures which showed a feeling about what they wished for more of in their home. Children were surprisingly focused and engaged for the whole activity



## Key Themes:

- Parents who wonder if they are doing a good enough job heard how much their children love & appreciate them.
- The children valued small rituals which affirm attachment
- Children didn't immediately include all members of the household as family
- By and large the children seemed to like their lives
- Comfort and Managing Big Emotions- children could identify comfort/coping strategies
- Importance of contact with animals to all of the children- especially those who had experienced trauma.
- There was an experience of hearing a lot of no. Children wanted more opportunities for more outdoors adventure, some more "yes" to loud, fun and messy play.
- Opportunities for more one-on-one time with Mum (or Dad).



05

THE SUNSHINE PROJECT

# Early Action Research Prototypes



# Early Experiments

## Co-designed Human Resources Recruitment



### Enablers:

- Mandate/permission and resourcing from both orgs' Execs to learn and try new things
- Anglicare WA HR team willing to take a risk on a different approach to recruitment
- Lived experience rep on Steering Group.
- HCD + Action Research approach holding space for uncertainty
- Ruah and Anglicare Exec willing to put in own funds to try something out



### Workshop- What Families said was important in a worker

Desire for someone who:

- Presents like a "fun caring auntie", but balances this with strong boundaries and exceptional ability to navigate systems.
- Is able to engage well with children and include them in the planning for the family's future
- understands what it is like to have kids with school and appointments and factor this into the pattern of engagement
- "Need someone to challenge and motivate me but don't push too hard- understanding all the pressures- I am in survival mode, burnout. I need someone who has a gentle parenting style of motivation".
- Can help with life admin- Participants spoke of the overwhelm of the admin that follows a crisis. There is immense workload in seeking help." I wish I could have someone who could just come and be my PA for a block of time and help me knock over a bunch of things on my massive to do list"
- **Trauma Informed Transitions-** "if we are genuinely trauma informed- we need to respect and respond to attachment and abandonment issues as they relate to abrupt staff turnover- need to support transitions between workers in a way that does not re-traumatise".
- **Lived Experience Validation-** The families have responded positively to the opportunity to be part of recruitment. The prospect of being paid, and their first-hand experience as a form of valid expertise shifted something in the dynamic

### Insight: The design process has functioned as a therapeutic tool in its own right.

We had initially viewed this as something separate to the "helping work" and were cautious that it would be an impost to ask families to do the mapping as many said they hated having to re-tell their story over and over. However, families expressed that they found the mapping process validating:

- All commented it was good to see their stories mapped out visually- they felt seen- all asked for a copy of the journey map to show to counsellors etc. They said they enjoyed doing the co-design work and indicated they wanted to do more of it. This seemed to be about more than the vouchers they received for their contribution.
- They found it validating to be paid for their time and for their expertise to be valued. One was proud to tell her nan she was doing some paid work.
- Families decorated their vision boards when they got home and put them up prominently on the wall. The kids insisted on taking theirs too.



# Early Experiments

## Bespoke Outreach

Facilitation coach- available through the week (work days) to help families progress towards some quick win goals. Flexible in what we can do. Modest brokerage initially- have invested less than \$1,000 per family on average so far.

### Key features

- Outreach (meet in families' homes, at cafes, at the beach)
- Use text chats with families to keep momentum going in between meetups
- Spend the time that is needed – 10 mins or 3 hours. Judgement about what is needed. Low ratio of families to worker 1:5 means that appointments aren't back-to-back.
- Aim for 80% of time spent servicing families (may include non-contact time), 20% servicing the system (case notes etc.). Aim to do something practical/helpful in every interaction.
- Focus brokerage mostly on things that will help the family move forward, rather than recurring living costs. We can revisit this part as the project progresses.
- Utilise the concept of chipping-in- if it seems appropriate, offer to chip in with the family for something that is a nice to have or a big purchase. This helps with the power balance- allows families the dignity of having contributed and minimises the risk of dependence. However, in some situations, just pay for the damn thing- the family's monumental efforts to meet their family's needs can be counted as their contribution.
- Rather than leaving families with an overwhelming list of admin to follow up, offer to do it with them on the spot- shall we look up a dentist and book an appointment now? Shall we have a look at some of the practice tests for your driver's license? Shall we take some pics of your crochet now? Focus on vision rather than goals.

### What we have learned

- School holidays are a write-off for sorting out business, but good for connecting with the kids and doing children's voice work.
- School hours are the best time to get business done
- Meeting at a café (and being clear that the coffee is on us) doubles as a meeting spot and a wellbeing treat
- Mornings are best for motivation and mental health,
- Walking and talking works well when someone's not doing well
- Multi-tasking- be helpful- talk about things while helping fold washing, batch cooking a bunch of dinners to freeze, etc. This can overcome the anxiety of meeting face to face in a formal way, and provide a more natural conversational flow.
- We have paid for some stuff that another service might also cover. However factoring in the time and stress involved in making an additional referral and appointment for the family to go and access it from them, we might as well do it.

### Challenges

- Families are still seeing a range of other services, which means significant time is taken up every week on travelling to and attending office-based appointments with various services.
- Our participants are all mothers as primary help seekers so far- they carry the responsibility for food, kids development
- Partners rarely have an active role in help-seeking, are reluctant to engage in services themselves and are sometimes unhappy about service providers coming to the family home. Finding ways to engage partners is an area of latent opportunity.
- Due to the many stressors at play, working in a linear way doesn't work. We help them deal with the latest crisis but also work on some of the longer-term strengthening aspects alongside this. This looks disorganized- 3 steps forward, 2 steps back. However, with an eye to the vision of the good life and its enablers, this can give the work focus despite the day-to-day ups and downs.



### Enablers

- Mandate/permission and resourcing from both orgs' Execs to learn and try new things
- Ruah and Anglicare Exec willing to put in own funds to try something out
- Not limited by funder constraints
- Joint risk management and Safety planning- access to Anglicare and Ruah outreach safety apps.
- Mix of design skills, social work practice and community development skills.
- Strong support from Practice Excellence team and Ruah's team around practice wisdom, risk and safety, Professional Supervision

Worker provided with tools to be mobile and to streamline / minimise admin work

- Laptop and phone provided, connected remotely to email, CRM systems, etc.
- Teams chat with the project team to ask questions, maintain contact and support outreach worker throughout the day.
- Links to create case notes, outreach forms, risk assessment etc. on the go.



# Light Touch Quick Wins

## Some examples of week-by-week work:

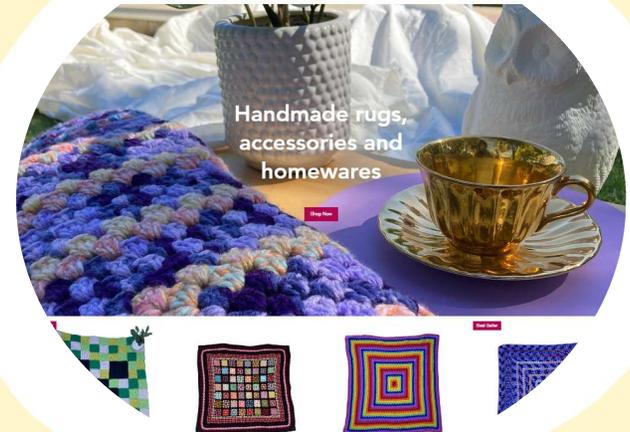
- ✓ Helped remove an invasive tree causing drama with the neighbours
- ✓ Helped with a pest treatment, some furniture to organise belongings off the floor in a rental.
- ✓ A laptop and an online course to enable someone to learn AUSLAN so they could seek roles as an Education Assistant with hearing impaired children
- ✓ A new phone to take pics and a website to enable someone to sell crochet items
- ✓ A pinata and a cake to enable a family to have a first birthday party at the park and invite some school friends
- ✓ First ever trip to the movies for the kids
- ✓ Went halves with a Mum to buy circus tickets to reward her son for achieving school attendance and behavioural milestones
- ✓ Helped someone get a rotten tooth removed which was causing them pain- had been putting it off over a year
- ✓ Self-defense classes for an FDV survivor who didn't feel confident going out alone
- ✓ Heater for kids' room for winter
- ✓ Helped people join a yoga class, a writers' group, a crochet group to make new connections in the community
- ✓ Accompanied people with high levels of anxiety/PTSD to appointments, to collect copies of violence restraining order, to court dates etc.
- ✓ Mowed lawns, folded washing, helped with bulk cooking alongside people in order to build trust and momentum while listening to their stories and dreams.

## Service Provider Feedback

We are so constrained by what we can offer in terms of number of appointments or brokerage or time.

There is value in a relationship which feels less institutional- more coaching/mentoring

Value in practicality- doing the stuff with people- Value in flexibility- in time and money and creativity- not limited to the standard response of give them a food hamper and a fuel voucher. Can spend 3 hours with them if needed, build a website





# The Good Life- Key Themes

## Co-designed Program Logic and Outcome Measures

The team worked with Anglicare's Results Based Accountability lead to develop a workshop which would enable families to develop a program logic for the project which made sense to them.

We worked backwards, starting with a vision of the good life.

- *What does the Good Life Look like for you (what does it feel like, sound like, smell like?)*
- *What ingredients are needed for the good life?*
- *What activities by you/us/other supporters will help you grow more of the good life?*
- *If we checked back after a while, how would we know if it was working?*



**Enablers:** Mandate/permission and resourcing from both orgs' Execs to learn and try new things  
Anglicare WA Contract Governance and Impact team and Ruah's Business Development team supported delayed and co-designed approach to Program Logic and measurement to enable it to be co-designed with families

### Why this approach is unique.

Most programs develop the program logic long before they engage with clients. They are developed by office staff and presented to funders. The program logic forms the basis of what is subsequently funded and the parameters of the service model- what resources are available, what activities take place, what is measured etc. By the time the service starts interacting with the people who will be most impacted by the service, this is all set in stone, and there is usually very little ability to adapt it.

**Status-** We will continue to refine the program logic with families in line with prototypes developed.





# Early Experiments



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Anglicare WA Contract Governance and Impact team and Ruah's Business Development team supported delayed and co-designed approach to Program Logic and measurement to enable co-design with families

## Process Evaluation

For action research and iterative projects, it is helpful to have some measures which enable the team to know how well we are doing. From a Results Based Accountability point of view, this covers the "ways of working" or "how well are we doing it?" dimension. The Australian Centre of Social Impact has a lot of experience iterative service design in place based contexts and recommends using process measures based on the project design principles.

We used a survey to check in with the participating families 6 months in. We will repeat this at 6-monthly intervals throughout the project.

## How we're doing so far:

How we do things	Score out of 1-5 (1 is terrible, 5 is amazing)		
Inclusive and understanding	5	5	5
Listen well, curious and learning	5	5	5
Flexible, work with family in their context	5	5	5
Build trusted relationships	5	5	5
Family led- put power in the family's hands	5	5	-
Create possibility, focus on potential, develop capabilities, grow the good	5	5	5
Families are better off because of Sunshine Project	5	5	-



## What has helped most?

Being understood, non-judgemental, helping people meet their potential  
Having someone help and support me  
Having the support around to make decisions for my future

## What frustrations have you had?

Don't think I've had one  
None with Sunshine project just life in general

## What questions you have about the project?

Not at this stage  
Nothing I can think of  
None- if I do I always feel safe to ask them

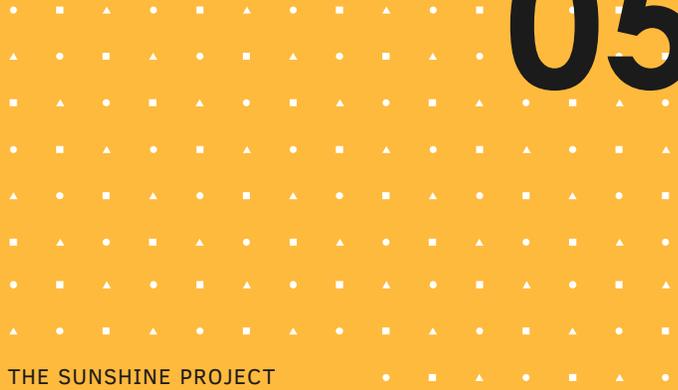
## What do you think might help as we move into the next phase?

Diagrams. Understanding about my ADHD  
Not sure  
I'm really not sure. This is an incredible project that is helping me realise my potential and get back on my feet

## Anything else you want to comment?

That youse are all legendary people  
Thankyou for letting me be a part of this  
The ladies are so approachable and happy to help out wherever needed and go above and beyond

# 05



THE SUNSHINE PROJECT

## Hunches and Next Steps



## Some Early Hunches to Explore Further

- Build the health of the community- many connections, many opportunities to contribute and to mutually benefit
  - Empower and resource grassroots informal community networks and groups to meet needs, distribute assets and enable connection/contribution
  - Position resources in the community so that people can share and access them;
  - Digital tools to connect people with needs to others who hold a missing piece of the puzzle
  - Provide families with means, training, platform to use their stories to advocate for change
  
  - Address cost of living with highest urgency
  - Address critical housing affordability and supply, along with retrofits for energy efficiency- look at temporary measures while longer term solutions are actioned.
  - Food security options which work better for families in chronic poverty.
  - Diverse income opportunities for people who aren't currently in a position to participate in mainstream workforce
  - Create/foster workplaces which are developmental, trauma informed, start where people are and scaffold growth- Translate Housing First principles for Employment.
- “Less cooks, more broth”- reduce the number of case plans, reduce the number of appointments in different places with different caseworkers- minimise the burden of time on families servicing the system.
  - spectrum of different service functions particularly bespoke supports for those whose need is greater than standardized service can support.
  - Easier access to capital to invest in families' development
  - Helping families shift their identity through shifting narratives which they have been repeating and internalizing and which repeat generational issues (but also recognizing that by itself cannot shift systemic barriers).
  - Role for both professional expert and informal helper in sharing the work of helping.
  - Funding forms which are suitable for working with complexity
  
  - Greater crossover between medical/mental health and social sectors in shared care, shared case planning
  - Ability for organisations to better accommodate and share risk
  - Increase access to the therapeutic potential of new medications in therapy
  - Increase access to the therapeutic potential of animals for people who have experienced trauma.



## Next Steps

- Ideation- generate ideas
- Secure funds to prototype and test
- Prototype ideas with families and others
- Capture further insights, summarize learning
- Decide next steps

Want to support the project in any way?

Please contact Innovation Design Manager Joni Sercombe at [joni.sercombe@anglicarewa.org.au](mailto:joni.sercombe@anglicarewa.org.au)

# FY2022-23 Milestones & Deliverables

Achievements FY2021-22

Q1 July 2022-Sept 2022

Q2 October 2022 – December 2022

Q3 Jan 2023 to March 2023

Q4 April 2023 to June 2023

- Review of Cottam trials and other similar projects
- Steering Group established, Lived Experience rep
- TOR, MOU in place.
- Collaborative recruitment of Families facilitation Coach
- Built relationships with 5 families, quick wins.
- Engaged local stakeholders
- Visit to New Zealand, met with Auckland City Mission, (Family 100 Project), Former PM and others to understand impacts of the project.
- Continue to update 100 Families Working Group

- Recruit further families
- Mapping sessions to capture:
  - Life/service Journey
  - Feedback on Sunshine process
  - Food security/Debt/ Social connection/ contribution
  - Vision of good life/ outcome measures
- Synthesis of insights
- Produce visual artefacts
- Develop program logic outcome measures
- Gallery walk to get feedback
- Engage system stakeholders
- Engage provocateurs to provide constructive criticism and prompt ideas
- Produce early insights report
- Design prototypes to test over next 6 months

- Implement prototypes
- Capture outcomes/findings
- Co-design sessions to capture learning and inform iterative improvements
- Continue to engage with local and system stakeholders
- Engage provocateurs to provide constructive criticism and prompt ideas
- Circulate learnings update
- Seek funding where relevant to implement additional prototypes

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- Circulate learnings update
- Seek funding where relevant to implement additional prototypes

- Capture outcomes/learnings with families and others.
- Continue to engage with local and system stakeholders
- Gallery walk to seek feedback.
- Write up Insights Progress Report with recommendations for a new model/way of working (TBC).
- Decision point- For the year ahead do we proceed with further prototyping, scale up/replicate, merge with another initiative, embed in BAU?
- Engage with relevant funders with a view to viability options



We would like to thank all of the families who have shared your journeys with us so far. We have nothing but admiration for your efforts to give your children a better life and look forward to helping you grow more of the good life.

Thankyou to the Executive at Anglicare and Ruah for giving us permission to try something different.

Thankyou to funders, service providers and community members who have engaged with the project. We look forward to working with you as we try some new things.

We would also like to thank Innovation Unit who helped us out in a pinch with some graphic design support.

