Preventing youth homelessness by creating hope

Therapeutic Youth Services and the Rubys Reunification Program

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Youth homelessness

- 12 – 25 year olds represent roughly 25% of Australia’s homeless population

- the most common reasons for becoming homeless include family violence and relationship or family breakdown

- the costs of homelessness on young people are significant and multi-faceted
Youth homelessness

Young person living at home with extreme conflict

Young person makes tentative break, some contact with home

Young person makes a permanent break, often no contact with home

Centrelink assessment for Special Benefits (for 15 yo) or UTLAH (independent) youth allowance (older)

Accommodation parallels shifts in relationships, education, engagement, hope and agency
TYS response

- Young person living at home with extreme conflict
- Young person makes tentative break, some contact with home
- Young person makes a permanent break, often no contact with home

TYS service response:
- Counselling
- Counselling & Rubys Reunification program

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**TYS response**

**Young person living at home with extreme conflict**

- TYS service response:
  - Counselling
  - Counselling & Rubys Reunification program

**Young person makes tentative break, some contact with home**

- TYS service response:
  - Immediate accommodation (up to 7 nights a week) if required
  - Engage family members
  - Assess appropriateness of reunification
  - Challenge assumptions that living together isn’t possible
  - Create hope for reunification

**Young person makes a permanent break, often no contact with home**

- TYS service response:
The TYS difference

Assume the young person can go home until there is evidence that they can’t +
Safe accommodation option +
Our staff

Rubys Thebarton team
Why are we successful?
- The parents
- The young people
- The relationship with the team

“We are in the business of reunification”
“We remain steadfast in our belief that reunification is possible”
Rubys stats for 9 months YTD

Reunification clients (green section)
- 47 clients exited the program
- 66% went home
- 13% went to extended family or friends
  = 79% stayed out of the homelessness sector
- 45 clients (96%) to a destination that TYS staff considered appropriate
Rubys stats for 9 months YTD

Assessment clients (blue section)
- 73 individuals stayed

Destination upon leaving:
- 17% went into Rubys reunification program
- 40% went home
- 28% went to extended family/friends
- 12% went into YNAHA accommodation
- 3% unknown/other

= 85% stayed out of the homelessness sector
Conclusion/Questions

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