YLS/CMI™2.0: Education/Employment

This brief aims to provide information for all Youth Justice staff about what works for young people when addressing assessed need in the Education/Employment domain of the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI™) 2.0.

High need in Education/Employment: What does this mean?

Young people who have high need in the Education/Employment domain of the YLS/CMI™:

- Will often skip school, be completely disengaged, or 'stuck' in cycles of frequent school suspensions and at risk of expulsion.
- Have minimal or no realistic career aspirations.
- May lack emotional regulation and impulse control skills that result in disruptive behaviours that would affect their participation in education/employment (Consider how these factors may interrelate with other criminogenic need areas).
- May have developmental delays associated with speech and language or cognitive impairment, or generally be academically behind same aged peers due to frequent disruptions to schooling in earlier years.

Why do young people disengage from school?

Disengagement from school is often a result of underlined relationships between a young persons' individual characteristics, their risk factors and the home and school environment.

Disengagement from school is strongly linked with the home and family context and the degree to which parents can economically, socially, and emotionally support children and young people to engage at school. Attitudes to education within the home or social environment can also lead to early disengagement when education is considered irrelevant to daily life. Transiency and having multiple school enrolments (more than three) has a significant impact on young peoples' education experience, with transition periods being a particularly challenging time for many young people.

When young people do not have the skills or ability to appropriately manage their behaviours, the educational environment becomes challenging and may result in exclusions from school. These behaviours may include impulsivity, aggression, poor concentration and poor social skills. Mental health issues may also contribute to behavioural responses that impact on the educational experience.

How to address high need in Education/Employment?

Addressing high need in Education/Employment means helping the young person to develop a desire to attend school or work and to address any barriers to participation.

Youth Justice staff should:

- Consider if this need is the first need to be addressed. It is important to maintain principles of effective service response planning i.e.: intrinsic vs extrinsic (high) needs first. For example, a young person high in personality/behaviour or attitudes/orientation may be unable to maintain a presence in school. Addressing these first can improve sustainability of engagement.
- Identify criminogenic thinking patterns that may be influencing motivation to engage in education and employment e.g. "school was hard, so I gave up on it" (thinking pattern: Inability to cope).
- Assess young peoples' readiness and capacity to engage in Education/Employment activities and, work collaboratively (using Motivational Interviewing) to draw out YPs motivation, co-develop plan to address barriers/build on strengths and progress through stages of change.
- Support young people and families to identify barriers to school attendance/engagement and link with educational support services who may be able to assist in addressing these barriers and provide ongoing support to maintain engagement.
- Encourage and facilitate participation in formal assessment of cognitive functioning where there are suspicions of disability or learning issues.
- Consider alternative education pathways and discuss these options with young people and families where appropriate.
- Recognise that re-enrolling a young person alone is not sufficient in addressing this need and consider all the above 'how to address' and below 'how to encourage' points along with practical re-enrolment matters.

Which external service providers can support need in Education/Employment?

These will vary based on your location. A service map might help identify local resources and providers.

It is important that all centres build an understanding of the local services and programs available to assist young people with education and employment support.

What core programs address high Education/Employment need?

- Transition to Success (T2S)
- Black Chicks Talking (BCT)
- Integrated Case Management (ICM)
- Changing Habits and Reaching Targets (CHART)*
- Girls… Moving On (GMO)*

*While CHART does not address Education/Employment needs specifically, it includes a discretionary module on 'Education and Work'.

GMO also includes a module on Making Connections and exploring work opportunities.