

# NAYSS Discussion Paper – *Questions of National Significance*

## Introduction

This paper is intended to generate discussion about how we can best pursue the national action research themes that were identified through consultation leading up to and workshops at the NAYSS Good Practice Forum in December 2007. The Lead Provider would like to propose that NAYSS Providers and FACSIA consider how these themes are reflected in each NAYSS region, what action research has been undertaken that could contribute to a national picture, and how best to incorporate this into reporting requirements.

## Background

In the lead up to the NAYSS Good Practice Forum in December 2007, the NAYSS Lead Provider (CMYI) consulted with all NAYSS providers about what they considered were important themes emerging through their work. These were analysed and compiled by the Lead Provider and then presented for further discussion at the Good Practice Forum. Feedback confirmed the themes were reflective of providers' experiences and a workshop allowed participants to contribute a range of possible action research questions to each theme. FACSIA undertook to pursue a common format for documenting action research within NAYSS and the Lead Provider undertook to draft some questions of national significance.

## National Themes

For each of the four national themes, the following questions of national significance have been proposed. We encourage all NAYSS providers to contribute feedback to these either to CMYI or to FACSIA over the coming weeks. This feedback can then be compiled and included on the NAYSS website. It could also inform NAYSS Self Evaluation Reporting.

### Educational Opportunity

Proposed Question of National Significance:

*What would it take to achieve educational pathways that are responsive to the experiences and needs of newly arrived young people?*

### Family Conflict

Proposed Question of National Significance:

*What would it take to strengthen and support newly arrived families so that they may act as a key support for newly arrived young people?*

### Cross-cultural Conflict/Racism (Identity)

Proposed Question of National Significance:

*How can NAYSS build inter-cultural awareness and a deeper understanding and valuing of cultural difference across all sections of the Australian community?*

### NAYSS Response to AR

Proposed Question of National Significance:

*How can we use action research to inform policy and address changing needs for NAYSS clients?*

# Attachment A: NAYSS National Action Research Themes -

---

## *Brainstorm of possible action research questions*

### **AR questions for Education**

- Clients how can we support you to achieve your educational goals?
- Schools/service providers: how can we work together to support newly arrived young people succeed at school?
- What would it take to create an engaging primary school age homework support program?
- How might NAYSS bring young people and parents/educational department together to engage with the broad pathways to education and employment?
- What would it take to engage mainstream schools to support CLD Youth?
- How do we link education with career pathways for NAYSS clients?
- What would it take to involve parents in the education of CLD students?
- What does it take for the TAFE to review their programs involved to accommodate the needs of the majority of African communities? Africans are NOT ONE BIC COMMUNITY!!
- What would it take to change young CLD views of attitudes towards TAFE as an educational outcome?
- How long will it take to encourage young people to get into the educational system?
- What might it take to get young people to get into the educational system and confidently explore their own opportunities?
- What would it take for school/NAYSS to introduce home computers studies to assist student cope with homework
- How can youth have a say in what education they are delivered and how
- How can we make the education system more accountable around their support to NAYP their education needs
- What would it take for educational system/ education system to be more responsive to the needs of CLD young people?
- What would it take to include life skills to the education of CLD young people.
- What would it take for there to be more support for young people in schools around career planning / education planning and is this what young people need?
- How can we support curriculum development, policy development in the education system
- How long will it take for young people to get used to the educational system and the pressure around it?
- Are schools the right place for NAYP to get the skills/ opportunities they need to creating the futures they want?
- How do we assist schools in keeping youth in the class room
- What would it take for newly arrived to be engaged in learning NOT just Language but also socialising and attitudes etc, within the group environment of school
- What would it take to support Young people to engage with different pathways apprenticeships etc
- What would it take for schools to work with NAYSS to actively support Young people (before crisis or drop out/ expulsion) and how to re engage post drop outs?
- How to support young people transitioning to university/ other programs?
- How can we support teachers who have limited experience in teaching and behaviour management?
- How can NAYSS advocate for policy change to increase support for youth in schools?
- What would it take for the Cleeland VCAL model to be taken on by more schools?
- What can we do to make educational institutions more aware and sensitive to the needs and experiences of newly arrived young people?
- How can young people who are 18 and over be linked to education?
- How can we get the strength based model into education?
- What would it take to bridge the huge gap in terms of lack of formal education/ disruption among newly arrived young people and coupling in school
- What would it take to find out what teachers need in order for them to better support newly arrived students?

## AR Questions for Family conflict

- What would it take to create understanding between young people and parents about their challenges in settlement?
- How do we challenge traditional practice that's illegal in Australia respectfully?( e.g. discipline with violence (child abuse)
- How do we mediate the process more appropriately accordingly to their culture and belief
- What would it take to understand the concept of family in newly arrived communities?
- How and when do we get info for families about laws and cultural norms in Australia?
- How do we safely advocate for Young people when the family are insistent that we enforce their views?
- What would it take to understand the causes of family conflict in newly arrived communities?
- What are the option/ way of addressing family conflict in newly arrived communities?
- How do we get young people to respect cultural values and traditions when they are trying to fit in with Australian way of life?
- How do we engage community members with mediation?
- How do we respect confidentiality with interpreters in small communities?
- How can we work with young people and their families around issues of healthy respectful relationships (sexual health)?
- How can we support your community with intergenerational conflict?
- How do we as service providers know about each newly emerging African community actual structural works
- How do we navigate/ work with elders/ leaders who is the 'community'?
- What would it take to mediate family conflict ie, culturally appropriate?
- How do we get elders involved in family mediation process?
- How might NAYSS understand better cultural practice of the various communities and the ideology collisions within the new environment, they are trying to find themselves and live?
- What would it take to simultaneously support young people and parents without compromising/ being biased in role?
- What would it take to support family/ relatives connection where fragmentation separation/ trauma has occurred?
- How do we understand family dynamics for newly arrived people concerned?
- How can we tell the difference between, and then appropriately address, the "everyday" youth issues and those specifically related to their refugee/ migration experience/ trauma?
- How can we become involved in family conflict issues without being intrusive, or contributing to further conflict?
- How do we balance the needs and interests of the young person and their family? (as they may conflict)
- What would it take to avoid getting child protection involved?
- How CLD education be delivered about child protection?
- How can we engage all stakeholders in this discussion?

## AR questions for Racism

- How can we share the learning's of different groups of people?
- What would it take for young people from diverse backgrounds to get information on newly arrived young people?
- How do we best support Young people at individual level to explore questions of identity?
- How do we sensitively and respectfully explore racist attitudes held by newly arrived young people?
- How do we educate/ inform NAYP and family around their new environment to prevent or minimise racism toward their new country?
- How can we assist in helping Young people in schools find self identity when being continually harassed?
- How to effect change in refugee parent perception of pressuring their children to fulfil their own ambition?
- How do we diffuse the situation between indigenous and CLD young people?
- How can we gauge whether our own actions and plans invade cross-cultural support services, and become culturally insensitive?
- How can NAYSS engage indigenous communities, while working within contract?
- When is it better / worse to run activities for a specific cultural group or for mixed group and why?
- What would it take to get the media more involved in promoting cross cultural awareness in Australia (Positive stories)
- What would it take to engage stakeholders to come up with solutions regarding racial conflict.
- How do we effect change in relation to institutionalised racism? (government, Police, schools, etc, etc)
- What would it take for Australia to identify racism as a real problem?
- How can we foster multiple identities among young people given their heritage?
- What would it take to address issues of racism in relation to newly arrived young people in schools, etc?
- What would it take to engage services in cross –cultural training /understanding in relation to the newly arrived young people/ communities?
- What is the role of NAYSS services regarding racism in schools?
- What is the NAYSS target group?
- How do we encourage mainstream Australians to reflect on their own cultural identity and values as different and constructed rather than dominant or “normal”?
- How can NAYSS worker listen and respond better to the confusion of being between two cultures, two distinctly different cultures (identity)?
- How do we provide information to professionals in relation to newly arrived that they are able to use their dealings with them?

## **Nayss response to Action Research**

- How could we develop better/ special data collection?
- How could we utilise qualitative/ quantitative?
- How can we use AR to inform policy and address changing needs?
- How could we measure the outcome of our young people?
- How could Facsia include AR into future budget? I.e. - pilot program costs \$
- How can small nayss programs get support for documentation? ... i.e. funding etc to incorporate changes in service delivery
- What would it take for FACSIA staff to do their own AR?
- How can AR actually change contracted service delivery?
- How can we work better as a National service, through AR? (Sharing practice, resources, learning etc)
- How do we adjust or feel comfortable as workers within an environment of constant change / flux?

## How can we integrate AR in to our day to day activities?

- What would it take to add AR into our interagency meeting?
- Can FACSIA develop an AR specific data response site?
- What is the best way of sharing learning's from AR?
- How do we ensure that AR isn't ethnocentric or self absorbent?
- How do we ensure that AR has the participatory aspect? And that it is not just tokenism?
- How do we record large families, i.e. young people in large families are all being supported but only one recorded?
- How can we involve clients in doing AR?

## **Attachment B: NAYSS Discussion Paper -**

---

### *National Action Research Themes?*

The following discussion paper has been compiled by the NAYSS Lead Provider and is based on discussions with NAYSS staff over the past couple of weeks. This is just an attempt to begin to identify what the key national AR themes might look like. We have not in all cases managed to speak to all staff from a particular service so there will be additional opportunities both at the Good Practice Forum and afterwards to feed into this process.

We have documented all the comments, action research questions, thoughts and reflections of NAYSS staff that we have consulted and this paper is based on all of that feedback. The following four themes have been identified out of all those observations and reflections of NAYSS staff. These themes need to be further teased out and explored and the Good Practice Forum will be a good opportunity to do just that. The themes presented below are in no particular order.

### **Current Draft National Action Research Themes:**

#### **Educational Opportunity**

This theme loosely groups a range of issues relating to education. Ranging from interrupted schooling, to the need for intensive language support, to the need to raise awareness about the other options such as TAFE, to homework support programs, to hub schools, and so on.

Comments from NAYSS staff illustrate the importance of this issue in terms of NAYS services responses:

*"Many young people need an intensive education or an alternative education program to assist them with these needs"*

*"Many success factors hinge on education and then the transition into work"*

*"...it is easy to see how a strong support network at school can directly benefit a young person"*

As with each of these themes, services will need to conduct action research on what they can do to respond as NAYSS services to the needs of newly arrived young people in relation to education.

#### **Family Conflict**

Many of you mentioned this as an important issue within NAYSS and one that services need to respond to. The sorts of issues here include: intergenerational conflict, balancing young person's desire for independence with maintaining family and culture, how to best respond to this as a NAYSS service.

The following comments capture some of your thinking about this issue:

*"Major issue is intergenerational conflict and parental/guardian involvement and support in that young person's life"*

#### **Cross-cultural conflict/Racism (Identity?)**

The issue of racism certainly came up frequently in our consultations as did the related aspect of identity for newly arrived young people. We would like to explore what these issues mean and whether they are indeed related or perhaps two distinct issues. This theme includes juggling two or more cultures, moving between cultures, the importance of the 'welcome' in a young person's settlement.

The following comments outline more about this theme:

*"Racism in schools, communication issues at schools leads to many issues arising"*

*"Young people feel that they are not accepted although they feel both Australian and African in the same way"*

*"Newly arrived are questioning identity, young people are questioning identity. Sensitive support positive approach, exploring beliefs together"*

### **NAYSS Response to AR**

This theme covers in a way, all of the above, although from the perspective of how can NAYSS as an Initiative respond? That includes, improving data collection, responding to other needs of the target group such as greater flexibility in regional boundaries, better ways to record the number of family members worked with and so on.

Comments in relation to this theme included specific suggestions as well as general opportunities for AR:

*"It would be great if we could work together with CMYI to come up with a standard, or template for recording our action research"*

*"Data collection form is not helpful, it is very limited/ing, the information is proves is vague"*

### **Other possible threads to follow up/include:**

- Homelessness
- Identity
- Accommodation
- Early Pregnancy
- Capacity Building with other services