

Practice Hour

Ethical Dilemmas



Date:
Thursday 20th July 2023

Name of Facilitators:
Hayley McKenzie & Ben Dancey

Acknowledgement of Country

Home
Stretch
WA



*Ngaala kaaditj Noongar moort
Keyen kaadak nidja boodja*

We respectfully acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land we are presenting from today, and all the countries where people are located. We pay our respects to their strength, cultural resilience and the Elders past and present.

Housekeeping & Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement:

- Safe, secure, confidential space
- De-identify your examples (*including case managers & District offices*)
- Not supervision (*but can be arranged!*)

Teams Etiquette:

- Cameras on
- Mic on mute
- Raise your hand (*virtually or give us a wave!*)
- One person per camera is best



Is everyone ok with it being recorded?

Who is here today?



In 1 minute or less

- What is your name?
- Which agency do you work with?
- What is your role?
- Which country are you tuning in from?

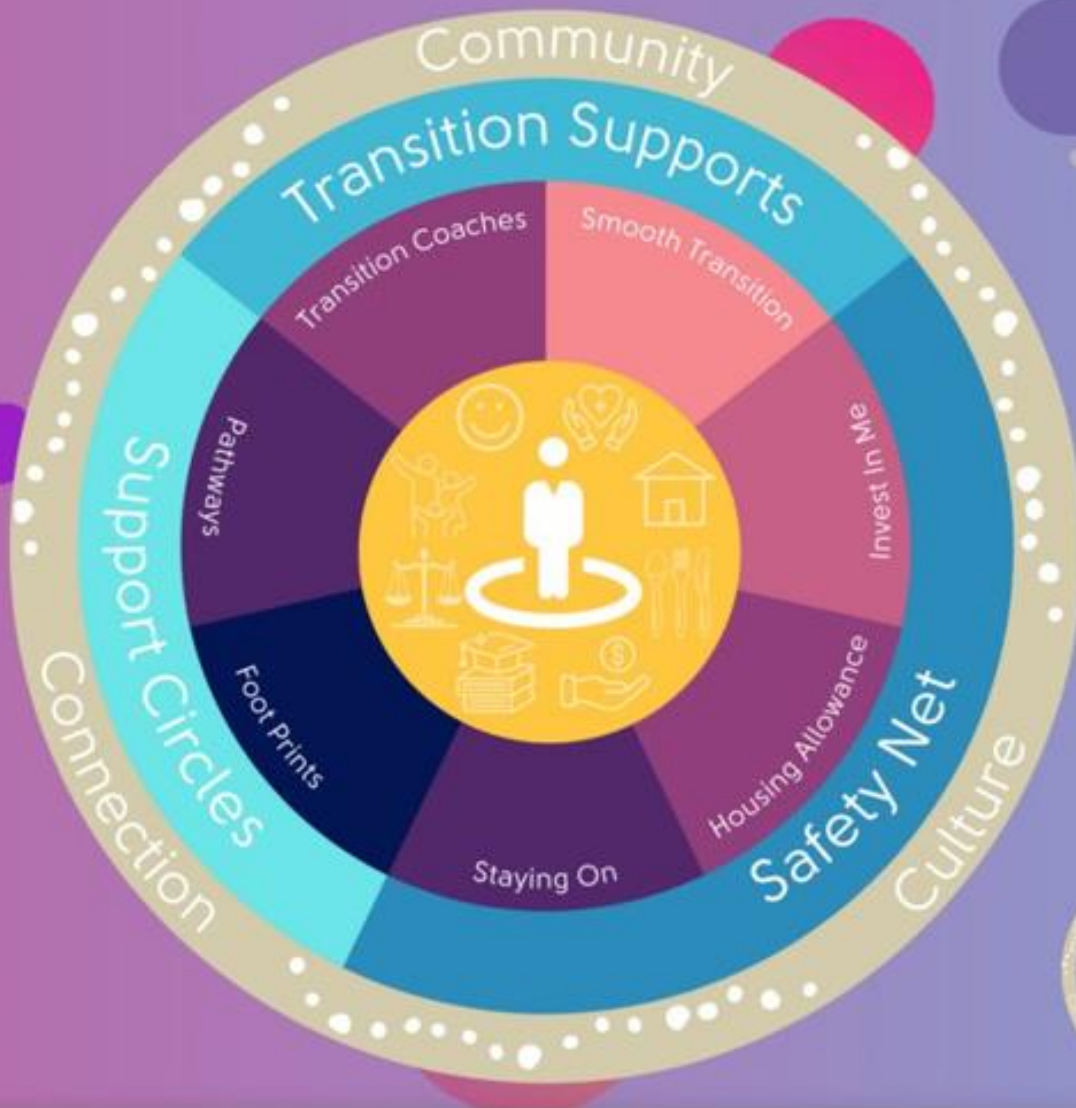
By the end of this session...

- Basic understanding of Ethics and Ethical Dilemma's.
- Insight into the Codes, Principals, Policies, Procedures and Laws that guide ethical practice.
- Work through practical examples of ethical dilemmas.

Next Practice Hours

- Support Circles Refresher – 27th July 2023
- Engagement Strategies for Coaches – 3rd August 2023

Home Stretch WA Model



Young people are at centre of support.
Everyone is treated as an individual



Support or connection is offered in
all areas of life



Support is delivered in specific
ways [Practice Approaches] that
work for young people



Home Stretch WA focuses on 3
key elements of support



Home Stretch WA greater purpose is to
connect young people with their
community and culture.

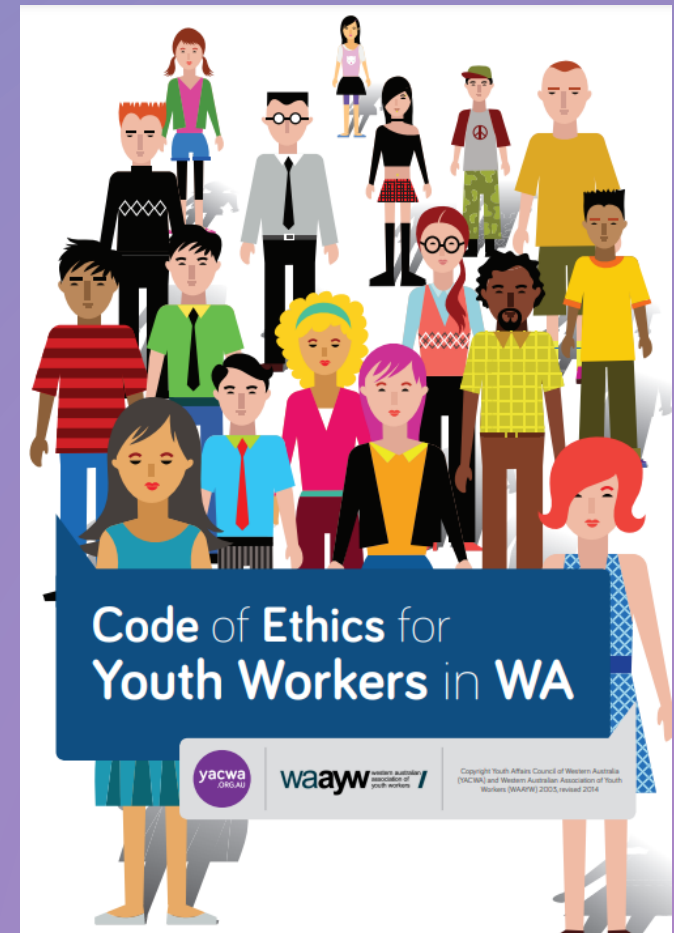
What are ethics?

Ethical Practice is about acting with integrity according to one's responsibilities and duties, and behaving in accordance with professional principles, guidelines and/or agencies rules/policies and procedures

Ethics in the context of professional practice is about developing the ability to see the ethical dimensions of a problem, to reflect on the issues, to take difficult decisions and to be able to justify these decisions.

Youth Work Code of Ethics

- A core document created through consultation within the youth sector that sets the standards the WA Youth Work sector has agreed to practice by.
- *The Code expresses the values and responsibilities which are integral to and characterise the Youth Work profession.*
- Reviewed by Youth Work WA and the Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) in 2014.
- Currently at the beginning of a new review
- In-person and online training available.



Youth Work Code of Ethics

Youth workers are committed to ethical practice in their work with young people. This ethical practice is defined by the following principles:

"Youth work is a practice that places young people and their interests first."

"Youth work is a relational practice, where the youth worker operates alongside the young person in their context."

"Youth work is an empowering practice that advocates for and facilitates a young person's independence, participation in society, connectedness, and restoration of their rights."¹

AYAC National Definition of Youth Work, 2013

- 1. Primary Client**
Youth workers are clear that the interests of the young people they work with always come first. Where conflict exists between obligations to more than one young person, the youth worker should always try to find solutions that minimise harm, and continue to support the young people involved.
- 2. Context**
Youth workers work alongside young people in their social context. A wide range of contexts impact on young people's lives, including culture, family, peer group, community and society. Youth work is not limited to facilitating change within the individual young person, but extends to the context in which the young person lives.
- 3. Promotes Equality**
Youth workers' practice promotes equality for all young people, regardless of factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, disability, location or socio-economic status.
- 4. Empowerment**
Youth workers presume that young people are competent in assessing and acting on their interests. The youth worker advocates for and empowers young people by making power relations open and clear, by holding accountable those in a position of power over the young person, by avoiding dependency, and by supporting the young person in the pursuit of their legitimate goals, interests and rights.
- 5. Duty of Care**
The youth worker avoids exposing young people to the likelihood of further harm or injury, and is aware of the safety of others.
- 6. Preventing Corruption**
Youth workers and youth work agencies will not advance themselves and their interests at the expense of young people, and will act to prevent corruption.
- 7. A Transparent Relationship**
The role and expectations established between the youth worker and the young person, and the resulting relationship, will be respectful, open and truthful. The interests of other stakeholders will not be hidden from the young person.
- 8. Confidentiality**
Information provided by young people will not be used against them, nor will it be shared with others without their permission. Young people should be made aware of the limits to confidentiality, and their permission sought for disclosure. Until this happens, the presumption of confidentiality must apply.
- 9. Cooperation**
Youth workers will seek to cooperate with others in order to secure the best possible outcomes with and for young people. Youth workers will respect the strengths and diversity of roles other than youth work.
- 10. Knowledge**
Youth workers have a responsibility to keep up to date with the information, resources, knowledge and practices needed to meet their obligations to young people.
- 11. Self-awareness**
Youth workers are conscious of their own values and interests, and approach difference in those with whom they work with humility and respect.
- 12. Boundaries**
The youth work relationship is a professional relationship, intentionally limited to protect the young person. Youth workers will maintain the integrity of the limitations of their role in the young person's life.
- 13. Self-care**
Ethical youth work practice is consistent with preserving the health and well being of youth workers.
- 14. Integrity**
Youth workers are loyal to the practice of youth work, not bringing it into disrepute.

Code of Ethics for Youth Workers in WA

yacwa **waayw** Western Australian Youth Workers Association

Copyright Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) and Western Australian Association of Youth Workers (WAAYW) 2013, revised 2016

The 14 principles of the Code of Ethics:

1. Primary Client
2. Context
3. Promotes Equality
4. Empowerment
5. Duty of Care
6. Preventing Corruption
7. A Transparent Relationship
8. Confidentiality
9. Cooperation
10. Knowledge
11. Self-awareness
12. Boundaries
13. Self-care
14. Integrity

Practice Principals

The Home Stretch WA Practice Principals guide Coaches approach to working with young people.

The principals can be drawn on when navigating ethical dilemmas.

Transition Coach – Practice Principles

Developed through our co-design work with the Youth Advisory group and guided by the feedback from the young people and families participating in the trial.

These principles provide Transition Coaches with a set of easy-to-follow references for how they should approach their work with young people.

Example

A client disclosed that her partner had cheated on her with a 14 year old.

The client's partner is in his early 20's.

Client did not give many surrounding details.

As the information was third hand and not enough information was given, it was not reported to child protection.

Where would this sit in mandatory reporting law?



Making a report

- Mandatory reporters: *Doctors, Nurses, Midwives, Police Officers, Boarding Supervisors, Teachers & Ministers of Religion.*
- Check your organisational policies and procedures.
- Collect more information:
 - What does cheating look like?
 - Name, DOB, address of young person
 - Details of perpetrator
- Support young person to make a report to DOC.
- If further action is required be *transparent* and keep young person updated.



A brief interlude about consent...

Sexual consent happens when someone of legal age gives free agreement to participate in a sexual activity.

In WA, the legal age for all genders is **16 years**. However, it's an offence for a person in a supervisory role (e.g. teacher, coach, medical worker, religious leader) to have sexual interactions with a person under 18 years who is in their care.

Holding or sharing sexual images of people under 18 is illegal even if they are over the age of consent.



A brief interlude about consent...

Opportunity to talk about consent, healthy relationships and sexual health.

- **YEP** – Youth Educating Peers
- **SHQ** – Sexual Health Quarters
- **WAAC** – Not an acronym. Previously Western Australian Aids Council.
- **SARC** – Sexual Assault Resource Centre



Ethical Dilemma 1

You are supporting a young person experiencing homelessness to make an application for transitional accommodation. The referral form asks you for any risks or safety issues.

The young person has a history of fire lighting but has asked you not to disclose this on the referral. You are aware of a fire lighting incident involving the young person in the last six months.



The dilemmas...



- Breach of confidentiality.
- Damage to Coaching relationship with young person.
- Prevent the young person being accommodated
- Risk to others – fire lighting.
- Risk to reputation – Professional, Home Stretch WA and the agency they represent.

What would you do?



- Advise the young person that the fire-lighting should be disclosed and that you have a *duty of care to them* as well as others.
- Risks and safety issues are disclosed for everyone's safety and to help support people with their behaviour – *Integrity*.
- Disclosing the fire-lighting does not definitely rule them out and will be kept confidential within the service.
- Provide accommodation service with information regarding young person's *Context* – engagement with Home Stretch and Counselling.
- Acknowledge that the young person being open is an indication of trying to change that behaviour.
- Assure the young person and accommodation provider that you will continue to support the young person – *Reliable source of support is your right and Cooperation*.

Ethical Dilemma 2

You meet a young person in the morning ahead of taking them to a driving lesson. You can smell alcohol on the young person's breath, and they tell you that they were at a party until the early hours of the morning.

You tell the young person you are concerned that they will be over the limit to drive. The young person does not want to cancel the lesson because they paid \$60 for it out of their own money.



Ethical Dilemma 2

- Damage relationship with young person by not taking them or warning the driving instructor
- Physical and legal risk to young person
- Risk to others through driving under the influence



What would you do?

- Advise the young person that they should cancel the lesson or explain that you have a *duty of care* to express your concerns to the driving instructor.
- Remind young person that learner drivers must have a BAC of 0
- Acknowledge the frustration of the young person.
- Draw on the Practice Principals – *Failure and bad choices are learning opportunities.*
- Encourage the young person to contact the driving instructor – *Empowerment.*



Ethical Dilemma 3

Over the past few months, a young person you support has become noticeably more confident and says he has been listening to podcasts and reading books that have helped him develop his identity.

He has saved up money to attend a self-help style conference and he has asked that Home Stretch support him with Invest in Me funding to pay for travel costs.

You look at the details of the event and see it is being hosted by a social media star renown for misogynist opinions and the use of violence against women.



Ethical Dilemma 3

- Conflict with personal values
- Conflict with Agency and Funding body values
- Concern for young person's vulnerability
- Young person appears to have benefited from connection to this community.



What would you do?

- Acknowledge the young person's growing independence and his ability to save up for the conference.
- Draw on Practice Principals – *You are the expert in your life, you deserve the freedom and respect to make your own choices.*
- Discuss how his beliefs align with the conference host and how they might differ from your own – *Self-awareness.*
- Ask him to tell you about the conference after he has been to it



Ethical Dilemma 4

You are at Coles on a Saturday and you see a young person you support doing their shopping with a worker from another service. The other worker does support that young person but their service doesn't operate over weekends.

The next time you see the young person you say that you saw them, and they explain that the other worker sometimes helps them out with buying groceries and lifts to places every now and then.



Ethical Dilemma 4

- Conflict with personal and professional boundaries.
- Taking action could reduce young persons support circle.
- Taking action could impact the other workers employment.
- Damage Coaching relationship with young person.



What would you do?

- Advise the young person that you would need to disclose knowledge of their relationship with your team leader and the other organisation – A *Transparent Relationship*.
- Acknowledge that the relationship is genuine to the young person however it blurs the *boundaries* of professional and personal relationships
- Support the young person in exploring other ways to pay for groceries and travel.
- Contact the worker and their team leader to discuss the worker's relationship with the young person



Navigating Ethical Dilemma's

- Share your concerns with the team.
- Reflect – *Self Awareness*
- *Self care.*
- Line and Clinical Supervision.
- EAP.



Questions & Comments?



More Information & Resources



Links to Resources & Documents on the website

- [YACWA Youth Work Code of Ethics](#)
- [Transition Coach Practice Principals - Flash Cards](#)
- [Invest In Me Decision Matrix - Practice Guide](#)
- [Group Case Discussion – Guidelines](#)



www.homestretchwa.org.au



Contact Us

Community of Practice



homestretch@anglicarewa.org.au

Department of Communities



homestretchwa@communities.wa.gov.au



Andy

0413 207 096

Vanessa

0447 784 128

Hayley

0447 784 128

Ben

0481 144 877

Renae

0479 067 474

Jess

0486 041 786

Consultants

0487 897 991

