

# NATIONAL GUIDELINES ON INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR CHILDREN IN ALTERNATIVE CARE

Building a Caring Society Together

[www.dsd.gov.za](http://www.dsd.gov.za)



social development

Department:  
Social Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The production of these guidelines for the development of Independent Living Programmes for children in alternative care would not have been possible without the collaborative effort of stakeholders responsible for the care and protection of all children in alternative care.

Development will therefore like to acknowledge the support and contribution of the following persons and parties:

- University of Witwatersrand, Department Social Worker, particularly Dr Ajwang Warria.
- Mamelani Project: Mamelani Projects a non-profit organisation based in Cape Town, South Africa and has been working in the field of youth leaving care for over a decade.
- University of Johannesburg, Department of Social Work, particularly Prof A Van Breda.
- DSD officials at provincial level, NGOs and CPOs who were instrumental in sharing their expertise by participating in focus group discussions and inputting into the draft document. All the inputs and contributions were where appropriate and suitable, included in the document and have contributed to the completion of this document.
- The management of the Department of Social Development for their leadership and commitment in making scarce resources available.

# FOREWORD

The social welfare system in South Africa is configured to protect the rights of children and to provide care and protection to children who are vulnerable. The need for care and protection is due to orphanhood, child abuse, neglect and exploitation. The well-being of children is also impacted upon by various factors including, among others: poverty, unemployment, death of parents and caregivers. The impact of these factors contributes on rising numbers of children that are in need of care and protection who subsequently are placed in alternative care.

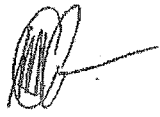
Most children who leave the alternative care system do not receive adequate preparation and support for their transition to independent living. Compared to other children, children in alternative care are more likely to be homeless, incarcerated, unemployed and unskilled. They further experience physical, developmental, behavioural, and mental health challenges.

The transition to adulthood is challenging for every adolescent, but for children in alternative care, these challenges are further compounded by instability. Many youth spend years in the alternative care system, experiencing multiple placements and numerous disruptions to their schooling. As a result, children in alternative care are often disconnected from family and social networks. Further, approximately half of children exiting alternative care drops out of high school, limiting their ability to secure employment and achieve self-sufficiency.

Current and former children are more likely than their same-age peers to experience substance abuse, mental illness, teenage pregnancy and early parenthood, homelessness, and arrests. In many cases, the circumstances that led to a child's placement in the alternative care system have taken a serious emotional toll on the children.

In response to these challenges, policymakers in government have stepped up their commitment to meeting the needs of children in alternative care. The department developed guidelines to support children leaving alternative care to become healthy, productive adults by promoting stable, permanent connections to caring adults; to assist children with the management of their physical and mental health needs; supporting economic success through education and employment programs; providing life skills training to help children navigate the adult world; improving access to stable and safe housing; and structuring opportunities for children to provide input on state policies and programs.

The guidelines focuses on areas that are identified for improvement which are inclusive of seeking greater employment opportunities for children; developing reallife practice opportunities or esteem-building experiences; providing more vocational opportunities and more apprenticeships, devising ways to link children to potential employers; providing more life skills classes, mentoring programs; and transitional living homes for children to practice skills and building self-worth.



**Mr L Mchunu**

**Acting Director-General:**

**Date: 29 June 2020**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
Acronyms	6
Definition of Concepts	7-8
Introduction	9
Situational Analysis	10-13
Problem Statement	14-15
Structural Arrangements	16-17
Purpose	18
Goal	18
Outcomes expected from Independent Living Programme	18
Eligibility for Independent Living Programme	19
Objectives	19
Factors involved in determining outcomes of the transitions to adulthood	20
Legal Context	21
Guiding Principles	22-23
Theories and approaches underpinning the programmes	23-25
The structure of the guidelines	26
Standards for Independent Living Programmes	27
Minimum Standards	28-42
Development of transitional plan	43-44
Support for Aftercare	45
Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders	46-47
Monitoring and Evaluation	48
Conclusion	49
References	50

# ACCRONYMS

<b>CYCC</b> -	Child and Youth Care Centre
<b>ECD</b> -	Early Childhood Development
<b>IDP</b> -	Individual Development Plan
<b>CP</b> -	Care Plan
<b>FCG</b> -	Foster Child Grant
<b>CFC</b> -	Cluster Foster Care
<b>UNCRC</b> -	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children
<b>LIP</b> -	Independent Living Programmes
<b>AOY</b> -	Aged Out Youth
<b>CASE</b> -	Community Agency for Social Enquiry
<b>CA</b> -	Children's Act

# DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

## 1. Alternative Care

Alternative care is defined as a placement either in foster care; a Child and Youth Care Centre and adoption following an order of the Children's Court or the Criminal Procedure Act, 51 of 1977.

## 2. Assessment

Assessment can be defined as a process and a product. As a process, assessment involves the gathering, analysing and synthesizing of information to provide a concise picture of people's needs and strengths, within their unique circumstances.

As a product, assessment results in an actual formulation or statement regarding the nature of a person's circumstances and other related factors at a given time (Hepworth, Rooney, Rooney, Strom-Gottfried & Larsen, and 2006:180).

## 3. Child

A child according to the Children's Act 38 of 2005 and Section 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is defined as any person under the age of 18 years.

## 4. Cluster Foster Care

This cluster foster care (CFC) as defined in the Children's Act, is the reception of children in foster care in accordance with a cluster foster care scheme registered by the provincial head of social development.

## 5. Temporary Safe Care

Can either be placement of a child in the care of a person, place or in a child and youth care centre that is approved to provide such a programme to the children.

## 6. Foster Care

According to the Children's Act, is a care of a child with a person who is not the parent or guardian of the child as a result of an order of the Children's Court.

## 7. Child and Youth Care Centre

The Children's Act 38 of 2005 defines a child and youth care centre as a facility for the provision of residential care to more than six (6) children outside the child's family environment in accordance with a residential programme suited for the children in the facility.

## 8. Child Protection

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) defines a child protection system as a "set of laws, policies, regulations and services, capacities, monitoring and oversight needed across all social sectors – especially social welfare, education, health, security and justice – to prevent and respond to protection related risks".<sup>15</sup> This approach to child protection has been adopted and advocated by international organisations such as UNICEF and Save the Children since 2010, as a more

holistic and consequently effective approach to ensuring that children are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. Thus, this systems approach replaces the commonly used silo-based approach that focuses on issues such as HIV and AIDS, child abuse and neglect, child trafficking, street children and child labour separately; resulting in child protection stakeholders providing fragmented responses to children affected by multiple and complex risks.

#### **9. Care**

Includes a range of services and support that children require to ensure their well-being, development to their full potential, and protection.

#### **10. Continuum of care**

The continuum of care represents a range of programmes and services common for all risk groups inclusive of prevention, early intervention, and protective interventions. The services range from least restrictive, which increases a family's freedom of choice by supporting its right to make decisions for its children, to most restrictive, which usually refers to out-of-home placement.

#### **11. Age out of care**

A young person who leaves care around the age of 18 primarily because they have reached the age of 18.

#### **12. Independent Living**

Independent living means having every opportunity to be self-sufficient as possible and the right to pursue a course of action.

#### **13. Independent Living Programme**

A psychoeducational, developmental, training programme designed to develop a range of competencies in a young person preparing to age out of care, that enables them to navigate their social environment more independently and to access appropriate support when required.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

South African Children's Act 38 of 2005 makes provision for an Alternative Care Programme which is inclusive of places of temporary safe care, foster care, child and youth care centres (residential care) for vulnerable children. The programmes provides for the care and protection of vulnerable children outside their parental home who are found to be in need of care and become wards of the state. According to the Convention on the Rights of the child, the best place for the children to develop their full potential is found when children live in a safe family environment. It is widely agreed that the family offers the greatest protection, provision and the emotional support to the child. Not every child, however has an opportunity to grow up in an ideal family environment. There are different factors such as poverty, violence, family break down, orphanhood, neglect, to name a few that are forcing children to live outside their families. As a result, such children are particularly vulnerable to experience multiple deprivations impacting their long-term physical and psychological development. Many of these children become wards of state and be placed in alternative care.

Whilst in alternative care, these children must be provided with a plethora of services which includes among others, the provision of independent living programmes as recommended in the alternative care strategy (2008). These services must be designed to help young person's transition from alternative care to living independently as productive citizens and the service must also help young persons to obtain life skills and education.

Adolescence is a time of growth, learning, and developing independence, and most young persons with the support of their family, makes a successful transition to adulthood. However young person's in alternative care often lack guidance, support and training to learn necessary skills to function independently when they leave alternative care systems. These services are important because when they turn 18 years and leave alternative care, they no longer receive grants from the state, consequently many must move out of their homes and are always not fully prepared to live independently.

Well planned and managed preparation for leaving care as well as on-going support and after care are required to ensure a smooth transition into adult life. It is therefore imperative to have/ implement independent living programmes to young persons who are in alternative care which will provide them with multiple opportunities to be prepared to live independently, self-sufficiently, and to enable them to integrate smoothly into society.

## 2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

When children enter the care system, they bring with them the harshness of the socio-economic environment that have already burdened them with the knock on effects of neglect and abuse. They present with psychological, emotional and learning difficulties and therefore struggle to form positive long lasting relationships. Such children are obviously both wounded and vulnerable. If not adequately addressed, these needs will determine recurring patterns of behaviour that can become set in the identity of an adult. The finding of a qualitative study on the experiences of youth who aged out of the foster child grant in South Africa, Impact Research International (Chiroro, P. M., Seedat, R., & Woolnough, K. (2009). which was conducted together with Sub-Directorate: Alternative of the National Department of Social Development highlights that most of the participants' needs were not addressed while they were in foster care, they still struggle to adjust to the changes that were brought about by the termination of the grant.

The main challenge that most of the participants faced after ageing out of the foster care system are related to financial strain (economic consequence). A number of participants mentioned that they could not continue attending school because they could no longer afford school fees and/or school-related needs. Participants reported experiencing difficulties finding employment due to their current circumstances (such as low educational qualifications as many have not yet completed Grade 12 and insufficient access to information and/or resources). Most of the participants did not have the necessary funds, resources and/or information available to them in order to study further or to develop the necessary skills, which would improve their chances of being successful in their employment applications.

Many of the participants who successfully completed high school, failed to raise enough money for university/tertiary education. As a result, they tended to turn their attention towards finding employment with no professional training beyond a high school certificate. Given their low level of education, many of them ended up either with part-time jobs or became self-employed (e.g. running a street car wash).

It is clear from these findings that many of the young persons who age out of care do experience many challenges long after their grant is terminated which impact negatively on their quality of life and future prospects of ever living a comfortable lifestyle. With many of them dropping out of school or tertiary education, their chances of getting formal employment are severely diminished.

In reflecting and sharing their views, participants felt that Social Workers could have assisted by providing them with skills training, on how to gain access to available information on available employment and education opportunities. Many of them bemoaned the current practices where there is limited contact between themselves and the Social Workers and even the lack of regular visits to them even while they were still in foster care.

Related to the above study, it was clear from the findings that many foster children did not receive the kind of services that would have prepared them adequately for aging out of foster care. There was very little contact between children in foster care and Social Workers, and even much less contact after the children aged out of foster care. This should be a cause for grave concern.

The study therefore, recommends that the National Department of Social Development consults extensively with stakeholders (i.e. foster parents, schools, community leaders, other government departments, CBOs/NPOs, etc) on this matter with a view to developing clear guidelines on how preparatory and after care programmes must be implemented country wide.

In 2008, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund in collaboration with the Wits Social Work Department undertook a research to investigate the situation of foster care from the perspective of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund partner organisations, foster parents, foster families and foster care in South Africa with the aim of ultimately enhancing the lives and general well-being of children and the youth. The findings of this study relates to the challenges facing foster parents which includes poverty and serious financial problems; difficulty in managing older children, especially adolescents; children leaving school and still remained dependent on the family as they were not equipped with skills during placement in foster care, due to that they were unable to secure employment as they could not further their education after reaching the age of 18 years as the grant was terminated and that subjected them to substance and alcohol abuse.

A recurring theme emphasized by almost all of the partner organizations is a general lack of finances to sustain existing projects and implement new programmes such as aftercare.

In 2010 Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) commissioned a study of registered Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCC), the objective of which was to provide the Department of Social Development with the information that would assist in transforming the centres in line with the Children's Act. The findings of the study shows that virtually all CYCC's report having recreational and life-skills programmes, while only 61% report having early childhood development programmes, and 65% report having after-care programmes or services that cater for children who have left the CYCC. Only 39% of places of safety report having after-care programmes. No mention was made for the provision of independent living programmes.

A longitudinal study on care-leaving in South Africa, with participants from Girls and Boys Town CYCC, found that the rates of young people who were not in employment, education or training (NEET) ranged between 28% and 39% at one, two and three years after aging out of care (Dickens and Marx 2020). They found that NEET care-leavers were also more likely to not complete their education, not have suitable accommodation and not be financially secure, and it appeared that those who were NEET may have been more vulnerable to drug, alcohol and criminal engagement (Dickens and Marx 2020).

Another study with the same cohort found that 27% of care-leavers were involved in some kind of criminal activity during their first five years after aging out of care, but that 18% were involved in regular criminal activities (Van Breda 2020). This latter group (approximately one fifth of care-leavers) reported regular and increasingly serious criminal engagement and conflict with the law over their first five years out of care.

A study conducted on young people aging out of foster care in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal (Chiroro, Seedat, and Woolnough 2009) had similar findings to the studies conducted by Van Breda and Dickens among young people aging out CYCCs in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape (Dickens 2018, Dickens and Marx 2020, Van Breda 2018c, b, d, 2020). This suggests that foster care leavers are just as much in need of support for the transition out of foster care as those transitioning out of CYCCs.

Some South African studies have endeavoured to identify the resilience factors that facilitate improved outcomes of care-leavers a year or two after leaving care (Dickens and Van Breda 2019, Van Breda 2018c, Van Breda and Dickens 2017, Van Breda 2015, 2018e, Van Breda and Hlungwani 2019). These studies emphasise the important of social networks or social capital – the more connected aged out youth are to people around them and the more skilled they are in negotiating these relationships, the better outcomes they evidence in relation to a range of independent living outcomes at one and two years after leaving care.

These local studies on resilience point to the central importance of interdependence (Moodley, Raniga, and Sewpau 2020) rather than independence. In truth, no-one is really ‘independent’ – we all rely on each other to get on with life. In South Africa, we refer to this as Ubuntu (Van Breda 2019). An indigenous, African approach to facilitating the transition from care to young adulthood should, therefore, emphasise the Ubuntu philosophy that we are not separate islands, but rather we are collectives of people in perpetual relationship with each other. In Western, scientific terms, Van Breda (2018e, 2018a) refers to this as ‘interactional resilience’, that is, the interrelationships between people is what enables them to navigate life’s challenges and emerge with better-than-expected outcomes.

Situational analysis also includes various studies/researches conducted in African countries on youth aging out of alternative care.

A study conducted in Zimbabwe on poverty and sustainable livelihoods among care-leavers in Zimbabwe by the University of Pretoria, South Africa indicates that adolescent girls’ leaving institutional care need transition services and support to build adequate asset stocks in order to achieve sustainable livelihoods after care. This will cushion them from the adverse effects of poverty resulting in negative coping strategies. This qualitative study evaluated the livelihood needs of adolescent girls in institutions and care leavers in relation to the services and support being provided by key transition service providers (the government and institutions). The findings of the study indicate that during care, the participants have access to more assets compared to care leavers who lose larger stocks of assets after aging out of institutional care. The key service providers lack sufficient resources to provide poverty-reduction programmes while the social networks (relatives and non-relatives) are constrained both socially and economically. This lack of sustainability affects adolescent girls in their preparation for self-sufficiency whilst in care.

This study recommends the allocation of adequate resources for the development of transition policy and programmes that promote the achievement of sustainable livelihoods during and after care.

Uganda and Uganda Youth Development Link, examined facilitating the transition of adolescents and emerging adults from care into employment in Kampala, Uganda: A case study of Uganda Youth Development Link has an increasing number of vulnerable youth in care who require support to transition into adult life. The aim of this was to explore the agency enablers as well as the factors which hinder adolescents and emerging adults transitioning from care to adulthood. with an emphasis on the transition into work taking as case study of the Uganda Youth Development Link. Cross sectional and case study designs were employed using structured questionnaires, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

The results show that care programmes helped care-leavers gain skills that have facilitated self-reliance through employment in the formal sector and self-employment. Care-leavers developed a savings culture and expanded their social networks. The enablers included the existence of mentors, conducting of exchange learning visits, placements/internships through contracts with existing business, and the availability of positive social support networks. Unaffordable business premises, stigma and discrimination, limited access to credit facilities and insecurity inhibited their successful post care transition. The conclusion emphasizes the importance of both agency and structure in the transition out of care in Uganda.

### 3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Young person approaching transitioning out of care are faced with the challenges of becoming 'instant' adults (Stein, M, 2006). Leaving care may mean that the young person will lose positive relationships (with staff and other residents), will lose access to activities and support, and will also lose a certain standard and expectation of living. They are simply not ready or adequately prepared for this transition and the associated anxiety can have a severely negative impact on their behaviour. This unsettling time can induce memories of previous trauma, separations, and the young person may revert to old negative behaviours (Pinkerton, J. 2011).

For these reasons, well planned and managed preparation for leaving care (Van Breda, A D., Marx P., Kader, K (2012), as well as on-going support and after care are required to ensure a smooth transition into adult life. One study found that more than 30 percent of youth in foster care had eight or more placements with foster families or group homes. Sixty-five percent experienced seven or more school changes from elementary through high school. As a result, young persons in this category are often disconnected from family and social networks. Furthermore, approximately half of these young persons drop out of high school, limiting their ability to secure employment and achieve self-sufficiency.

In addition to creating instability in life, many of the young persons in alternative care face physical, developmental, behavioural, and mental health challenges. Current and former young persons in this category are more likely than their same-age peers to experience substance abuse and mental illness, teen pregnancy and early parenthood, homelessness, and arrests. In many cases, the circumstances that led to young person's placement in the alternative care system have taken a serious emotional toll.

The transition from alternative care provokes a complex set of emotions, irrespective of circumstances, which, without the proper preparation, could result in lapses in behaviour or the development of new problems upon departure. A well-orchestrated disengagement from care can assist the care leaver to re-work past losses, achieve closure, employ more realist expectations and develop an awareness of available support.

Pinkerton (2011) posits that there is a clear need for a planned and properly managed preparation process for leaving care as well as the importance of an early introduction of this process, and direct involvement of care leaver in the planning of this process and its delivery.

Separated and unaccompanied children outside of their country of origin are very vulnerable whilst they find themselves in South Africa as a host country. They do not have the protection of their parent/s or guardian/s and therefore need urgent interventions from Social Workers and other stakeholders to meet their basic needs. These children should always be seen as children first and should be offered the same protection measures available to South African children.

However the range and complexity of situations in which children become separated, and the diverse needs of children, means that no single organization or government department can hope to address the situation alone. The action to assist separated and unaccompanied children that are outside their country of origin requires a long term commitment, often lasting years, by the stakeholders involved, but intervention will most certainly be required in the host country to secure the well-being of this very vulnerable group of children (Guidelines: Services for separated and unaccompanied children outside their country of origin in South Africa).

Independent living programme are intended to facilitate better transitions from care towards young adulthood by equipping young people with a range skills required in adult life. However, the evidence base for the efficacy of independent living programmes is disappointing. One systematic review of six studies in the USA (Yelick 2017) found only weak evidence that independent living programmes improved education, employment, housing, mental health, and living skills outcomes. Other studies have found ambiguous results (Batista-Calderbank 2011, Everson.Hock et al. 2011).

It can thus be concluded that while independent living programmes may be an important component of care to young people transitioning out of care, they are not the pancea for leaving care. Instead, independent living programmes need to be part of a range of interventions, including those focused on the specific needs of each child and those offered after having left care as part of a package of aftercare services to children aging out of alternative care.

(Guidelines: Services for separated and unaccompanied children outside their country of origin in South Africa).

## 4. STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES IN THE PROVISION OF TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMMES

The harshness of the socio-economic environment for children who enter care means that a child comes into the system already burdened by the knock-on effects of neglect and abuse. He/she presents psychological, emotional and learning difficulties and therefore struggles to form positive, long-lasting relationships. The child, who enters care at a moment of crisis and dislocation in their lives, is both wounded and vulnerable. If not adequately addressed, these needs will determine recurring patterns of behaviour that can become set in the identity of the adult.

Children in South Africa move into a care system in which provisions are uneven and they leave the system with successful and unsuccessful attempts at transitioning into independent living being carefully noted. The challenges of any analysis are to separate causes from the effects and an attempt to uncover what the underlying drivers are of the uneven performance of the sector. Three main contributory factors to the underlying difficulties were identified as follows:

- Shortage of resources;
- Family engagement and reunification; and
- Inappropriate facilities for fostering independence.

### **Shortage of resources**

Insufficient/lack of human and financial resources for the provision of care makes it difficult in meeting the physical and emotional needs of children and youth in the system. Individualised programmes which require levels of engagement from young people are needed if they are to become skilled and competent to cope on their own once they leave care at 18 years. For example, dedication and commitment to work through their Individual Development Plans (IDPs) and to facilitate transitional programmes are important. Developmental programmes need to care for children from different backgrounds, different countries and some with educational and developmental delays which requires more inputs to work appropriately with these needs. Different interventions are needed for children with different ages at different stages of development which is sometimes difficult and awkward to manage in one facility especially if it is under-resourced.

### **Family engagement and reunification**

The engagement of families in the lives of their children during the period of care as well as the eventual reintegration of young persons back into the family unit is another challenge. Difficulty in achieving this is due to the low level/non- involvement of family and a critical shortage of Social Workers which makes family reunification more difficult. A poor relationship between

children and the external Social Worker designated to the case is also noted. Family reunification work is the responsibility of the designated Social Worker, but in reality, facility Social Workers describes how little time these Social Workers have and how they are forced to attend to the time consuming, complex and cost effective task of family reunification.

While the child receives support, growth and develops in the care system, the family does not receive equal support and intervention. In many cases the family remains unable to change their circumstances, forcing the child to remain in care. All this makes reintegration into their community of origin more difficult for young persons to leave care at 18 years.

### **Inappropriate facilities and activities for fostering independence**

It is the responsibility of the alternative care system to ensure that the young persons leave the care with the knowledge and emotional capacity to live independently and interdependently. However the nature of daily life within the residential facilities often turns to undermine such desired goals. Institutionalised living through the centralised provision of services leads to a creation of a context where everything is "done for the young persons" rather than being done with them".

This leads to dependency and lack of opportunities to learn to be responsible. Possible solution to this is a move towards experiential learning and through the Independent Living Programmes (ILPs) that functions in the context of cottage-style accommodation. Space is needed to learn different life skills in preparation for the real world. Cottage-style facilities and alternatively designed or supervised space for ILPs is essential to move young people from dependency to independence.

(Transitional support: The experiences and challenges facing youth transitioning out of state care in the Western Cape).

## 5. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

- To guide Social Service Practitioners on the design, development and implementation of the Independent Living Programmes.
- To identify key social processes including factors that facilitate transition into independent living.
- To narrate the life story of young persons transitioning into independent living.
- To provide guidance on the programmes to be rendered to prepare children in alternative care for transition into independent living.

## 6. GOALS OF THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMME

It is to enable eligible young persons to achieve self-sufficiency prior to leaving alternative care systems. Providing independent living skills assessment, education, vocational training, job seeking and written independent living plan for each participating young persons will assist in achieving the goal. These programmes must be available and accessible to all youth in alternative care.

## 7. OUTCOMES EXPECTED FROM THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN

- The youth shall have identified an affordable and potentially permanent place to live upon their discharge from the programme;
- Have researched different living options, including transitional/post-18 accommodation options;
- Have identified a back-up plan for emergency accommodation, should their 1st option not work out;
- Have been given the opportunity to strengthen relationships with the people they will be living with or renting from once they leave care;
- Understand basic personal safety skills;
- Be able to demonstrate self-sufficiency and independence from social services;
- Gain significant employment experience or vocational training through internships, learnerships or vocational training;
- Learn to communicate effectively with individuals in the community;
- Make progress toward educational goals;
- Have an improved self-awareness as it relates to their family dynamics;
- Increase their overall level of responsibility;

- Increase their capacity to avoid or remain free from illegal/criminal entanglements and risky behaviours;
- Secure and maintain positive peer relationships;
- Understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens;
- Feel prepared and supported through their transition out of care;
- Have a stronger sense of self (be aware of their strengths, talents and cultural identity);
- have been able to build healthier relationships;
- have been able to identify and build a stronger network of support;
- feel better prepared (emotionally and practically) for moving through transitions;
- be able to make better choices regarding their future;
- be able to navigate local resources to meet their needs;
- have the practical skills and the internal resources to cope with the reality beyond care;
- be able to continue with their education/studies; and
- be connected to developmental opportunities.

## **8. ELIGIBILITY FOR THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMME**

Persons eligible for the service are all young persons in alternative care aged 16 and over who are preparing to move out of care. These persons must be equipped with skills to enable them to integrate swiftly in the communities.

## **9. OBJECTIVES OF THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMMES**

- promoting the importance of early planning for one's future;
- developing each individual's innate strengths;
- promoting the concept of permanent connections/long-term relationships – as opposed to short term interventions;
- ensuring transition of young people aged 16-18 from state custody to self-sufficiency and successful adult living; from depending on the alternative care giver to creating a network of support so that they are able to function interdependently and increasingly meet their own needs;
- supporting youth by encouraging a multi-disciplinary approach through training of field staff, and other appropriate and responsible adults; through the creation and support of a multi-disciplinary “transition team” that supports the young person to strengthen their network of support;
- providing support to staff at alternative care placements to become “Transitions Friendly” and more able to work from a youth development perspective with older youth; and
- develop youth targeted resources and community partnerships.

## 10. FACTORS INVOLVED IN DETERMINING OUTCOMES OF THE TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD

Pathway	Obstacles	Interventions identified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job skills and access to employment pathways.</li> <li>• Ability to manage money</li> </ul>	<p>Un-or under employment.</p> <p>Low earning.</p>	<p>Providing employment training.</p> <p>Provide access to employment pathways and opportunities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of at least a high school education with access to post secondary education or vocational training or apprenticeships.</li> </ul>	<p>Low education.</p>	<p>Provide tuition assistance and support services that makes educational, vocational and apprenticeship opportunities more accessible.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to problem solving and to make decisions.</li> <li>• Ability to use available resources.</li> <li>• Belief in the future.</li> <li>• Development of social competencies</li> </ul>	<p>Early pregnancy or fatherhood.</p> <p>Encounter with legal system.</p> <p>Substance abuse.</p> <p>Dependency on public assistance</p>	<p>Provide access to life skills and self -esteem building and real-life practise opportunities.</p> <p>Provide access to social skill programmes.</p> <p>Provide access to life skill programmes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship with the caring adult</li> </ul>	<p>Returns to family from which was removed (family has not changed).</p>	<p>Provide access to mentors (caring adult).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality last placement</li> </ul>	<p>Homelessness.</p> <p>Multiple moves in and out of foster care system.</p> <p>Unplanned exit from care.</p>	<p>Provide access to transitional housing so that the youth can practise skills in a safe environment.</p>

## 11. LEGAL CONTEXT

South Africa is a signatory to a number of international agreements on the rights of the child. Agreements most significant to the care and protection of children include the following:

### **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children of 1989**

It emphasises the rights of children such as the right to dignity, freedom from discrimination, survival, development, protection from abuse and exploitation, participation in political, civil, cultural, social and economic activities with overall consideration of the best interest of the child.

### **The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of 1990**

The Charter calls for legal protection, as well as care regarding the health, physical, mental, moral and social development and culture.

### **The African Common Position on Children: Africa Fit for Children, 2001**

This is aimed at improving the quality of life of the child and taking appropriate measures to ensure that each child has a good start in life, grows and develops in an environment which permits the child to develop his potential to accept peace, security and dignity.

### **The Bill of Rights entrenched in the South African Constitution (1996)**

It provides for the protection and promotion of the human rights of all citizens of the Republic of South Africa. It affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom and it applies to all legislation and binds the legislature, the executive, the judiciary and all organs of state. Section 28(1) deals particularly with the rights of children and young people and states, among other things, that every child has the right to a family or parental care or appropriate alternative care.

The Child Care Act 74 of 1983 and Children's Act 38 of 2005 also endorses the rights of children as indicated in the Constitution, and makes provision for alternative care.

The Objects of the Children's Act, 2005 are as follows:

- To promote the preservation and strengthening of families;
- To give effect to the following constitutional rights of children namely:
  - Family care or parental care or appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment;
  - Social services;
  - Protection from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation; and
  - That the best interests of a child are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

## 12. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These principles underpin the approach to assess children and they also assist Social Workers on how the assessment should be carried out. The emphasis of the principles is that assessment should:

- **Be child centred**  
The primary focus of assessment must always be on the safety and well-being of the child. The safety of the child should be ensured throughout the assessment process.
- **Be rooted in the child and family development**  
There must be thorough understanding of the child's development as well as the life-stages development of the family.
- **Normalization**  
Young people should be exposed to normative challenges, activities and opportunities which promote participation and development.
- **Acknowledge diversity and ensure equality of opportunity**  
The focus should be on the acknowledgement and respect of diversity in the child, the family and community in which the child grows up.
- **Continuity of care**  
Changing social, emotional, physical, cognitive and cultural needs of the young person and the family should be recognised and addressed throughout the intervention process. Links either continuing support and resources when necessary should be encouraged after disengagement from the system.
- **Build on strength as well as identifying challenges**  
Strength used approach to assessment refers to practice methods and strategies that are based on the strength of children, families and communities.
- **Participation**  
Young people and families should be actively involved in all stages of the intervention process.
- **Rights of the child**  
The rights of the children as established in the United Nations Convention and the South African Constitution shall be protected. Children have inherent human rights and specific rights which must be protected, and it also includes the right to participate in decision making in line with their age and stage of development.

- **Person-in-environment:**  
The young person must be located and supported within the layers of their social environment, including family, friends, teachers/employers and community, and also the social and structural dimensions, including race, gender, disability, employment, rural-urban contexts, policy, economics.
- **Empowerment**  
The resourcefulness of each child and his or her family should be promoted by providing opportunities to use and build their own support networks and to act on their own choices and sense of responsibility.
- **Integration**  
Services to young people should be holistic, intersectoral and be delivered by a multidisciplinary team where possible.
- **Resilience**  
Capacity of a young person recover from or adjust to change.

## **13. THEORIES AND APPROACHES UNDERPINNING THE PROGRAMMES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The theoretical foundation forms the basis upon which the Social Worker to think about the young person and how he/she will respond to identified strengths and needs. It is therefore crucial for the Social Workers and Social Service Professional to know how their theoretical foundation influences their decision making in analysing the human functioning process. Theories assist in finding answers to questions and to formulate and substantiate beliefs and values (Parrt:2003).

The following identified theoretical approaches form the theoretical foundation for services to children transitioning from alternative care will form part of these document.

### **DEVELOPMENT APPROACH**

The development approach assumes that there is not a quick fix approach to the challenges facing young people, but rather a slower process in which young people stand at the centre of their own development. A youth development approach promotes young people learning to make their own decisions and managing the consequences of their choices. Development does not happen in a straight line; it is an on-going process that happens as young people build on previous experiences.

A positive youth development approach best serves the developmental needs of young people. Below are some helpful youth development practices that should form part of interventions that prepare and support youth transitions:

- Focus on the young person's strengths;
- Build authentic relationships between the adult and young person;
- Help the young person to learn by doing;
- Create opportunities for the young person to build skills;
- Build networks of support;
- Try to see things from the young person's perspective; and
- Work collaboratively - share power with young people.

### **ATTACHMENT THEORY**

Attachment theory is a concept in developmental psychology that concerns the importance of "attachment" in regards to personal development. Specifically, it makes the claim that the ability for an individual to form an emotional and physical "attachment" to another person gives a sense of stability and security necessary to take risks, branch out, grow and develop as a personality. For some young people, their journey through care has compensated them for their earlier problems. It has provided them with stability and a secure attachment to at least one of their carers. From this secure base, they have been provided with opportunities and active encouragement to explore and become confident in the adult world. Care has provided them with a turning point.

John Bowlby's studies in childhood development and "temperament" led him to the conclusion that a strong attachment to a caregiver provides a necessary sense of security and foundation. Without such a relationship in place, Bowlby found that a great deal of developmental energy is expended in the search for stability and security. In general, those without such attachments are fearful and are less willing to seek out and learn from new experiences. By contrast, a child with a strong attachment to a parent knows that they have "back-up" so to speak, and thus tend to be more adventurous and eager to have new experiences (which are of course vital to learning and development).

### **CIRCLE OF WHOLENESS (Developmental Well-Being)**

It encompasses values and principles which if practiced, can produce wholeness and developmental well-being for a country, a nation, a family and an individual. People who are whole are able to be responsible and are able to contribute back towards the continued healing and growth of a nation, community and/or family. The development and implementation of the IDP is done according to the circle of courage which includes: belonging; mastery; independence and generosity.

Services to children need to be provided to address the identified developmental needs by linking them to programmes that will respond to their needs that can contribute to the young person's successful independent living. The development of the IDP is done in a panel discussion setting where the participation of the child, family, field Social Worker, institution Social Worker, Child and Youth Care Workers responsible for the child and other professionals who are part of the multi-disciplinary-team take place. The IDP is reviewed six-monthly.

### **STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH**

This approach values the capacity, skills, knowledge, connection and potential in individuals and communities. With the growing focus on self-directed support, self-management; there is increasing interest in identifying and building on the strength and capabilities of those supported by service as a means to help them resolve problems and deliver solutions. Strength based approach concentrates on inherent strength and deploying personal strength to aid recovery and empowerment.

Strength based approach practice is a collaborative process between the person supported by service and those supporting them; allowing them to work together to determine an outcome that draws on person's strength and assets. As such concern itself principally with the quality of the relationship that develops between those providing and being supported as well as the elements that the person seeking support brings to the process (Miller; Duncan and Hubble ;2000). Working in a collaborative way promotes the opportunity for individuals to be co-producers of service and support rather than solely consumers' of those services (Morgan and Zigloi; 2007).

### **PSYCHO-SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT THEORY**

According to Erickson's, there is an overlap between the identity versus confusion and intimacy versus isolation stages which the young person should be prepared for. In the identity vs confusion stage, the young person's identity formation is important and they ask questions such as "Who am I?" and "What do I want out of life?" They have realistic considerations about their abilities and as their deductive reasoning improves, they are able to think about future vocations and problem solving becomes more systematic. Young people who are not assisted to navigate this stage of development tend to struggle with the next stage i.e. intimacy vs isolation especially in the absence of a mentor.

## 14. THE STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDELINES

- Introduction;
- Standards for independent living programmes;
- Coordination;
- Minimum standards;
  - Strengthening social and emotional skills
  - Employment preparation/assistance
  - Post-secondary training and education preparation
  - Identifying accommodation options and preparing for reintegration (housing)
  - Provision of personal and emotional support
  - Gathering essential documents
  - Developing independent living skills
  - Health and wellbeing issues
  - Building network of support and navigating community resources
  - Transition to self-sufficiency
- Guideline for the development of a plan;
- Support for aftercare;
- Monitoring and evaluation; and
- Conclusion.

### 14.1 INTRODUCTION

Guidelines focuses more on areas that are identified for improvement which are inclusive of seeking out greater employment opportunities for youth; developing real-life practice opportunities or esteem-building experiences; developing employment pathways; providing more vocational opportunities and more apprenticeships, devising ways to link youth to potential employers; providing more life skills classes, mentoring programmes; and transitional living homes for youth to practice skills and building self-worth.

These programmes should be designed in such a way that they meet the requirements such as:

- Design and deliver programmes to achieve the purposes of the law;
- Ensure programmes serve children of various ages and stages of achieving independence;
- Involve public and private sectors in helping the adolescents;
- Use objective criteria to determine eligibility for benefits and services and ensure fair and equitable treatment of recipients; and
- Cooperate in national evaluations of the effects of the programmes.

## 15. STANDARDS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMMES

The standards for independent living are relevant for understanding the elements necessary for an effective independent living programmes. Assumption of standards defines the target group for independent living programmes as young people who have been separated from their homes who are in need of obtaining the skill necessary to live healthy, productive and responsible lives as self-sufficient adults. The standards assume the primary value of the biological family and of reuniting children who have been removed with their parents whenever possible. Where reunification is not possible, the standards assume that:

- Planning for independent living requires a clearly written plan.
- Youth be involved in the independent living planning process.
- Process towards self-sufficiency begins earlier to yield more effective results.
- Involvement of foster parents and Child and Youth Care Workers to provide support and to also serve as role models and instructors of youth.
- Fullest inclusion of the biological families in the preparation process.

### 15.1 COORDINATION

The coordination of services delivery system is the primary emphasis of the standards. The coordination implies a sense of shared purpose of various elements of service system necessary to promote independent living as well as the definition of roles and responsibilities of each participating agency and individuals. The following should be linked together in a coordinated independent living programmes.

- Social Work services by Case Manager, Social Worker, Counsellors and others is essential.
- The programme must ensure linkage with educational services, including assessment of career guidance.
- Linkage with employment services should be part of independent living programmes.
- Health services must be available to the youth.
- Help in finding suitable living arrangements.
- Socialisation, cultural and recreational services such as interacting with adult role model.
- After care services should also be made available.

### 15.2 SOCIAL WORK

- The Social Worker must ensure that the assessment of personal and life skills is conducted.
- The Social Worker should be responsible for ensuring that the child has the opportunity to learn the independent living skills.
- Ensure that the transitional plan for the youth is in place.

## 16. MINIMUM STANDARDS INCLUDES THE FOCUS ON THE FOLLOWING:

### A. STRENGTHENING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Young people who have been separated from their families and placed in alternative care often experience lasting difficulties as a result of these experiences. Not having a stable home and family life results in them missing out on opportunities to develop social skills and form lasting relationships. It is important that young people develop the social skills that will allow them to build and maintain healthy relationships in their lives. Relationships that are built with Social Workers, foster parents, Child and Youth Care Workers and teachers are existing connections that should be nurtured. Creating opportunities that enhance social skills are important to help young people adapt to different social settings and engage with different people - these are skills that they will need to thrive as young adults. Transitional support interventions should therefore contribute to the building of social skills.

#### Objective

To promote the concept of permanent connections/long term relationships as opposed to short term interventions.

#### Output

Young people shall have developed social skills that will allow them to build and maintain healthy relationships in their lives.

#### Program elements

- Relationship building skills.
- Decision making skills.
- Self-awareness.
- Social awareness.
- Communication skills.
- Conflict resolution skills.

#### RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- Assist young people to build a trusting relationship with someone whom they can open up to and be able to get support from.
- Assist young people to identify those with whom they can believe in for guidance and motivation. Having these people around them, they will be enabled to move forward.

The benefits of building and maintaining relationships with young people can be long-lasting and can continue to provide much needed support once the young person has transitioned from care.

## B. EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION/ASSISTANCE

It is important to prepare young person, particularly those in the age category 16-18, for independent living through a variety of programmes designed to teach the skills necessary to adapt to the adult world and to manage a household. The Independent living provider should connect youth with local industries and employment programmes so that young people can have an opportunity to explore career opportunities and develop a plan to achieve their career aspirations.

Skills and experiences that help young people prepare for work are an essential part of getting ready for adult life. Exposure to the world of work and helping young people gain these skills can expose them to the reality of the world of work and broaden their understanding of different work environments – this is important to assist them in making the correct decisions with regard to their future work goals.

Finding and maintaining employment is critical in helping young people achieve financial security and supporting their transition into adulthood. To achieve this, youth need assistance in preparing for this challenge, they need to explore their strengths and identify what it is they want to do. One of the key features of adolescence and early adulthood is identity exploration, which plays a significant role in the decisions they make. Young people often explore their identity by trying out new things.

### Objective

To promote the concept of permanent connections/long term relationships as opposed to short term interventions.

### Output

Young people shall have developed social skills that will allow them to build and maintain healthy relationships in their lives.

### Programme elements

- Basic and remedial education.
- Job readiness or job maturity skills.
- On-the-job-training.
- Job search assistance.
- Exposure to career days.
- Opportunities to develop interview skills.
- Job maintenance skills.
- CV writing skills.
- List of organisations offering work readiness support.

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- Partnership with business, trade associations and youth serving communities agencies to provide meaningful work experience; internship and paid employment opportunities for young people in care.
- Conduct mock job interviews with the young people to help them learn crucial interview skills.
- Training in areas such as resume writing and interviews. These classes can help young people to develop techniques and skills they need to get and keep a job.
- Assistance to young people to obtain part time work whilst in alternative care.
- Provision of supported employment opportunities.
- Assist young people to participate in the competitive labour market.
- Help young people to identify their natural skill and abilities.
- Encourage career exploration.
- Support the development of job readiness skills and employment skills.
- Work with job placement agencies.
- Organize work shadowing opportunities in the field of the young person's career interest (include fields such as hairdressing, plumbing, electrician, panel beating, mechanic etc).
- Facilitate career related research (entry requirements for further study, application processes, bursary opportunities, career fairs, job opportunities).
- Develop employment relationship by fostering relationships with potential employers in the young person's community of origin.
- Assist young person to secure part-time weekend work and holiday employment in his/her community of origin.
- Assist with application processes.
- Develop career interest

The services should be provided to children through collaborative partnerships with a variety of agencies; both private and public as a means to strengthen and increase employment enhancement programmes for youth who have aged or are in the process of aging out of alternative care. This will assist youth with setting employment related goals, ensuring that training needs are met to assist them to obtain desirable employment, conducting assessments needed to place them appropriately.

Both the public and the private sectors should be encouraged, including through incentives, to employ children from different care services, particularly children with special needs.

## C. POST-SECONDARY TRAINING AND EDUCATION PREPARATION

Education is an essential element for future employment success. Youth in alternative care are more likely to drop out of school, less likely to receive a high school diploma and also less likely to participate in post-secondary education. Since educational success is a key to financial self-sufficiency, coordinated services are critical to help young people in alternative care to succeed academically.

Programmes that promote educational stability and integration are most likely to promote educational success. The department must offer an assortment of programmes designed to assist the youth with completing high school or obtaining a higher education certificate. There must be programmes that connect the youth to employment-related programmes that suit their career or school interests. Education not only increases job security and earning potential, it also reduces the likelihood of housing instability and homelessness.

Mendes (2011) refer to the social inclusion model which supports the youth who are leaving care by having them participate in mainstream activities and by linking them with a range of professional and community support which can address key developmental needs, like education, in a more sustained fashion. This type of mentoring programme aims to foster the young people's sense of self through supporting them as they seek education and training opportunities while countering the isolation and alienation issues.

### Objective

To offer an assortment of programmes designed to assist the youth with completing high school or obtaining a higher education certificate.

### Output

Youth connected to employment-related programmes that suit their career or school interests.

### Programme elements as follows:

- Financial assistance.
- Tutoring.
- Study skills (training).
- Assistance with school registration.
- Educational assessment.
- Career plan.
- Educational pathway planning (including short and long term planning).
- Visits to FET/University/ Further Skills Training/College.
- Planning for continued education after care

### RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- The department can offer limited financial assistance and provide grants to youth who are interested in attending college and also various financial aid programmes that are awarded to the youth should be indicated or approached.
- Help to young person to improve their grades. In many instances these young people fall behind in school, and access to academic help is crucial. Assistance can come from the school system, local literacy programmes and or voluntary organisations.
- Assist young people transitioning into post-secondary education to have a college/university mentor with whom the young person can work on one-on-one basis and assist the young

person in defining their ongoing educational goals. The mentor's aim is to help the young person to identify and fine tune his/her unique educational plan. Having clarity with their direction, young people will develop the required skills, that will enable them to navigate the application processes, visit college and universities campuses or schools of their own choice and also learn about applying for financial aid.

- Conduct assessment of young people to determine their educational needs and guide them to the required services available in that particular area.
- Assistance to develop career plan, the plan should include young person's interest, strengths in school, vision for career path and opportunities for career and work experience.
- Stay in constant communication with the young person's school.
- Stay focused on school stability and continuity, as this is critical for educational success.
- Monitor the educational progress by attending individualised educational meetings and provide informed inputs to assure integration of such information in the child's independent living plan.
- Involve parents and care givers by encouraging them to develop a relationship with school staff for them to know where to go when there are school problems and also to be able to provide homework support.
- Make sure that young people acquire reading and writing, literacy, maths and technology skills.
- Help young people to attain aptitude and vocational interest assessment. Make sure that the young people benefit from career development, vocational and job training offered through their high schools.
- Encourage extra-curricular activities to help young people to develop positive social skills and self-esteem.
- Arrange for work shadowing experience and mentors for young person in their chosen field to foster greater investment in education.
- Provided young person with an information pack containing information about the tertiary institutions (offering trade, diploma and degree courses) in the area to which the young person returns, or their closest town, contact numbers of application, finance and housing departments, numbers of the nearest SEETA and department of labour offices. Where possible, application forms for course entry, accommodation and funding opportunities should be obtained and completed before the young person leaves care.
- Encouraged young person to do online research into their career ideas, specifically looking at the requirements in terms of subjects, grades and application processes.
- Empower young person on how to source information themselves, so they can continue to do so after leaving care.

Since educational success is key to financial self-sufficiency, coordinated educational services are crucial to help children in alternative care to succeed academically. Programmes that promotes educational stability and integration are likely to promote educational success.

Children with special needs, such as disabilities, should benefit from an appropriate support system, ensuring, inter-alia, avoidance of unnecessary institutionalization.

## D. IDENTIFYING ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS AND PREPARING FOR REINTEGRATION (housing)

Youth leaving care often faces challenges in finding safe and affordable accommodation. Securing housing for youth who turns 18 years is crucial since alternative care givers are no longer obliged to care for them. Many of such youth have difficulty making the transition from alternative care to self-supported housing. This difficulty is caused by three barriers which includes, high rental costs, a limited number of affordable rental units and unwillingness of landlords to rent to young tenants with no work or credit history. Planning where young people will live once they leave care is important because uncertainty, a bad placement, or dealing with unsustainable family situations can derail a young person's development in the first few months after leaving the alternative care.

### Objective

To increase the overall level of responsibility and feel better prepared (emotionally and practically) for moving through transition.

### Output

Improved self-awareness and ability to navigate local resources to meet their needs and also he/she will feel prepared and supported through their transition out of care.

### Programme elements

- Transitional housing project and youth development support services.
- Assistance with rental issues.
- Research the costs of different housing options.
- Creation of linkage between other departments, and local authorities.
- Training on leases, landlord and tenants laws.
- Emphasis on education and employment in order to earn a living wage for rental.
- Acquiring apartments or apartment leases that are set aside for rental to youth aging out of alternative care.

### RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- Provision of family cottages as well as mentoring and tutoring to help young person's prepare for life after care which includes:
  - Scattered-site apartments which are rented from the private landlord. These are individual apartments where the young person typically 17 years old, usually lives alone. On the first days of the move into the apartment, there is daily supervision by the independent living programme staff, later during the process the supervision drops back to once or twice a week. Rent and other expenses are paid by the programme and the young people are provided with stipend for food and personal items. The young person may take over expenses as they approach discharge from alternative care.

- Supervised apartment: These apartments are clustered together. Live-in or overnight staff supervisors supervise the apartment. With this arrangement, the young person assumes most responsibility of the environment but the agency maintains greater control and can provide for young persons who need daily attention, supervision and counselling.
- Transitional home. Young persons may move from the centre to the group home where they begin to assume greater personal responsibility and are given greater freedom with minimal supervision.
- Subsidized housing. Under this arrangement, the young person may choose their own living arrangements. The programme provides them with stipend to pay for rent, food and other personal items.
- Developing working agreement with landlords who are willing to set aside rental units for young persons while also waiving income, credit and co-signing requirements.
- Develop contact with housing programmes and develop working agreement with government housing authorities.
- Provision of housing to young persons by leasing and paying for rental units, when the young person exits 18 to 24 months after entering the programme, the apartment lease can be transferred to the young person's name if so desired by them. This will assist to facilitate transition to stable independence.
- Implementation of the cottage system. Mentoring and tutoring should be provided to help young persons to prepare for life after care. Supervision must be provided by a professionally trained parent figure who lives with the young person in different cottages.
- Ensure that young persons have a safe, affordable place to live when they leave care, shelter is not an acceptable plan.

Regular visits to youth in independent living houses should be conducted to help them resolve any problems that may have occurred and also to help ensure that youth are properly caring for themselves and the property.

## E. PROVISION OF PERSONAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Mentoring programmes for youth as a means of providing support and encouraging interaction within the youth community is of importance. The expansion of mentoring programmes and continued collaboration with various public and private agencies is important to provide as many appropriate support programmes as possible. Another aspect is the importance of providing mentoring programmes to youth to orient them toward the community and caring adults. Youth need adults in their lives who demonstrate caring and not getting paid for their involvement. Youth need to feel that they are valued members of society. The caring adults in their lives, whether they are mentors, foster parents, case workers, or friends, need to help the youth feel connected and able to access resources that benefit their lives.

### Objective

To orientate them toward the community and caring adults, to be able to identify and build a stronger network of support.

## Outcome

Young person will be connected to developmental opportunities.

## Programme elements are as follows:

- Mentoring programmes.
- Training programmes for foster parents, child and youth care workers and adoptive parents to promote relationship building skills with youth.
- Support groups for youth.
- Assistance with obtaining community resources and support systems.

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- Link the young person to a mentor who can act as role model and teach young person specific skills which includes:
  - Transitional life skills mentor who provides young people with social support, friendship, and also serve as a role model in making the transition from alternative care to independent living. The mentors are recruited from a wide variety of community organisations and settings.
  - Cultural-empowerment mentor, these are recruited from the same cultural or ethnic group as the young person. The fundamental idea is to offer each young person a positive role model from his/her cultural background and a means of overcoming the negative messages about the group from the general society. These mentors are found in specific target populations and cannot be recruited through general advertising in the community.
  - Corporate-business mentors come from the business community and they provide jobs, monitor work experience, offer career development to young persons who are motivated to participate.
  - Mentors for young persons are experienced mothers matched with young pregnant females. The mentors under this model endeavour to assist, instruct and encourage the girls regarding child rearing and also to guide them towards self-sufficiency. The goal is to help the girls to avoid abusing or neglecting their own children in the future.
  - Mentor home model, four to six young persons are placed with an adult mentor. The programme works with at risk youth, and the mentor is responsible for guiding the young person in relation to education, employment and community services. The mentors are usually college students who live in the home.
- Allow young persons to feel in control and be able to make their own decisions as they are transitioning into adulthood.
- Partnership with community based networks to promote social inclusion of care leavers in the local community. Support obtained from the communities can help to address key needs such as social and family relationships, and independent living skills among others.
- Help young person to connect with a related family member whom they can maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with.

The provision of continued relationship building training to foster parents, care givers, Child and Youth Care Workers and adoptive parents will promote healthy interaction with the youth and will also help them to feel connected within the communities. The promotion of mentoring programmes is important to attract caring adults within the communities to become mentors.

## F. GATHERING ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS

It is important for young people to have certain essential documents because these are often required for life in the adult world. Having this document in their possession, will help them to be prepared for their transition towards adulthood. At a practical level, young people should be supported to arrange essential documents to ensure that they are well equipped and ready to move upon transition from care.

### Objective

To understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

### Output

Young people will have improved self-awareness as it relates to family dynamics.

### Programme elements

- Ability to apply for a birth certificate.
- Ability to apply for an ID document or relevant papers (asylum seeker/ refugee status) with certified copies.
- CV writing.
- Opening a bank account.
- A Learners/drivers Licence.
- A contact list of their network of support.
- A list of emergency contact details.
- A library card.

### RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- Young person must learn to access information and to navigate community resources.
- Encourage young person to use public transport.
- Allow visit to a health facility.
- Assist young person to build capacity by exposing them to public spaces for them to engage with officials in different departments, to speak with members of the public and also encourage them to gather information they need. These skills e.g. social skills will be needed for their transition.
- Recruit driving schools to donate time to train learner drivers.

Social skills will assist the young person to start engaging with resources in the community and to be familiar with the places they would need to visit to help them as they transit from alternative care.

## G. DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS

Independent/daily living skills can be understood as the skills that a young person needs to take care of themselves and to take care of their daily needs without adult supervision. These skills may include, but are not limited to, cooking, budgeting, cleaning, doing laundry, going shopping and taking care of their personal needs. Equipping young people with these skills is necessary so that they have the competency to cope with life away from the alternative care. Sometimes, these tasks will have been performed by cooks, cleaners, child and youth care workers and social workers at the alternative care. When the young people move on from the alternative care, they will need to do these things for themselves.

### Objective

To provide young people with practical skills and internal resources to cope with the reality beyond care.

### Output

Young people will be able to demonstrate self-sufficiency and independence from social services.

### Programme elements

- Managing a household: menu planning, creating shopping lists, meal preparation, cleaning, food storage, washing their own clothes, home management and starting to pay bills.
- Financial management skills which includes: budgeting, savings, opening a bank account, filing income taxes and becoming an informed consumer.
- self-confidence, personal responsibility, problem solving, and goal-setting.
- communication and relationship development.

### RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- Assist young people to create budget and open a savings account.
- Involve the young person in a life skill training group which includes money management in the curriculum, reproductive health and parenting.
- Working with the care giver to monitor their respective budgets.
- Appoint a mentor/family member to help them to acquire these skills on effective problem solving, money management, stress reduction and preparing healthy food.
- Engage foster parents and other care givers in teaching money management skills.
- Provide opportunities for young people to practice living on their own i.e. housekeeping and also to work out disputes with roommates.
- Assist young people in getting a driver's license, car, and insurance.

Teaching young people independent living skills can also help them to develop confidence and experience a sense of agency as they move through their transition.

## H. SELF CARE SKILLS

Equipping young people with these skills is necessary so that they have the competency to cope with life away from the alternative care.

### Objective

To provide young people with practical skills and internal resources to cope with the reality beyond care.

### Output

Young person will have improved self-awareness. Community based care provider should offer hands on and real world opportunities in areas of self-care.

### Programme elements

Self-care skills which includes instructions about topics such as:

- Personal hygiene.
- Alcohol and drug abuse.
- Parenting skills.
- Responsible parenting.

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- Linkage with an adult mentor to participate in activities intended to teach effective problem solving and stress reduction.
- Prevention - universal implementation of sex education.
- Health care services--provision of outside of the health system e.g. mobile services to provide an effective voluntary counselling and test services to young people, particularly young men who do not generally attend traditional health services.

## I. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING ISSUES

Young people transitioning from care must be provided with health care education prior to their leaving the care system. Basic health care includes, first aid kit, physical fitness, mental and emotional health, medication use and basic method of assessing one's own medical needs. The curriculum should also include education on responsible sex and information on communicable diseases. Young people must prior to leaving the alternative care system, undergo health screening, including basic health care management consistent with the young person's specific health problems.

## Objective

To provide young people with practical skills and internal resources to cope with the reality beyond care.

## Output

Young people will be able to demonstrate self-sufficiency and independence from social services.

## Programme elements

- Visit to local health care centre.
- List of key health care services including eyes, dental, sexual and reproductive services.
- Medical records.
- Clinic card.
- Nutrition knowledge.
- Fitness/exercise plan.
- Personal hygiene.
- Skills for stress management.
- Basic first aid skill.
- Someone they can speak to about gender and sexuality.
- Accessing a counsellor for emotional support.

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

- Work with the health department to provide a low cost medical care for young people who are not eligible for medical aid.
- Identify local medical provider who agree to provide free mental health care to the young person.
- Arrange comprehensive physical, dental, vision, hearing and substance abuse screening before the young person leaves alternative care placement.
- Health care education which includes: first aid, physical fitness, mental and emotional health, and medication use.
- Youth to be assisted to develop their own health care plan as part of a transition plan from alternative care, to prepare them to manage their health care needs when they live independently. The transition plan should include all previous health information (e.g. immunization, past health care treatment), and future routine health care needs (e.g. annual physical and dental cleaning).
- Provide young people with information on specific health care providers to visit to continue his/her health care such as primary health care physician and dentist.
- Identify community health care resources and link young people with these services.
- Feel confident to access health services - transitional programme coordinator together with the child should cultivate relationships with the health care community and educate them on special needs of this population.

- Help young people learn to understand how to apply for insurance, access health care services and keep appointments with health care providers.
- Assist young people in consolidating and updating health records.
- Identify individual who can help young people to maintain safety and wellness.

## J. BUILDING NETWORKS OF SUPPORT AND NAVIGATING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

To build resilience in young people, it is important to strengthen their network of support. The attachment formation of positive relationships with adults is an emerging theme in the literature on independent living. It is argued that young persons are in need of supporting relationships with adults who can adopt non-punitive approaches and normalise the expression of feelings. Attachment theory explains that a child's care giver or attachment figure has a crucial role in managing a child's anxiety, and by responding to their needs, helping them in forming a secure attachment. This in turn provides a child with an ability to form positive relationships with others in the future.

The quality of the child's relationships has been found to predict changes in many areas, including social, psychological, behavioural and cognitive areas. Having friends, family or mentors outside of the care placement can be a vital protective factor, especially in the first couple of months as the young person adjusts to changes in their life. When young person experiences stress and anxiety, which often comes up as they transition, one of the coping mechanisms many of them employ is to withdraw and become isolated when things become overwhelming. In transitioning into adult life and greater independence, more networks of different types are required to support a young person's life, especially for those transitioning from alternative care, who may not have advantage of supportive parents or hosts, there is a greater need to develop networks in their communities that can provide this necessary support. Mamelane (2013) also agree that building support networks facilitates smoother transitions out of care for young persons. With strong networks of support, care leavers have better opportunities to access housing, obtain employment, go to school, get financial support, engage in recreational activities, learn and also obtain a sense of belonging. Strong networks can assist a young person emotionally and practically as they move through transitions.

### Objective

To assist young person to have strong networks that can assist to support them emotionally and practically as they move through transitions.

### Output

Contribution to young person's sense of belonging, self-worth and a sense of safety in the world that will enable them to function inter-dependently and increasingly meet their own needs.

## Programme elements

- Access to supportive and trustworthy adults.
- Mentor/mentors.
- Connection, where possible, to biological family.
- Access to a list of community resources.
- Experiences to explore their cultural heritage.
- Access to youth/social/recreational club.
- Experience through volunteering/ community service.

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICE

- Assist young person to identify existing relationships in their life whose inputs they value, and who are the sources of positive support.
- Apply strength-based approach to help young people to open up and speak about their lives in a way that help them to see their strengths. This approach highlights their skills, affirms their knowledge and experience.

These supportive relationships also contribute to the young person's sense of belonging, self-worth and sense of safety in the world. The support network is stronger if it is made up of a variety of people who are able to provide support to the young people in different areas of their lives.

## K. TRANSITION TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Most young people pick up the everyday skills that they will need as adults from their families. Various surveys may be cited, but the general consensus is that young adults remains dependent on their parents for financial assistance and emotional support on average until they reach their mid-twenties, and continue to acquire the knowledge necessary for living apart from their parents throughout this period. Contrast this picture with that of youth exiting alternative care at the of 18 years. They typically have not had strong family support. If most of the youth in supportive families are not yet ready to leave on their own at the age of 18 years, how many fewer former alternative care youth are ready? The deficit arising from poor early environment and the lack of family support must be overcome and alternative care youth must learn and develop more rapidly and be self-sufficient earlier in life than is normally the case for their more fortunate peers.

Youth aging out represent a vulnerable population that requires consistent and effective services to address their unique needs and therefore the importance of providing these individualized and consistent services to promote self-sufficiency among youth is paramount. The services offered may vary from one group to the other, but the purpose of providing support and guidance must be consistent. To provide the youth with these services and support, an assessment of youth is required before these services can be offered and coordinated.

## Objective

To guide young people to strengthen their network of support.

## Output

Young people have the skills and tools necessary for them to live independent and productive adult lives.

Program elements that have been identified as key components to assist youth with the transition to self-sufficiency are listed as follows:

- Conduct assessments of skills and needs.
- Co-develop transition plans based on assessment.
- Involvement of the youth in the development of the transition planning.
- Involvement of alternative care givers (child care workers and foster parents) to work with youth on transition skills.
- Youth involved in local planning activities.
- Independent Living Services and support information packet provided to all youth while in care.
- **ASSESSMENT OF SKILLS**

However, apart from what the programmes might require in the future, the assessment of skills is a critical step in designing an individualised independent plan for the youth. This will include assessment of life skills in preparation for life skills training, basic education skills and other skills in preparation for post-secondary education. The development of the plan is based on the assessment of skills which is very critical. The assessment of skills at various points in time would seem to be a logical part of this process. The outcomes of the assessment must be incorporated in the young person's IDP which is to be reviewed after every six months period.

- **THE INVOLVEMENT OF CARE GIVERS CAN HELP YOUTH TO PREPARE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING**

Care givers should be involved in five critical areas as youth transition to adulthood:

- Participate in the development and updating of the independent living plan.
- Transport youth to independent living groups.
- Help youth to learn things they need to complete their independent living plan.
- Complete the cater section of the Life Skill Assessment.
- Care givers are uniquely situated to teach youth skills in the home on a daily basis e.g. personal hygiene, keeping track of important documents, using public transport etc.

## 17. DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSITION PLAN

Transition plan describes the programme and service which help young people to prepare for the transition from alternative care to adulthood. It is a written document that includes an overview of skills, knowledge, resources and competencies necessary for adult living. The plan must indicate steps the young people will take to meet his/her goal as well as to outline the task the young person will undertake to meet specific challenges identified on his/her personal independent living assessment. This individualised plan must be developed with the young person in order for it to be meaningful. It must be signed by both the young person and the Social Worker. The plan should be developed before the young person leaves alternative care.

### a) WHO MUST PARTICIPATE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN?

The young person, Social Services Professional, Social Worker, Child and Youth Care Worker, foster parent, parents or a guardian and independent living programme coordinator.

### b) WHEN MUST THE PLAN BE DEVELOPED?

During the 90 day period prior to the date the young person will be discharged from alternative care system at the age of 18 years or older, the designated Social Worker must provide assistance to the young person in developing the transitional plan. The planning process must be led by a young person and be based on his/her unique needs as identified in their need assessment. Various assessments and planning processes should be integrated to ensure that the young person understand and receive services towards meeting their goals.

### c) ELEMENTS OF THE 90 DAYS TRANSITION PLAN

- Introductory messages, which intended to alert the young people that this plan will differ from the first plan because they are approaching or have now turned the age of 18 years old.
- Organisation of the 90 days transition plan, the revised plan is conceptualised as containing three sections:
  - Rights and responsibilities, contains the notification required for young persons approaching 18 years.
  - Plan for successful transition, which documents specific plans in prescribed areas, confirms the status of critical document and document permanent connections.
  - Service and transitional plan for young persons, this constitutes the plan the young person will follow as he/she continues to receive independent living services.

### d) HOW TO DEVELOP THE TRANSITION PLAN

- First the young person meet with the Social Worker and decide on what goals he/she want to reach within the next six months. The plan must be developed and be signed by both the young person and the Social Worker.

- What should the plan cover?  
Any goal the young person need to reach.
- What if the goals on the plan are not the goals you want?  
If the goals written on the plan are not the goals a young person want, he/she does not need to sign the document. The young person must talk to the team to explain what he/she does not agree with.
- What happens if a young person want to change his/her goal?  
He/she can ask for a meeting with the team to change the plan.
- What if one goal is harder to achieve than expected?  
The young person can ask for help, by giving copies of the plan to the people in his or her life, like your job coach, foster parent, child and youth care worker or other care givers to help he/she make adjustments to the plan.
- Who should have a copy of the plan?  
The young person should keep a copy of the plan to make sure that he/she is getting the service and support he/she is supposed to get. It might be good to give a copy to an adult he/she trust or a mentor. If the young person lives in a group home or housing programme he/she can give it to the person overseeing that programme.

#### **e) ASPECTS TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN DEVELOPING THE PLAN**

- Assist the young person to develop his/her goals (educational, vocational, housing, life skills etc.) based on his /her strength and needs.
- Identify community services the young person can turn to if he/she need assistance.
- Outline individual tasks the young person will undertake to meet his/her goals.
- Connecting the young person with the adult mentor in the community (mentorship relationship will provide support, advocacy and assist them with personal, academic and career development).
- The plan should include the following; objectives, actions to be taken, responsible person and time frame.

## 18. SUPPORT FOR AFTER CARE

Agencies and facilities should have a clear policy and should carry out agreed procedures relating to the planned and unplanned conclusion of their work with children to ensure appropriate aftercare and/or follow-up. Throughout the period of care, they should systematically aim at preparing children to assume self-reliance and to integrate fully in the community, notably through the acquisition of social and life skills, which are fostered by participation in the life of the local community.

The process of transition from care to aftercare should take into consideration children's gender, age, maturity and particular circumstances and include counselling and support, notably to avoid exploitation. It is very crucial that aftercare services be planned as early as possible in the placement and, in any case, well before the child leaves the care setting.

### ELEMENTS FOR SUPPORT/AFTER CARE

1. Need to improve tracking system:  
Set of tools and resources for tracking what happened to whom and when, and after they leave care should/must be developed. This is critical because it will enable evidence-based practice to develop within the care system. **(DSD responsibility)**.
2. Peer support network:  
Once accurate tracking system is in place, space can be created where youth who have already left care can form collective alumni. This group can play a vital mentor role for those youth preparing themselves, as well as providing peer support for each other. **(DSD, NGO & CPO responsibility)**.
3. Strengthen youth sector:  
A strong Youth Development Sector is needed to create awareness, build capacity and connect with the children's sector. This will help to forge a stronger overall provision of continued support service as they transition from childhood through adolescence to young adulthood. **(DSD & CPO responsibility)**.
4. Bridge the gap between youth and work opportunities:  
The challenge here lies in networking and connecting with potential employers to establish relevant and accessible employment opportunities for youth at risk. Connection should be made between the private sector and specialist NGO's to assist with job creation for youth at risk. This could take the form of tailor-made learnership, internship, job shadowing and apprenticeships and ultimately jobs. **(DSD, CPO & CIVIL SOCIETY)**.

Children with special needs, such as disabilities, should benefit from an appropriate support system, ensuring, inter alia, avoidance of unnecessary institutionalization. Both the public and the private sectors should be encouraged, including through incentives, to employ children from different care services, particularly children with special needs.

## 19. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS

Departments	Roles and Responsibilities
Social Development	They provide comprehensive social development services not only to children in need of care and protection' but also the 'young adult who was formerly a child in need of care and protection'.
Home Affairs	<p>Verification of citizenship.</p> <p>Identification of caregivers according to the type of identification. (e.g. SA identity document, passport).</p> <p>Documentation of unaccompanied minors, migrants and asylum seekers and the tracking of statutory services rendered to these children.</p>
Basic Education	<p>School attendance of children for purposes of tracking services received.</p> <p>Children receiving Integrated School Health Programme.</p>
SAPS	Records (e.g. criminal records, reported criminal cases).
Health	Medical assessments, access to various professionals for assessments and intervention services (e.g. occupational therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists).
DoJ&CD	<p>Unaccompanied minors, refugees placed in alternative care.</p> <p>Estate registrar with regard to children.</p>
Statistics South Africa	Various indices on the population.
Child Protection Organisation	<p>Child protection services rendered in line with the intake and business process (intake, investigation, statutory, supervision and aftercare services).</p> <p>Research conducted on child protection.</p> <p>Responsive programmes developed on child protection.</p>
Human Settlements	Provision of housing.
Labour and Employment	<p>They regulate labour practices and activities according to its legislation.</p> <p>It plays an important role in regulating child labour by conducting workplace inspections and prosecuting employers who employ children.</p>

Departments	Roles and Responsibilities
Treasury	Allocation of funds.
Non-Governmental Organisations	<p>They render services to children at all levels of interventions , interns of the</p> <p>National Policy Framework for the management and Prevention of Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation.</p> <p>Some organisations focuses on prevention and early intervention rather than on the statutory and the reintegration level.</p>

## 20. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation processes should be in place to inform programme design and delivery, and to provide robust information on outcomes.

These (monitoring and evaluation) activities should be planned from the outset of the programme or service, including establishing desired outcomes and success indicators. Programmes and services should be monitored and evaluated to track outcomes, and such information should be used to inform programme and service improvement.

There should be centralized data regarding services provided to youth aging out of alternative care and what happens to youth after they leave the system. Assessment and evaluation of the processes and outcomes of programmes or interventions identified in the implementation strategy should be conducted to assure that:

- Young persons are individually assessed to determine what services and supports they require to have a successful transition;
- Young persons who are appropriate for the programmes are being referred to them in a timely manner;
- The programmes develop and revise individualized service plans that meet the identified and merging needs of the young person;
- The services are provided in conjunction with the service plans and are effective at producing the intended outcomes based on objective measures;
- Assess workers' understanding of the policies through surveys and interviews with workers, young, and independent living programme staff;
- A longitudinal study of youth who have aged out of alternative care could be conducted. The study would examine outcomes of youth in relation to the types of services they have received and external factors such as the age they entered alternative care, the number of times they exited and re-entered the system of care, and demographic factors;
- Conduct a longitudinal study of youth who have used post-secondary education and/or vocational training funds. The study would examine programme completion rates, employment rates, types of employment, earned income, benefits related to employment such as health insurance and pensions, and community activities; and
- Use information gathered from the studies to determine whether services for youth aging out of alternative care are adequate or could be changed to enhance their effectiveness.

The policies, procedures and monitoring mechanisms should be in place so that they will ensure that the goals of assisting youth as they age out of alternative care to become productive citizens will have become a permanent part of the system.

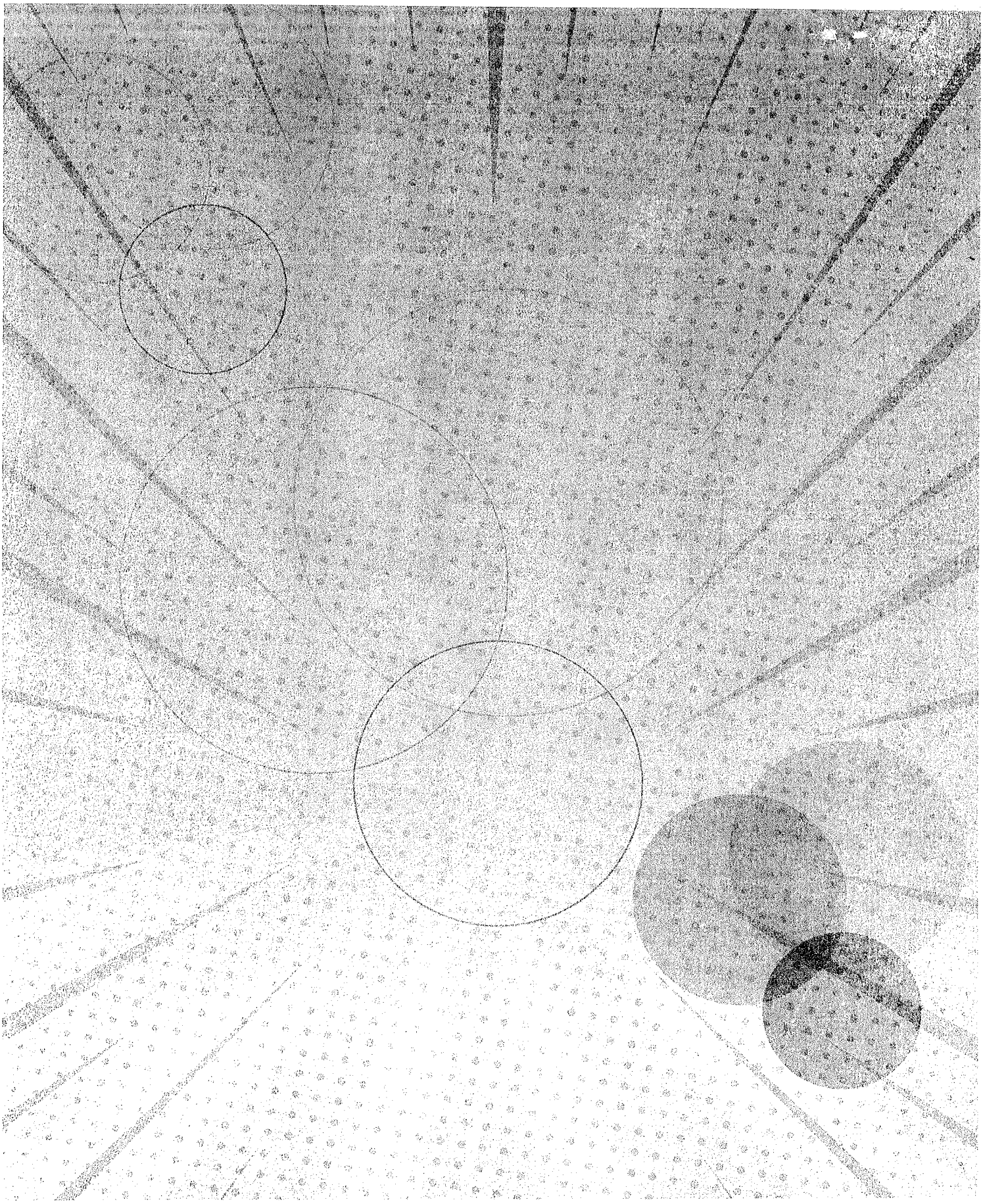
## CONCLUSION

The transition to independence is a challenging time for youth navigating the bridge from adolescence into adulthood. Developmental tasks for this period includes youth taking definitive steps towards achieving a measure of independence in areas of emotional maturity, finance, employment, housing and education. Embodied in this transition period is the view that it is a period of growth, but one that can be a difficult crossroad for many. An understanding of what practices and services realise positive outcomes for this cohort of at risk youth who are transitioning from care to adulthood is essential to helping them to successfully manage this transition and achieve the best possible outcome.

Burt and Paysnick (2012) underscore that knowledge of what works best in the transitioning out of care is still in the early stage and best practices are not yet clearly solidified. Like Flynn and Vincent (2008), they too recommend longitudinal, multiple-informant studies of youth transitioning out of care; they identify the need to include more comparison groups, and they flag the need to conduct studies that capture the best practices of successful transitions. There is a large gap in the collective child welfare literature on preferred, evidence-informed approaches to advancing educational, employment, housing and supportive relationships outcomes for youth transitioning out of care. Havlicek (2011) notes that minimal attention has been given in research, policy and practices to understand the transitioning experience and related outcomes within a longer developmental time frame.

## REFERENCES

1. Baseline study on registered Child and Youth Care Centres (2010).
2. Mamelani. (2013). *Transitional Support: The experiences and Challenges facing youth transitioning out of State Care in the Western Cape*. Cape Town, RSA: Mamelani Projects.
3. Mamelani. (2015). *Transitional support programmes for the child and youth care sector*. Cape Town, RSA: Mamelani Projects.
4. Stein, M. (2006). *Research Review: Young People Leaving Care*. *Child and Family Social Work*, 11. P273-279.
5. Pinkerton, J. (2011). 'Constructing a global understanding of the social ecology of leaving out of home care'. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33 (12), pp2412-2416.
6. Van Breda, A. D., Marx, P., & Kader, K. (2012). 'Journey into independent living: A grounded theory'. Johannesburg, RSA: University of Johannesburg and Girls & Boys Town South Africa.
7. Jannet Max, & Pat Paluzzi, (2005): *Promoting Successful Transition from foster/group home setting among parenting teens*. Publishers?
8. Garry R Anderson; School of Social Work Michigan State University (20003): *Aging Out of Foster Care System. Challenges and Opportunities for State of Michigan*. Publisher?
9. *Legal Guide to age thresholds for children and young people* (2011) Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.
10. Anne Kuligowska (2015) *RETRAK I Independent Living Programmes*.
11. *Transitional and Independent Living Program and Placement Requirements* (2006).
12. *Project Lungisela: Independent Living Skills Programmes for Youth at Risk* (Mamelani Project).
13. *National Strategic Framework for the transformation of CYCC's* (2014-2019).
14. Lauren Eyster & Sarah Looney Oldimixon (2007) *NGA Centre for Best Practices* (2007).
15. *Independent Living BC Programme Framework* (2012).
16. *South African Child Gauge 2007/2008*. Cape Town: Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.
17. *Successful Transition, Success as Adult: LeeAnne Dewar & Deborah Goodman* : Children's Aid Society of Toronto (March 30,2014).
18. -Calderbank, Tara. 2011. "Measuring Implementation Fidelity in Independent Living Programs (Ilps) for Youth Leaving Care: A Systematic Review of the Literature." MSc, University of Oxford.
19. Chiroro, Patrick M , Ruqayya Seedat, and Kim Woolnough. 2009. *A Qualitative Study on the Experiences of Youth Who Aged out of the Foster Child Grant in South Africa*. Pretoria, RSA: Impact Research International.
20. DckesLisa F. 2018. "One-Year Outcomes of Youth Exiting a Residential Care Facility in South Africa." *Child & Family Social Work* 23 (4):558-565. doi:10.1111/cfs.12411.
21. Dickens, Lisa F, and Peter Marx. 2020. "Neet as an Outcome for Care Leavers in South Africa: The Case of Girls and Boys Town." *Emerging Adulthood* 8 (1):64-72. doi:10.1177/2167696818805891.



Chief Directorate: Communication  
Department of Social Development  
Private Bag X901, Pretoria, 0001  
Tel: +27 12 312 7653  
Fax: +27 12 312 7988/7470  
[www.dsd.gov.za](http://www.dsd.gov.za)