



Government of Western Australia  
Department for Child Protection

**Department for Child Protection**

# **Residential Care (Sanctuary) Framework**

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## **Introduction**

The Residential Care Sanctuary Framework describes the overarching model and core elements of how the Department for Child Protection residential facilities operate. The Framework is largely based on the principles of the Sanctuary Model developed by Sandra Bloom and a study into residential care conducted by James Anglin (2004). It introduces a coherent therapeutic approach to care and more importantly is a model for organisational change within the facilities.

The Department for Child Protection has undertaken a major expansion and reform of residential care across the State. Concurrently with introducing the Sanctuary model of therapeutic care the Department has transformed its residential services of larger hostels into smaller services (four bedroom houses) located throughout the metropolitan area and major country regions although the country homes have a larger capacity of 6-8 beds. It has also established additional residential services (Family Group Homes) in partnership with the non-government sector state wide.

In addition a Secure Care facility for up to six young people aged 12 to 16 years has been established. This Centre provides for stays of up to twenty one days with the option of one extension. The objective of the service is to provide a safe place for young people who are at serious risk to themselves and others. It acts as a circuit breaker, stabilising their behaviour and providing the opportunity to identify and engage with the services and supports they require.

## **The Context**

Children and young people who have been the victims of neglect and/or abuse are traumatised. Many child protection interventions seeking to protect and support children and young people such as appearance in court, removal from home and placement with strangers may actually increase a child or young person's trauma.

Children and young people who have been neglected and/or abused may not be functioning at their chronological age in terms of their physical, social, emotional or cognitive skills. It is therefore critical that care givers are aware of the effects of maltreatment on these children and young people and that residential and secure care staff are able to respond in considered and informed ways rather than react to the behaviours displayed by these children and young people.

## **Healing from Trauma**

- In a therapeutic situation, it is essential that children and young people and the care workers understand what they want to achieve, so that their goals and strategies for achieving those goals are aligned.
- For individuals (and for systems), this requires a rigorous process of self-examination and the development of a core system of understanding, that will guide behaviour, decision making, problem solving and conflict resolution.
- Recovering trauma individuals need to learn how to listen and to talk.
- It will be through participation and regularity of work groups, teams and meetings that routine emotional management occurs within our organisation.
- This will mean us all 'walking the talk', embedding conflict resolution strategies at every level, and not turning them over to other areas or individuals.

## The Plan and Way Forward

Our aim is to develop an organisation that has as its culture, seven dominant characteristics, all of which serve as goals directly related to resolving trauma.

1. Culture of non violence.  
*The building of safety skills.*
2. Culture of Emotional Intelligence.  
*Helping to teach affect management skills.*
3. Culture of Inquiry and Social learning.  
*The building of cognitive skills.*
4. Culture of democracy.  
*Helping to develop skills of self control, self discipline and an administration of healthy authority.*
5. Culture of Open Communication.  
*Helping to overcome barriers to healthy communication, reduce acting out, improve self-protection and self-correcting skills, teaching healthy boundaries.*
6. Culture of Social Responsibility.  
*To rebuild social connections, establish healthy attachment relationships.*
7. Culture of Growth and Change.  
*To restore hope, meaning, purpose and empower positive change.*

Sandra L Bloom (2005), *The Sanctuary Model of Organisational Change for Children's Residential Treatment*, Therapeutic Community: The International Journal for Therapeutic and Supportive Organisations 26(1): 65-81

Residential care staff should be encouraged to attend regular staff meetings and engage in ongoing reflective practice. This should include safety planning and collaboration with children and young people in the development of self-care plans.

## System Evaluation Framework

The S E L F Framework is a trauma informed tool that helps staff and children/young people move through four critical stages of recovery.

<b>S</b> afety	<b>Attaining safety for oneself, others and environment</b>
<b>E</b> motional	<b>Looking at personal experiences and impact management</b>
<b>L</b> oss	<b>Feeling grief and dealing with personal loss</b>
<b>F</b> uture	<b>Trying out new roles, ways of relating to ensure personal safety and help to others</b>

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## The Organisational Process in the Residential Community

To effect change the following needs to occur:

- Leadership commitment
- Adopting an evaluation framework
- Creating shared assumptions, beliefs and values
- Having more democratic processes

- Working as a team and collaboratively
- Understanding trauma and its impact
- Holding care community meetings
- Developing safety plans and individual contracts
- Undertaking staff learning and development
- Client participation
- Evaluation

### **Staff Therapeutic Behaviours with the Children and Young People**

Some of the key behaviours that staff can employ with young people that will make a difference to their sense of safety, healing and day to day behaviour include the following:

- Listening and responding with respect to young people helps them to develop a sense of dignity, a sense of being valued as persons and a sense of self-worth.
- Communicating a framework for understanding with young people helps them to develop a sense of meaning and a sense of the rationality within daily life.
- Building rapport and relationships with young people helps them to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness with others.
- Establishing structure, routine, and expectations with young people assists them to develop a sense of order and predictability in the world, as well as a sense of trust in the reliability of others.
- Inspiring commitment in young people encourages them to develop a sense of value, loyalty, and continuity.
- Offering young people emotional and developmental support helps them to develop a sense of caring and mastery.
- Challenging the thinking and actions of young people helps them to develop a sense of potential and capability.
- Sharing power and decision-making with young people encourages them to develop a sense of personal power and discernment.
- Respecting the personal space and time of young people helps them to develop a sense of independence.
- Discovering and uncovering the potential of young people helps them to develop a sense of hope and opportunity.
- Providing resources to young people helps them to develop a sense of gratitude and generosity.

These staff behaviours can be mapped against the dimensions of the System Evaluation Framework – Safety, Emotional, Loss, and Future – to identify where efforts can be directed with particular children and young people. This is set out in Attachment A.

### **How to Monitor Success.**

Measurable and observable indicators of success should include:

- Less violence (physical, verbal, emotional).
- A system understanding of the impact of trauma.
- Less victim blaming: less punitive and judgemental responses.
- Clearer, more consistent boundaries and higher expectations (linked to rights and responsibilities).
- Earlier identification of, and strategies to deal with, perpetrator behaviour.
- Better ability to state clear goals, create strategies for change, justify need for a holistic approach.
- Understanding of repeat behaviour and resistance to change.
- More democratic environment at all levels.
- Better outcomes for children, staff and the organisation.

Sandra L Bloom (2005), *The Sanctuary Model of Organisational Change for Children's Residential Treatment*, Therapeutic Community: The International Journal for Therapeutic and Supportive Organisations 26(1): 65-81