



SUNSHINE PROJECT

DESIGN
REPORT
OVERVIEW



CEO Foreword

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The Sunshine Project emerged from the urgent need highlighted by the 100 Families Report, which identified that support systems often create more barriers than choices for those in need.

In response to these findings, Ruah and Anglicare WA - two partners in the 100 Families Project - set out to explore how radically rethinking and transforming support systems could work in practice.

Anglicare WA and Ruah share a commitment to driving fundamental change for the people they serve, ensuring they are empowered rather than constrained by the very systems which are intended to help them. This commitment inspired our partnership on this ambitious and innovative project.

Two years later we are pleased to share our findings and some recommendations. Our team's design research generated significant insights and learning for our sector, highlighting critical friction points in the existing system and providing test cases for possible solutions.

However, the real triumph is the testimonies from families. As one participant described:

"If you asked me what Sunshine was, it is like if little angels came into your life and asked what do you need help with, and then they started helping you with these things until you could do it yourself".

Transformative change is not only possible, but already underway.

As we scale the Sunshine model within our own services, our goal is to spark a broader movement that redefines our approach to helping families and communities, ultimately empowering everyone to genuinely live their 'good life'.

The Sunshine Project

- ✓ Draws on research from 100 Families, Hilary Cottam, UK evidence-based models.
- ✓ Multiple social sector organisations partnering together
- ✓ Ruah and Anglicare WA invested own funds to enable design and testing
- ✓ Co-designed with people with lived experience
- ✓ Prototyped over two years in Kwinana/Rockingham - Six families (27 individuals) facing significant and complex hardship, from a range of referral sources.
- ✓ Safety focus for staff and families
- ✓ Place-based model connected with joint community response
- ✓ Independently evaluated by Innovation Unit ANZ
- ✓ Cost Benefit Analysis demonstrates value for money for Government
- ✓ Package of model and training materials developed to support replication
- ✓ Being scaled into existing and new services

Sunshine Model Theory of Change

Creating enabling conditions for families to grow their 'good life'

PROBLEM: Families experiencing hardship often have multiple needs, however the formal support system often only works with single issues in isolation. Furthermore, the system can be difficult to navigate.

IF WE ADD a family-centred approach and:

- Meet families where they are at on their terms and focus on decreasing their mental load.
- Place a trusted relationship at the heart of the work; evidence based, intensive Coaching.
- Collaborative upfront work with families to identify key leverage points for change and agree on aspirations and timing. Emphasis on outcome independence to enable personalised goal setting.
- Coordinate with formal services and also informal supports (e.g. family, friends – unlikely players who can open up opportunities).
- Ensure creative responsiveness that allows for agile, adaptable approaches unrestricted by conventional funding limitations.
- Customise flexible investment and direct (often in-home) practical support around specific development needs of each family to ensure equity, including:
 1. Focus on health, wellbeing, employment, education, connection to community life.
 2. Create new opportunities for inclusion.
 3. Proactively reduce systemic barriers.

THIS WILL LEAD TO

- Reduced mental load and breathing space for families to think and plan together.
- Stabilised situation.
- Increase in hope.
- Equity, open up opportunities.
- Deep trust bond, solidarity, creating safety to venture changes.
- Small wins which scaffold capabilities towards bigger wins.
- Connection with informal supports and mutual helping.
- Easier access to specialist supports, who are freed up to focus on what they do best.

SO THAT

- Intrinsic motivation and self belief grows.
- Family gains momentum towards their 'good life'.
- Protective factors for the 'good life' increase.
- Mental health, family wellbeing and functioning, parenting, food security, education access, employment and income improve.
- FDV, abuse, justice involvement and risk factors for trauma and hardship are reduced.

AND EVENTUALLY /ULTIMATELY

- Families experience benefits of the 'good life' across multiple life domains.
- Families have resilience to handle difficulties, reducing reliance on costly crisis interventions.
- Families are connected / included in communities.
- Children are likely to grow up enjoying their own 'good life'.

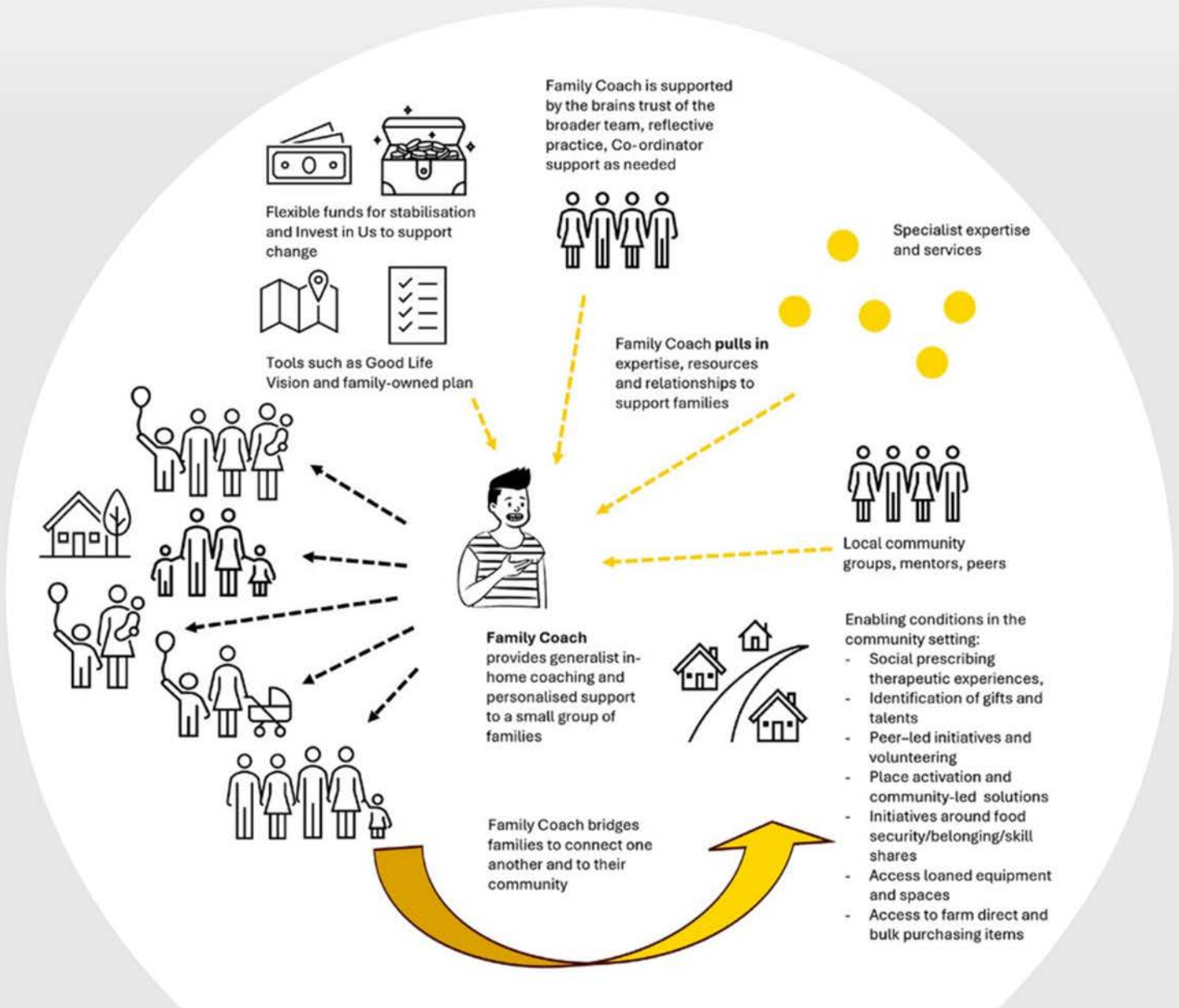


Sunshine Model



For relational, family-based coaching

This diagram captures the role of the Sunshine Family Coach relative to families, other services and the broader community



- PRINCIPLES**
1. Centre the family/de-centre the system
 2. Free up time & reduce families' mental load
 3. Connect families with resources, relationships and opportunities
 4. Grow the 'good life'
 5. Work with motivational capital/hope



Sunshine Model



For relational, family-based coaching

This diagram captures the stages of the coaching journey, which tracks volume of Coach time and key activities at each stage.



1. Relieve the Mental Load

- Quick wins
- Flexible stabilisation funds
- Practical & hands-on help



2. Imagine

- Imagine a vision of your Good Life
- Discover core gifts
- Take a peek at healing



3. Do Together

- Helpful introductions
- Go together
- Personal development
- Strategise difficult things & real talk
- Practical group work
- Self-care support
- Life skill growth & sharing
- Steps towards healing
- Good life investment fund (brokerage)



4. Grow momentum

- Self care/respice
- Engage with natural supports
- Coordinate supports/services
- Community connection
- Relationship restoration
- Good life plan check in



5. Finish Well

- Share skills & gifts
- Prepare for life beyond Sunshine
- Develop finishing well plan



6. Graduate

- Measure family growth
- Celebrate wins
- Bridge to natural /community supports

← WEEKLY VOLUME OF COACH TIME

DURATION OF COACHING RELATIONSHIP →

Outcomes - What we could help families shift

We have found that investing upstream in enabling families to take control of growing their own good life, results in outcomes across range of outcome indicators that many other services are seeking without success. Cost benefit analysis conducted by external evaluators captured savings to Government across three key domains:

	Out of 6 families	Savings to government p/a
Child Protection	9 children from 5 families avoided Child Protection involvement	\$4,224 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Per family p/a if no order • \$59,292 p/a if order resulted
Eviction/homelessness	5 families avoided housing eviction/homelessness	\$13,594 per family
Engagement in employment	2 parents entered/stayed in the paid workforce	\$25,708 per person p/a

Additional outcomes were achieved around a range of wellbeing domains:

- Increased sense of hope, feeling in control, confidence and positive self-identity.
- Improved family relationships, parenting skills and confidence.
- Increased school attendance.
- Improved access and utilisation of fresh, nutritious foods.
- Improved outcomes for health and mental health (dental/optical, mental health. treatments, assessment & access to developmental/therapeutic supports for children.
- Outcomes in formal and informal adult learning, small business and livelihood, life skills and creative expression.
- Increased participation in community life, friendships, volunteering, helping others

80%+ satisfaction

6-monthly survey of participant satisfaction with the project and Coach returned consistent satisfaction levels above 80% for all categories.

The outcomes of the Sunshine Project highlight the resilience of families striving to build a good life for their children, despite fighting battles with limited support. They also show how professionals can make a difference by walking alongside families and offering small, tailored investments. With the right framework, families can achieve their goals and thrive, even in difficult circumstances.

Opportunities to Work Differently - Government & Local Government



POLICY CHANGE

Challenge-led commissioning:

Evolve “outcomes-based” commissioning to “challenge-led” commissioning (often called “mission-driven” commissioning), where leaders define broad challenges, giving directionality to the service ecosystem but enabling flexibility in how solutions are developed in each context.*

Bridge Social Service and Grassroots Groups:

Recognise the valuable role informal community groups play around family protective factors and enabling conditions for families to grow their ‘good life’. Resource mechanisms for these two different worlds to convene and co-ordinate.



INNOVATIVE FUNDING AROUND RELATIONAL PRACTICE



Implement place-based approaches to commissioning:

Starting with willing communities and run as iterative learning projects.

Normalise new types of paid roles in the wellbeing economy: This could include community farmer, community builder or activator, library of things tool librarian, community hub host, circular economy and food security roles - don't expect volunteers to carry the full burden of community building.

Resource social prescribing of therapeutic experiences: Support and connect up initiatives which can bridge the core work of social services with broader community connectivity through social prescribing type initiatives. Identify nodes/touchpoints from which families can be “prescribed” therapeutic experiences.

Invest in education, development of community ownership models: This could include community trusts, co-operative or worker owned business, social enterprises.



FLEXIBILITY WITHIN EXISTING CONTRACTS

Liberated practice - Shift from compliance intensive regimes to liberated frameworks:

Empower staff to do the kind of work they aspired to when they joined the community sector. Resource helping professionals to work with families’ strengths and vision for their ‘good life’ in a more holistic way.

Staff-client and brokerage ratios:

For contracts where the service works with high complexity families, enable flexibility in the budget to support meaningful change, allowing for:

- Smaller caseload ratios of approximately 1:5 families (comprising multiple individual clients) to allow time for trust building, and time to unpick complex challenges and gain change traction.
- Greater percentage of the contract budget allocated to brokerage funds to invest directly in families’ growth.

Adaptive models: Recognise that program logics are not an absolute science, and that they apply a manufacturing mindset to complex human relationships. Models need to be flexible to meet families where they are at, rather than working to prescribed and narrow outcomes.

Broader scope of outcomes: When commissioning services for families facing multiple, complex challenges allow for a broader range of possible outcomes relative to families’ unique circumstances.

*In Australia, “mission” can have negative connotations; hence use of challenge-led.

Scaling Sunshine Relational Practice

Anglicare WA and Ruah are currently scaling the Sunshine Model into a number of existing and new services which work with families facing significant and complex hardship. This will provide further learning about how the model works in different locations and with different cohorts.

ESSENTIAL ENABLING FACTORS TO EMBED THE MODEL

- Low case load (5-6 families per coach)
- Home outreach model
- Whole household/family
- 'Good life' orientated
- Flexible family-determined outcomes
- Practical hands-on help
- Invest In Us - Flexible fund
- Tools for the Coach (vehicle, phone, laptop, credit card)
- Brains Trust and Supervision
- Optional value-add-Community Builder role



We invite you to partner as we take next steps to scale this model

Sunshine offers a flexible but robust model which can be adapted for a range of cohorts and communities in WA. It is a bold and positive approach which draws on a thorough design process. Additional organisations have indicated interest in adopting the model and forming a Learning Community around Relational Practice. For more information about partnering with us, visit thesunshineproject.com.au or email Sunshine Lead, Beth Webster at beth.webster@anglicarewa.org.au



This report is a brief overview of the Sunshine Project and model. For in-depth information, see the Sunshine Project Insights Report, Design Report and Sunshine Evaluation Report at thesunshineproject.com.au.

A sample of feedback from participants

"If you asked me what Sunshine was, it is like if little angels came into your life and asked what do you need help with, and then they started helping you with these things until you could do it yourself".

"The Coach has been great at keeping me motivated and supporting me to achieve against the obstacles and challenges. And there's so many obstacles."

"It feels so good to be driving, to be behind the wheel, because I feel in control which in so many aspects of my life, I never do."

"For the first time things feels manageable. We still have a lot to work through, but I can focus on supporting my granddaughter now, knowing that everything else is going okay."

"I'm like you guys now, I'm doing design on myself. I try something out and see if it works, and if it doesn't, I try a different solution."



We acknowledge Aboriginal Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands that our services are based on and pay our respects to Elders of these lands both past and present. Anglicare WA and Ruah Community Services deliver services across many Countries in WA, from Ballengarra Country in the North to Minang Noongar Country in the South. In particular, we wish to acknowledge the Custodians of the lands where our offices operate. We would like to thank the Noongar, Miriuwung Gajerrong, Tjurabalan, Yawuru, Nyikina, Ngarluma, Kariyarra, Nyiyaparli, Martu, and Wangkatja peoples for their wisdom and generosity.