

'Our Kids' and Technology Friend or Foe?

Technology is an integral part of everyday life for 'our kids'

Advantages

- ↑ Educational Apps can engage students and make learning fun
- ↑ Online chat and counselling provided by organisations such as Kids Helpline and Headspace have improved access to mental health services
- ↑ Smart phone apps e.g. Aurora provide a safe way of finding information and support for women experiencing domestic violence
- ↑ Children/young people with disabilities can achieve greater independence through a range of electronic supports
- ↑ Connection with peers has been increased through instant messaging and social media. Video messaging apps e.g. Skype and Facetime make it easier stay in touch with loved ones

Challenges

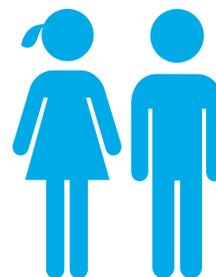
- ↓ 1 in 4 children/young people experience cyber bullying in Australia (ACBPS 2009)
- ↓ UK Research (NSPCC, 2014) indicates over a quarter of children aged 11-16 with a profile on a social networking site have experienced something upsetting in the last year
- ↓ Children/young people may not know how to keep their personal information safe or protect their "digital reputation"
- ↓ Sexting and distribution of/access to inappropriate content
- ↓ Perpetrators are targeting children/young people in OOHC through a variety of mediums including Facebook and instant messaging apps

What do young people in OOHC tell us?

Barnardos Australia commissioned the CREATE Foundation to explore young people's views on preferred methods of communication with caseworkers and the potential benefits of MyStory - Next Generation Case Management (E. Johnstone, 2013).

Twenty one young people with a care experience, aged 15-23, participated in the consultation. Young people told us:

- ➔ Phone and face to face contact with caseworkers is essential; using technology e.g. social media and email can enhance caseworker/client relationships
- ➔ Security of personal information is important
- ➔ Carers/caseworkers should be aware of individual likes/dislikes and unique personalities, "They should know my family history... what is important to me, like the stuff I like to do"



In addition to a paper file, a place to store personal documents electronically e.g. achievements and milestones is needed

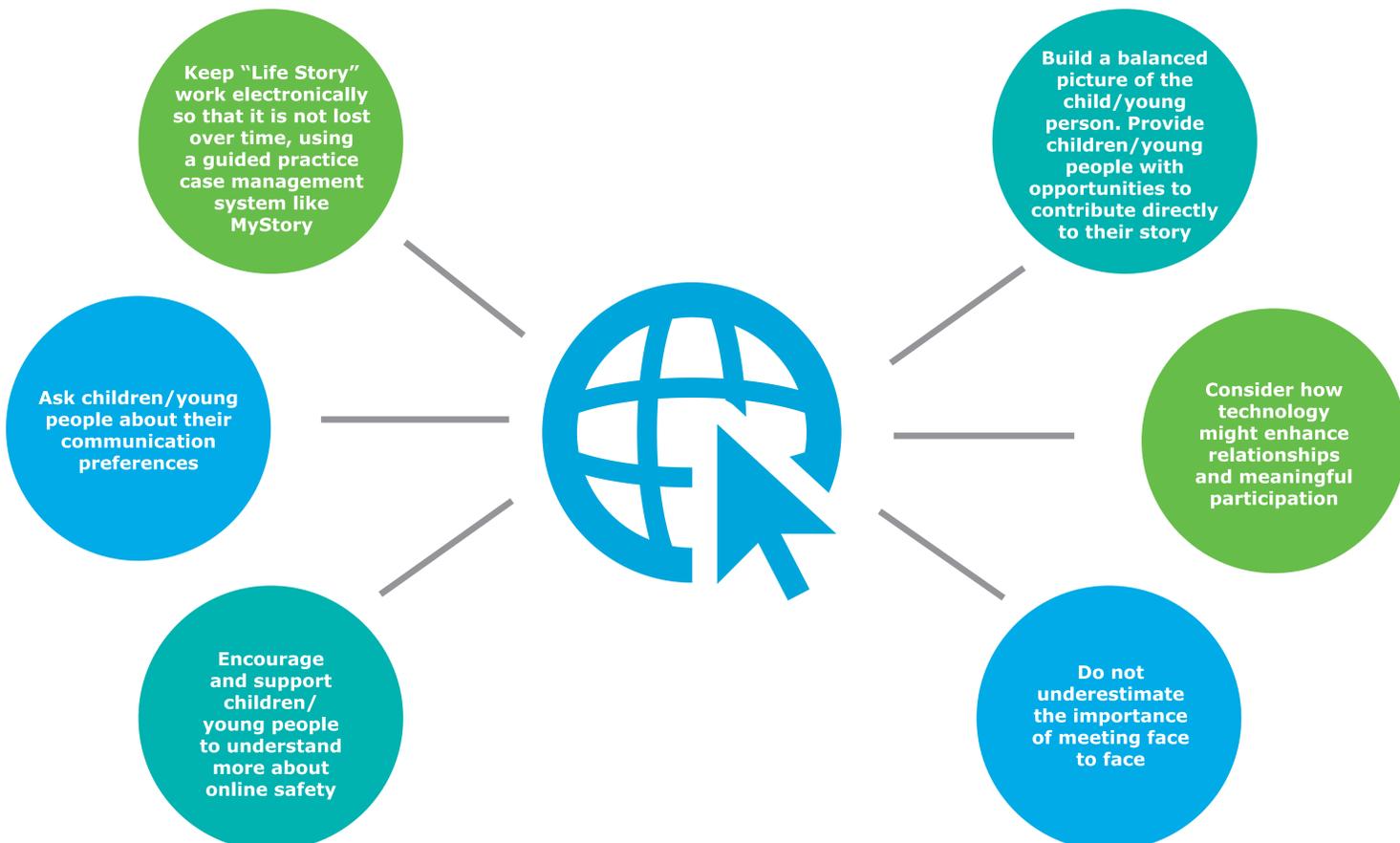


Caseworkers should consult with young people regarding what might be recorded on file and young people should be given a chance to have their say. Case notes and history would be more balanced, "not just a list of all the bad stuff I have done"



Barnardos Australia are committed to utilising cutting edge technology with the MyStory case management system to ensure better outcomes for children/young people. We continue to research and improve upon strategies to ensure the child/young person's voice is at the centre of all decision making

How can we harness technology for good?



Find out about MyStory
Next Generation Case Management
my-story.org.au



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