

Youth Mental Health Team Strategic Plan 2025-30

VISION

To improve the mental health of young people, their families and communities locally, nationally, and internationally. Specifically, we aim to:

- Reduce the prevalence and impact of mental health difficulties in young people
- Mitigate risk factors that lead to poor mental health
- Improve access to mental health support

To achieve our Vision, we will:

- Conduct high quality and impactful research
- Ensure the voices of young people and their families are heard and represented in all aspects of our work
- Translate our research into accessible, evidence-based programs, resources, practices, and policies
- Mentor the next generation of youth mental health researchers to ensure the sustainability of our research and the stability of our workforce

VALUES



Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity

We value equity, diversity, and inclusivity in the research we conduct, the communities we serve, and the way we work together to achieve outcomes. We commit to research that empowers communities to advocate for themselves wherever possible. Additionally, we commit to advocating for others who have inequitable access to opportunities and care, especially when they are unable to advocate for themselves.



Collaboration

We value strong and sustained connections with other researchers, as well as clinical, community, and policy stakeholders, and recognise that improving mental health care requires collaboration within and outside of the Team and the Institute. We value working with other local, national, and global partners to ensure we find the best solutions to improve youth, family, and community mental health.



Curiosity

We value curiosity as a driving force for learning and growth. We embrace novel ways of working and the creative pursuit of new knowledge. We continuously reflect on what works well whilst identifying opportunities for improvement. We foster and embody change and creativity by exploring new ideas, approaches, and relationships.



Excellence & Integrity

We value rigorous scientific enquiry and methodologies that yield tangible and meaningful applications to improve youth mental health. We conduct transparent, open science, and always conduct ourselves professionally and personally with integrity and sound ethical principles.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



High-quality and impactful research

We will prioritise research on populations with the greatest need, directing our research efforts where evidence is urgently required.

We aim to better understand the needs of these marginalised and/or high-risk groups and work in partnership with them to develop targeted, effective, and acceptable interventions and resources that address their specific needs.

We will prioritise research on the most pressing and critical issues that young people and their families have themselves identified as their top priorities.

We will work creatively, flexibly, and responsively with young people and their communities to understand and address the most pressing concerns currently impacting young people's mental health.

We will prioritise research on mental health promotion and the prevention of mental health difficulties in children and young people.

We will conduct research that aims to avert the trajectory of mental ill health by conducting research that prioritises mental health promotion, and prevention of mental health difficulties. This will incorporate a focus on families, communities, and the broader systems that impact the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

We will prioritise research aimed at improving young people's experiences of accessing and engaging with mental health care and support.

We will collaborate with policymakers, services, communities and families to conduct research that aims to ensure all young people can equitably access appropriate, acceptable and evidence-based mental health care and support.



Collaboration

We will work with local, national, and global partners to ensure we develop and implement internationally competitive, research and collaborative outputs in youth mental health.

We will work with other researchers (within and beyond our Team and the Institute) and all relevant stakeholders (including but not limited to young people, families, clinical and community services, and policymakers) to ensure our research is comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and high quality, and has local, national, and global impact.



Translation

We will embed translation into all aspects of our research, to ensure our work is practically applied in real-world setting to the benefit of young people and their communities.

We will integrate research translation into every stage of our work by actively involving end-users throughout the research process to enhance the relevance, acceptability, and impact of our work. We are committed to honest, transparent, and timely communication, ensuring that both the scientific and wider community remain informed of our research findings and contributions.



Sustainability

We will obtain sustained and diversified funding to ensure the ongoing stability of research staff and sustainability of projects and outputs.

We will endeavour to obtain funding from a diverse range of sources (including competitive, philanthropic, and/or commercial) to recruit the best and brightest staff and students at all levels, and to continue to conduct world-class research.

We will build youth mental health research capacity and empower emerging youth mental health researchers in WA, nationally, and internationally.

Through mentorship, professional development and collaboration, we will grow the capacity of students and emerging researchers to become skilled, ethical and compassionate independent researchers and future leaders in youth mental health.

We will be regarded as a 'team of choice' internally and beyond the Institute, by investing in mentorship and team culture.

We will consistently focus on building skills and offering opportunities to all team members, regardless of career stage, creating a culture of collaboration, support and collegiality for the collective benefit. We commit to a psychologically safe, open and welcoming team environment, where feedback is encouraged and taken seriously.

We will provide capacity building opportunities for young people with lived experience of mental health difficulties and marginalisation.

We commit to the mutual sharing of knowledge and expertise. We will offer reciprocal learning opportunities to young people wherever possible and desired.

