

Invest in Me

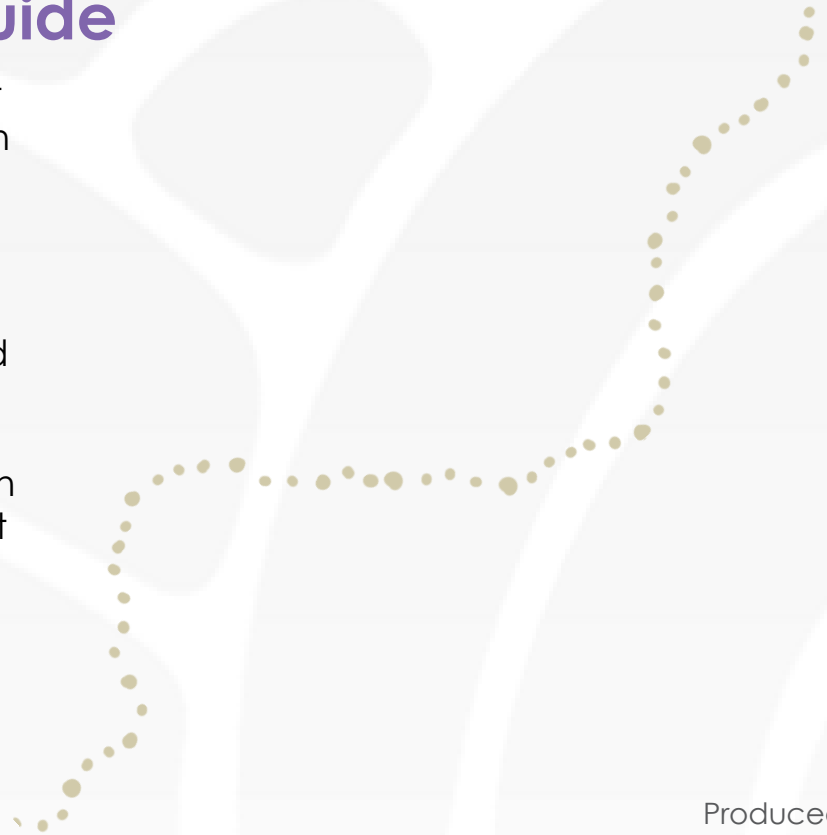


Decision Matrix - Practice Guide

Invest In Me Funding has been designed to support young people to become interdependent, through accessing financial assistance towards their goals that is combined with coaching and support.

Each time a young person accesses funding through Invest In Me there is an opportunity to build their capacity and self-reliance.

This tool has been developed to assist Home Stretch staff to make consistent, equitable and transparent decisions about funding. It provides a structured rationale for why funding is approved, and a planned approach to investing in young people.



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

Produced by:
Anglicare WA
Home Stretch WA Team

Invest In Me Practice Guidelines

What does the young person want / need?

Are we able to fund this?

- The young person has talked it through or completed an application.
- It is likely to achieve the intended outcome
- It is consistent within the IIM guidelines.
- It directly benefits the young person in some way.
- We have exhausted mainstream options to fund or meet the need.
- How many times have they had they asked for funding for this issue?
- Is it an emergency?

Want / need identify

Why would we fund the item/request?

Use the Impact and Funding source questions to clarify “why” we would fund the request. Consider:

- How will this impact the young person's life and what are the funding source considerations.
- This is part of the conversation that the coach would have with the young person when considering applying for Invest in me funding.
- The conversation is part of capacity building and transparency around funding criteria.

Meets funding criteria

How to support the IIM request

- What experience, skills and knowledge does the young person need to solve this problem in the future.
- How can we use this opportunity to grow their trust and connection in other people and services?
- Development of the young person's skills and capacity is the key driver for **Invest In Me** funding decisions.

Plan approved

Guide for Decision Making

Step 1: Build Relationships First

- **Focus on the Relationship:** Remember, Home Stretch WA is not just about paying for things. It is about building a trusting relationship that can help a young person become more confident, capable and connected.
- **Walk Together:** Be there for them, offering guidance and encouragement as they navigate their path towards their dreams and roll with any of the challenges along the way.

Step 2: Connect with People, Places and Services

- **Look Beyond the Fund:** Whenever there's a need, first explore what existing services and supports are out there. The Invest In Me fund is a backup, not the first option.
- **Mainstream First:** Help them connect with mainstream services that can offer the support they need. It's about knowing all the options available.

Step 3: Learning Through Doing

- **Teachable Moments:** Use every need for support as a chance to learn something new. Whether it's budgeting, planning, or problem-solving, every situation is an opportunity to grow.
- **Expand Networks:** Encourage them to build and broaden their support circles beyond Home Stretch and the child protection system. The more connections, the better.

Step 4: Empowerment and Interdependence

- **Build Confidence:** Support them in gaining the confidence to seek out and access resources and support on their own. Your goal is to empower them to stand on their own feet.
- **Skill Development:** Focus on developing skills that will help them become financially self-reliant. From budgeting to understanding services, equip them with the knowledge they need.

Step 5: Long Term Planning

- **Think Future:** Always keep an eye on the future. How can each decision and action today help prepare them for independence after 21?
- **Sustainable Support:** Aim to create a sustainable model of support where they feel confident in their ability to manage life's challenges without always needing a safety net.

Step 6: Walking in Two Worlds

- **Honour and Respect Culture:** Make sure you show respect and awareness of a young person's cultural identity. Recognize and celebrate the strengths and resources within their community, and also the challenges where western ways of doing things are in tension with cultural obligations.
- **Community Ties:** Encourage involvement and engagement with their cultural community. Strong cultural connections can be a powerful source of support and identity.

Step 7: Reflect and Adapt

- **Feedback Loops:** Regularly check in and reflect on what's working and what could be better. It's a journey of continuous learning for both of you.
- **Adapt and Grow:** Be ready to adapt your approach based on their evolving needs and the changing landscape of services and supports available.

A Simple Guide for Decision Making

Why Fund it? <i>Respond 'Yes' or 'No' for each question below - Does the young person's request...</i>	No	Yes
It will have a positive impact on one or more of life domains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It directly supports the young person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It will help a young person through crisis or reduce their risks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It fits within Invest In Me Guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is likely to achieve the intended outcome	* <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is a one-off request, not something that keeps happening	* <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If ticked 'Yes' to one or more questions, go to 'Why IIM?'

* If 'No' is ticked for either of the last two questions, the plan must show how these risks will be mitigated

Why Invest in Me? <i>Respond 'true' or 'false' for each statement below in relation to the young person's request.</i>	False	True
All mainstream funding resources have been explored	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low Cost or Public Services cannot help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The young person does not have financial capacity (refer to budget)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any associated costs are affordable for the young person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The young person sees this as a priority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is an emergency (there is immediate risk to the young person's safety or health)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If ticked 'True' to one or more statements, go to 'What is the Plan?'

* If 'False' is ticked for any except the last statement, consider requesting further relevant information

A Simple Guide for Decision Making -continued

What is the Plan? <i>Is there a plan to build knowledge, skills, capacity and connections? Consider..</i>	No	Yes
Interdependence Connections to community, culture, family and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agency Builds confidence and advocacy skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chipping-in/ Chucking-in Builds the young people's financial independence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem solving Level of problem-solving ability to find a solution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Awareness Level of understanding of their rights and responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety Ability to keep themselves safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication skills Capacity of the young person's communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are satisfied that there is enough information that the IIM request will build the young person's skills and capacity, it's appropriate for IIM funding & any risks have been mitigated...

Approve IIM request

Details of further information requested:

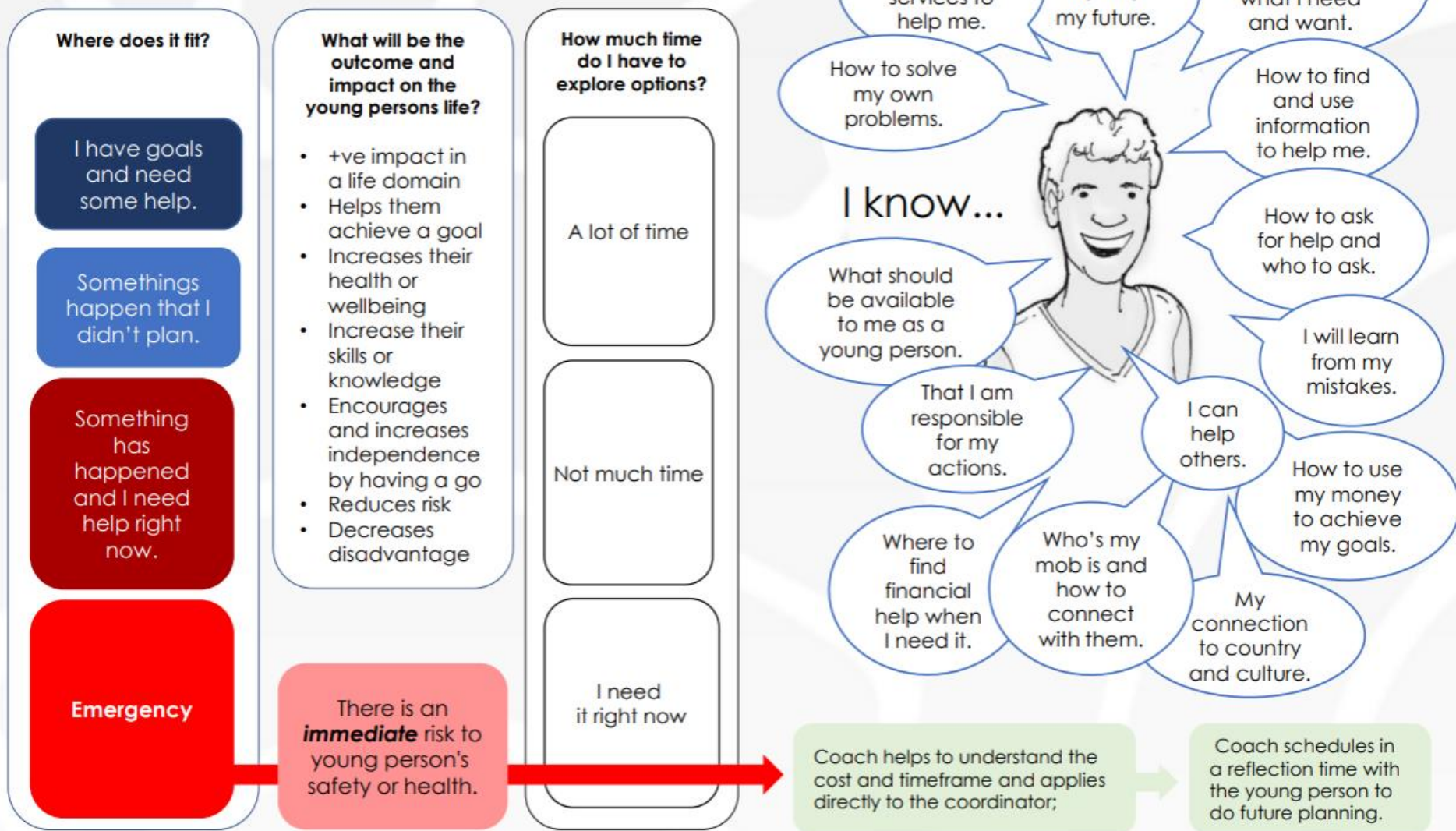
Details of reasoning for IIM request not being approved:

Invest In Me is about helping



Invest in Me

Helping you to achieve your goals, take a chance, explore new things, build confidence and skills, provide help when it is needed.





Continuum of Financial Support

Home
Stretch
WA

Financially
Dependent on
Department

Growing
Financial
Interdependence

Independent
with
Mainstream

Transitioning
to Financial
Self-Reliance

Financially
Independent

16yrs

18yrs

21yrs

25yrs

**District Supports
Young Person**

**Home Stretch WA
Grows Awareness**

**Young Person
Grows
Connections**

**Young Person Uses
Connections**

**Young Person Uses
Independent
Financial Means**

Case Support Costs
Foster Carer Subsidy
Clothing Allowance
Specialist Foster Care
Centrelink
(dependent rate)

Centrelink (independent rate)
Crisis Relief
Staying On
Housing Allowance
Invest In Me Funding
(dealing with emergencies & gaps)
Invest In Me Funding
(aspirations and goals)
Leaving Care Fund
(is last resort for big costs)
Family & Friends Support

Centrelink/Work
Crisis Relief/Foodbank
Public Health/Dental
Youth/Public/Community Housing
Scholarships and Grants
HUGS
TILA
Invest In Me Funding
Family & Friends Support

Centrelink/Work
Crisis Relief/Foodbank
Public Health/Dental
Youth/Public/Community Housing
Scholarships and Grants
HUGS
TILA
Leaving Care Fund (District)
Family & Friends Support

Paid Employment
Other Income Sources



Supporting Practice Resource- skill & capacity assessment & activities to consider



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Are one or more of these true?

Impact	Funding Source
Has a +ve impact on one of their life domains.	There is no alternative funding source.
Leads to a successful outcome of one of their goals.	It is an emergency. [there is immediate risk to the young person's safety or health.]
Reduces risk.	The young person does not have capacity to pay some or all cost.
Decreases disadvantage.	There is no other alternative option. eg. Car vs public transport
Increases health and wellbeing.	There is no other alternative service or support. [Legal Aid, Medicare, Workforce Australia etc.]
Increases the YP capacity. (skills and Knowledge)	An unplanned event in the person's life requires a timely response.
Encourages and increases interdependence	Is it a large cost that has been committed to previously in Leaving Care Plan
Design Principles	
The Right to Support - not 'deserving and 'non deserving.' Builds Capacity - develops knowledge, skills & confidence to access mainstream resources beyond those available through the Department of Child Protection.	Responsive - timely & responsive to short term hiccups that can have long term circumstances. Does not duplicate existing resources - funds that can be met elsewhere should be met elsewhere (mainstream resources, public services, rapid response).

Process How can this help develop interdependence?

Plan is likely to be approved if young person demonstrates high skills and capacity [pink] in the plan. When the young person requires some support [grey] this should be included in the plan. Plan to include support and skills development for criteria identified in the purple section. First request could be a learning opportunity and plan may be exempt in case of emergencies.

Indicates young person's skills and capacity.

High – Requires little to no support from the coach.

Medium – Requires some support & planning with coach.

Low – Will require support and planning with the coach.

Decision making	Self advocate	Chipping in	Future Planning	Problem solving	Self-reflection	Comms Skills
The young person is fully independent in their decision making.	The young person can advocate for their needs.	The young person can and will chip in financially .	The young person has the capacity to maintain the thing or activity.	The young person has demonstrated problem solving to find a solution.	The young person understands their role, responsibility, rights in the situation and demonstrates self-reflection and learning.	The young person has appropriate communication skills (verbal, written, numeracy).
The young person requires some assistance in their decision making.	The young person requires some support to advocate for their needs.	The young person can and is willing to contribute in ways other than financial.	The young person will need support to plan how to maintain the thing or activity.	The young person needs some support to research, compare and decide upon a solution.	The young person requires some support to understand their role, responsibility and rights in the situation. The young person is guided through being self-reflective.	The young person has limited capacity and requires support in one or more communication area/skills.
The young person's decision-making capacity in this 'area' is limited.	The young person requires assistance to advocate for their needs.	The young person cannot or does not want to chip in.	The young person has limited ability at this time to maintain the thing or activity.	The young person needs support to research, compare and decide upon a solution.	The young person demonstrates low understanding of their role, responsibility, rights in the situation, is externalising responsibility and is not self-reflective.	The young person requires support in all communication areas/skills.

*This is the criteria for funding an item/request through Invest In Me

The coach and the young person work together to increase the young persons interdependence.*

Decision making	Self advocate	Chipping in	Future Planning	Problem solving	Self-reflection	Communication skills
<p>1) Should the young person do further investigation to ensure that this is an informed decision?</p> <p>2) How is the young person feeling?</p> <p>3) Is this an emotional decision or logical decision?</p> <p>4) What could be the short/long term outcomes of the decision?</p> <p>5) What is driving this decision?</p> <p>6) Does the young person need to do more learning?</p>	<p>1) Does the young person need to develop skills, knowledge confidence about their rights and responsibilities to be able to self advocate for their requests?</p> <p>2) Do they need to engage in the short / long term with a personal advocate, e.g. Transition Coach?</p> <p>3) Is there someone else that can assist long term? E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can a young person call up a service and ask for help? • Do they know their rights within a service & their responsibilities? • Can the coach role model to the young person how to self advocate ? • Are they aware of supports? Can they take someone with them to advocate for support? 	<p>1) Can the young person chip in if there is more time or if there are supports in place?</p> <p>2) Can the young person save money over time?</p> <p>3) Is there is opportunity to develop skills, knowledge or experience the young person can't see themselves?</p>	<p>1) Can a plan be made to access a service, increase their capacity or resources that would enable them to maintain this some thing (item/object/activity)?</p>	<p>1) Can the young person do research, use their existing network, ask for help from other services / people, find alternative options or solutions to help them?</p> <p>2) What would the young person do if there wasn't the funding available?</p> <p>3) What will the young person do if the funding isn't approved?</p> <p>4) What will the young person do in the future if a similar problem arises?</p>	<p>1) How might the young person understand their role, rights and responsibilities in the situation?</p> <p>2) How might the young person be more reflective on this situation?</p> <p>3) Can the young person make a plan to decrease future likelihood?</p>	<p>1) How can the young person's capacity increase in that area? Eg. training, communication devices, skills building</p> <p>2) Does the young person know how to communicate effectively to different audiences? E.g communicating with a service that they dislike etc.</p>

Things to consider **Tools and Activities**

Decision making	Self advocate	Chipping in	Future Planning	Problem solving	Self-reflection	Communication skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking activities • Motivational Interviewing • Understanding the law • Understanding peer relationships • Understanding relationships and personal boundaries • Increase emotional intelligence (feelings chart) • Mind mapping- decision matrix • List- for / against / pros & cons • Goal Setting activity <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach assists young person to make lists – for/against, positive / negatives around important decisions they need to make. <p>Design Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People hold decision making power – Home Stretch supports & encourages an emerging independence. • Individualised - Promotes individual choice and individual circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview practice • Role playing – calling services/ suppliers etc. • Understanding rights and responsibilities • Learning about contracts • Listening skills • Assertive comms skills • Understanding your emotions <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach assists young person to call up a GP to make an appointment for a mental health care plan for counselling. <p>Design Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds Capacity - develops knowledge, skills & confidence to access mainstream resources beyond those available through the Department of Child Protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Activity / task plan • Working with others • Research plan / outcome • Goal planning / Aspirational Planning tools & worksheets, vision board, journey map. etc. • Timeline <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach assists young person to make a budget using budget planner. • Coach assists young person to set up separate savings account for the purpose of short/long term saving. <p>Design Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not duplicate existing resources - funds that can be met elsewhere should be met elsewhere (mainstream resources, public services, rapid response) • “Chipping in”- young people have incomes at this age they should be contributing to costs or in some other way (skill development /contribution) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Support plan • List of options for support • Working with others and agreeing on support and plan • Goal planning /aspirational Planning tools & worksheets, vision board, journey map. etc. • Timeline <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach assists young person to create a goal planning timetable, setting out time frames/tasks for achieving goals. <p>Design Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible & Secure but not without hoops (responsibility) - mirroring the small hoops young people might have if asking help from parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network mapping • Google searching • Learning how to ask for help • Building trusting relationships • Understanding where to find information • How to compare information, quotes, services <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach assists young person to contact a services/s to obtain quotes for something they need and compare them and assess their budget. • Coach assists young person to create eco map/list to look at their existing networks and how they can assist with an issue. <p>Design Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds Capacity develops knowledge, skills & confidence to access mainstream resources beyond those available through the Department of Child Protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding rights, role and responsibilities • Planning and reflecting on own actions – what would I do differently? • Coach discussion <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach and young person make a list of ways they can seek support in the future – service/network for an issue. <p>Design Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualised- Promotes individual choice and individual circumstances. • Visible & Secure but not without hoops (responsibility) - mirroring the small hoops young people might have if asking help from parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreter • Looking into communication devices • Accessing skills development • Accessing support services – eg. DSO at TAFE <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach links young person in with interpreter if applicable. • Coach to support young person to attend communication course and to support young person to use their comms skills to access services. E.g. Write a test email to a service requesting assistance/information. <p>Design Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds Capacity develops knowledge, skills & confidence to access mainstream resources beyond those available through the Department of Child Protection.

Practice Example

Example- Request for Mobile Phone in homelessness

Funding Criteria Why would we fund the item/request?

Are one or more of these true?

Impact	Funding Source
Has a +ve impact on one of their life domains.	There is no alternative funding source.
Leads to a successful outcome of one of their goals.	It is an emergency. [there is an immediate risk to the young person's safety or health.]
Reduces risk.	The young person does not have capacity to pay some or all of the cost.
Decreases disadvantage.	There is no other alternative option. [eg. Car vs public transport]
Increases health and wellbeing.	There is no other alternative service or support. [Legal Aid, Medicare, Uni support etc.]
Increases the YP capacity. (skills and Knowledge)	An unplanned event in the person's life that requires a timely response.
Encourages and increases interdependence	Is it a significant cost that has been committed to previously in the Leaving Care Plan

*This is the criteria for funding an item/request through Invest In Me

Indicates young person's skills and capacity.

High – Requires little to no support from the coach.

Medium – Requires some support & planning with coach.

Low – Will require support and planning with the coach.

LIKELY TO BE APPROVED

Decision making	Self advocate	Chipping in	Future Planning	Problem solving
The young person is fully independent in their decision making.	The young person can advocate for their needs.	The young person can and will chip in financially.	The young person has the capacity to maintain the thing or activity.	The young person understands their responsibility in the situation, is self-reflective and has plan for the future.
The young person requires some assistance in their decision making.	The young person requires some support to advocate for their needs.	The young person can and is willing to contribute in ways other than financial.	The young person will need support to plan how to maintain the thing or activity.	Young person needs support to understand their responsibility in the situation, how to self-reflect on the situation or how to plan for the future.

MAY BE APPROVED - FURTHER SUPPORT OR INFO NEEDED

The young person's decision-making capacity in this 'area' is limited.	The young person requires assistance to advocate for their needs.	The young person cannot or does not want to chip in.	The young person has limited ability at this time to maintain the thing or activity.	The young person has limited understanding of their responsibility in the situation, inability to be self-reflective or has not considered a future plan.
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THINGS TO CONSIDER

Should the young person do further investigation to ensure that this is an informed decision.	Does the young person need to develop skills, knowledge confidence about their rights and responsibilities. Do they need to engage with their coach.	Can they chip in if there is more time, there are supports in place, they can save over time, there is an opportunity to develop skills, knowledge or experience that they young person can't see themselves.	Can a plan be made to enable the young person to access service, increase their capacity or resources that would enable them to maintain this thing.	How might they understand their role, rights and responsibilities in the situation. How might the young person be more reflective on this situation. Can they make a plan to decrease future likelihood?
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