

Unlocking better outcomes for children through a more relational Human Services model



The problem

- Government spending on social services – especially in reactive/crisis is growing
- Increasing number of children are starting school with developmental vulnerabilities
- Families or communities experiencing systemic disadvantage are most at risk of being left behind.

The opportunity

- Most frontline workers – within government services and NGOs – aspire to work relationally with those they support.
- Where human-centered place-based practice now occurs, it is often *despite* the commissioned system, not *because of* it.
- Relational models **embed** relational practice into the system.
- Relational models here and overseas are demonstrating new approaches that can deliver better outcomes and reduce cost.

Core elements of relational models

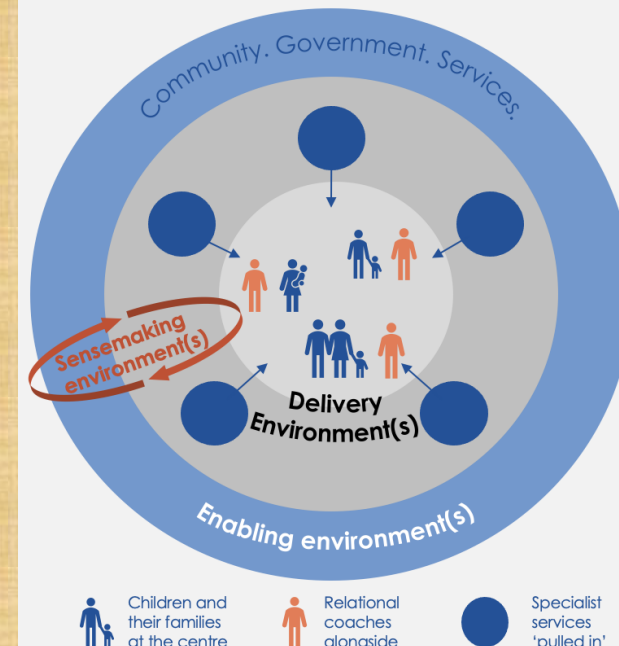
- Understanding that relationships and agency are the foundations of effective support
- Prioritising trust, human connection and mutual understanding
- Being led by the person – they know best what will work for them in that place at that time
- Generalist coaches who navigate through complex specialist systems
- Flexible funds (brokerage) for people's "gloriously ordinary" but life-changing needs
- Integrated sense-making and data functions
- Changing systems to benefit all, based on the insights from the experiences with participants.

Examples to draw from

- [Liberated Method](#) (UK)
- [Thurrock Council](#) (UK)
- [Human Learning Systems](#) (UK)
- [The Sunshine Project](#) (WA)
- [Person-led Coaching](#) (NSW)

A proposal

- A test-and-learn demonstration of the relational model, based on the Liberated Method, at scale in an Australian context, delivered jointly by government, the NGO sector and 2-3 NSW communities (Taree, plus 1-2 others)
- Implementing core elements of the work, fit for local context, connected statewide, including:
 - 2-3 relational coaches in each place, working as per the "core elements", left
 - "Pulling in" of specialist services as required (not referring out)
 - Systems conferencing and leadership to enable broader change
 - Learning and research partnerships to develop an evidence base on outcomes, efficacy, enablement
- Designed to inform a replicable model across many Australian contexts



The ask

- Participation is required from government and communities to enter into detailed design and implementation
- Funding will be defined in detailed co-development phase. Estimate \$500k - \$800k, per year, per site
- At least a 3-year commitment