

# Navigating Support Systems

(Part One)

## Snapshot



100 Families WA

***“Half the time I'm overwhelmed and exhausted from feeling like I have no help within the system, and this contributes to my mental health and conditions and I just give up”***

This snapshot is the first in a series which will focus on the support systems families navigate, including formal (service) supports and informal supports such as friends and community. The Navigating Support System Bulletin and this snapshot draw primarily on findings from the baseline survey, along with initial insights from eco-maps completed with families.

For more information, please refer to **100 Families WA Bulletin No. 3**.

### What does engaging with support systems look like for families?

Findings indicate that families are relying on both formal and informal supports to get their needs met. Findings further show that effort doesn't always equal reward with families' attempts to access a formal support service not always yielding a result.

### Key services being accessed



**72%**  
accessed food  
emergency relief



**46%**  
accessed mental  
health and  
counselling support



**45%**  
accessed  
financial support  
services



**42%**  
accessed  
employment and job  
search services



**38%**  
accessed housing  
support services



**29%**  
accessed  
homelessness  
services



**56%**  
of people who  
accessed essential  
services, accessed  
them daily



**1/6**  
of people could not  
access homelessness  
services every time  
they needed it.



**1/7**  
people could not  
access mental health  
services every time  
they needed them

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# Families voices on barriers to accessing services

## Personal and Family Circumstance

"It can be difficult getting there with a small child."

"I've got too much on my mind, it all felt too much at the time."

"I am loathed to take the spot of anyone who needs it more than me."

## Organisational Factors

"The only available appointments are often two weeks away but you need help today."

"Services are not available on weekends"

"I've been homeless for 3 years and I still don't know what I'm eligible for"

## Systemic Factors

"We keep getting told we don't fit criteria"

"We maxed out our ability to access additional supports"

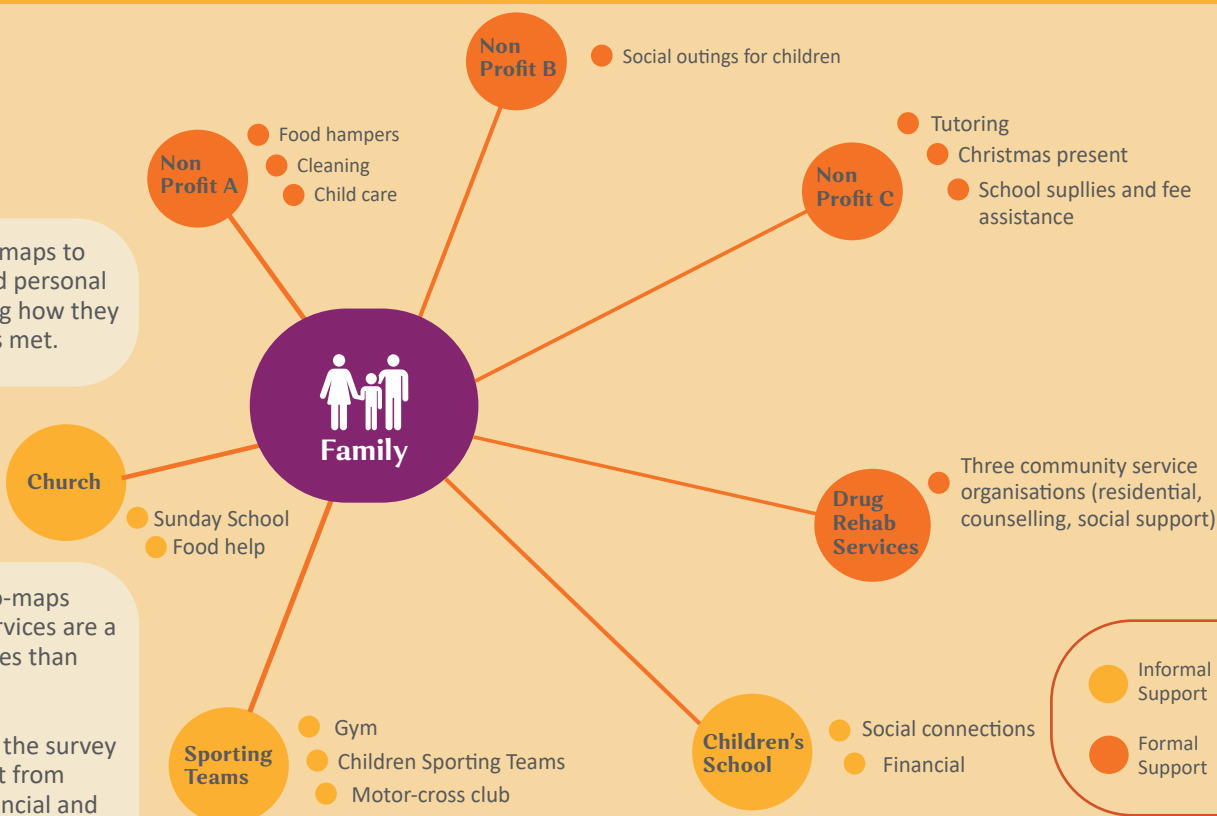
"Sometimes I don't have the bus fare to get in or home, but I need food."

## Eco-Map

Families completed ecomaps to describe their social and personal interactions, highlighting how they typically get their needs met.

An initial review of the eco-maps suggest formal support services are a smaller part of families' lives than informal support systems.

A few families indicated in the survey that they accessed support from family (particularly for financial and food help) rather than approaching services.



\*The above eco map is a composition of 36 maps, demonstrating a 'typical' families experience.

The fortnightly qualitative interviews, currently underway, will reveal more detail around people's experiences of services, including what has worked well, the constraints being faced, and what could be done to improve the way families are supported.

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## Ways Forward

The baseline survey and review of eco-maps has provided some initial insights on service delivery and social policy. Further Ways Forward will be shared as part of this ongoing series and following the completion of the in-depth, fortnightly qualitative interviews.

### Service Delivery



Create a welcoming environment to ameliorate feelings of shame and embarrassment at seeking support.



Ensure eligibility criteria and related documentation are as streamlined, flexible and responsive as possible.



Make service information including eligibility criteria accessible in a variety of forums and formats.



Pay particular attention to people's informal support systems during the assessment process, identifying their strengths and contributions.



Better understand the formal and informal systems that families are navigating. Strengthen and reinforce these particularly for generalised services.

### Social Policy



Reduce the need to navigate complex systems by increasing the levels of income support available.



Be creative about targeting services to the particular population, focusing on inclusivity over exclusivity.



Develop sustainable and affordable transport systems



Ensure community service providers are adequately and sustainably funded to provide high quality services.

This bulletin has shared preliminary insights, drawn from the baseline survey and ecomaps, about families' experiences of accessing support.

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