

Ms Emma Wood  
Committee Manager  
Committee on Children and Young People  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Wood

### **Inquiry into Prevention of Youth Suicide in New South Wales**

Thank you for your letter of 14 March 2018 about the evidence I gave before the Committee on Children and Young People's Inquiry into Prevention of Youth Suicide in New South Wales. I apologise for the delay in responding.

Attached is the transcript with some minor amendments, as requested.

In response to the question taken on notice at the hearing, I can provide the following advice.

There is no specific content about young people and suicide in the Caseworker Development Program, which is the compulsory training for new caseworkers.

The impact of mental health on children and young people is currently covered in Module 6 of the existing Caseworker Development Program: Alcohol and Other Drugs, Mental Health and Co-existing factors. The current course is focused on parental risk issues, rather than risk that a young person may cause themselves.

It is a requirement of this module that caseworkers arrange time with an experienced caseworker, casework specialist or psychologist within their CSC to discuss Family Action Plans, Case Plans and treatment options in relation to the mental health scenarios.

As the course is currently under revision, there is an opportunity to ensure staff are introduced to the comprehensive practice kit for working with young people with mental health issues, which is available on the Department's intranet. This includes making caseworkers aware of resources for working with young people at risk of suicide.

It may also be possible to provide additional in field and on the job activities to extend their understanding of this topic and to provide the opportunity to extend their practice skills.

Department of Family and Community Services

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If you would like more information, please contact me at [REDACTED] or at

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Yours sincerely

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**Pam Swinfield**  
Director – Practice Support