



## Challenges, risk and transitioning members

Being a facilitator sometimes means guiding the group through tricky moments. This might involve conflict, difficult behaviour, or sensitive topics. It can also mean supporting parents as they prepare to leave MyTime, or responding to risks around safety and wellbeing.

## Responding to challenges and risk

Every group is different, and challenges are normal. As a facilitator, your role is to:

- keep the group space safe and respectful
- step in when behaviour is unkind or disruptive
- follow your group agreement when addressing conflict
- ask your coordinator for guidance if an issue feels beyond your role.

When discussing concerns with members, it is essential to respond sensitively while maintaining the boundaries of your role as a facilitator. Maintaining boundaries looks like:

- Suggesting the member get in touch with a service that can support them
- Sharing contact details for appropriate services or show members how to find them
- Checking in with the member at the next session to see how they are
- Suggesting the member reach out to a trusted family member or friend for support
- Showing members where they can access trusted information.

It is not appropriate for you to:

- Offer to personally support the member through the concern or crisis
- Share your own contact details – never give members your personal mobile number, email address or social media accounts (if this information is shared by mistake, let your coordinator know immediately)
- Contact members between sessions to see how they are – this can create dependence and expose you to risks outside work hours
- Share information about a member with other members without permission — even if you think it might help
- Offer personal opinions, advice, or anecdotes.

Setting boundaries is an important part of creating a safe and supportive environment for



everyone. If you are ever unsure about how to respond to a concern, talk to your coordinator first. They can also help you with maintaining boundaries and your own self-care as a facilitator.

**Tip:** The Guiding Principles Handbook has practical strategies for managing conflict, maintaining safe boundaries, and supporting respectful conversations.

Occasionally, members may share things with you that make you concerned for their wellbeing, or for the wellbeing of their children (for example, family and domestic violence, child maltreatment, significant mental health concerns or other safety concerns, like unstable housing or food insecurity).

**If you have any serious concerns about someone's safety, you must talk to your immediate supervisor or coordinator as soon as possible.** It's your responsibility to follow the reporting guidelines in your state or territory, and to comply with your organisation's policies and procedures. If you are unsure about what these are, or where to find them, ask your coordinator.

## Transitioning members out of MyTime

Parents can attend MyTime until their youngest child with additional needs turns 18. This age limit is set by our funders. Some parents will move on easily, while others may feel sadness, anxiety, or worry about the future.

You can support transitions by:

- letting parents know about the age limit when they first join
- encouraging members to build connections outside the group (for example, with other parents, service providers and the community) – genuine connections take time, so this should be an ongoing focus in your group
- suggesting links with parents who have already moved on (with permission)
- inviting guest speakers who focus on life with older children or young adults
- sharing resources and services relevant to teens and young adults.

If a parent is struggling with the idea of leaving, acknowledge their feelings while being clear about the program's requirements. Always talk to your coordinator for support.