

## Ellen Marks

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**From:** Engage.dss.gov.au <noreply@dss.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 31 January 2017 4:13 PM  
**To:** Ellen Marks  
**Subject:** [ID: 4232] Your submitted idea for the Try, Test and Learn Fund

Dear Ellen,

This is confirmation that your idea submitted to the Try, Test and Learn Fund has been received. We suggest you save this email for future reference.

**Submitted by:** Ellen Marks <ellen.marks@sfnsw.org.au>  
**Submission ID:** 4232  
**Contact:** Dr Ellen Marks

The Department will now review your submission and notify you about its eligibility within 10 business days. If your idea is found eligible it will be published on DSS Engage according to the preferences that you indicated in the submission form.

If you would like more information about this process, please consult the Try, Test and Learn Fund Handbook. If you have further questions email the Department at [investmentapproach@dss.gov.au](mailto:investmentapproach@dss.gov.au). Please do not reply to this email as it is sent from an unmonitored mailbox.

Below is a full copy of your submission.

### Agreement to terms and conditions

- Yes, I agree with the terms and conditions

### Are you submitting this idea on behalf of an organisation?

Yes

### Name of organisation

The Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW

### Your title

Dr

### Your given name

Ellen

### Your surname

Marks

### Position in organisation

General Manager Advocacy and Inclusion

### Address

Locked Bag 5014  
Gladesville, NSW 1675  
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Map It

**Contact email**

ellen.marks@sfnsw.org.au

**Contact number**

0466733507

**Question 1: Which priority group of the Try, Test and Learn Fund does your idea support?**

- Young carers

**Question 2: What need or issue are you trying to address?**

In Australia there are an estimated 2.7 million unpaid carers, with around 300 000, or 1 in 10 identified as young carers . Half of all young carers are school age at under 18 years old . The above statistics significantly underestimate the number of young carers by an estimated 75,000 people , which highlights the importance of identification of young carers. This may be due to a lack of awareness, stigma, a fear of repercussions and cultural beliefs. Early identification of carers and supportive holistic interventions will improve education outcomes (school completion), mental health and other socioeconomic outcomes for young carers.

**Question 3: What is your idea?**

Carer Youth Ambassadors and Mentors (CYAM)

The proposed CYAM initiative aims to take a peer led (by Youth Ambassadors and Mentors) approach to improving outcomes from young carers of those with a mental illness to intervene early through identification and engagement with young carers.

CYAM has two main delivery modes.

Firstly, Ambassadors aid identification and education of carers by delivering educational programs on mental illness and carers to students and teachers on school campuses. Secondly, CYAM will provide carer Mentors for one-on-one coaching which would include support for schooling, navigating the mental health system and career advice.

CYAM Ambassadors are well placed to identify young carers in school based programs as a result of their own experiences or passion. Ambassadors could be found within the schools themselves and trained and supported by CYAM, or provided by CYAM should the need arise. By using school-based Ambassadors, the costs of the program are contained and creates self-sufficiency, self-sustainability and self-dissemination of awareness.

Secondly, CYAM will provide carer Mentors for one-on-one coaching which would include support for schooling, navigating the mental health system and career advice. Mentors could be carers who have previously completed high school or those with a passion to improve the lives of others. Mentors are provided training and support by the CYAM program.

**Question 4: What makes your idea innovative, new or different?**

CYAM uses evidence-based approaches of peer led initiatives and applies this to to achieve early identification of carers for prevention of adverse outcomes that result from caring without support. This is supported by further interventions aimed at improving and enhancing school completion and career outcomes.

**Question 5: What hypothesis will your idea test?**

Early identification and intervention for young carers of those living with a mental illness improves school completion and mental health outcomes.

**Question 6a: 3 months' time**

By 3 months we have identified trial sites, recruited ambassadors and mentors to deliver the program.

**Question 6b: 6 months' time**

By 6 months, mentors and ambassadors have been trained and are delivering the CYAM program in schools across trial sites.

**Question 6c: 12 months' time**

We aim to have established a core group of mentors and ambassadors capable of training the future generations of CYAM workers. Expected outcomes include better RAS (wellbeing) scores for young carers and school completion rates.

**Question 6d: The longer term (around 2 to 5 years)**

We aim to have established a core group of mentors and continuous recruitment of ambassadors. Expected outcomes include better RAS (wellbeing) scores for young carers, school completion and employment rates.

**Question 8: Have you consulted with anyone in preparing this idea?**

SF NSW has consulted with internal governance structures including the Consumer Consultative Committee and the Carer Reference Group.

**Publishing your idea**

I am happy for my answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 to be published on DSS Engage

**I agree for DSS to publish the following on DSS Engage**

- Name of contact person: Yes
- State: Yes
- Email address: Yes
- Contact number: No

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