

MY SUPPORT MAP



Summary

My Support Map is an activity designed to assess young people's access to support and to monitor changes or growth in a young person's support network



Keywords

Activity
Cross sectional data (snapshot)
Longitudinal data (trend analysis)
Quantitative data (frequency data)
Monitoring



Participant Use



Participant Evaluation



Resources

Paper-based
1 facilitator
Whiteboard and markers
1 copy of blank support map and a pen for each participant



Group Activity



Time

Set up: N/A
Implementation: 10-15 minutes
Optional addition to activity: 15-30 minutes to develop list of support services
Analysis: 5 minutes per participant



Frequency of use

Periodically to assess changes in support over time – e.g. every 6 months



How to Use This Tool

Young people need access to support to help them cope with day-to-day issues they may face. Support can come from family and friends, peers, community members or support services. Youth who are at most risk of experiencing mental health problems, including depression and anxiety, may not have access to adequate support. Peer-based programs for young people play an important role in developing supportive peer relationships and increasing young people's knowledge of the support services they can access.

The overall aim of the *My Support Map* activity is to compare present levels of support to levels of support available to an individual prior to participating in a peer-based program. The tool can be used to capture changes or growth in a young person's support network and to identify individuals who at greater risk of mental health problems owing to inadequate support. The tool is also useful to assess young people's knowledge of available support services.

The *My Support Map* activity requires a facilitator. This can be an adult e.g. the program coordinator, or the activity can be peer-led i.e. a young person from the group who has been attending the group for some time facilitates the activity.

The *My Support Map* activity comprises Support Map 1 and Support Map 2. Support maps are retained by the program coordinator and kept confidential. Participants should be reassured that no other members of the group will see the maps and that everyone's maps will look different.

Support Map 1 should be completed early in the program and **Support Map 2** should be completed after young people have participated in the program. For ongoing programs, support map 2 should be completed after a period of 3-6 months.

Directions:

1. The facilitator goes through an example of a support map on the whiteboard. Directions are given to participants on how a support map should be filled in. The circle titled '**Immediate**' is where you write down the people or organisations that you rely on **most**. These individuals or services would be your first port of call if you needed help. The circle titled '**Secondary**' is where you write down **other** people and organisations that you also rely on. You may call on these individuals or services if your immediate sources of help were unavailable.
2. Group participants fill in their own support map showing their current support network. Maps should only include people and/or services they rely on for support or whom they have or would contact for support. The maps should not be a list of people or services they know of but have not used or would not use.
3. Optional addition to activity: Participants can be given a list of local support organisations as a memory aid when doing this activity (See **Example**). It is often difficult to remember support services you have used but may not have used recently. The list of organisations can be generated by the program coordinator or as a group activity. This optional addition to the *My Support Map* activity has several advantages:
 - a. Opportunity to increase young people's knowledge of local support services they may not have been aware of previously

- b. Opportunity for young people to hear their peers' experiences of using particular support services.



Suggested Uses

The *My Support Map* activity is a simple way for young people to identify the immediate and secondary sources of support available to them. Reflecting on their personal maps can also be a positive experience for young people to realise that they are not alone and help is available.

By comparing Support Map 1 with Support Map 2 for each individual, program staff can identify changes or growth in a young person's support network since participating in the program.

The activity is particularly good for young people who may not feel comfortable participating in group discussions or who do not enjoy completing survey tools. The activity can be completed silently and alone while still providing a useful opportunity for young people to reflect on who they would rely on if they faced a problem.



Complementary Tools

The *What if...? Scenarios* activity is another useful activity to assess knowledge of support services and/or to increase knowledge of available support.



Implementation Tips

- **WARNING:** for some young people, participating in the *My Support Map* activity can be very confronting since they may realise that they do not have much support and they may feel very isolated. Even those completing Support Map 2, whose support networks may now be adequate, may feel anxious since the activity brings back memories of a period when they felt more isolated and alone
- This activity is also not recommended for very new members to a group since coming to a group can be daunting enough without having to participate in evaluation activities which highlight feelings of isolation.
- It is important to stress to participants when completing their support maps that the **quality of support** is most important and having one really close friend or family member you can rely on may be quite adequate for some people while others rely on a range of people and support services. Participants should not feel their support network is less adequate than someone else's just because they have fewer people or services listed.



Links

[My Support Map](#)

[What if...? Scenarios](#)



MY-PEER USER GUIDE

toolkit ^[1.0]



The My-Peer Toolkit [1.0] was developed by [Western Australian Centre for Health Promotion Research](#) and is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 2.5 Australia License](#). It can be accessed at www.mypeer.org.au.



MY SUPPORT MAP

Directions

1. Please write your name on each map. Your maps will only be seen by the program coordinator. They will not be seen by any other member of the group.
2. The circle titled '**Immediate**' is where you write down the people or organisations that you rely on **most**. These individuals or services would be your first port of call if you needed help.

Note: It is up to you whether you name individuals. If you do name people, please write in brackets their relationship to you e.g. Tara (friend), Alex (partner). If you prefer, you can just write friend, brother, sister, mum etc without naming anyone

3. The circle titled '**Secondary**' is where you write down **other** people and organisations that you also rely on. You may call on these individuals or services if your immediate sources of help were unavailable.



Remember - Every person's map will look different

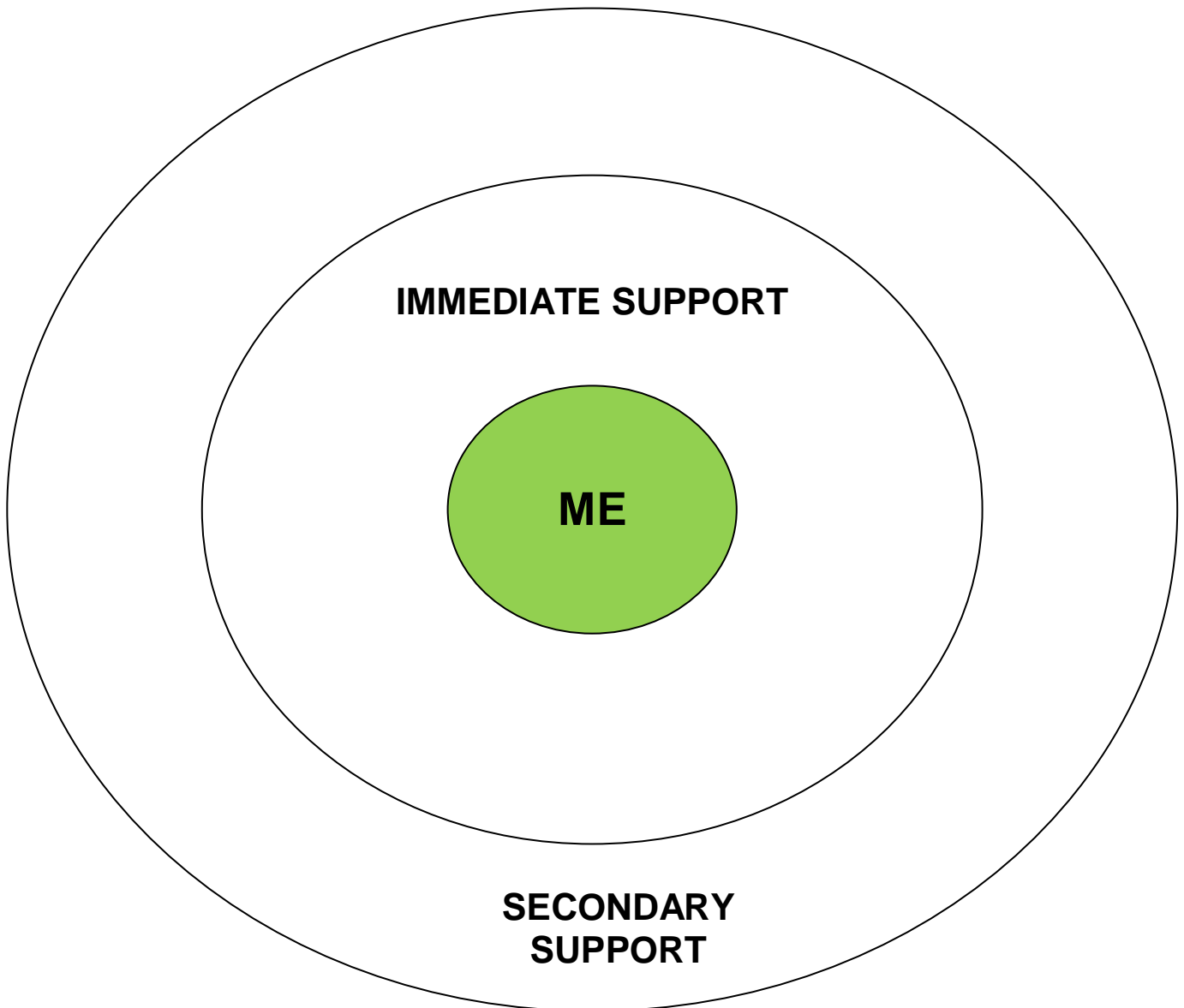
MY SUPPORT MAP - 1

Name: _____

I think my level of support is currently

Adequate Why? _____

Not adequate Why? _____



MY SUPPORT MAP - 2

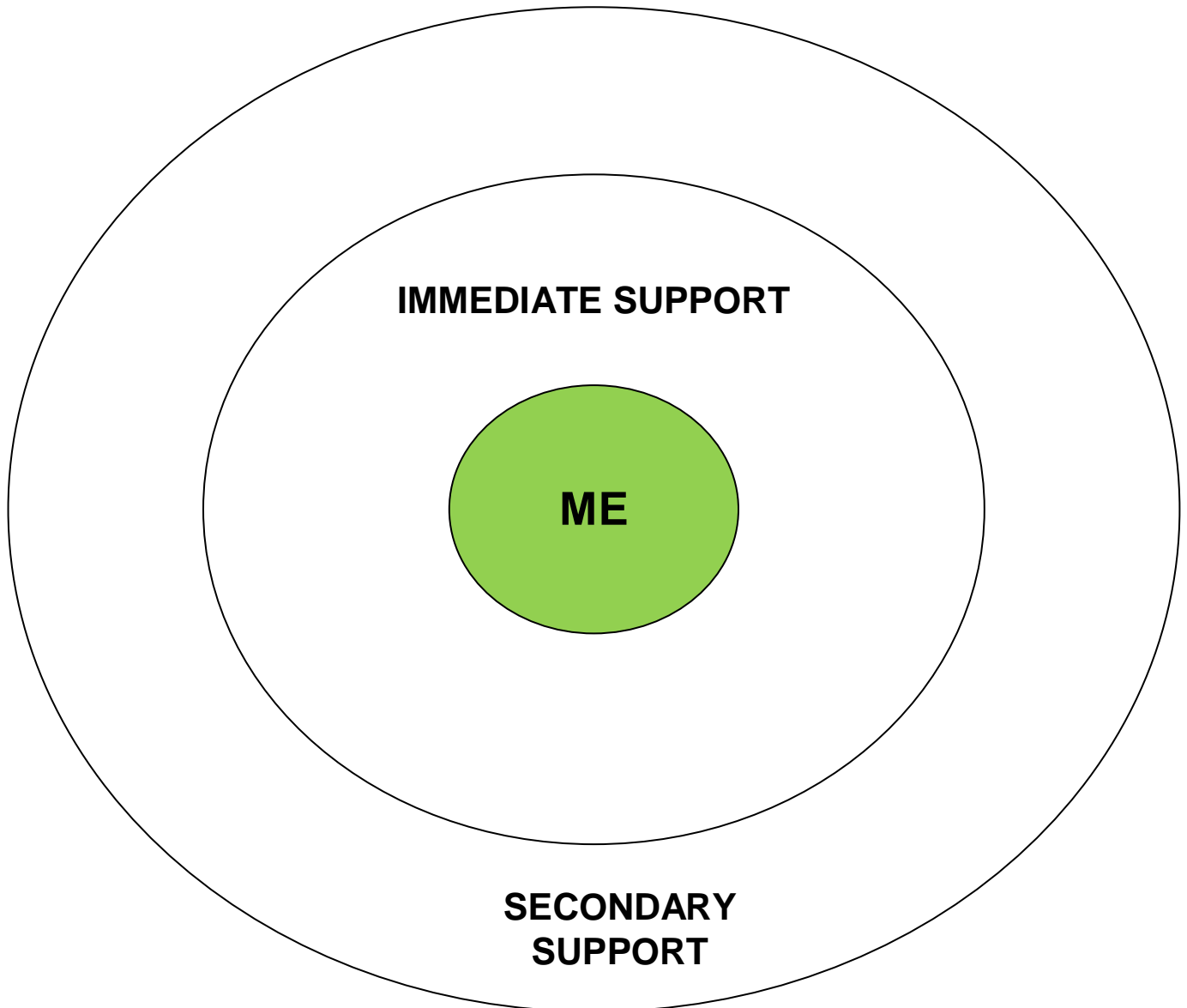
Name: _____

I think my level of support is:

Adequate Why? _____

Not adequate Why? _____

Comment on any changes in support since joining program



LIST OF SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS FOR YOUNG PARENTS IN CITY OF ROCKINGHAM

Educational	REYP (Rockingham Educating Young Parents) HIPPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) program
Emotional & Psychological Support	Rockingham Outreach and Counselling Youth Service (ROCYS) Cockburn Youth Centre Station Youth Centre Psychologist/psychiatrist Relationships Australia
Financial Support	CentreLink Legal Aid
Medical Support	Australian Breastfeeding Association Doctor Hospital Child Health Nurse Health Centre After Hours Clinic Poisons Hotline Child Health Services
Alcohol & other Drugs	Next Step
Social	YPAVE Facebook
Health and Parenting	Ngala Curtin Midwifery Program Kwinana Early Years Services (KEYS) South Coastal Women's Health Service Best Beginnings Waikiki Community and Family Centre Kwinana Reaquatic
Legal	Community Services (formerly DoCS) SCALES
Research	Curtin University My-Peer Project ECU Psychology Department