

School-community partnership awards



by National Australia Bank

National awards program, NAB Schools First has announced a total of \$1.3 million in awards to be granted to 35 school-community partnerships throughout NSW.

NAB Schools First is a partnership between NAB, the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) and Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) that rewards outstanding school-community partnerships that lead to improved student outcomes.

Head of Education, NAB, Rebecca Sherwill said the quality of this year's applicants was outstanding. "NAB Schools First received 863 applications from truly inspiring school-community partnerships around the country. The quality of these partnerships, their originality and their ability to address their specific students' needs and opportunities is outstanding – making it difficult for our judges to select this year's winners," said Sherwill.

There are two awards categories: Impact Awards of \$50,000 are allocated to schools whose community partnerships are already having a demonstrated impact on students, whilst Seed Funding Awards of \$25,000 are granted to schools that are in the early stages of their community partnership. Of winning schools in NSW, 17 received Impact Awards and 18 received Seed Funding Awards.

Student Award

A new Student Award category was introduced this year to empower students to build and implement their own school-community partnership. The award provides students with the opportunity to own and nurture an idea that will positively impact their peers. In 2011, five awards were available across

YAPA support for youth workers in schools

Earlier this year, the Australian Government expanded the school chaplaincy funding program to become the **National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program** which now includes "Student Welfare Workers" (ie. youth workers) in schools.

YAPA has long supported youth workers having a significant role in schools, and so we are providing information to help services to partner with schools and apply for funding.

Over recent weeks the department has been making more information available, so go to this address for the latest details: www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NSCSWP/Pages/Expansion.aspx

YAPA has written a fact sheet to help youth services – see link on our homepage www.yapa.org.au.

YAPA also has two other fact sheets which, while not specific to this funding program, may be of use:

- www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/facts/schoolpartnerships.php
- www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/facts/workingwithschools.php

YAPA is also happy to field queries from youth services. Please email Dean Williamson on policy2@yapa.org.au.

Australia. Winners received \$2,000 towards their partnership idea as well as mentoring and support from a range of industry professionals.

One student entry from NSW was successful: Ali Amood and Adam Alahmad from Granville Boys High School. Ali and Adam's idea is to open a café in the mornings before school starts and provide healthy food for students in a

(continued on page 16)

December 2011 - January 2012

- 2 News
- 4 Useful things
- 5 Your headspace keeps expanding
- 6 Are teenage sexters *sex offenders*?
- 7 Youth councils get together in Macarthur
- 9 StreetWork on the northside - rough times in the leafy parts of Sydney
- 10 Work and Development Orders – the lucky break your client has been waiting for?
- 11 THOUGHTPICS from Peter Slattery
- 11 Drama in youthwork
- 13 Tightrope walking in the twilight zone: Ethics in youth work
- 19 What's on for youth workers
- 20 YAPA Latest

News

More news

Lots more news and links to full stories at yapa.org.au/youthwork/news.php

Take the love test: chlamydia epidemic alert as new cases soar

When romance blooms, young couples should seek a chlamydia test, given an epidemic of the insidious disease among young Australians, says an expert in sexual infections, Associate Professor David Wilson. New cases of the easily-transmissible infection, which can leave women infertile years later, rose by 17% last year to 74,000, a "very concerning" trend Professor Wilson says. He advises couples beginning an intimate relationship to discuss their sexual history and to have a doctor prescribe a chlamydia test ... smh.com.au 27/9/11 [click here](#) / [google headline](#) for more

However, AYAC is still calling on the government to reform the Student Income Support system which at present sees young people on allowances receiving only \$34 a day compared to pensioners who receive \$53 a day. AYAC wants the government to increase allowance rates to reflect real living costs and to be on par with pensions. We believe in a system that treats young people with similar needs and living costs in a fair and consistent way, and ensures that all Australians, regardless of age and circumstance, have the financial capacity to attain a decent basic standard of living according to contemporary community norms. – Australian Youth Affairs Coalition Newsletter 29/9/11 www.ayac.org.au

Community views sought on laws for child offenders

NSW Attorney General Greg Smith has invited public comment on whether changes are needed to key laws for juvenile offenders. "The review will determine whether the laws are effective and consistent with the NSW Government's commitment to reducing recidivism among young offenders," Mr Smith said. "It is also important that the laws are in line with community standards and I encourage members of the public, including victims of crime, to have their say." The consultation paper is available at: www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lpd. Submissions can be sent to lpd_enquiries@agd.nsw.gov.au by 9 December 2011.

It's not all easy street on north shore

Youth homelessness on Sydney's affluent north shore might be a hidden problem, but it is one that some councils say appears to be getting worse. "It's hard to get accurate statistics on local youth homelessness because the problem often goes unreported," the Ku-ring-gai mayor, Jennifer Anderson, said. "Our staff report that the number of young homeless people in Ku-ring-gai has risen significantly in recent years."

James Fry, a counsellor at Mission Australia's family support service in Hornsby, said there had been a notable increase recently in legal conflicts between teenagers and their parents - a leading cause of youth homelessness. "I have certainly seen a jump at the courts in the amount of matters being heard regarding conflict between teenagers and their parents. For example, at tomorrow's children's court there will be approximately 15 child-parent AVO matters," he said.

Changes to Youth Allowance

AYAC congratulates the Australian Government for its recent announcement of their \$265 million Youth Allowance bill, that allows more students from regional communities to get financial assistance. We commend the change that will remove the discrimination faced by students living in inner regional areas who needed the independent rate of youth allowance for their studies just as much as those from outer regional and remote areas. AYAC is also pleased to see an increase in relocation scholarships for students needing to move away from home to access tertiary education. Many of the changes in the new bill were called for in AYAC's submission to the government's Review of Student Income Reforms in April this year.

Dominic van Gestel, an area manager for juvenile justice, said the number of northern beaches teenagers entering the system in recent months was far higher than usual. A total 6% of teenagers were homeless when they entered the system and more than a quarter had moved more than twice in the past six months. Mr Van Gestel said there were very few services for at-risk youth on the north shore. "There's almost a social view that it's such an affluent area there's no need for those services," he said. "I'd suggest ... it's actually quite the opposite." ... smh.com.au 9/9/11 [click here](#) / [google headline](#) for more

yaprap

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Opinions are the authors' and not necessarily YAPA's

Editor: Nick Manning

Contributions welcome from youth workers and others.

Email info@yapa.org.au or phone YAPA.

Deadlines:

12 December, 27 February



Disadvantaged families need greater support to reduce juvenile offending

UnitingCare Burnside has commended the call by NSW Attorney General and Minister for Justice, Greg Smith, for greater support for disadvantaged families to reduce juvenile offending. Mr Smith addressed a juvenile justice public forum recently, chaired by UnitingCare Children, Young People and Families Director Social Justice, Karen Bevan. In a wide-ranging speech and subsequent Q&A session, the Attorney General said there was a need to address unrealistic bail conditions and reduce intensive bail check-ups on young people by police where they weren't constructive.

With over 6,000 young people on remand last year – a figure that has doubled since 2007 – Mr Smith also addressed the need to reform the Bail Act 1978 to make it simpler to understand and to reduce the number of young people held on remand.

However, the key to the Attorney General's speech was the need to better support disadvantaged families and children. Ms Bevan agreed that the over-representation of vulnerable groups in the juvenile justice population points to the need to support communities through early-intervention and prevention programs. "The Noetic Report, commissioned then mostly rejected by the previous government, recommends the use of Justice Reinvestment to reduce both the costs of the juvenile justice system and the number of young people entering the system," said Ms Bevan. "Last night, we heard promising signs from the Attorney General that the Noetic Report is being relooked at as part of the Department of Juvenile Justice review 'Youth on Track'." - UnitingCare Burnside 2/11/11

Vocational study no substitute for HSC

STUDENTS who take certificate training as an alternative to year 12 are worse off than their peers who get better results and have better work options, states a study of young people. If governments push vocational education as a viable alternative to final year study, it should be no less than a Certificate III, the study by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research found. The report, *The Vocational Equivalent to Year 12*, concluded there was

no true comparison between the HSC (and its national equivalent) and certificate training and that a Certificate II did not measure up... smh.com.au 21/9/11 [click here](#) / [google headline](#) for more

Zero Tolerance

When a small group of Blue Mountains residents delivered a case of books to State Parliament in October, they left Macquarie



BMSAC mural, Kmart carpark.
Photo © Peter Adams 2011



© Bec, 'Lucid', 2009

Street hoping the reading material might just change government policy on graffiti. "The state's current zero tolerance strategy has been soberingly unsuccessful in relation to young people" said book co-author and youth worker Jarrod Wheatley. The book, *Zero Tolerance*, puts the case for a different strategy that places the emphasis on working with graffiti artists to provide legal avenues for their work. It examines the work of the Blue Mountains Street Art Collaborative (BMSAC), an artists' collective founded in 2008 by Mountains Youth Services Team to engage young street artists and graffiti writers in large scale public and private artworks. [Blue Mountains Review Oct 2011] More:

- Blue Mountains Street Art Collaborative: www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/stories/bmsac.php
- *Zero Tolerance* book – view online or buy: www.bmsac.org.au
- Interview with Peter Adams, *Zero Tolerance* photographer, & Damian Cooper, Mountains Youth Services Team, on 10 News with George Negus - [click here](#) or search Youtube for "6.30 - Art or vandalism?"

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News

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Job Services Australia

A new research piece by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, *Swimming Upstream: Young People and Service Provision Under Job Services Australia*, considers the provision of employment services to vulnerable or disadvantaged young people under the Job Services Australia program. The report confirms the importance of generalist and

specialised youth JSA providers adopting best practice when working with young people. It also recommends that the JSA program recognise more strongly the social and non-vocational outcomes achieved for vulnerable young people by JSA providers, and that providers be encouraged to adopt a flexible, integrated and individualised approach to supporting vulnerable youth.

Source: www.yacvic.org.au

More useful things

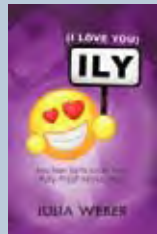
Lots more useful things for youth workers at www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/useful.php

Useful things

What is a youth service? (guide for migrant families)

What is a youth service? A guide for families who have migrated to Australia (2 page PDF) in English. Translations into community languages will be available in the future. www.myan.org.au/nsw/information-resources/

ILY (I Love You): One Teen Girl's Guide to a Bully-Proof Adolescence



OK - so picture this. You're at home in front of the mirror. Telling yourself exactly what you think of yourself. Too fat. Too pasty. Too little. And that's just your little finger you're looking at. You don't even think of paying yourself one

single compliment. Are you your own worst enemy?

Enter the bully - she can pick you in a moment. She knows she can take a shot at you and you'll fall down in a heap, and you know why? Because she's actually on your side, she's picking you to pieces in the same way that you treat yourself.

There's really only one lasting solution to the bullying nightmare. You've gotta learn to ILY yourself and understand that it's not your problem. ILY is short for I LOVE YOU, and this self-help book for teen girls teaches the importance of loving yourself and others so you can be happy in the teenage years.

14 year-old Australian teenager Julia Weber knows only too well what it's like to be bullied, both in person and via

cyberspace. She has become an anti-bullying campaigner and now fills the pages of ILY with heart-warming, witty and practical advice for teen girls about everything from bullying and low self esteem to gratitude and forgiveness. Julia uses affirmations from the world's most famous self help author Louise L Hay, writing teen translations of her words which are fresh and relevant. She speaks at conferences, participates in research and is part of a youth advisory panel which advises on counselling services for young people. Book: www.booktopia.com.au, Facebook: "ILY by Julia Weber"

haveawebsite.com.au

My name is Phillip Havea and I used to be a youth worker at Belmore Youth Resource Centre. Recently I started a social enterprise with the aim of helping individuals and organisations in the community sector get online at minimal cost and fuss. We have just started the organisation and because of my links to the youth sector I thought I would give them the first opportunity to benefit.

Through my work at the centre, I started to see the importance of having an online presence to engage young people, workers and organisations especially through social networking. We understand that in the community sector two things are scarce, funding and time. We set you up online at a highly reduced cost compared to commercial web developers and save you time by showing you how to use it effectively whilst supporting you along the way. If you would like to find out more you can contact me or visit our website. It would be greatly appreciated if you could distribute this through your networks.

- Phil, phil@haveawebsite.com.au, 0466 375 519. www.haveawebsite.com.au

15 new headspace centres, plus eheadspace

The establishment of 15 new headspace centres around Australia will give thousands more young Australians the help they need to overcome anxiety, depression and other conditions affecting their mental wellbeing. To inform the placement of centres, extensive investigations have been done to identify the areas of greatest need across Australia.

The locations are:

- **NSW:** Tamworth, Lower Hunter, Port Macquarie, Sydney Outer West and Blue Mountains (Penrith), Northern Suburbs of Sydney
- **Victoria** - Shepparton, South East (Dandenong), Outer East (Ringwood/Knox), Ballarat
- **Queensland** - Mackay, Ipswich, Sunshine Coast
- **Western Australia** - Bunbury, Perth North East
- **South Australia** - Upper Spencer Gulf.
- In addition, two outpost services, overseen by existing headspace centres, will be established at Mt Isa (**QLD**) and Burnie/Devonport (**TAS**).

The new headspace centres will open in 2013 and will bring the total number of headspace centres to 55. The new centres are part of the \$197 million funding commitment for headspace announced in the May Federal Budget. There are currently 30 headspace centres operating across Australia with a further 10 to open in early 2012.

The establishment by headspace of a comprehensive online and telephone counselling service, eheadspace, which begins as a 24-hour service today, further boosts coverage to young Australians.

Determining the location of the new headspace centres is based on several considerations to ensure that headspace delivers services in the areas of greatest need. They include: the distance from existing headspace centres; the number of young people in the area; population growth; social and economic disadvantage; accessibility of the location and the readiness of the location to set up a headspace centre.

NSW details

- **Sydney - Northern Suburbs:** The northern suburbs of Sydney, including Hornsby, have one of the largest youth populations (over 65,000) in New South Wales that does not already have a headspace centre. There is currently no headspace centre in Northern Metropolitan Sydney. Strong community and stakeholder advocacy and for a new

eheadspace

eheadspace is a confidential, free, anonymous, secure space where you can chat, email or speak with qualified youth mental health professionals if you are 12 to 25 years and:

- want to chat about what's going on in your life
- need advice
- are worried about your mental health or feeling depressed or anxious
- are feeling isolated or alone
- are worried about your drug and/or alcohol use
- are worried about a friend or a family member
- online support is available seven days a week from 1pm to 1am (AEST), you can email at anytime or you can call eheadspace from 10pm to 1pm (AEST).

www.eheadspace.org.au or 1800 650 890

centre in the Northern Sydney region indicates a healthy readiness to proceed with establishing a centre.

- **Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains (Penrith):** This region, which is centred around Penrith, has a youth population of over 58,000 and is subject to significant disadvantage. It is an area of anticipated high demand for a headspace centre. This headspace centre will complement the Mt Druiitt and Parramatta centres.
- **Newcastle (Lower Hunter):** Newcastle is a major regional centre with high need for a youth mental services. With a youth population of well over 50,000 and significant pockets of disadvantage. It is 30km from an existing centre in the smaller centre of Maitland (youth population 12,000) which will provide opportunities for collaboration.
- **Port Macquarie** has a youth population of 11,000 and it is over three hours travel to the closest existing headspace centre (located at Coffs Harbour). There are pockets of disadvantage and evidence of local capacity to hit the ground running. Port Macquarie is clearly a priority location for a headspace centre.
- The **Tamworth** region, including Gunnedah, has a youth population of over 14,000. It is over three hours travel time to the closest headspace centre and has pockets of significant disadvantage. This makes Tamworth a logical candidate for a headspace centre.



by headspace, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation
www.headspace.org.au

There's no shame in teenage sextual relations



by Nina Funnell

Nina Funnell is a contributing author to Big Porn Inc, published by Spinifex Press, and a board member of the NSW Rape Crisis Centre. These are her personal views. This article was first published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 10/9/11.

Two teenage "sexters" were recently reported to have been charged and prosecuted with child pornography offences and placed on the sex offender register in Victoria, branding them criminals and ruining their career prospects.

Under Australian national law, teenagers under age 18 who consensually photograph and send images of their own bodies in nude, sexualised poses can be charged with production and distribution of child pornography. Anyone to whom they send those images can be charged with possession of child pornography, even if the sender of the image intended for them to have it.

In NSW the age of consent is 16. This means a 17-year-old girl can legally have sex with her boyfriend (or girlfriend) but if she films it, or if she photographs her own breasts and sends that image to her partner, she can be prosecuted under Australian national law. Understandably teenagers find it difficult to comprehend this legal inconsistency and there are some serious questions to be raised.

How can a person be charged for photographing their own body? And how can they be considered both the victim and the perpetrator of the same crime? This seems about as logical as charging a 15-year-old boy who masturbates with "molestation of a child" and ordering him to stay 500 metres away from his own genitals.

More to the point, child pornography laws were put in place to protect children, not to criminalise teenage sexuality. And what good can come from grouping sexually curious teenagers in with convicted gang rapists and paedophiles? Not only does this ruin their lives unnecessarily, but it also undermines the power and authority of the sex offender register. We must preserve the integrity of this register by reserving it for individuals who pose an actual threat to society.

Of course, if images are produced without consent (such as in the Australian Defence Force Academy Skype scandal, where a female cadet was filmed unknowingly during sex) or if images are distributed without consent to third parties, this should be treated as an unlawful act. And it should be unlawful regardless of the victim's age. But in acts of agreed, consensual sexting where images do not go beyond the

intended recipient, it is overkill to prosecute these teens.

Victoria has already announced an inquiry into the laws, and NSW and all other states and territories should follow suit. Part of this inquiry should also address why it is that no accurate data has been kept on how many teenagers have been placed on the sex offender register in relation to sexting offences. It should also address the radical inconsistency in sentencing.

Right now the courts are continuing to crack down on consenting teenage sexters while simultaneously going easy on adult sexual predators who film women and girls without their consent. Last month it was reported that a Sydney man who secretly filmed up the skirts of hundreds of women and girls would avoid jail. Sabapathy Chandrahasan, a 56-year-old architect, was arrested by police at Central Station after taking more than 1000 pictures and videos up women's skirts. Some of the footage contained women who were not wearing underwear and other pieces involved schoolgirls, some of whom were under 16. And yet the magistrate handed down a suspended sentence, meaning that Chandrahasan will avoid jail time and it is unclear whether he will be required to register as a sex offender.

How the law can be so draconian when it comes to consensual teenage sexting and so lenient in matters of non-consensual, perverted upskirting is breathtakingly absurd.

But other institutions can be equally guilty of failing to distinguish between acts that pose little harm, and those that represent serious threats. The Herald reported last week on an incident where a hidden camera was found in the change room of an unnamed Sydney private school. Shockingly, the school did not pursue the matter with police because it "didn't want the disclosure". In other words, it decided to hush up the incident to save some public embarrassment. Not only is this in direct contradiction of the school's obligations as mandatory reporter, but the principal may have inadvertently colluded with a potential child pornographer by failing to report the crime.

The common sense test in all of this should be to look at the issue of consent. Where it is lacking we should take action.

Social media research

Are you aged 12-20 and have an opinion about social media? Do you think the media overreacts to sexting and Facebook scandals, or are there serious risks young people should know about? Where do you stand? If you're interested in sharing your opinion, Nina Funnell is researching an important new book about young people and social media. If you'd like to be interviewed by phone, email or in person please contact her at ninafunnell@gmail.com.

Rep-Resent Macarthur



by Jodie Grundy
Community Project Officer
- Youth
Camden Council

The Macarthur Youth Services Network (MYSN) organised a Regional Youth Advisory Group Forum with local young people and Youth Advisory Groups from across the Macarthur region. This one day forum was held on a Saturday in October 2011 at the Campbelltown Arts Centre.

20 young people participated, from Youth Advisory Groups, Reference Groups, Youth Councils and Subcommittees from the Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee local government areas. Campbelltown Council's Youth Advisory Subcommittee, Camden Youth Council (CYC), Wollondilly Youth Advisory Committee (or "Dilly YAC" as they are known), Wingecarribee Youth Advisory Committee, Macarthur Diversity Services CALD Youth Group and Youth Solutions Youth Advisory Group all presented information to each other about the types of events and projects they run in their local communities. Each group presented information about the impact they make on other young people and youth issues at a local level. They also participated in networking activities where the young people became inspired and empowered by each other.

The day also featured guest speaker, Travis Holland. Travis was one of the founding members of the Wingecarribee Youth Advisory Committee and was an active member and Chair of the NSW Youth Advisory Council. Travis talked about his experiences of being

on the NSW Youth Advisory Council and how his experience changed his life and provided him with opportunities that he thought wouldn't ever come his way. He also offered tips and advice to other young people who were thinking about representing their communities at a higher level or within politics.

In addition to having Travis as our guest speaker, Primitive facilitated an awesome drumming workshop that focused on leadership and the concept of team development. This workshop allowed young people to understand and engage in the concept of team building and creation through African drumming rhythms and beat within a group environment. The young people had so much fun doing this, as it created a relaxed, informal and comfortable environment whilst achieving outcomes.

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Rep-Resent Macarthur

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We have already scheduled in our next Regional Youth Advisory Group Forum meeting – we will be holding an event like this at least once a year. Our next big event will take place during Youth Week 2012 and the young people are looking at inviting State and Federal Members of Parliament, local Mayors and Councillors as well as local media to highlight the positive contributions that young people make in their local communities. This event will also look at developing a 12 month regional action plan for youth events and projects across the Macarthur-Wingecarribee regions.

Overall, the forum was a fantastic and highly positive experience for everyone involved. When it came down to expenses, it was great because with so many services and Councils getting on board, the costs became minimal as they were shared amongst the group. Our regional peak community service organisation, Sector Connect, supported the organisers, MYSN's Communication and Participation working group, which was a huge plus for us.

The value of something like this is just amazing – the impact that it has on young people as a group and individually is incredible.



StreetWork on the northside



Sydney's north shore is affluent, leafy, green and quiet. Nothing much happens there. Although in recent times the community has been protesting over the building of unit blocks that have been replacing the valuable heritage homes. Sydney's northern beaches are absolutely beautiful and lend themselves to a 'Summer Bay' lifestyle of surfing after school and hanging around the surf club. For some young people it's an idyllic place to call home.

However, hidden in the community is what some think a growing problem with disaffected young people who are at risk of homelessness and drug and alcohol abuse. StreetWork, a local charity, has been working for over 30 years with young people who are part of the underground, the ones that get overlooked. It is a non-denominational Christian charity which helps at risk 11-to 18- years-olds in the local government areas of Willoughby, North Sydney, Lane Cove, Ku-ring-gai, Hornsby, Manly, Warringah and Pittwater.

The founder of StreetWork, Peter Hobbs, knows the local youth issues and when he founded StreetWork he used to walk the mall to talk to young people who hung out there. Hobbs was doing the streetwork that many youth services don't have the money to do. The term streetwork refers to youth workers meeting young people in public spaces. It's this type of youth work that has helped many young people who aren't receiving any services. And in Sydney's wealthy north it appears that organisations such as StreetWork are in demand. Jennifer Anderson, Mayor of Ku-ring-gai said "Our staff report that the number of young homeless people in Ku-ring-gai has risen significantly in recent years. Our area certainly isn't immune to the impacts of issues such as family breakdown and drug and alcohol abuse". This comment is also supported by Department of Juvenile Justice Area Manager

Dominic van Gestel (both recently quoted in the Sydney Morning Herald).

StreetWork has got a lot bigger since its humble beginnings. It appears to have kept its heart with youth workers still doing outreach work such as hanging out at the mall, juvenile advocacy and responding 24/7 to youth involved in crisis situations. It still provides case management through the Kickstart mentoring program as well as parent and carer support. However, it has developed skills in building programs such as air and soul graffiti art workshops, gym and fitness, streetstylz dance program, bean me up coffee skills program, and Street Duke of Edinburgh – an innovative, street-based application of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, customised for young people living in difficult circumstances.

So, in a nutshell StreetWork is now able to work intensively with young people instead of having to refer them to other organisations.

I sat in on the informative presentation the CEO, Andrew Crawford and Youth Case Worker Penny Dalgleish gave at the recent YAPA youthwork conference. They spoke about the importance of taking the time to build relationships with young people before any program work begins. I wondered how they did this when some government funding does not give projects enough time to do the relationship-building work with young people. Andrew said that because StreetWork relies heavily on funding from the local community it does give them more flexibility to invest the time in building one on one relationships with young people. And it sounds like they have been doing a good job with such successful outcomes such over 85% of young people completing the Kickstart mentoring program.

With all the hidden youth problems on the north shore and northern beaches it's great to see an organisation such as StreetWork doing the crisis work as well as the program work for young people. The concept of streetwork is often overlooked by governments wanting to fund outcomes-based programs. The organisation StreetWork has kept its soul by simply going to where young people are and finding the homeless and disaffected youth and building the relationships that young people are crying out for.

Due to the growing number of young people accessing StreetWork programs they are currently seeking more volunteers. So, check out their website or email Amber Davies if you're interested in volunteering.



by Isabel Seidel
yaprap Feature Writer



More:

- streetwork.org.au
- Amber Davies, Team Leader, 02 9419 7559 or amberd@streetwork.org.au
- StreetWork Kickstart – [yaprap](http://yaprap.com.au) April 2008 – www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/stories/kickstart.php
- It's not all easy street on the north shore – smh.com.au 9/9/11

Work and Development Orders: The lucky break your client has been waiting for?



by Francesca Ciantar
Solicitor
Legal Aid NSW

This WDO changed my life mate (laughs). No seriously, it did...the WDO opened a door and it had a ripple effect. I owe so much to it.

The story of the client who has accumulated consecutive fines with the SDRO, who is then hounded and further penalised, is a familiar one for youth workers.

Many young people would fall into a pattern of accumulating fines, reoffending, court appearances, loss of license and other associated legal issues. The system inadvertently punished those who couldn't pay up, regardless of their circumstances.

The WDO scheme was established by the NSW Government as a trial in 2009 in response to this familiar story: the high levels of entrenched debt amongst disadvantaged people, particularly young people.

In July this year WDOs were made permanent. Legal Aid NSW and Aboriginal Legal Services NSW/ACT (ALS) also received funding to employ staff to assist clients and organisations to get involved with the Scheme.

A Work and Development Order (WDO) is an order made by the State Debt Recovery Office (SDRO) that allows eligible young people or adults to reduce or eliminate fines debt by doing voluntary unpaid work, certain courses, or treatment plans. An 'eligible person' is a person who is having difficulty paying their fines because they are homeless, suffering from economic hardship, mental illness, intellectual disability or cognitive impairment.

As a youth worker, you can help your client apply for a WDO.

If your client wishes to undertake voluntary unpaid work, participate in training or treatment as part of a WDO, they will need to be supervised by an 'approved organisation'. Some charities, health providers and training organisations have already registered to be approved organisations.

If it is not already registered, you could encourage your organisation to become an approved organisation. Otherwise you could suggest your client is supervised by another organisation in your region.

By participating in the WDO scheme, clients can reduce and erase debt whilst fulfilling a positive function: engaging in voluntary work within their community or undergoing drug, alcohol or financial counselling.

The feedback from clients who have participated has been very positive:

The fine and debt and my criminal record made me feel like a failure... I never smiled for years mate. Now I can move on. I want to be in love - have a beautiful life. The WDO gives me a clean slate, the ability to be normal again. So can you tell them "thank you very much" from me? I can start again, no strings attached. This is the best opportunity I've got to be somebody without problems.

'Approved organisations' have also been positive about the WDO scheme. Many service providers felt as helpless as their clients in the face of exponential debt: they had few helpful options to offer clients with entrenched debt.

WDOs offer service providers a positive and effective solution for their eligible clients. Furthermore, the WDO scheme can provide excellent leverage for obtaining commitment to rehabilitative treatment programs from otherwise reluctant clients.

As one health care worker said:

WDOs are the most concrete and effective way of getting compliance with treatment that I have seen. There is nothing like it. Clients get quite excited about it.

Legal Aid NSW will employ civil lawyers in **Coffs Harbour, Orange, Wollongong** and **Liverpool** to increase outreach services to clients with fine debt. These lawyers will be available to assist clients and organisations interested in WDOs.

As part of this initiative Legal Aid NSW lawyers will be running community legal education sessions for organisations interested in applying to be 'approved providers' of WDOs. If you are interested in hearing more about the scheme call Andrew Taylor, Solicitor at Legal Aid NSW, on 02 9219 5809 or email us at WDO@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.

Free legal advice on fines is available at your nearest Legal Aid NSW - www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au.

Reference: Rintoul D (2011) Now I can move on: the impact of accumulated fine debt and the Work and Development Order scheme on disadvantaged people, University of Wollongong for the NSW Department of Justice and Attorney General, April 2011. (Quotes above are from page 16, page 15, & page 22)

THOUGHTPICS



It's hard not to like THOUGHTPICS. It's a creative multimedia group work resource created by Peter Slattery, a well-known youth therapist and educator based in Sydney. THOUGHTPICS are images that are set to music. There are five THOUGHTPICS and each one has a different theme:

1. **Faces:** what lives have others led? And what can I learn from them?
2. **A Place to be:** What signs in my life should I be paying attention to?
3. **Relationships:** What do I value in relationships?
4. **Signs of Life:** What signs in my life should I be paying attention to?
5. **Symbols:** What might represent my life?

The aim of THOUGHTPICS is to quickly capture people's hearts and minds and help them connect with a topic. Peter has used some very powerful images and thoughtfully matched just

the right music to grab your attention. Each THOUGHTPIC comes with activities, questions and worksheets to help you explore each topic. But what's really great about this resource is that once you've become familiar with the images you can use it in any way you want. The images are short and are created with minimal text on the screen and they unfold quickly or slowly depending on the topic.

This flexibility is a great strength of this resource and encourages you to be as creative as you want. It's hard to find a weakness in such a creative and fun resource. But I guess it won't be for everyone. I reckon some people just won't relate to the images given that most of us have a preference in the way we take in information eg. visually, through listening or through diagrams. To Peter's credit he recognises this and offers ways to work with people who don't get anything out of the images. However I do think if you're not an experienced group work facilitator it might be hard to pull off.

Peter has included a special section in the resource for schools. This is fantastic. And comes at a great time when the role of youth workers in schools is being promoted. There are endless possibilities on how THOUGHTPICS may be used. So, the next opportunity you have to run a group, let yourself have fun with this resource. I'd highly recommend purchasing the whole series of THOUGHTPICS.



by Isabel Seidel
yaprap Feature Writer

More:

You can buy THOUGHTPICS individually or the set of 5. Each THOUGHTPIC includes a high resolution mp4 video file (1 to 5 minutes long), and PDF written material that includes a series of activities, discussion questions and worksheets.

www.peterslattery.com
petersla@zip.com.au

Drama in youthwork

Hi my name is Alex and I'm an actor. I even have a degree in it and everything. No you probably haven't seen me in anything. What am I doing writing this, you might ask? Well, I'm also finishing my youth work study at TAFE and working with young people in high schools as a facilitator for *Links to Learning*, a program that aims to help students at risk of dropping out to connect in with their education.

This is an article about why drama can be powerful in youth work and I am writing it because the two disciplines can complement each other amazingly well. In my work with young people I have tackled issues such as bullying, violence and self esteem using drama as a tool.

Even I was surprised that roleplays and analysis got further than straight discussion and now I think there could be times when drama could help a lot of youth workers.

There are two main positive outcomes that can be achieved through using acting and drama with young people. The first is as a worker when participating in activities you will be able to express your empathy for the young people you are working with in a more direct way than

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by Alex Williams

Drama in youthwork

(continued from previous page)

is often possible.

The second is the possibilities for self development for young people.

Drama allows self expression that is free from consequences and expectation, it can aid in breaking down barriers, help develop capacity for empathy and reinforce the idea that who you are “in action” is something you are in charge of. Every moment “acting” makes it clear that everything you communicate through your face, body and voice is within your control. Recognising the level of control you have over who you are is a powerful revelation when looking at improving relationships and addressing negative behaviours.

A major application for drama in youth work is roleplay. It takes a situation and tries to recreate how it would work in real life. The situation should always be relevant and the task given as a challenge to the participants to be honest, bold and represent it as they have experienced it. When taking on roleplay tasks, success is a matter of deep observation and emotional courage. You do not have to be an actor, just a human, actors are just trying to act like real people anyway but you can't manufacture authenticity. Anyone who is brave enough to be honest can benefit from roleplay work and enrich other people's experience at the same time.

As humans we communicate in ten ways at once, just talking about something doesn't have the same weight as acting something out, when it's truthful that is. And this is where the hook can come in for getting young people involved. When you're doing scenarios about life as they experience it, they are boss. Who knows better than them? If you workshop a roleplay till you find the emotional truth of each character and the issues that are affecting their actions then you have probably just done

some pretty deep sharing without talking specifically about any one person.

Forum theatre

Now I want to talk to you about a specialised form of drama called *Forum Theatre*. It takes the roleplay form to the next level. Forum Theatre as we use it is taken from Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*. It involves a group of players acting out a sequence of scenes following the same character and through their choices they come to a negative outcome. These scenes always revolve around an issue that has been targeted as directly relevant to the group it is being presented to.

It's not a one way presentation however; the real power of this style is in its focus on the audience guiding the experience. Once you have engaged the young people in the issue through showing a character's journey that they can relate to, the scenes are played from the start again but this time the audience is in charge. Every time they think they can make a better choice than a character they call out stop and give their suggestion for how to change a behaviour to bring about a better outcome in each scene. The next step is for them to step in and physically take over the roles, but this takes a bit of warming up to.

This form gives the young people a chance to take control, but also it lays bare their tactics for dealing with a situation, and they may reveal a weakness that needs to be overcome or a strength that can be utilised.

Much more detail about *Forum Theatre* and the *Theatre of the Oppressed* can be found online with many other exercises available for engaging with issues and empowering people to address important factors affecting their lives.

Below is a good places to start, with access to numerous resources and lists of groups in Australia and around the world that use these forms for social change.

I hope you've found some of these ideas interesting; there is a lot of potential for positive work to be done with drama. When creating activities, the two guiding principles are to make it relevant and to let the young people guide you, it's not about the drama but how it can be useful for your group.

More:

www.theatreoftheoppressed.org

Tightrope walking in the twilight zone

Ethics in youth work: A regular column

Dilemma: Let's make music together

A young guy (aged 18) who regularly attends and sometimes volunteers at your youth centre gets employed by you in a 3 month paid position, 6 hours/week to help organise music events over the summer. He tells you that he is really keen on another young person (aged 17) at the centre and is planning on making a move at the next event.

What would you do, if anything?

Read what other people think, and post your own reply (anonymously or not) - go to <http://youthworkethics.blogspot.com> and click on **Let's make music together**.

Selected blog comments will be published in a future yaprap.

Previous dilemma: Dress for success!

Your boss is the Manager of Youth Services for Vision Australia, a large non-religious charity. She has been asked to write a dress code to cover all Vision's youth workers in city and rural areas.

The dress code needs to:

- *cover things like clothing, footwear, slogans on clothing, tattoos and piercings*
- *apply to the whole range of Vision youth services (refuges, recreation, streetwork, advocacy, working in schools, working with families)*
- *apply to workers with all client groups including migrant communities, Aboriginal communities, street kids, and various youth subcultures.*

She asks you to jot down some random bullet points to get her started. What would you jot down?

Here is what you had to say in response.

Anonymous said...

Nothing! Why should how we dress affect the how we work with our clients????

Anonymous said...

I think the only restraints you need to put in place are ones that ensure the best interests of the young people you are working with are maintained. For example, articles of a worker's clothing that could be obviously offensive to a young person (or any other person in the community) should not be allowed.

Additionally, certain work situations might require safety concerns to be taken into account. For

example, closed shoes in a work environment that can sometimes involve crisis situations.

Beyond these considerations, however, I think youth workers should be encouraged to wear the clothes that they identify with as individuals. Isn't it possible that many of the young people who are receiving services from organisations like Vision Australia already feel like there is too much regulation and institutionalisation in their lives. Why increase it by making their support workers, role models and friends wear some variation on a uniform? Particularly for teenagers, who are often struggling with their own issues of individual expression. They need to be supported in finding the courage and confidence to be the sort of person they want to be. You don't help them achieve this by suppressing the individual character of their workers and mentors. Youth workers should reflect society. As such, they should be free to wear what they want so long as it doesn't impinge upon the interests of the young people they are there to support.

Anonymous said...

Some organisations seem to be increasingly encouraging their staff to dress more formally than youth workers traditionally would have. I have heard of rules like "no denim", "no joggers" cropping up. I think that as organisations who seek to empower young people to take control of their own lives, we should not underestimate the size of a backward step that can be taken by presenting to a young person with an inaccessible appearance - ie. over-dressed, expensive clothes, overdoing the accessories etc. Perhaps there should be some statement about not over-dressing, or dressing in a way that reflects status or creates a power imbalance. I think the guidelines are also best kept to reflect concerns of safety as the previous poster has suggested: closed in shoes, piercings out when they pose a risk etc.

Anonymous said...

I agree with the above comment. As a Youth Service Manager in the ACT I won't ask my staff to wear a certain code of dress. I do encourage them to think about their dress in relation to being accessible and safe for various clients to engage with.

I will make comment if a worker's clothing appears too revealing or corporate and ask them to think about how it may affect their clients' impressions of being able to relate. Then staff have the choice to dress for effective work or not.

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compiled by Nick Manning
YAPA Communications
Manager

How to use YAPA ethical dilemmas

- post your own response to the blog (anonymously or not)
- debate the scenario at a team or network meeting
- use the scenario in staff training.

<http://youthworkethics.blogspot.com>

Tightrope walking in the twilight zone

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Ben Hollis said...

I agree with a lot that has already been said around OHS issues and about what a youth worker's dress could communicate to the young people they are working with.

Maybe instead of bullet points about a dress code, there should be bullet points for a conversation that happens between the manager and youth worker during the recruitment stage. I think this would help in creating a healthy culture at the workplace and encourage workers to have other conversations with their managers.

As a youth worker it has taken time to figure out what clothing could communicate to the young people I'm working with and, like a lot of other issues in youth work, it isn't always healthy to have a 'black and white' solution and to allow for a more flexible 'grey scale' approach.

And also like said before, if there is a piece of clothing that the manager doesn't think is appropriate, a conversation can be entered into where both parties feel respected.

David said...

I've been asked in the past to sharpen up my appearance while at work (no torn jeans) and appreciate that, while I am at work, I have a responsibility to represent my organisation as a professional. While I personally don't see the more casually/ sexually dressed youth workers as less professional, people's view of the organisation (and perhaps the profession as a whole) is affected, and this affects our service delivery. We need to be taken seriously by other agencies/ teachers/ parents/ cultural groups.

I have recently had conversations with workers who are part of the community they serve (ie. small geographic or ethnic communities, likely to have contact with clients outside of work hours). They said that their 'uniform' (casual blue shirts with corporate logo) has helped clients to understand when they are not at work, and therefore shouldn't be approached in the same way. It also makes it easier to work out who the workers are in a youth centre.

Other dot points to consider:

- limits to political and religious expression?
- non-sexualisation of relationships?
- engaging with subcultures - how much do we need to dress like one to be accepted by one? Does our clothing put up barriers to other subcultures?
- role modelling culturally appropriate dress for court appearances, employment, contact with elders etc.

Jaw said...

Dress code:

- Clean and respectful
- Appropriate and approachable
- Appropriate footwear with consideration to safety
- Considerate to the day's schedule (I wouldn't wear a suit to meet refugees, I will wear a suit to the schools and to meet the families and I wouldn't wear a revealing top or a short skirt with a client with sex issues)

Consideration: No rude, vulgar, revealing, symbolic, suggestive, discriminative, religious, obsessive thoughts' material is advertised on any garment. These come in many ways such as symbols, slogans (remarks or comments) or pictures, maybe even a logo.

Be aware: This is so no person has to feel inferior, threatened, scared, harassed, offended or discriminated against in anyway.

Clover :-) said...

As youth workers I believe it's so important to remain who we are... Through the holistic process of becoming a youth worker there is one thing that comes to mind time and time again... "Be real, keep it real." You can have a rapport with a young person with expressions of your true self... So I believe what we choose to wear needs to be kept on an individual basis... We may also be mindful to each and every one of us who has grown on our own individual journey to be comfortable in who we are and what we wear. By putting restrictions on what we wear can be suppressing a part of who we are, making us feel uncomfortable in our appearance. I believe that as adults who are now in a role that helps young people who more often than not are just trying to find themselves through all life's trials of darkness, that we would have the knowledge to know what is respected by young people on their own individual level. Trying to wear dress pants when you're comfortable in jeans/skirt or vice versa, is like saying my favourite colour is pink when it's actually purple. So I would say the dress code needs to be real. It needs to be on a realistic level that enables us as workers from whatever background, culture, gender, life experience or belief to be able to walk in to work each day being comfortable in ourselves. So my only dot point would be: Come as "yourself" being mindful of all the people surrounding you.

Peace Out.... :-)

Anonymous said...

As a council youth worker, council dress code requires that we present in a professional manner, being appropriate to our job and work duties. Therefore if I am spending a day out in the field or on a project with young people, jeans and a shirt or casual dress are acceptable. If I am to attend council meetings, including youth meetings, or other level of government meetings a corporate and professional dress code is expected. At all times and in any work environment, I am expected to take OH&S policies into consideration, therefore, covered appropriately if out in the field re. exposure to the elements, covered shoes etc.

In any work environment as a youth worker, I think we need to remember that rapport is important, but we are professionals and are young people's youth worker, not their friends or peers, regardless of age.

Ringo said...

When I first started in this role 5 years ago, there was a push for me to be in standard corporate issue stuff, complete with tie and shining shoes...

Now as a previous self-employed opal miner for the past 22+ years getting around in shorts, T boots, spats and singlet, I found this a bit, ummm, "not so cool"...

So job starts, a bit of office "show me the ropes" stuff and away we go... After a few weeks of being more "on the ground" with organising footy and outdoor games/workshops etc, I found it near impossible to move as freely as I wished / paint and stuff all over me if you know what I mean and also more importantly, I deflected a few remarks from young people like: "You look like a copper", "Are you from DoCS?", "You should shave ya beard off to match your big noter clothes" (THAT ONE HURT!)

I then decided to approach the GM and stated my case. Basically I said if you wish for me to actively engage with young people I need to be approachable and, as we all know how young people make quick judgments on how we dress etc, this is not going to happen. I requested to wear jeans, keep the Council logo shirt, ditch the tie and wear more casual shoes.

He mentioned maybe I should look into having a back up outfit with me or go home and change etc. I stated this is a no go as I travel 156 kms round trip to work and back each day. And also very difficult to assume I will be having a "day in the office" as young people's issues are not pre-planned etc and I am trying to service an area of over 22,000 sq kms.

So he agreed... all good since then. What I did do however was design a casual but dressy polo (logo designed by our young people), so when I know I will be in the office, outside running programs, or travelling miles, I can look sharp but still represent the Shire.

Jordan said...

I think sensible "normal" clothing is the way to dress. I think dressing too formally distances yourself from the young people and wearing uniforms can often be a little intimidating. Inappropriate clothing eg. alcohol or obscene attire should be avoided as it sends the wrong message. By dressing casual I believe it helps youth workers connect better with young people.

Katerina said...

There needs to be flexibility in both worker and employer about what is workplace clothing. Casual is usually youth workers' dress code but sometimes more office type clothes for more formal meetings, management meetings etc. It also doesn't hurt young people to sometimes see their youth workers in more formal clothing if they have come from a meeting. But with anyone, youth worker or not, it needs to be your style! Youth work is also about role modelling and needs to be appropriate for the setting you're in. Plus there is nothing worse than a youth worker trying to dress like they are 15 years old... peace out!

Barb said...

I agree with Katerina. Definitely need to dress to suit the activity/ environment and as long as it is not offensive or revealing. I more often than not wear casual clothes including jeans (frowned upon by council's policy) especially when meeting with young people that day, but no one has commented to me in my 4 months. As long as you are getting your job done and doing it well, it should not matter- a whole lot more important to me than what I look like!

Natalie said...

I am able to wear what I like, however when I have an event or youth program to deliver I have a shirt I wear with council logo, just to identify who I work for, promote council and also it's just comfortable and good for any physical activities as well and doesn't get my clothes ruined.

Personally I think it is good to promote who you work for to a degree to the community and young people. As long as clothing is appropriate as well that is also important. A balance can always be good!

What do you think?

Post your own reply (anonymously or not) - go to <http://youthworkethics.blogspot.com> and click on Dress for success!

In a dilemma yourself???

Pose an ethical dilemma - a situation you have faced, or just something you wonder about.

Email info@yapa.org.au with the subject: **ETHICAL DILEMMA**. Give plenty of detail. You don't have to identify yourself or your agency, and we will not identify you publicly.

School-community partnership awards

(continued from page 1)

safe environment. They propose to partner with the Granville RSL and a local café who would assist the students to manage the café and provide training in food preparation.

health issues for refugee students. A significant model of proactive planning and intervention at a critical point of need. An application that is able to show that good health is vital to learning.

Here yaprap showcases selected NSW winners (including several YAPA members) whose projects may be of most interest to our readers.

Selected NSW winners

Albury Wodonga Community College & YES Youth and Family Services - Youth Re-engagement project

Offering something quite different to mainstream education, this partnership between the Community College and YES has been formed to provide students disengaged from education with a pathway that will take into consideration their wide ranging, yet specific needs. Lacking the basics necessary for educational success and ill prepared to cope with the demands of the workplace and life in the wider community, the students involved will benefit greatly by this structured, caring program. The establishment of a 'case plan' for each student is integral to providing whatever support is required to enable them to take part successfully.

What the judges said: *Extensive research has been undertaken to guide the development of this program. The partners will be working side by side in and out of the classroom assisting each student to re-engage in education and the community.*

Beverly Hills Intensive English Centre & Multicultural Health Service(MHS), South East Sydney Local Health District - Optimising Health and Learning

Beverly Hills Intensive English Centre enrolls 300 students, from 30 different countries and 26 language backgrounds each year. After spending 3 to 4 terms at the IEC they move on to one of 20 local high schools. It is this window of opportunity that has been seized upon by the partnership. Beverly Hills IEC has joined in partnership with a wide range of health service providers to set up an on-site screening program to gain early assessments of health and well being for refugee students and other vulnerable new arrivals. Extensive examination of each student allows early intervention and maximizes their learning situation and provides continuity of care in their chosen community.

What the judges said: *This is an excellent program aimed at dealing with fundamental*

Bulli High School (NSW) & Access Community Group - Arresting disengagement, building work readiness

Bulli High School has partnered with the Access Community Group to devise a support program for a select group of Year 8 and 9 students who are failing to make connections with schooling and future work. It is the partnership's intention to make a difference for these students early rather than later. By providing activity based learning and linking each of them with a mentor of a similar age, who is currently successfully employed in the workforce, in an industry that is of interest to the student, it is proposed that they will reconnect now and make a successful transition in the future.

What the judges said: *A genuine partnership with mutual benefit for all directly involved. In the future the wider community will reap the benefits of the work done at this stage in each student's life.*

Cessnock High School & Cessnock District Learning Centre - Opportunities for at-risk young people

This highly successful partnership has been operating since 1995 and has been catering for the learning needs of at-risk Year 7-10 students. By providing individualised programs for students who have become disengaged with mainstream schooling, the Cessnock District Learning Centre assists them to modify their attitudes and behaviour, develop their self esteem, and improve their learning. This program demonstrates a strong spirit of compassion with a focus on making improvements to address the student needs of the future. This partnership is making a significant difference.

What the judges said: *This program shows substantial evidence of the benefits to the students, the community and the Cessnock District Learning Centre. The longevity of this project is testament to its success. The improvement in student performance has been measured and the results are impressive.*

Cowra High School, Cowra TAFE, Cowra PCYC & Greater Western Area Health - Breakaway

The high school, TAFE, the PCYC and the health service have partnered to develop the program, Breakaway, to provide academic, health education and social opportunities for young Aboriginal female participants in a learning environment away from school. The high school teachers and the TAFE teachers plan, develop and facilitate the various learning activities for the Breakaway program which is held once a week over two terms. Initially, the program was health-based but has developed and adapted to be more culturally relevant and academically rigorous. The activities are designed to engage and enhance the employability skills of young people while at the same time being innovative and creative. The TAFE and the high school teachers work together to develop appropriate and meaningful lessons where the girls are able to achieve positive outcomes.

What the judges said: *This is a successful, long running program that is clearly designed to meet the needs of young Indigenous girls at risk of failing to complete even a basic education and engaging in social behaviours which place their health at risk.*

Cronulla High School & Shire Wide Youth Services - Re-engaging Disengaging Year 9s

The key goals of this partnership are to re-engage Year 9 students who are at risk of not completing high school. The school has partnered with Shire Wide to conduct excursions to various workplaces to engage in hands-on activities, talk to workers and take part in Q and A sessions in regard to pathways into employment. The schools involved will work with Shire Wide on the program which will take selected students out on these visits with the aim to motivate them. The Shire Wide youth worker will accompany the students, teachers from the schools will also supervise and follow up any activities back at school.

What the judges said: *The need was clearly identified from data and research. This is a positive program for students with mutual benefits and measurable data to show outcomes for students. The program has been thoroughly researched with careful evaluation embedded in the program.*

Gloucester High School & Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) - Student Support Centre

The school has partnered with the AECG and developed a plan to improve Aboriginal students' engagement in the classroom, academic outcomes, leadership skills and attendance. The project also aims to impart knowledge of Aboriginal history and culture, as well as enhance post school opportunities. Members of the AECG provide cultural support and offer assistance to school staff in well-being and cultural matters. The proposed support centre will provide Aboriginal students with a designated area that caters to their learning styles and provides significant and relevant content to engage them within the classroom environment. It is the wealth of local cultural and historical knowledge that the members bring to the partnership which can be shared with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, staff and the broader school community and then collaboratively transferred into the wider community to strengthen relationships.

What the judges said: *A truly collaborative project that enlists the support of the local community to support Aboriginal students and their families by the inclusion of Elders, an Aboriginal tutor and skilled community members to support and enrich the program.*

Great Lakes College, Forster & Great Lakes Education Christian Care Association (GLECCA) - Chill Out Breakfast Program

The College and GLECCA have developed a partnership to provide breakfast two days a week for students in Years 7 to 10. Many students were missing out on breakfast for a variety of reasons and the school and GLECCA have worked together since 2003 on the breakfast program. Community volunteers help serve breakfast and this has been an effective way to provide mentoring and meeting students who are in need of individual care, attention, support and social interaction. Some students have become volunteers themselves and help serve other students. Apart from the nutritional benefits of having breakfast, there has been an improvement in student concentration, leadership skills and community involvement. Absenteeism is significantly reduced on breakfast days.

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School-community partnership awards

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What the judges said: *The students and volunteers benefit from this activity and the benefits go beyond those of healthy eating. The students have access to a Youth Worker if they feel the need and the school offers an informal setting with the breakfast program.*

King Street Public School & Singleton Youth Venue - 009 Student Wellbeing Project

The partnership is being set up between the school and the Youth Venue in order to share skills, expertise and physical resources to meet the needs of the students while connecting them with the staff at the Venue. The main goal is to develop leadership and provide students with the opportunities to develop empathy for others and reduce the number of violent incidents and suspensions at school. Having access to the facilities and the expertise of the Youth Venue will enable the school to extend its programs to more students. The school expects to see positive changes for individuals as they become more socially skilled and the Youth Venue hopes that the partnership will allow them to have a positive impact on the lives of those children who are often the hardest to reach.

What the judges said: *The application showed clear links between the identified need and the goals of the program. There is clear evidence of a commitment from the school and the partner and an ongoing relationship is being established.*

St Phillip's Christian College & First Steps Parenting - DALE Young Mothers' Program Early Intervention

This partnership between the school and a local parenting and child health organisation, First Steps Parenting, takes a preventative approach and draws on the principles of early intervention by addressing parenting and baby health needs on-site. The partnership takes a holistic approach to the teenage participants

and recognises that there are many issues that may impact on their ability to stay connected to education. The partner shares their expertise with the school and visits weekly to provide ongoing support for a group of young mothers, they workshop ideas and identify concerns. There is a longitudinal impact from the project as the young mothers have benefited from the program and their children also benefit from improved parenting.

What the judges said: *The school and the partner are committed to the long term success of this program so that the girls and their children benefit. Keeping students at school is all important and this partnership works hard to make sure this happens.*

Thomas Reddall High School & The Benevolent Society - Local Buddies

The school and The Benevolent Society partnered to support students in need of guidance and friendship. Trained mentor volunteers, who are caring community role models, meet each week to participate in activities and discussions on career and training options, mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence. Activities give the students support in career choices to encourage them to stay at school and complete their education. A strong connection to the Society has been built through community forums and the school is represented at these.

What the judges said: *A clear need has been identified and the partnership with The Benevolent Society has been established to address this need. A positive program is being developed, involving a genuine community partnership. All of the criteria has been addressed in detail and careful attention has been paid to providing relevant evidence.*

More:

Schools and community groups interested in finding out about the 2012 award funding should visit www.schoolsfirst.edu.au and join the mailing list.

What's on for youth workers

22-24 November, Brighton Beach End Youth Homelessness Conference 2011

Yfoundations' vision for the conference is "think global, act local". The conference will present practices, policies and research from around the world, then place them into a localised discussion. With this motto, the conference aims to tap into all sources of expertise, knowledge and wisdom to foster discussion on how these sources can suitably fit into the Australian and local contexts.

Contact: grace@yfoundations.org.au
or (02) 9698 5833
www.tinyurl.com/endyouthhomelessness

25-27 November, Newcastle 2011 State Youth Council Conference

This year the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Youth Advisory Councils (NYC and LMYAC) are forming a partnership to host a statewide Youth Council Conference. The conference will be open for all Youth Councils across NSW to attend and participate in.

ycouncil@ncc.nsw.gov.au

1 December, Sydney

What's the frequency? Tuning into adolescent development to help young people stay safe (Youthsafe forum)

Young people seem to be 'programmed' differently in terms of the way they react and deal with the challenges and daily activities that are very normal but a real part of being a young person. These things include socialising with friends, getting around town, driving, going to school, TAFE or uni and working part time. The difficulty for those who work with or deal with young people on a daily basis is that they don't always fully understand what drives young people to do what they do, hence making it difficult to support young people and help reduce their vulnerability and risk of injury. This Youthsafe one-day forum explores the 'pre-set channels' of a young person's cognitive, physical and psychosocial development and tuning into what adolescents think, feel, and do. The forum will provide ideas, strategies and networking to help you work with young people in ensuring they stay safe.

Keynote speakers:

- Dr Soames Job, Director, Centre for Road Safety RTA

- Professor David Bennett, Director of Centre for Advancement of Adolescent Health
- Professor Kate Steinbeck, Medical Foundation Chair of Adolescent Medicine, University of Sydney
- Professor Iain McGregor, Professor of Psychopharmacology, University of Sydney
- Ms Megan Mitchell, Commissioner for Children and Young People

Forum is free but space is limited. Enquiries: Dianne Naylor office@youthsafe.org or (02) 9817 7847. www.youthsafe.org

8 December, Sydney CBD

Social security for people working with students

Training on social security issues that particularly affect students, including youth allowance issues, study load requirements, how to avoid debts and how to use the appeal system.

Contact: <http://www.welfarerights.org.au/pages/sydneyINFO.aspx> or 02 9211 5300.

until 11 December, Cockatoo Island (Sydney Harbour)

Outpost Project

Street art festival heads to Cockatoo Island: 150 individual artists or collectives will take part in the inaugural Outpost Project at Cockatoo Island over five summer weeks, billed as the largest street art extravaganza held in Australia. Between them they embrace all the many different styles grouped under the umbrella term, street art. Such as? Stencilling (prints created by painting over cut-out designs), paste-ups (basically, posters), stickers (small scale artworks reproduced in large numbers), street sculpture (made out of discarded objects) and aerosol art, the best-known form associated in the public mind with graffiti... smh.com.au/10/10/11. Outpost Project will run on Cockatoo Island from 4 November to 11 December.

Details www.outpost.cockatooisland.gov.au.

13-22 April 2012

National Youth Week 2012

Put the date in your diary and start planning your events for Youth Week 2012!

www.youthweek.nsw.gov.au

More events at www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/whatson.php.

unleash



unleash – opinion and action for young people under 20.

In December 2011-January 2012 *unleash*:

- Madeleine Boxall explains why holding out on same-sex marriage is no longer an option
- Nick Manning shows us 'How To' use games and icebreakers
- Pia Birac introduces us to twelve-year-old Lyrric Marr from Taree and her project, Refuge for Kids
- Stephanie Elise Latin poses the question, "What if Gillard were male?"
- Taran Kaur thinks that WikiLeaks is necessary to keep governments accountable

- Katrina Hendy challenges us to understand disability better
- (You)th Express
- Erin reviews Minister Dominello's address at What's Up West?
- Jess Hill reflects on *What's Up West?*
- Madison Chodziesner makes a confession about party drugs
- Angelique Lu looks at the issue of young people and sexuality
- Alex Williams spells out the different mental health services for young people
- plus news, opportunities and more!

Get *unleash* - www.yapa.org.au/unleash or contact YAPA.

YAPA Western Sydney Project update



Leah Weber
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Coordinator
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The last few months of the Western Sydney Project has been phenomenally busy but as always, super fun!

What's Up West? 2011 was held in October with 60 young people coming together to share their ideas and opinions, as well as learn a few things in skills based workshops and have a Q&A session with NSW Minister for Citizenship and Communities, Victor Dominello. (You can hear more about what young people had to say at *What's Up West?* in the next *yaprap*).

The pilot of Out West, a social and support group for GLBTIQ young people from Western Sydney, ran from July to October and was

an overwhelming success, reaching over 50 young people. Twenty10 has committed to running the group as a continuous program. YAPA is now working towards sourcing funding to increase the capacity of Western Sydney's mainstream youth services to support GLBTIQ young people based on the findings of the Way Out West report (to be released soon).

YAPA Western Sydney has also been supporting Outburst! the Western Sydney Youth Forum, establishing SHOUT! The Western Sydney Youth Sector Alliance, and speaking up at various government and non-government conferences, meetings and forums around the place.



Ann Deslandes, YAPA
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Wed, Thurs, Fri

YAPA policy update

Hi! I'm Ann and I've returned to YAPA in a new role as Research & Policy Analyst, (after being employed as the KIT Sector Support Officer for February-September 2011).

I commenced in this new role in October and will be working on establishing a research agenda for YAPA, as well as working with Dean Williamson on YAPA's ongoing policy advocacy work.

I'm particularly looking forward to hawking the *Youth Work Snapshot 2011* around the traps for the remainder of this year.... it's great to have such a detailed picture of youth work in NSW at my fingertips!

Please feel free to contact me (see contact details in margin) - looking forward to working with the NSW youth work sector in this new venture for YAPA!

Contact YAPA



yaprap, *unleash*, membership, training, event bookings & general enquiries:
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