

# YAPRap

Newsletter of the Youth Action and Policy Association NSW Inc

Vol 16 No 2 February 2006

## Young Australians dropped in Howard's reshuffle

Rey Reodica, Young Spokesperson, Australian Youth  
Affairs Coalition (AYAC)

**Young Australians are the big losers in the Prime Minister's recent ministerial reshuffle. Whilst the reshuffle was anticipated to usher in a more youthful front bench, Prime Minister Howard has dropped the Children and Youth Affairs portfolio from his Government altogether.**

The Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC), the nation's non-government youth affairs peak, has renewed calls on the Howard Government to stop

turning their backs on young people.

AYAC itself receives no federal funding to research and speak up on issues of importance to young people, after the Howard Government ended decades of support and funding for a national youth affairs peak in 1998. Then in 2004, the Children and Youth Affairs portfolio was downgraded from a Ministerial role to a Parliamentary Secretary. A year later, the size of the National Youth Roundtable – described by the government as the centerpiece of its youth

consultation strategy – was halved.

As difficult as it is to speak out on youth affairs without funding, AYAC says it is clear that Howard's reshuffle means young people must again question who in the Government is actually there to listen. The young people of Australia have no specific representative in their

(continued on page 4)



### In this issue:

Free AOD training	2	Police searches	6	Blacktown Migrant	
Respect & responsibility	3	Workchoices	7	Resource Centre	12
Myths about Muslims	4	Welfare to work	8	Preventing Crime	15
Safe celebrating	5	Ninja radio	10	What's On	19

## YAPRap

YAPRap is YAPA's monthly newsletter. YAPA is the Youth Action and Policy Association NSW Inc, the peak organisation representing young people and youth services in NSW.

© 2006 Youth Action and Policy Association NSW Inc  
Opinions are the author's and not necessarily YAPA's.

### To subscribe

YAPRap is sent to members and subscribers only. Go to [www.yapa.org.au](http://www.yapa.org.au) or contact us for details.

### Contributions

Contributions welcome from young people, youth workers and others. Email articles and listings to [info@yapa.org.au](mailto:info@yapa.org.au) or ring Nick Manning at YAPA to discuss your contribution. YAPA may also publish your contribution in other newsletters and on our website.

### Advertisements and loose inserts

We run ads in YAPRap and insert loose flyers, when space permits. Contact Nick Manning to discuss your ad or flyer.

### Deadlines for contributions, ads and loose inserts

(YAPRap is posted 2 weeks after the deadline.)  
Monday 6 March  
Monday 3 April

### YAPA NSW Office

146 Devonshire Street  
Surry Hills NSW 2010  
Phone: (02) 9319 1100  
Toll Free: 1800 627 323  
Fax: (02) 9319 1144  
Email: [info@yapa.org.au](mailto:info@yapa.org.au)  
Web: [www.yapa.org.au](http://www.yapa.org.au)

### Executive Officer

Kristy Delaney

### Finance & Administration Manager

Martair De Pasquale

### Policy & Training Officer

John Ferguson

### Communications Officer

Nick Manning

### Administrative Officer

Joanne Bennett

### YAPA Western Sydney Office

Suite 7, Level 1,  
48 Macquarie Street,  
Parramatta, NSW 2150  
Phone: (02) 9687 1466  
Fax: (02) 9687 1229  
Email: [yapaws@yapa.org.au](mailto:yapaws@yapa.org.au)

### Regional Youth Development Officer

Kylie Gordon-Wilkins

### Administrative Officer

Joanne Bennett

# Free AOD training for rural youth workers

## We introduced the YAPA Alcohol & Other Drugs Project for rural youth services in the last edition of YAPRap.

### Survey update

A huge thankyou to all those rural workers who took part in our survey on alcohol & other drugs issues. We were delighted with the response. So far 85 agencies have participated. A report on the findings will be available in the next YAPRap.

### Self paced learning package

We are currently developing the self paced learning package on the issues that services have identified. This will be available to all training participants and at a later stage on the YAPA website for free download.

### Free training

The training is on in March and April in:

- \* Dubbo.
- \* Wagga

\* Coffs Harbour.

Everyone who attends the training will receive:

- travel subsidies to attend the training
- a 2 day face to face training course
- access to professional supervision and mentoring for 6 weeks
- a follow up day face to face training course
- a copy of the learning package plus lots of other resources on alcohol and other drugs.

Each training program will be open to 20 youth workers only. So hurry up and book your place! Download the booking form and more info from [www.yapa.org.au/yapa/events/aod.php](http://www.yapa.org.au/yapa/events/aod.php).

You must be employed as a worker with young people in a rural area to be able to attend. In accordance with the funding guidelines we will give priority to small organisations and Aboriginal workers.

This Project is funded by the NSW Workforce Development Council.



# Respect and responsibility plan?

Gary Moore, Director, The Council of Social Service of NSW (NCOSS)

## What is the NSW Government respect and responsibility plan?

NCOSS has sought urgent discussions with NSW Premier, Morris Iemma to clarify the nature and scale of his Government's so called Respect and Responsibility Plan.

The announcement of Parental

explain what it is, why it is being pursued or what results are to be achieved.

On the evidence presented so far, Morris Iemma is copying John Howard's concept of mutual responsibility and delivering proposals that have little evidence base that they work and which

mix in regenerated housing estates and on the other, its reshaping public housing policy will only house the absolute poorest of the poor.

And having the lowest prison escape rates across Australia is doing very little to reduce the massive prisoner recidivism rate

“the Parental Responsibility contracts will...drive a wedge between at risk families and the new early intervention services that the Department of Community Services is seeking to establish.”

Responsibility contracts follows on the heels of Housing Minister, Cherie Burton's promise to shortly announce more antisocial behaviour rules for public housing tenants. Justice Minister, Tony Kelly also referred to this Respect and Responsibility Plan when selectively quoting prisons figures from the Review of Government Services Report.

NCOSS understands that all Ministers are being asked to come up with new proposals that can be badged under this Plan. The problem is that the Government has failed to publish the Plan or

clearly blame the victims for poor social outcomes.

Most front line child and family services that NCOSS has spoken to since the announcement suggest that the Parental Responsibility contracts will be counterproductive. They will drive a wedge between at risk families and the new early intervention services that the Department of Community Services is seeking to establish.

The Government already has a dilemma in its public housing policies where, on the one hand, it says it want much greater social

in NSW, with predictions of over 10,000 inmates being reached very soon.

Labor Premiers like Morris Iemma are the first to condemn the Howard Government for punitive and misleading policies like Welfare to Work reform. Yet, the NSW Government has so far failed to consult those who are massively affected by this Respect and Responsibility Plan before any of the announcements are made.

[NCOSS media release 7 February 2006] 



# Debunking the myths about Muslims in Australia

Phil Glendenning, Director, Edmund Rice Centre

**The Edmund Rice Centre has released *Debunking the Myths About Muslims in Australia* to deal with the stereotyping and discrimination Muslim Australians have had to face in the wake of the war on terror and the riots on Sydney beaches.**

Issues like terrorism, the children overboard affair, the war in Iraq, and the riots in Cronulla have been marked by an unjust and incorrect characterization of Islam and Muslim people.

When the Provisional IRA were conducting a bombing campaign in Britain, Catholics and Catholicism were not blamed. Christianity was not blamed for the Ku Klux Klan, the massacres of Rwanda, nor the

terrorist activities of the groups like the Shining Path in Peru, nor the state terrorism of Chile's Pinochet and the Argentinian juntas of the 1970's.

Yet when it comes to the war on terror, it is the religion of Islam and Muslim people that have often been blamed, either deliberately by 'dog whistle' politicians, or through the intolerance and ignorance of a divided community.


This is deeply unfair and the truth needs to be put on the public record.

It is in this spirit that the Edmund Rice Centre has published *Debunking the Myths About Muslims in Australia* so that people can see that issues like terrorism are less about religion and far more about politics, injustice and warped fundamentalism.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam are branches of the same tree. It is

important to remember in this Christmas week that Jesus Christ was a Jew and a prophet of Islam, as well as the founder of Christianity.

He was therefore also a man of Middle Eastern appearance, who today – with his apostles – would probably be locked out of Bondi, Brighton-le-Sands, and Cronulla.

*Debunking the Myths About Muslims in Australia* is a timely and much needed document. This discrimination based on ignorance has to stop. 

## How to get it

note: there is no "www" in this address

[http://erc.org.au/](http://erc.org.au/just_comments/1131689123.shtml)

[just\\_comments/](http://erc.org.au/just_comments/1131689123.shtml)

[1131689123.shtml](http://erc.org.au/just_comments/1131689123.shtml)

## Young Australians dropped in Howard's reshuffle

(continued from page 1)


Government to hear their needs and concerns.

Youth issues are diverse and in need of particular focus and attention. Mr Howard appears to have forgotten that his Government's policies on issues such as education and employment affect the lives of

young people in distinct ways.

The interests of young people cannot simply be placed with issues such as family and community services and expected to be given a fair go. Young Australians have a right to fair representation by their Government and this reshuffle is

a huge failure in this regard.

AYAC has renewed calls for the Howard Government to take a greater interest in the wellbeing of young people by fully funding a national youth affairs peak and reappointing a Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. 



# Safe celebrating update

Michaela Zappia, Project Officer, Youthsafe

## Website

The NEW and improved Youthsafe website is now up. Features include a specific Safe Celebrating page – yeah! These pages include links to research related to safe celebrating, resources (our own as well as links

they can be included in our ‘Safe Celebrating’ contact list by getting in touch with Youthsafe.

## Parent Resource

Currently we’re researching the need for a resource to help parents talk to their teenager

## Safe Celebrating Discussion Paper

Youthsafe has been deliberating long and hard on a safe celebrating paper to outline some of our research findings as well as the ‘future focus’; where Youthsafe

“Youthsafe has been deliberating long and hard on a safe celebrating paper to outline some of our research findings as well as the ‘future focus’; where Youthsafe sees opportunities to work with others and also recommendations for strategies to address safer celebrations.”

to others’), links to other sites and copies of presentations from our Safe Celebrating forums. It will also expand as we gather more information and develop more Safe Celebrating related info - see [www.youthsafe.org](http://www.youthsafe.org). If you have any links or resources you would like to share with others, we are happy to put them on our site.

## Networks


We are aiming to put together a ‘Safe Celebrating’ network to help everyone working on Safe Celebrating initiatives keep in touch and share information and ideas with one another. If anyone else that you know would be interested, please let them know

about parties and to help parents understand how they can reduce risks associated with youth celebrations. There are plans to include a kind of ‘workshop’ outline to help community groups work with parents and young people in using the resource effectively. We will keep you updated on the progress of this.

## Safe Celebrating Guide

Don’t forget you can get a free copy of Youthsafe’s Guide to developing Safe Celebrating Strategies to help you with your projects. Just contact our office on (02) 9809 4615 or e-mail [office@youthsafe.org](mailto:office@youthsafe.org).

sees opportunities to work with others and also recommendations for strategies to address safer celebrations. This is well on its way now. If you would like a copy of the paper, please get in touch with Michaela Zappia – [michaelaz@youthsafe.org](mailto:michaelaz@youthsafe.org)

Remember, any Safe Celebrating info you have, send it our way! 

## Youthsafe contacts

Michaela Zappia  
(02) 9809 4615  
[michaelaz@youthsafe.org](mailto:michaelaz@youthsafe.org)  
[www.youthsafe.org](http://www.youthsafe.org)



# P Police searches and WIPeIng

Mandy Loundar, Youth Liaison Officer, NSW Ombudsman

**Recently I sent out information about our review of the public disorder police powers that were established due to the Cronulla riots. We are also conducting another review that youth workers and young people could assist with.**

The Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 commenced on 1 December 2005. As part of its review, the NSW Ombudsman is seeking your views on certain aspects of the Act. Commonly referred to as LEPR, the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act brings together the powers most commonly used by police in NSW.

Below is some information of interest to young people regarding the personal searches and the new safeguards stating police must Warn, Inform, Provide, Evidence (WIPE) before exercising particular powers.

Some of the ways in which you can contribute to the review are by:

**1. Written submissions:** We will accept written submissions to the review at any time during the review process. Issues raised will be considered in the conduct of our research. Alternatively, you may make a submission to the review in response to our discussion paper. This will be released approximately mid-way through the review process (towards the end of 2006).

**2. Individual cases:** You may also wish to draw our attention to particular cases which are of relevance to the review.

**3. Direct contact:** It is invaluable for us to have direct contact, through interviews and/or focus groups, with vulnerable groups to hear how the exercise of police powers is affecting them. For example, in the past, community organisations have arranged focus groups for our reviews with young people.

## Contact

[review@ombo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:review@ombo.nsw.gov.au)

Shelagh Doyle  
02 9286 1050

Michelle Chung  
02 9286 0973

## Personal searches

Part 4 contains a new three-tier system of personal searches which is modelled on the Commonwealth *Crimes Act 1914*. The three tiers from lowest to highest are frisk, ordinary and strip searches. Definitions of the three searches can be found in section 3. In particular:

- A “frisk search” is defined as:
  - (a) a search of a person conducted by quickly running the hands over the person’s outer clothing or by passing an electronic metal detection device over or in close proximity to the person’s outer clothing, and
  - (b) an examination of anything worn or carried by the person that is conveniently and voluntarily removed by the person, including an examination conducted by passing an electronic metal detection device over or in close proximity to that thing.

- An “ordinary search” is defined as a search of a person or of articles in the possession of a person that may include:
  - (a) requiring the person to remove only his or her overcoat, coat or jacket or similar article of clothing and any gloves, shoes and hat, and
  - (b) an examination of those items.

- A “strip search” is defined as a search of a person or of articles in the possession of a person that may include:
  - (a) requiring the person to remove all of his or her clothes, and
  - (b) an examination of the person’s body (but not of the person’s body cavities) and of those clothes.

Part 4, Division 4 of LEPR outlines when each type of personal search would be authorised. For example, LEPR specifies that strip searches can only be conducted where the police officer suspects it is necessary for the purpose of the search and the seriousness and urgency of the circumstances require the strip search to be carried out.

Section 32 outlines rules for the preservation of a person’s privacy and dignity during a search. For instance, the type of search conducted must be the least invasive kind of search practicable in the circumstances and must be conducted by a police officer of the same sex as the person searched. Police must ask for the person’s cooperation and conduct the search as quickly as is reasonably practicable, in a way that provides reasonable privacy for the person searched.



## General safeguard provisions


Part 15 includes safeguards for the exercise of particular powers regardless of whether or not those powers are

conferred under LEPR. Under section 201, police officers have to provide certain information either before or as soon as possible after exercising a relevant power. The NSW Police have dubbed these requirements “WIPEing”. That is, police must:

Warn that failure to comply could be an offence

Inform of the reasons for exercising the power

Provide name and place of duty

Evidence the fact that they are a police officer if not in uniform. 

---

# Taskforce on impact of IR Workchoices

---

**A taskforce of representatives from the community sector, unions and the NSW Government has been set up to investigate the impact of the Federal Government’s Workchoices IR legislation on the quality of community service delivery across the state.**

The group of more than 100 representatives met for the first time in December to look at the future impact new federal legislation will have on thousands of community service employees in NSW.

“Workchoices has the capacity to undermine the delivery of high quality services to the people of NSW,” Minister for Community Services, Reba Meagher said. “The Federal Government has rushed through its new industrial laws with only limited scrutiny and with little regard for the consequences. It is becoming increasingly clear there will be major impacts for our community

services and the people they support.”

Minister for Industrial Relations, Disability and Ageing, John Della Bosca said the legislation was complex and confusing, leaving many community services unsure of which industrial laws would apply to their organisations. “This legislation is causing immense uncertainty and anxiety among many organisations – it is not clear if they qualify as a constitutional corporation or not,” Mr Della Bosca said. “Many of these organisations have different funding sources, meaning they may face the very real prospect of having employees working side by side under different conditions.”

NSW Council of Social Services Director, Gary Moore said the legislation would impact on around 30,000 workers in NSW employed in the community sector. “This legislation affects every community sector employee and will have a flow

on affect for hundreds of thousands of people in NSW who use their services,” Mr Moore said.

“Many organisations will face difficulty attracting skilled employees and retaining employees under these industrial laws.”

Australian Services Union (ASU) Secretary, Sally McManus said the Taskforce would look at the impact the Workchoices legislation will have on employers, employees and the community. “Workchoices has the capacity to devastate the working lives of staff in the non-government community industry. We cannot allow that to happen.” Ms McManus said.

The Taskforce is due to report back to the NSW Government early next year identifying practical actions for consideration by the community sector and Government.

[Joint NSW Government, NCOSS & ASU media release 21 December 2005] 



# Welfare to Work: The govt's welfare reform package... More Work Choices for young people!

John Ferguson, YAPA Policy & Training Officer



**There has been much written about the Industrial Relations reform that the government is embarking on, but towards the end of last year, they also passed another piece of legislation that will significantly impact on young people.**

The main principle behind this agenda is a desire to get people off welfare and into the workforce, which is better for them and better

of these issues, the vast majority of welfare recipients are not happy to be in their situation, and would gladly trade the debilitating issues they face for a place in the mainstream workforce. Regarding young people, they will not only be affected directly by this law, but it also has the potential to have a detrimental impact on their families as well.

The new Welfare to Work package will come into effect on July 1 2006. It has major implications for those people receiving Youth Allowance and Newstart Allowance, as well as recipients of the Disability

Support Pension to Newstart Allowance and receive a significant reduction in their weekly income.

It is a similar story for sole parents. Once the youngest child turns 6, sole parents will be required to look for part time work, while remaining on the parenting payment until the child turns 8. Once the youngest child turns 8, these parents will be moved on to the dole, be forced to look for work they are capable of, and face non-payment penalties if they fail to comply. There will also be a reduction in their weekly income. So for those services working with young parents, even

As a sector, we need to inform ourselves about the impacts of this law and how it will affect the young people we work with.

for the economy. It is driven by the view that thousands of people on welfare are 'job snobs', arrogantly refusing all kinds of work, as well as those who are content to sit on welfare and make a career out of the system. If you watch *Today Tonight* or *A Current Affair*, you might actually believe this. It is so easy for these programs to show a young male surfer living the coastal dream on welfare, and in so doing, fuelling these perceptions. However, for those of us with more awareness

Support Pension and Parenting Payments. The new law compels people to look for work if they are able. Sounds simple. However, there are stricter guidelines to determine who receives welfare and how much someone is able to work. Currently, those people receiving disability allowance are judged suitable for work if they are deemed capable of working 30 hours. That figure will soon be 15 hours. In effect, this means that many people will move from the Disability

if their youngest child is not 8 yet, we need to prepare these young people for the changes they will face and the potential impacts of these new rules.

**The problem is compliance...  
Prepare for breaches...**

For those on welfare who are deemed capable of work, they must also accept suitable job



offers unless there are special circumstances that prevent them. If they fail to comply they will face a breach. The concern is that suitable work now includes work remunerated at less than award conditions and that young people will be forced to undertake such work. Failure to do this could constitute a breach of the activity test requirements.

Under the new system there are certain events that will

marketing, but without a university degree, she knows she may have to start at the bottom of a small company and work her way up. She is more than willing to do this. However, Mary is on Youth Allowance and is forced to take a job that she does not want because it is deemed suitable for her. Due to the IR changes, the job she is forced to take has low money and poor working conditions. She cannot afford to

comply, or what is deemed a 'special circumstance' for refusing a job. These matters will most likely be addressed in the guidelines that will come out in the near future.

Even without the guidelines to provide further clarification, there are still things that we can do at this stage to support young people. As a sector, we need to inform ourselves about the impacts of this law and how it will

“Under this new system, the National Welfare Rights Network has estimated that 16,000 people a year will incur an immediate 8 week non-payment period.”

automatically lead to a single breach, resulting in an 8 week non-payment period. These are:

- The person is voluntarily unemployed,
- The person is unemployed due to their own misconduct as a worker,
- The person refuses a suitable job offer, or
- The person fails to commence, participate or complete a program of work, or comply with the conditions of a program.

## The dangerous interaction of Welfare to Work and IR Reform...

There is still a lot to be understood about how the industrial relations laws will interact with the welfare to work reforms. However, despite the following scenario being hypothetical, there is the danger that this situation will become far too common.


Mary wants to work in

leave her job and face 8 weeks of no welfare support. She is also very worried about looking for another job, because if her boss finds out, her workplace will become even more difficult.

The major concern with this situation is the likelihood that a young person will feel trapped in this working environment. Faced with these daunting 'work choices' the young person will need a lot of support throughout this situation. With the probability of increased breaches, the emergency resources of youth services will be stretched when young people are left with no support.

Under this new system, the National Welfare Rights Network has estimated that 16,000 people a year will incur an immediate 8 week non-payment period. It is proposed that some people will receive case management through this period, but who will deliver this case management and which welfare recipients will be eligible for it is unclear at this stage. It is also unclear what will constitute a 'reasonable excuse' for failing to

affect the young people we work with. Since there will be a certain amount of interpretation and discretion in how these laws are administered, we need to have a positive working relationship with our Centrelink office to ensure that they are aware of the local issues for young people. Engaging with Centrelink staff, inviting them to speak to young people where possible, and having open communication will ensure the issues that are unique to young people are understood. For example, transport may be different in the Riverina than it is in the Newcastle region, and work opportunities may be different in Broken Hill than in places like Wagga.

Similarly, we also need to support young people to make an appeal where they think it is necessary. With the potential for breaches to occur, combined with the reluctance of young people to lodge an appeal, it is important that we assist and encourage young people in this process to ensure that they are not exploited in this new environment. 



# Ninja Radio

Barney Langford, YAPRap feature writer

***“It was a Monday like any other... For DAVID HASSELHOFF at least. However for celebrity paparazzi MICHAEL MEDIOCRE that Monday was a day that was just about to transform his life. That Monday was a day that he would make three life-transforming mistakes. Each mistake on its own was not critical. But when combined, Metamorphosing Monday made Freaky Friday look like a simple case of mistaken identity.***

Firstly MEDIOCRE made the mistake of getting too close to Hasselhoff at the world premiere of Hasselhoff's new movie THE DAY MY CAREER CAME BACK. Secondly he kept on snapping after Hasselhoff told him to stop. And thirdly he forgot to duck when Hasselhoff hacked the hugest golly at him.

Amazingly the Hasselhoff saliva reacted with Mediocre's skin. Before his very eyes he saw the burgeoning chemical reaction result in his transformation into (cue echo effect)

**OVERLY ATTRACTIVE MAN**  
(OAM for short)

Aided by housewife with six kids UMA POWERS, herself transformed into the tectonically powerful THIGHMASTER, OAM makes a fateful decision to choose good over evil, in the process confronting those musical and fashion scourges of the eighties ELTON JOHN and BOY GEORGE, and the unspeakably evil master of malevolence: FECAL MAN”

## No Rhys for the wicked

Rhys Nicholson is 15. He's the person behind Overly Attractive Man, NINJA RADIO's first ever serial. Rhys spends a lot of time at the Loft Youth Venue. He is involved as volunteer at gigs and with INZINE the Venue's Zine. But over the past 12 months Rhys has turned much of his attention to the Loft's latest project: NINJA RADIO. Rhys was one of the original members of the Ninja project and OVERLY ATTRACTIVE MAN has been part of NINJA almost from the beginning.

***We wanted to reclaim hip hop for us rather than all the American stuff that Triple J is now playing***

Adam Henry is 25. He got involved with the Loft one day when he wandered by some people doing some aerosol art at Woodberry, one of Newcastle's western suburbs. He recognised one of the participants and asked if he could be involved. Adam started attending the Venue's hip hop and electronica workshop group: BEATS AND RHYMES. He formed a duo (NAMELESS) with Aza, another member. When Ninja radio started he signed up to be part. Adam runs a two hour show on Monday nights: URBAN FIX with Adam, Aza and Begsie. They play mainly local stuff. Adam is passionate about Ninja. His background in music production allowed him to quickly become

proficient in radio production as well.

***I'd always wanted to create a radio serial***

Michelle Nunn is not that much older than Adam. She is the Project Coordinator at the Loft Youth Venue. Two years ago the Loft was awarded an Australian Youth Foundation ON TRACK LEADERSHIP GRANT. Michelle took responsibility for ON TRACK and set about working with a group of young people to develop a project which would foster leadership amongst young people in Newcastle.

The group eventually settled upon the idea of a youth run and youth-oriented radio station. A youth radio station would allow young people to make their own radio programs: documentaries; live gig recordings; opportunities for new and emerging bands to get their music out to a wider audience; specialist interest programs. Above all a youth radio station would broadcast stuff the kids wanted to make and hear.\*

How do you start a radio station? Well you need equipment; and you need to know how to use that equipment and you need product, hours and hours of product. And above all you need a licence to broadcast.

For the Ninja kids it soon became apparent that getting a licence was a difficult process. They needed more resources than they could possibly hope to acquire. And it was likely to take years to achieve.



And years were not something that they had an abundance of. Unless of course they wanted to start a middle-age radio station. And there were already heaps of them around. So confronted and eventually overwhelmed by the bevy of bureaucratic, financial and legislative roadblocks to securing a broadcast licence, the group decided to look for an alternative solution. And what they came up with was simplicity itself: online broadcasting. Just sit at your computer and listen. Voila **Ninja Radio!!** In September 2005 Ninja radio was born.

maintain their ongoing viability.

Throughout the development of NINJA the young people involved had been in discussions with TIN as to how they could work



**Rhys Nicholson & Michelle Nunn**

## **NINJA RADIO: Keeping young ninjas off the streets and on your radio**

Sometimes there is a synchronicity at work in the world that makes for elegance and neatness. Paralleling Ninja's development was the emergence of TIN RADIO. TIN is the online radio arm of the Newcastle multimedia conglomerate known as the OCTAPOD ASSOCIATION. OCTAPOD runs the annual THIS IS NOT ART (TINA) Festival in Newcastle. For the past 2 years TIN RADIO has been an integral part of TINA via a temporary broadcast licence.

One of the difficulties of starting and maintaining an initiative like a youth radio station is that, by definition, there is going to be a regular turnover of membership. Young people grow up, become adults and move on. One of the issues which the young Ninjas had to address was how would they

together. Towards the end of 2005, agreement in principle was reached to have NINJA operate under the mantle of TIN. The collaboration with TIN provides a structure for NINJA. Importantly, it also provides an ongoing radio involvement for NINJA members to progress to after they move on. TIN provides studio facilities and mentoring for young people and devotes a specified number of hours per week to NINJA contributions. For its part NINJA contributes product and resources via the On Track Grant.

A Memorandum of Understanding setting out this relationship between NINJA and TIN should be in place by March 2006.

In 2005 funding from ARTSTART provided the opportunity for NINJA to take on a regional role. NINJA ran a series of radio production workshops to train up young people in regional centres of the Hunter. The aim is to create little NINJA outposts in Hunter Valley towns. And because NINJA is an online radio station each of these outposts can contribute to NINJA via their computers.

The radio production workshops had another beneficial spinoff. The Loft is keen to promote peer mentoring as an effective training methodology. The Loft was able to employ Adam Henry as a peer educator to help run the radio workshops. This in turn has enhanced his skills and abilities and employability, and enabled him to become part of the Loft's casual worker pool. In recognition of Adam's commitment and skills, he was appointed TIN's Station Manager for the month of October 2005.


So what does the future hold for Ninja? Well one of the benefits of being an online venture is that you can store material and have it available for download (podcasting). So the Ninjas are in the process of setting up a computer server which can house both this product and which can facilitate the download process. Here will reside recordings of gigs held at the Loft as well as all the material "broadcast" now and into the future.

## **How can you access Ninja? Simple:**

**listen to TIN**  
[www.tin.org.au](http://www.tin.org.au)

**Contact**  
Michelle Nunn  
Projects Officer  
The Loft Youth Venue  
(02) 4974 2090

Give it a try.

\* See Bureaucratic Youthspeak under buzz terms **empowering** and **ownership** 



# Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre

Melanie Conlon, YAPRap feature writer

## Youth success story - Emmanuel Johnson

Emmanuel came from Liberia, West Africa to Australia when he was just 15 years old. When he was 2, Emmanuel and his brother were separated from their mother and other siblings because she was sick and could not care for them any longer. Then the civil war broke out and he went to Guinea and lived in a refugee camp with his brother.

When he first came to Australia the Government recommended that he go to Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) to get help with his education and community information. Emmanuel now reports that he has been helped with education support, community information, computer courses, fun activities and help with his music career.

Recently Emmanuel performed as a backup singer for a prominent African singer at the Enmore Theatre, Sydney. He has

also produced 2 CDs with the help of MRC, the lyrics he has written himself.

Emmanuel performed in a music group at home in Africa but feels there are more opportunities here in Australia. He is trying to complete his music group to



record a new CD about different people's experiences. His dream would be to record a CD with a big label and perform a concert in Blacktown.

Emmanuel also dreams about the day he will reunite with his mother and has plans to return to his homeland to meet with her and his other siblings.

## A bit about Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre

In 2005 Blacktown MRC celebrated 20 years of service to the Blacktown community. Established in 1985 to cater to the needs of newly arrived migrants, Blacktown MRC has expanded and evolved over the years as the needs in the area have changed. Now MRC boasts over 50 staff and many new programs that cater for youth, family groups and the elderly.

Thanks to funding from DIMIA'S Community Settlement Service Scheme (CSSS), Blacktown MRC has been able to upgrade a part-time youth worker position to a full-time permanent position of Humanitarian youth worker.

Sheetal Challam started working for Blacktown MRC in 2003 as the CSSS part-time youth worker and also as the part-time NESB youth worker. She now divides her time between the CSSS youth worker role and the Small and emerging communities project coordinator



role as the programs have expanded.

Sheetal noted that the focus on youth is a relatively new concept to MRC that surfaced about 5 years ago. MRC began to focus services for youth aged between 13 – 25, originating through funding from WSAAS (Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme). This highlighted the needs of young refugees attempting to settle in Australia and motivated MRC to respond to these needs. In the early stages the youth worker position was only a part-time position, however it became apparent that much more could be achieved and

group. As many other workers from community agencies know, this is no mean feat as most community agencies rely on the help of local volunteers.

- Partnership programs between Blacktown MRC and TAFE where young Sudanese people can participate in adventure activities such as abseiling, canyoning and camping in the bush. This enables the youth to experience new adventures and learn about Australian culture, which subsequently helps them to feel more comfortable in their new country.

involved in leadership activities, learning communication skills and public speaking. These young people now have the opportunity to educate youth workers by presenting their personal stories about their journey and the challenges they faced when settling in Australia.

## Youth worker training

The young people who participated in the youth mentoring project are then eligible to become keynote speakers in the “Pathways

“These groups all have different settlement needs and cultural practices that she feels youth workers should be aware of when dealing with these young people.”

the position became fulltime in July 2005.

Sheetal reported that one of the first youth programs included touch typing classes that worked really well with the new refugees as the software package was developed in Australia and the graphics included pictures of Australian flora and fauna. Young people were then interested to learn about Australian culture and were introduced to our natural resources.

## MRC youth programs

On average about 40 young people access services at Blacktown MRC each week.

Today, the youth programs and recent events include:

- A refugee homework support group that boasts an average of 20 – 25 young refugee participants. A major recruitment drive led to the recruitment of 18 new volunteers to run the

- School holiday activities – The last school holiday program included great activities such as computer courses to develop basic computer skills, a trip to Featherdale Park and various other holiday activities.
- “Joining hands” – During youth week, 2005 “joining hands” was run as a joint project between Blacktown MRC and Mt Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency (MECA). It included an overnight youth leadership camp funded by Blacktown City Council targeting young people from Pacific Islander and Sudanese communities to attempt to bring them together and promote an increased understanding and awareness of each culture. 12 young people participated and workers noted it was a great success.
- Youth mentoring project – Young refugees from Sierra Leone, Sudan, Liberia and Afghanistan have become

to communities – Inroads to emerging youth” training run by Blacktown MRC. In these training courses youth workers are educated about the history and culture of young people from these backgrounds. This enables youth workers to gain a better perspective about the hardship young people faced whilst in their home countries and also in Australia coping with a new language, new home, a completely different culture, different governmental system and for many the loss of family and significant others.

Some of the young people talk about their personal journeys and hardships faced in a touching speech that helps youth workers to understand their plight.

Sheetal comments that the emerging refugee youth cultures who have contact with Blacktown MRC include Sudanese, Liberian, Sierra Leonian, Afghani and Pakistani young people. These groups all have

(continued over page)



# Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre

(continued from previous page)

different settlement needs and cultural practices that she feels youth workers should be aware of when dealing with these young people. She believes that workers should not generalise and take for granted that they all have the same needs and issues as each other. The training “Inroads to emerging youth cultures” highlights this.

## What works with your young people & engaging the different cultural groups?

According to Sheetal their success with young people is due to a number of different reasons. Her tips include;

- Involve young people in fun activities to teach serious information
- Let the young people tell stories about their journey as it brings out the issues that need work and they can then improve on their communication skills. It also allows them the freedom to talk about their problems openly without judgement
- Run fun stuff such as art workshops, hip hop workshops, and camps are an all-time favourite

## What is special about MRC?

Sheetal believes that Blacktown MRC is special to so many young people because of the committed workers

and good communication between staff. She believes that workers at MRC make it what it is and go the extra mile to do what it takes to help everyone they can. The funding bodies then make it all possible and make their dream a reality.

## What advice can you pass on to youth workers to help work with refugee young people?

Sheetal believes that the main point is to raise awareness of the issues for differing cultural groups.

- Be aware, empathic and understanding of the needs of young refugees from different cultural backgrounds
- Do not generalise as the issues for one group of refugees may be totally different from another group
- Identify settlement issues
- Understand that the issues constantly evolve

## How do you advertise?

Through flyers, advertise in local newspapers, advertise on websites and go regularly to local schools. Sheetal feels that word of mouth is the most successful means. This comes from good work with young people who then go and tell their friends and family.

## Chatting to David

David is another young person


who attends Blacktown MRC on a regular basis. David is 14 years old and came to Australia a year ago from Sudan. He has now graduated from the Evans Intensive English Centre to mainstream high school this year.

When asked about his favourite activities David talks about the Harmony camp between Sudanese young people and Pacific Islander young people. He loved canoeing and the flying fox but can't seem to pick the best part because he “loved all of it”.

David attends MRC regularly to take computer classes and participates in the dancing and hip hop classes. Sheetal reports that the music teacher boasts about his fantastic voice.

When asked what he likes the best about MRC he reports that he loves the friendly staff who are “just the best”, computers, homework support and the fun activities such as the camps.

## For more details...

So, as you can see Blacktown MRC is doing some fantastic work with young people who have to come to Australia under such unfortunate circumstances. If these young people are able to access services such as MRC or workers who have been appropriately trained it may just make their journey in Australia that much easier. 

## Contact:

Sheetal Challam  
(02) 9621 6633  
schallam@blacktownmrc.org.au



# Preventing crime

## Part 3 in our youth crime series

Garner Clancey, CHD Partners

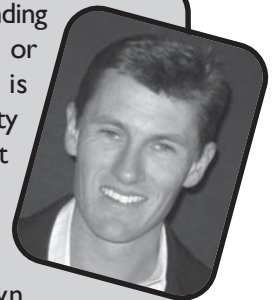
### Part 1: Youth Crime in NSW Summary

The first article in this Youth Crime Series (YAPRap Nov-Dec 2005) provided an overview of youth crime in NSW. Despite the limitations of available data, it would seem clear that NSW is not in the grips of a youth crime wave. Of the more than 700,000 young people aged between 10 and 18 years in NSW, less than 320 are in detention on any one day, with less than 10,000 court appearances and less than 10,000 cautions and youth justice conferences (combined) held annually. Self-report data suggests that a significant minority of young people offend, but stop offending with little or no contact with police or the juvenile justice system. However, the small group who become chronic offenders are likely to have repeated contact with the criminal justice system (68% of those young people appearing in Children's Court in 1995 had a subsequent court appearance in the eight year follow-up period).

### Part 2: Causes of Crime (YAPRap Jan 2006)

Why is it, that any young people offend and in particular,

why do a small group persist with offending for many years? Agreement on a single or small number of causes of crime is problematic, largely due to the wide variety in offences. A professional car thief might have very different reasons for offending than the young person who steals a letter box. When considering reasons for offending, distinction is often drawn between risk factors (increased likelihood of offending) and protective factors (reduced likelihood of offending). These factors can operate at the individual level (low impulse control, anti-social attitudes and beliefs), within the family (erratic and inconsistent parenting, offending by family members); the school (poor school performance, truancy, suspension / expulsion) and within the community / neighbourhood (low collective efficacy, high mobility, low informal social control). The information presented in these two previous articles provides the basis for considering preventative techniques and strategies in this article.



### Introduction to Crime Prevention

The suffering caused by crime is considerable. Victims of crime can suffer long-term physical, financial and emotional consequences. While measuring the costs of crime is a very difficult task, one attempt to do this revealed the following:

- Homicide – total cost \$930m or \$1.6 million per victim
- Vehicle theft – total cost \$880m

- or \$6,000 per theft of vehicle
- Theft from vehicles - \$530 million or \$550 per theft from vehicle
- Shop theft - total cost \$810 million or \$110 per shop theft
- Criminal damage - total cost \$1.34 billion or \$700 per incident of criminal damage
- Assault – total cost \$1.44bn or \$1,600 per assault
- Burglary - total cost \$2.41 billion or \$2,400 per burglary

- Robbery - total cost \$600m or \$3,600 per robbery
- Sexual assault - total cost \$230 million or \$2,500 per sexual assault
- Fraud - total cost \$5.8 billion
- Drug offences - total cost \$1.96 billion!

Reducing the number of victims is clearly a valuable social policy objective.

(continued over page)



# Preventing crime

(continued from previous page)

Crime prevention can take many forms. At times, it can seem as though almost any social policy initiative has crime prevention benefit. Providing employment and job readiness schemes, for example, reduce unemployment, increase self worth and self efficacy, improve material well-being and reduce boredom – all potentially positive outcomes in terms of preventing crime. Given the diversity of activities that might be

deemed to bring about crime prevention outcomes, it is worth trying to sort the different types of prevention (see table below).

## The Rise of Crime Prevention

In recent decades, in one form or another, there has been considerable interest in crime prevention. Some of the reasons for this (re)discovery

include:

- Recognition of the limits and costs of the existing criminal justice system as the major institutional response to crime. Increasingly people came to recognize that the deployment of greater numbers of police and more punitive criminal justice intervention had little or no impact on crime rates. Reliance on criminal justice interventions and continued

Crime Prevention Classification	Explanation
Criminal Justice	Criminal justice crime prevention operates through attempts to prevent re-offending. Drug courts, probation orders, intensive community supervision, post-releasing housing assistance and rehabilitation programs in prison all seek to prevent further offending. If successful, these interventions prevent recidivism (repeat offending) and hence prevent crime.
Situational	Situational crime prevention reflects the rational choice offender theory.* Situational approaches seek to prevent crime by reducing opportunities for offending (more secure premises), increasing the risks associated with offending (improved lighting and security personnel), reducing the rewards of offending (time lock safes and engraving schemes) and removing provocations (responsible service of alcohol) and excuses for offending (establishing conditions of entry).
Social	Social crime prevention encompasses numerous quite broad strategies. Access to education, provision of welfare services, mental health services and youth services are all examples of social crime prevention. These programs / services seek to improve conditions often associated with criminality (poverty, unequal access to education / health / welfare services, marginalization, etc).
Developmental	Developmental crime prevention seeks to improve early childhood and life circumstances as children develop. Early intervention in the form of nursing visits to new mothers, parenting support programs and early childhood educational programs in disadvantaged areas are all examples of developmental crime prevention. By providing a good start to life, it has been shown that many long-term outcomes can accrue. It is this form of crime prevention that has become increasingly appealing, as research revealed the long-term cost savings for government by investing in effective, targeted early intervention schemes.

\* See article 2 of this series for a detailed explanation of the rational choice offender theory.



growth in expenditure in the system became less appealing, particularly at a time when the role, size and function of governments came under closer scrutiny. The spiralling costs and central role of government in seeking to reduce and prevent crime came under attack, particularly by the conservative governments in the United States and the United Kingdom of the 1980s.

- There was no evidence that deterrence through punishment would have any significant effect on the rising crime rates. Similarly, continued reliance on the deterrence effects of a court appearance and court-imposed sanction, such as imprisonment, had been shown to have little impact on crime rates. The introduction of the most punitive sanction – the death penalty – for example, had little impact on the rising homicide rate in the United States. More recently, the self-report study by Baker (see article 1 in my Youth Crime Series) demonstrates that only a small percentage of young people reporting involvement in crime are actually arrested. As such, the threat of punishment is somewhat remote and not consistent with the experiences of many people engaged in criminal activity. The risks of arrest are generally low, and as such, relying on court-imposed sentences to send a message to the community about the risks of crime is at best likely to have only marginal impact.
- Social reform programs designed to prevent crime were providing little evidence of effectiveness. The ‘failure of the rehabilitative ideal’ in part lead to the ‘nothing works’ attitude, in which it was argued that there was little or no

benefit to both individual or social intervention strategies. The continued increase in crime, despite the investment in social reform programs, resulted in some questioning the value of such approaches.

- The adoption and impact of the public health model, focusing on preventative medicine, had implications for various social policies, including crime prevention. Adopting strategies to encourage healthy lifestyles, rather than waiting for illness and subsequent treatment, provided positive outcomes. This model soon began to be applied in other social policy settings, particularly given the potential economic benefits of investing funds now to save spiralling costs later.
- Consistent with considerations about the role and size of government associated with the economic rationalist, conservative approaches to government adopted by US President Reagan and UK Prime Minister Thatcher, crime prevention provided an opportunity to devolve responsibility for crime prevention to the community and corporate sector. Encouraging communities to help each other prevent crime, through schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch and establishing partnerships with corporations to fund or assist in crime prevention, meant the allocation of less government funding and was in keeping with the thinking of these governments about the roles that government should assume.

These are just some of the factors that have driven increased attention and focus on attempts to prevent crime in recent decades.

## Role of the youth sector in crime prevention

The youth sector is a significant player in crime prevention, often with little understanding of exactly how. Provision of crisis support, accommodation, alcohol and other drug services and recreational activities all contribute to the web of services, programs and initiatives which prevent crime. Young people would be more likely to be involved in crime, if it were not for these services (though proving a direct relationship between crime prevention and existing youth services can at times be challenging).

I believe that it is possible for youth services to provide an even greater contribution to crime prevention, if certain steps are taken. The following provides some guidance about ways that more effective intervention can be achieved.\* (See table on next page.)

It should be apparent that many of the principles described above will be consistent with principles of effective youth work and program development. By being very clear about the purpose of a program, the specific risk factors being addressed and how the program will prevent crime, then it is likely that positive results will be achieved.

A few further tips for effectively preventing crime:

- Discuss youth crime at your local inter-agency meetings – a discussion across agencies might reveal some key youth crime trends that could be tackled by a partnership approach. For example, seasonal factors tend to increase (or decrease) crime. Malicious

(continued over page)



# Preventing crime

(continued from previous page)


<b>Strategy &amp; Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted Approach – target areas and young people most at-risk of offending. Local crime data and liaison with police can help identify areas and individuals at-risk, peak times of offending, common offences and critical causes</li> <li>• Establish clear defined objectives associated with identified risk factors; ambiguous or ill-directed interventions will not prevent crime</li> </ul>
<b>Service Design &amp; Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive intervention, ensuring that sufficient hours and weeks are invested to tackle (often) long-standing issues</li> <li>• Place young people at the centre of any program – promote participation, build rapport, build ownership</li> <li>• Utilise educational methods and activities that are engaging, challenging and associated with addressing identified needs</li> </ul>
<b>Staffing &amp; Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate resources must be available</li> <li>• Staff must be provided with appropriate training, supervision and support</li> </ul>
<b>Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build monitoring and evaluation into the program</li> <li>• Establish clear procedures and protocols</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships &amp; Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-agency partnerships are essential, as causes of crime are diverse</li> <li>• Working with other agencies allows referral and informal counselling during a program</li> </ul>

\*The information provided has been drawn from Lowenstein, P; Warburton, F and Kelly, M (1999) Modern Youth Work and Crime Prevention, NACRO / Crime Concern, London.

damage associated with under-age drinking increases in summer months, particularly in areas adjoining beaches, parks and reserves. A local roster to provide outreach services on weekend nights could help stem these events.

- Be identified as a referral point – some young people who are cautioned by police will be at-risk of further offending, if appropriate supports are not put in place. By working with the local Youth Liaison Officer, it might be possible to provide referral details for dissemination at cautions and if permission is provided by the young person, contact could be made to facilitate contact with the youth service.

- Provide alternative services for young people disengaging from school – the point at which young people start to disengage from school is often a time when drift into offending is greatest. Working with local education services to provide meaningful alternatives for those students who are suspended or expelled will have many potential benefits.

By contributing to crime prevention outcomes, youth services can protect young people from becoming victims and help tackle one of the enduring challenges facing the youth sector – negative perceptions of young people. 

## Future articles in this Youth Crime Series

- Skate parks and crime
- Aboriginal young people
- A blueprint for the future

## More info

garner@chdpartners.com.au  
0425 231 825  
www.chdpartners.com.au



# What's On

---

## **4 March 2006, Tempe** **Pacific Unity Festival**

A celebration of South Pacific Cultures. Stalls, entertainment, mixed touch footy & mixed/female netball, food & much, much more! Contact: [pacific\\_unity@hotmail.com](mailto:pacific_unity@hotmail.com)

## **9 March - 1 June 2006, Sydney** **Personal & political tools for social change**

Exploring tools for social action using popular education and 'participatory action-response' principles and processes.  
[www.cpe.uts.edu.au](http://www.cpe.uts.edu.au)

## **10 & 30 March 2006, Sydney** **Advocacy training courses**

10 March - Work the System - an introduction to advocacy  
30 March - Effective Advocacy Skills & Strategies  
Contact: Carolyn: [cgrenville@piac.asn.au](mailto:cgrenville@piac.asn.au) or 02 8898 6506.

## **21 March 2006** **Harmony Day**

An opportunity for all Australians to celebrate our cultural diversity, re-commit to our common values of respect and goodwill, and to say 'no' to racism. Order free postcards, posters etc from [www.harmony.gov.au/harmony.htm](http://www.harmony.gov.au/harmony.htm)

## **March-June 2006, various locations** **Industrial Relations in NSW**

This seminar covers the current NSW industrial relations system and key provisions of the new federal industrial relations legislation. Bankstown, Sydney, Newcastle, Wagga, Lismore, Sydney, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Penrith, Tamworth, Armidale, Sutherland, Dubbo, Chatswood, Castle Hill, Nowra.  
[www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au/workplace/workshops/industrial+relations+in+nsw.html](http://www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au/workplace/workshops/industrial+relations+in+nsw.html) or call Workplace Advice: (02) 9020 4612

## **26-27 June 2006, Parramatta** **A survival guide for youth workers**

2 day training program for non-residential youth service workers. Have you been employed as a youth worker for less than 6 months or want to update your skills?  
[www.yapa.org.au/yapa/events](http://www.yapa.org.au/yapa/events)

**There is a lot more what's on at [www.yapa.org.au](http://www.yapa.org.au). To submit your own event for what's on, email the details in one paragraph in the body of the email (no attachments) to [info@yapa.org.au](mailto:info@yapa.org.au) with the subject line: whats on.**



# News Hound



## Young people's experiences of negotiating at work

Now that the Federal government's new industrial relations law is in place, YAPA wants to know how it might work for young people. We are researching young people's experiences of negotiating at work. We want to find out how confident young people are in negotiating with new employers, how they feel about finding the work they want and what is most important to them in the workforce. This survey will give us a great indication about young people and workplace relations.

We need young people to complete a confidential survey, which takes about 8 minutes. In particular, we need surveys from disadvantaged young people, rural young people, school students and unemployed people (as long as they had a job once - even a newspaper round). However we are happy for any young person 12-25 years old from anywhere in Australia to take part.

We need completed surveys by **17 March 2006**. Enquiries to John Ferguson (email him) or phone ext. 5, (02) 9319 1100.

At [www.yapa.org.au](http://www.yapa.org.au) you can:

- \* fill in the online survey, or
- \* download the survey as a PDF file to fax or post back.

## Young people needed

The Foundation for Young Australians, a dynamic not-for-profit organisation that funds young people and organisations that work with

young people, have recently undergone a huge restructure and are calling for young people to join their new Volunteers Network as well as their Board.

This is a fantastic opportunity for young people to get involved in a great organisation that supports a diverse range of young people and organisations, from regional to metropolitan, multicultural to queer. The FYA funds ACON's Queer Peer Project, and they are organising an underage dance party for Mardi Gras 2006.

Just go to the website at [www.youngaustralians.org](http://www.youngaustralians.org). They look forward to hearing from you! Closing date is 9th March 2006.

## Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course

The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course teaches participants how to recognise the major mental health problems experienced by people (depression, anxiety, psychosis, substance abuse). It will also teach participants how to apply "mental health first aid" to people who are in crisis; for example, people who are suicidal, having panic attacks, experiencing acute psychosis, or those overdosing from substance misuse. The MHFA course also looks at how to make appropriate referrals to professionals in your local area and how to encourage people to use "self-help" strategies.

The MHFA course runs over 12 hours in 4 x 3 hour modules. It can be delivered in 2 full days - or in 4 x 3 hour sessions. The course costs \$180 per person (minimum 10 participants) for the 2 days. At this

stage we are running courses for businesses and community groups who can get a group of participants together. Groups of around 10 - 16 are usually best. If you would like to attend the course individually, we can let you know when there is a group running by providing your contact details.

Feel free to call or email if you have more questions or would like to organise a time and price.

- Mark Baxter, Registered Psychologist, Personal Support Programme Coordinator, Access Community Group, (02) 4286 5601, [mark@acg.com.au](mailto:mark@acg.com.au)

## Active young people - showcase in YAPRap

YAPA wants to have an article in *YAPRap* each month featuring a youth activism project, campaign, group or event. It can be anything at all, as long as it is run by young people. Whether you are changing the world ... or just changing your little patch of the world, we want to hear about it!

2 ways your story can get into YAPRap:

1. You can write your own YAPRap article. YAPA will provide \$50 to your group, or \$50 in store vouchers to the writer, for published articles.

or

2. YAPA can send out one of our writers to interview your group, take photos and write up the story.

The first step is to let YAPA know about what you are doing - just a sentence or two in an email, and send it to [info@yapa.org.au](mailto:info@yapa.org.au) with a subject YAPRAP IDEA. 