

# Looking Ahead

## Youth Resource Kit

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## **FOREWORD**

Young people are important and valuable members of our community.

The challenge and priority for the Community Renewal Program, and other areas of government, is to recognise the contribution that young people make to their community and how they can benefit from participating in the life of their community.

Community Renewal's goal is to develop communities where people feel valued, safe and proud. It is currently operating in 12 areas throughout Queensland: Manoora, Vincent, Rasmussen, Palm Island, Caboolture South, Deception Bay, Inala, Goodna, Loganlea, Kingston, Woodridge and Eagleby.

The Program welcomes the participation of young people in, and contribution to, community life and government decision-making processes and to achieving this goal.

This kit is a valuable resource for government representatives and community members who seek to encourage greater participation by young people in renewal activities.

I encourage you to become familiar with the ideas and initiatives presented in this kit and to consider the enormous benefits in encouraging young people to participate in the life of your community.

**Robert Swarten MP**

Minister for Public Works and Housing

## WHY A RESOURCE KIT?

In December 2001, evaluation of the Community Renewal Program was completed. The evaluation report (*Transforming Places, Engaging People*, 2001) outlines a number of key findings and recommendations for how the Program can continue to improve the way it engages with people living and working in renewal communities. One of the recommendations focussed on improving the Program's engagement with young people.

Community Renewal will encourage greater participation by young people by:

- ◆ confirming young people, children and their families as a priority for the Program
- ◆ adopting a more integrated response to young people in renewal areas
- ◆ engaging with young people in decision-making about matters that affect their interests.

This resource kit provides ideas for including and enhancing the participation of young people in Community Renewal activities by:

- ◆ discussing some of the current issues faced by young people
- ◆ providing information and guiding principles of good practice and how to achieve successful processes, initiatives and opportunities with young people
- ◆ presenting a range of successful and innovative initiatives that have been developed and put into action at a local, national and international level.

The kit is designed to provide you with practical guidance and information for responding to a range of needs and issues impacting on young people in your local areas, as well as provide practical examples for how to engage young people in renewal activities.

## **SECTION ONE**

### **HOW OUR ATTITUDES MAY INFLUENCE THE WAY WE PERCEIVE AND WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

In engaging with young people it is important to recognise how we view young people. Unfortunately there are many negative views about young people that influence our perception of them. For instance, when we think of young people do we focus on problems they face or do we focus on what they can and do contribute to the community?

While many young people experience complex and inter-related issues, such as abusive or neglectful families, problems with the law, substance abuse, homelessness, problems at school, and family breakdown, it is often our interpretation of the issues that determines our ability to engage with young people.

Like other groups in the community, young people have an invaluable amount of knowledge, personal experience, creativity, vision and energy. At the same time, young people are often still gaining experience, skills and knowledge, which contributes to developing and refining their identity.

Furthermore, while young people are developing their identities, they are also making choices; choices about relationships, education, work, etc. Being a young person is about being in a time of change, it is about learning and about developing an identity and finding where one “fits”.

It can be easy to stereotype all young people, or simplify the problems they face, in order to understand. However, to do so is to make generalisations rather than understand the complex mix of social, economical, community, family and personal factors that influence those young people.

While many young people can and do overcome the difficulties that are impacting on them, it is important to remember the role you can play in assisting young people to feel valued and included in their communities. The goal of Community Renewal is to develop communities where people – including young people – feel valued, safe and proud.

## THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY

The role of the community is vital in engaging and valuing young people. This is particularly the case with Community Renewal areas where there is a strong emphasis on finding local solutions to local issues.

There are a number of settings that play an important role in the lives of young people. These settings can be formal such as the home, school and work, or informal such as public spaces and neighbourhoods. Settings are very important in shaping the lives and wellbeing of children and young people.

How do we value and recognise young people? By involving them in decision-making processes, and encouraging positive and active participation in their community.

Communities can act as vehicles to support and include young people by offering opportunities or pathways to encourage their participation. Community initiatives must be developed and planned to achieve participation by young people. Involving young people themselves in developing and designing such initiatives is critical to their success.

## YOUNG PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY RENEWAL AREAS

Young people between the ages of 12 and 25 make up a sizeable proportion of the population of renewal areas, with proportions ranging from 13.6 per cent to 19.8 per cent. Despite these statistics, there have been relatively low levels of engagement of young people in Community Renewal. The voices of young people are often not easy to find, either in the Community Action Plans (CAPs) or Community Reference Groups (CRGs).

One way to consider how well communities operate in meeting the needs of their young people is to investigate the outcomes for young people as they move through transitions, such as from school to work or from home to independent living. Some outcome measures of this include school retention rates, the level of teenage pregnancy, employment, and youth involvement in the criminal justice system.

**School retention:** In all renewal areas, the Year 8 to Year 12 retention rates in secondary schools that served those communities were less than the Queensland rate. In 2000, the difference was greater than 20 per cent in five renewal areas.

**Teenage pregnancies:** Seven of the 12 renewal communities have rates of teenage pregnancy in excess of the State average. In four communities the rate is around twice the State average.

**Unemployment:** On the basis of data from the 1996 Census, all of the renewal communities had very high unemployment rates among its young people, often more than twice the State unemployment rate. This was particularly evident in the 15-19 year age group.

**Involvement in the justice system:** During 2000, all renewal communities except Caboolture South had rates of court appearances by children and young people that exceeded the overall Queensland rate. Supervised Youth Justice Orders follow a similar pattern of distribution across renewal areas.

Young people living in renewal communities do not experience the same opportunities as their contemporaries in many other parts of Queensland. Furthermore, their chances of being faced by a combination of factors that may hinder their development toward adult responsibilities and opportunities are greater.

In response to these situations, Community Renewal has spent \$4.4 million on projects and activities that have had young people as a major focus in the year ending June 2002. This figure equates to 12 per cent of Community Renewal grants overall. These projects have covered a range of categories including community safety, employment and training, community services and facilities, and sport and recreation.

## **SECTION TWO**

### **ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION BY YOUNG PEOPLE**

Engaging with young people brings a number of benefits to everyone – the young people themselves, organisations involved and members of the community.

Benefits to young people include:

- ◆ development of skills, knowledge, confidence and awareness
- ◆ an opportunity to exercise their rights and understand their responsibilities in society
- ◆ an increase in their connection to and ownership of communities and confirmation of their value when they participate in public activities
- ◆ development of social ability and social responsibility
- ◆ constructive relationships between age groups.

Benefits to members of the community include:

- ◆ an awareness of young people's contribution to the life of the community
- ◆ utilisation of untapped community resources (eg. knowledge of youth issues and culture, and high levels of energy and commitment)
- ◆ the opportunity to challenge negative stereotypes of young people in society.

Young people have a great deal to offer communities and, therefore, Community Renewal. Young people often have fresh and creative ideas, personal experience or knowledge about issues and needs; in this way, you may find yourself in a position to learn from them. Positive relationships and supportive networks can be built through engaging with and involving young people in your processes.

### **BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION BY YOUNG PEOPLE**

The concept of consulting with young people is accepted and welcomed by government, yet the practical aspects of engaging with young people (through consultation processes) become a barrier in itself (OYA, 2002).

It is important, therefore, to acknowledge the range of barriers that exist, which prevent some young people from participating in community consultation and activities. Failing to acknowledge and understand the barriers that some young people face may result in your efforts being fruitless.

Such barriers can include:

- ◆ low self-esteem
- ◆ level of maturity
- ◆ peer pressure
- ◆ disadvantage, disability or marginalisation
- ◆ lack of skills, training and experience to actively participate
- ◆ lack of money to travel
- ◆ adults who express an attitude against youth participation or a fear of losing their power/authority to young people
- ◆ young people's suspicion of formal processes
- ◆ individual nature of many youth recreational activities
- ◆ diverse youth cultures
- ◆ organisational, community or cultural opposition to participation by young people.

The more you understand about the potential barriers that exist, the more you can do to work towards overcoming them and encourage more young people to get involved in your activities.

The following suggestions for removing barriers and promoting active participation by young people are straightforward, yet important:

- ◆ develop confidence in young people and their abilities
- ◆ develop opportunities for young people to develop skills, knowledge and leadership capability
- ◆ involve young people in the planning and initial ideas stage of activities
- ◆ provide networking opportunities
- ◆ provide equal decision-making opportunities
- ◆ conduct activities where young people themselves do the research
- ◆ trust that young people are capable of taking on positions of authority and responsibility
- ◆ promote honest and open communication (International Youth foundation, 1997).

For more information on engaging with young people, refer to the Office of Youth Affairs publication *Two Way Street: How government departments can engage with young people through consultation* (2002) and the *Queensland Youth Charter: Queensland Government's commitment to engaging with young people* (2002).

## **SECTION THREE**

A number of good practice principles and strategies are presented in the following pages, which will help you develop strategies for working with young people.

### **WHAT IS GOOD PRACTICE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?**

Good practice is about improving the way we work to deliver greater results. Achieving good practice involves continually reflecting and, if necessary, adjusting the way you do something to suit a particular target group or issue.

Working toward or putting into action good practice principles will mean that your efforts are aiming to appropriately respond to the needs and issues of young people.

Furthermore, if you develop and use examples of good practice in your dealings with young people, you will have the opportunity to continually improve your efforts and achieve successful results.

For the purpose of this document, we have used the term youth participation to mean activities that include both consultation and youth development. Youth development builds the skills and capacity of young people.

## **PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

1. Focus on enhancing the strengths of young people.
2. Involve young people at all levels of planning and decision-making.
3. Acknowledge and address the fact that young people are a diverse group and there are a number of barriers that stop them from being included and participating.
4. Focus on learning experiences that build on capabilities and skills while maximising opportunities for fun.
5. Respect the values and identities of communities and families. This also involves enabling young people to access services and seek advice from the community and youth sector.
6. Encourage communities to value and engage young people. Young people can offer valuable insight, experience and teach others.
7. Develop partnerships with young people, services, organisations, agencies, and other community groups.
8. Focus on developing initiatives that encourage young people to develop and apply creative and innovative ideas and solutions.
9. Encourage and respect individual choice. Young people are different and have different interests. Therefore, initiatives must be flexible and diverse.
10. Recognise the contribution of all stakeholders who have a vested interest in working with young people.
11. Encourage ethical and honest promotion of programs and initiatives. That is, ensure that advertising strategies are respectful and do not patronise young people.
12. Provide opportunities for young people to provide service to their community in a way that is meaningful to both them and the community.
13. Strengthen social networks by increasing opportunities for forming supportive and caring relationships with other young people and adults.

(Adopted from Ausyouth, *Good Practice in Youth Development: A framework of Principles*, p. 7, 2001)

## IDEAS FOR INCLUDING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH PARTICIPATION

Before being able to apply the principles of good practice, it is important to understand the concerns and issues impacting on and the needs of all young people in your community.

To find out what the key needs and issues are for all groups of young people in your community, the following ideas are examples of how you can seek the information you need.

Employ **Youth Workers** to go into your community and directly engage with the young people who are more vulnerable and harder to reach. Research has suggested that this strategy is an effective one for building connections and relationships, and working closely with and in a responsive way to young people. This strategy also involves smaller groups or individuals, which allows for activities to be tailored to their needs. In many cases the contact is less formal and involves meeting young people in spaces that are comfortable and familiar to them.

Ask **school authorities** and **community organisations** to inform you of any issues of which they may be aware. Existing youth organisations have an established relationship with many young people as well as a range of expertise and resources. To find out about youth organisations in your area, contact the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland on telephone (07) 3844 7713, 1800 177 899 or visit [www.yanq.org.au](http://www.yanq.org.au)

**Approach young people directly** about the issues they would like addressed.

**Peer research**, in which young people conduct surveys of other young people, can be used. Experience has shown peer research to be a very effective way of identifying the ideas and perspectives of young people.

**Developing partnerships with community organisations, government agencies and local businesses** is beneficial for responding to the needs of young people in your area. A joint effort will assist in developing and putting into action effective and thorough responses or strategies.

**Partnerships with young people** are significant for the community and for young people. Young people have a great deal to learn from and offer through partnership. Partnerships must be genuine, respectful and equal in power for youth participation to be positive and to continue.

One valuable and tested way of achieving good practice in responding to the needs of, and working with, young people is participatory action research. For more information about this, refer to Appendix C.

## SECTION FOUR

### INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDIES

A number of initiatives that respond to young people and encourage their participation have been documented and included in this folder. They are presented as a way of generating ideas for how things could be done in your renewal area and comprise local, national and international examples.

The case studies are categorised according to the key aim or focus of the initiative or project. The categories include:

- ◆ crime prevention
- ◆ education, employment and training
- ◆ family support
- ◆ arts and cultural
- ◆ responding to young people's needs and issues
- ◆ mentoring/peer support
- ◆ partnership
- ◆ public space
- ◆ substance abuse
- ◆ youth participation

Many of the case studies have been selected due to the good practice principles that have been adopted in the development of the initiative or project. The aim, therefore, is to provide you with tangible examples of how good practice principles for youth participation can be applied. These case studies will act as a future reference guide for your work in Community Renewal.

The examples are a guide to assist you with planning activities in your community. Please use the case studies as a starting point that needs adapting to your local context and as a reference point for you to develop your own bank of examples. You will find them as separate sheets inside your folder.

*Please note:* Refer to Section Three to review good practice principles for working with young people.

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## **APPENDIX B - USEFUL CONTACTS**

Office of Youth Affairs  
Department of Employment and Training  
Telephone: 1300 55 59 54  
Website: [www.generate.qld.gov.au](http://www.generate.qld.gov.au)

Community Renewal  
Department of Housing  
Telephone: 07 3235 9092  
Website: [www.communityrenewal.qld.gov.au](http://www.communityrenewal.qld.gov.au)

Youth Affairs Network of Queensland  
Telephone: 1800 177 899 or 07 3844 7713  
Website: [www.qang.org.au](http://www.qang.org.au)

## APPENDIX C - PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

### WHAT IS IT?

A simple way of understanding Participatory Action Research is to see it as the deliberate study by a group of people of some matter that impacts on them in order to change and improve it (Wadsworth, 1998).

For example, a group of people are part of a project during which they:

- ◆ identify an unsatisfactory situation and gather information about it (**looking at the matter**);
- ◆ build a theory about why the problem exists (**thinking about the matter**);
- ◆ develop and implement steps for dealing with it (**planning and taking action on the matter**); and
- ◆ review the action to think about the matter again and plan the next action (**evaluating the action**).

Their action research is participatory because all those who have an interest in improving the situation contribute to the investigation at every stage in a structured way. This means that in a project to investigate matters of concern to, or about, young people, their involvement from the start had been sought and valued. The validity of the research would have been reduced if the perspectives of young people had not been made explicit in the design and conduct of the work.

The group learns by reviewing their previous actions and uses this understanding to plan or improve the next action. This process is a continuous cycle so change does not have to wait until the research is completed. The distinction between those doing the research and those who are being researched is also deliberately blurred (Wadsworth, 1998).

### THE ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE

Writers about action research often differ about the number of steps involved in the Action Research cycle, some identifying three, others four or five. However, most descriptions of the cycle include the same set of processes even if they are organised slightly differently by different writers.

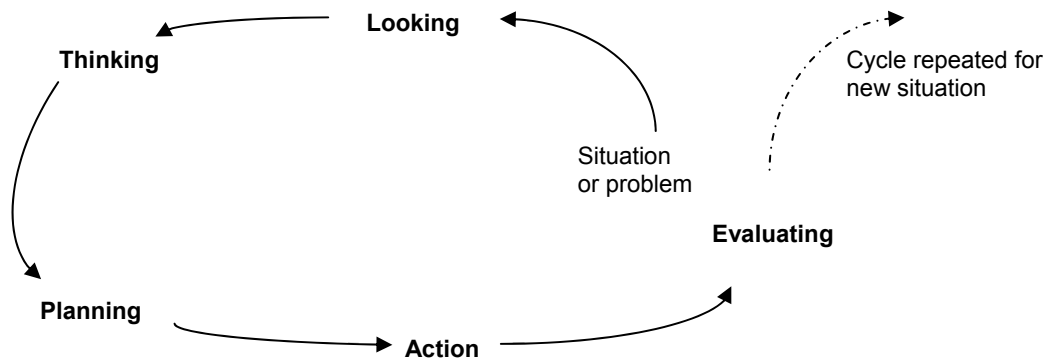
This kit describes a continually re-occurring five-stage cycle that combines the ideas of several writers. The cycle involves looking, thinking, planning, acting and evaluating.

All of this should be preceded by a pre-research stage during which:

1. all stakeholders (those with an interest in changing the situation) are informed and the informed consent of the group to be studied is obtained;

2. a research team (which should include members of the group being studied) is formed and trained;
3. values are clarified and resources confirmed; and
4. the project brief is finalised.

The diagram below illustrates how the Action Research cycle works.



### Looking

This involves getting as much relevant information as possible about the matter of concern to describe the situation and why it is of concern. Everyone with an interest in the situation or problem should be involved in this phase.

This involves:

1. asking questions about the matter to identify what information is needed to understand the problem or concern;
2. gathering the relevant information; and
3. building a picture that defines and describes the situation.

### Thinking

During this phase all stakeholders extend their understanding of the problem or situation by analysing the gathered data to create a theory about why the problem or situation exists. All stakeholders should participate in this stage, for example by verifying the analysis and by contributing to theory creation.

This involves:

1. exploring and analysing the information to understand what is happening; and
2. interpreting the analysis to explain why things are the way they are (or theorising).

### Planning

Planning should be based on the insights provided by the two previous steps. It requires you to develop a framework that outlines the way you will work to improve the situation or deal with the problem. This framework should detail what is to be done by whom and when, where and how it will occur.

This involves:

1. identifying possible ways the problem or situation can be dealt with (including some new ideas), based on the description of the matter and the theory of why it has occurred;
2. selecting the possible solution most likely to be workable; and
3. breaking down the selected solution into the steps needed to put it into action.

### **Action**

This is when the plan is implemented and the effects of the actions observed for future reference.

This involves:

1. implementing your planned actions in a systematic way;
2. communicating with all stakeholders and participants, and involving them in the process; and
3. observing and recording what happens, including recording verbal and non-verbal feedback, and action responses and impacts.

### **Evaluating**

The evaluation phase is about interpreting and building an understanding of what happened and what you observed and documented during the action phase. This allows you to reflect in a way that informs new and revised actions and affirms or challenges the way things were done.

This involves:

1. looking at what happened – your observations;
2. making sense of your observations and developing ideas or theories about them for the purpose of making changes;
3. sharing ideas with all other stakeholders to consider everyone's interpretations and meanings;
4. considering their own values and experiences and how these influence meanings and interpretations and considering how important those meanings are; and
5. beginning the cycle again, making adjustments as appropriate.

## **CRIME PREVENTION**

### **1. Initiative:** *Legal Street Arts* (Logan)

#### **Description:**

The Legal Street Arts initiative was supported and managed by the Logan City Council, and involved three-day street workshop with young people.

The project aimed to:

- ◆ provide education and information on legal street art
- ◆ engage graffiti 'taggers' in the making of public art in a group setting
- ◆ educate and develop the skills of young people in recognised employment and industry related skills (eg. air brushing and spray gun art)
- ◆ 'reclaim' a local clubhouse, encouraging a sense of ownership and respect for it. Young people involved prepared the clubhouse for painting, designed an art piece to be painted onto the clubhouse wall, applied the design and completed the piece.

#### **Target group:**

Young graffiti artists.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Graffiti
- ◆ Vandalism
- ◆ Training.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Educational workshop and practical activity.

#### **Further information:**

Logan City Council  
Phone: 07 3826 5555  
Website: [www.logan.qld.gov.au](http://www.logan.qld.gov.au)

## **EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

### **1. Initiative:** *Quantum Opportunities Program (USA)*

#### **Description:**

This youth development program is designed to assist disadvantaged adolescents by providing education, service, and development activities, as well as providing financial incentives, over the full high school period.

Each participant in the program is eligible to receive annually:

- ◆ 250 hours of education – participating in computer-assisted instruction, peer tutoring etc, to enhance basic academic skills
- ◆ 250 hours of development activities – participating in cultural enrichment and personal development, acquiring life/family skills, planning for college or advanced technical/vocational training and job preparation
- ◆ 250 hours of service activities – participating in community service projects, helping with public events, and working as a volunteer in various agencies.

#### **Target group:**

Young people from families receiving public assistance.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Lack of opportunities and options
- ◆ Educational disadvantage.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Community-based, case management approach tied closely to the school system.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Small groups of 20-25 young people
- ◆ A community-based, case-management approach, tied closely to school, and individually tailored to the young person's own needs and circumstances
- ◆ A program that targets participants when they are quite young (average age 14)
- ◆ An approach with multiple dimensions, building basic skills, imparting life and social skills, broadening horizons, and enabling young people to give back to their communities
- ◆ Financial incentives that reward young people immediately for hours worked
- ◆ Program administrators who go the extra mile, by making home visits and motivating young people
- ◆ Multi-year funding, provided in advance so that excellent staff can be recruited and retained and so that the young people can count on the program sticking with them.

#### **Further information:**

Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
Website: [www.colorado.edu/cspv](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv)

## **2. Initiative:** *Youth to Youth* (Nova Scotia, Canada)

### **Description:**

*Youth to Youth* was a community-based initiative developed to encourage young people to stay in school by providing immediate peer related support, particularly for young people experiencing family difficulties, peer pressure, and low self-esteem. The aim was to reconnect young people to the larger school community.

### **Target group:**

Senior primary and high school students, 12 to 19 years old, at risk of dropping out of school.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Lack of support for young people experiencing family difficulties
- ◆ Peer pressure
- ◆ Low self-esteem.

### **Method of delivery:**

Peer support network.

### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Select peer helpers through school staff and peer referral
- ◆ Peer helpers to complete student application forms
- ◆ Peer helpers to attend a two-day training workshop (as well as monthly training sessions that were topic and/or strategy specific)
- ◆ School-based counsellors and teachers provided support and guidance to peer helpers as required.

### **Further information:**

Health Canada

Website: [www.hc-sc.gu.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gu.ca)

### **3. Initiative:** *The Bay Approach* (The Canberra College, ACT)

#### **Description:**

The Bay Approach aimed at creating an integrated service system for school students. This involved bringing together educational and community services into one location.

This approach allowed teachers to teach without having to deal with the broader problems affecting young people and provided young people with easy access to support services and resources, particularly on health and personal issues.

A number of community organisations located services in The Bay as part of the school environment, as well as a Drug Referral and Information Service. A health promotion schedule was also built into the school curriculum as part of this approach.

#### **Target group:**

Young people in general, with a focus on at-risk students.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ School retention
- ◆ Access to support services.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Co-locating services within the school environment and integrating relevant programs within the school program.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ The level of access that students already have to services in the community
- ◆ Standards required to ensure that the school and organisations involved are committed to an agreed quality of service delivery
- ◆ Commitment from the school and those in the community organisation, as well as their ability to provide the required level of resources
- ◆ Interest from students and their understanding of the role of the services
- ◆ Careful selection of co-locating services so that they meet the standards, goals and directions of the school and support school policies and practices
- ◆ Protocols for partnership that ensure mutual benefits for all parties involved.

#### **Further information:**

The Canberra College  
Website: [www.canberrac.act.edu.au](http://www.canberrac.act.edu.au)

#### **4. Initiative: *BoysTown Link Up Enterprises* (Kingston)**

##### **Description:**

The BoysTown Link Up Enterprise initiative operates a number of employment enterprises within the broader initiative. All enterprises employ young people aged 17 to 25 years old, who are disadvantaged in a number of ways. The following is a list and description of the enterprises:

- ◆ *Landscaping and Maintenance Services* – young people are trained in a number of areas such as construction, horticulture, maintenance of tools and equipment and small engine maintenance. They are then supervised in mowing, cleaning, fencing, landscaping and minor repairs to properties on behalf of QBuild, corporate bodies, finance companies, real estate agents and private individuals. This enterprise was successful in winning the landscaping contract for Roma Street Gardens in Brisbane.
- ◆ *Morgans Mini Movers* – young people are employed to remove furniture for individuals, companies and government. Prior to employment, young people are required to undergo training in customer relations, truck maintenance, truck driving, truck off-siding, safe lifting, packing trucks and the use of trolleys and lifters.
- ◆ *Car Wash* – young people are employed for 3.5 days per week to wash cars and showroom windows at local car dealers' premises. Training is also provided in workplace health and safety, introduction to a work environment, car cleaning, chamoising, tyre and wheel arch blackening, window cleaning and teamwork.
- ◆ *Urban Fencing* – young people contract with QBuild to construct timber fencing, gates and lawn lockers at public housing properties. They are trained in fencing, concrete slab laying, lawn locker erection, maintenance of tools and equipment, employment maintenance and workplace health and safety.

##### **Target group:**

Young people aged 17 to 25 years old suffering multiple disadvantages.

##### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Unemployment
- ◆ Lack of opportunities
- ◆ Multi-disadvantage.

##### **Method of delivery:**

Structured training and employment programs.

##### **Further information:**

BoysTown Link Up  
Phone: 07 3808 8677  
E-mail: [linkup@powerup.com.au](mailto:linkup@powerup.com.au)

## **5. Initiative:** *Youth Employment and Training Initiative* (Mackay)

### **Description:**

This initiative was designed as an initial trial project using only resources available in the local community. The project took a group of known young offenders, and leaders in a local youth 'gang', and invited them to exchange their criminal activities for employment. Seven participants of the trial were successful in obtaining permanent work, resulting in reduced crime in their local suburb in the following year.

In this initiative employment was seen as a vehicle to break the unemployment/poverty/crime cycle. The idea was to offer employment, training and support as an alternative to crime; the young men were required to discontinue involvement in crime and encourage their peers to follow a similar path.

The initiative was replicated across Mackay, showing an 80 per cent success rate with the assistance of a Queensland Government grant. The initiative works closely with the Police, training and employment agencies and Centrelink.

### **Target group:**

Young offenders aged 17 to 20 years.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Crime
- ◆ Poverty
- ◆ Unemployment.

### **Method of delivery:**

Structured employment and training programs.

### **Factors to consider:**

1. \$10,000 was donated from a local training firm and \$10,000 from YACCA
2. Thirteen organisations formed a Reference Group to oversee the project
3. Employment, training and support were designed to suit the needs, interests and natural abilities of the participants
4. Participants were taken through an employment-preparation program of a camp, work-preparation, work experience and job search
5. Post employment support was provided.

### **Further information:**

Mackay Crime Prevention Partnership  
Phone: 07 4968 4548

YACCA Mackay  
Phone: 07 4953 5577

## **6. Initiative:** *YouthBuild – A National Program (USA)*

### **Description:**

The YouthBuild initiative is a youth and community development program as well as an alternative school. The program is designed to run on a 12-month cycle, offering job training, education, counselling and leadership development opportunities to unemployed and out-of-school young adults aged 16-24.

Opportunities are centred on the construction and re-development of affordable housing in their own communities. Young people redevelop the houses under the supervision of qualified tradespeople. The buildings that are re-developed or constructed during the program are usually owned and managed by community-based organisations as permanent low-income housing. Many young people who graduate go on to construction-related jobs or college.

### **Target group:**

Unemployed and out-of-school young people aged 16-24 years.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Unemployment
- ◆ Early school leaving
- ◆ Lack of opportunities.

### **How the program works:**

- ◆ Young people are supervised by qualified tradespeople
- ◆ Time is shared between the construction site and the classroom
- ◆ Young people get the opportunity to earn a high school diploma
- ◆ Graduates receive post-program counselling
- ◆ Local YouthBuild programs are small, supportive mini-communities that are operated by independent, community-based organisations
- ◆ Programs secure their own funding, which is generally a mix of government (federal, state and local) and private support.

### **Outcomes:**

- ◆ Young people learn the basics of a range of employment related skills within the building industry
- ◆ Young people also learn the basics of management of a small business including financial management and project planning
- ◆ Young people develop skills in teamwork, leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills
- ◆ Young people develop self-confidence and esteem in preparation on entering the workforce
- ◆ Amongst the community, there is an improved perception of young people.

### **Further information:**

YouthBuild USA

Website: [www.youthbuild.org](http://www.youthbuild.org)

## **FAMILY SUPPORT**

### **1. Initiative:** *Yale Child Welfare Project (USA)*

#### **Description:**

This project offered team-based, personalised family support to help disadvantaged parents support their children's development. The project was based on a strong belief that improving the bonds between parents and their children results in better social and school adjustment for the children. The initiative specifically targeted disadvantaged families who lacked adequate resources for their children and sought to improve the quality of family life by providing medical, educational, social and psychological services.

#### **Target group:**

High-risk, minority families on low incomes who lived in depressed, inner-cities.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Disadvantage
- ◆ Lack of support
- ◆ Limited quality of family life.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Home visits, paediatric care, high-quality daycare.

#### **Factors to consider:**

The success of this project lay in its ability to furnish constant, dependable and personalised care in a variety of areas. The intervention began when mothers were pregnant and continued until the infants were 30 months old.

Treatment included the following services:

- ◆ Home visits by the Yale Child Welfare project staff, who listened to parents' concerns, helped solve immediate family crises, assisted in achieving long-term goals and acted as a liaison to other service providers
- ◆ Paediatric care by licensed physicians who met with mothers and newborns daily while in the hospital and weekly in the families' homes. They made house calls when necessary and regular well-baby exams during which mothers could ask questions about their children's health
- ◆ High-quality daycare by trained staff, who encouraged children's emotional and social development and actively communicated with parents
- ◆ Regular developmental exams performed by project staff to monitor children's ability and development.

#### **Further information:**

Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
Website: [www.colorado.edu/cspv](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv)

## **2. Initiative:** *Youth Outreach Workers* (Various Queensland locations)

### **Description:**

A number of communities such as Deception Bay, Logan and Goodna have Youth Outreach Workers who work in the community to reach some of the more vulnerable young people. Youth Outreach Workers generally go to where these young people frequently socialise, most often late at night, rather than waiting for the young people to come and seek assistance. This initiative aims to make contact and build relationships with young people who are harder to reach than most. In some cases, Youth Outreach Workers offer meals, hygiene products, or information about support services available to young people in their community.

### **Target group:**

Hard-to-reach young people.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Isolation and vulnerability
- ◆ Lack of information about services
- ◆ Material deprivation.

### **Method of delivery:**

Street outreach work.

### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Identify the need for a Youth Outreach Worker in your local area
- ◆ Contact youth organisations to discuss the reasons for employing an Outreach Worker
- ◆ Employ a Youth Outreach Worker to work in your local area
- ◆ Identify the reasons for connecting with young people and their potential involvement
- ◆ Develop a strategy for connecting with young people.

### **Further information:**

Youth Affairs Network of Queensland (YANQ)  
Phone: 07 3844 7713  
Fax: 07 3844 7731  
Website: [www.yanq.org.au](http://www.yanq.org.au)

### **3. Initiative:** *Street Outreach Program (Ottawa, Canada)*

#### **Description:**

The Street Outreach Program was designed to create opportunities for making contact with young people on the street. The Operation Go Home agency coordinated the program, which involved volunteers walking the street to talk with young people. This contact involved letting young people know what was available through the agency and other relevant services and programs.

#### **Target group:**

Runaways and street youth between the ages of 16 and 18.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Isolation
- ◆ Poor access to information and services.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Volunteer street outreach work.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Volunteers were recruited by word of mouth (volunteers included university students and young people who had previously lived on the street). Young people who had a street background were required to have lived off the street for five years before becoming an outreach volunteer and be aged 21 years or older.
- ◆ Volunteers were required to undertake a screening process, which included completing an application, undergoing a police check and sitting an interview, at which time they were given information to read.
- ◆ Volunteers initially received a two-hour orientation, followed by nine hours of office work. They then attended a two-day non-violent crisis intervention workshop. Ongoing training involved bimonthly training meetings.
- ◆ Operation Go Home agency staff members were available 24 hours a day to offer support in the event of a crisis. In addition, staff members met with each volunteer on a monthly basis to determine how they were coping in their positions.
- ◆ Furthermore, volunteers were required to provide a debriefing after each night on the street, as well as submit written reports detailing their contact with young people.

#### **Further information:**

Health Canada  
Website: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

#### **4. Initiative: *Peer Research***

##### **Description:**

Peer research involves young people being trained to conduct research and collect information about their peers. This is a useful strategy for engaging young people, increasing skill and personal development, and identifying information about young people.

This strategy is a great way to involve and empower young people and has been used by Youth Arts Queensland as part of their Youth Action Research Project. Peer research is a highly recommended strategy to be used in local communities to gather information about and engage with young people.

##### **Target group:**

All young people.

##### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Participation of young people
- ◆ Needs analysis.

##### **Method of delivery:**

Research by peers.

##### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Form a local advisory group to support and guide young people;
- ◆ Form a peer research group made up of young people
- ◆ Conduct peer research training sessions with peer researchers and the project officer
- ◆ Conduct interviews/surveys using a developed questionnaire to collect relevant data
- ◆ Conducted data analysis, ensuring that an expert and/or project officer oversees this process
- ◆ Hold discussion groups with project officer and peer researchers to reflect on and discuss the data, findings and processes
- ◆ Write a report of the project using the peer research approach.

##### **Further information:**

Youth Arts Queensland  
Phone: 07 3252 5115  
Fax: 07 3252 4741  
Website: [www.yaq.org.au](http://www.yaq.org.au)

## **ARTS AND CULTURAL**

### **1. Initiative:** *Rip and Tear Theatre Company* (Tasmania)

#### **Description:**

The Rip and Tear Theatre Company was one of a number of successful crime prevention projects having received an Australian Youth Initiatives Grant. The project involved both at-risk teenagers as well as those with criminal convictions. The project aimed to:

- ◆ Provide advocacy and mentorship to work toward achieving changes in behaviour and increased options for young people experiencing a number of disadvantages
- ◆ Produce deep and insightful art from the experience of disadvantage and present it in national forums.

As well as addressing young offenders and marginalised young people, the project also aimed to educate all teenagers using real life experience, and make adults aware of the difficulties facing young people in society.

#### **Target group:**

Marginalised young people and young people who have offended.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Crime
- ◆ Lack of public awareness
- ◆ Lack of options for young offenders.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Theatre performance was used as a vehicle for increasing young people's self-esteem, communication and assertiveness.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Establish a project management team and steering committee – involve performance expert (eg. professional actor and a youth worker)
- ◆ Involve young people in drafting the script, building the props, organising costumes and make-up, sound and technology, music, fundraising, marketing and performing
- ◆ Run daily workshops to produce the show
- ◆ Ensure young people are paid for their contribution.

#### **Further information:**

Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI)

Phone: 03 8663 2200

Fax: 03 8663 2211

Website: [www.acmi.net.au](http://www.acmi.net.au)

## **2. Initiative:** *'Red'* (Global Youth Limited, Brisbane)

### **Description:**

Global Youth Limited worked with a group of young people at risk, using arts skills development to facilitate understandings of empowerment and structural disadvantage, especially issues relating to effective citizenship.

The 10-week project included a final week of performances at youth agencies and an industry showcase at Powerhouse in Brisbane, which was video-recorded.

The initial two workshops invited a large group of young people to be involved in a self-reflection process to create one core work group, capped at eight participants. The remaining members of the large group were given the opportunity to participate as a steering committee for the project.

Four youth arts workers participated in the young people's workshops as helpers, as well as undertaking a parallel professional development process, facilitated by an experienced professional. The parallel training process allowed for knowledge and skills to be shared.

### **Target group:**

Young people from diverse backgrounds and those experiencing disadvantage.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Personal and skill development
- ◆ Disadvantage
- ◆ Participation
- ◆ Community awareness.

### **Method of delivery:**

Drama performance.

### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Recruitment of young people for workshops and steering committee
- ◆ Parallel professional development workshops & facilitation
- ◆ Final performance and video recording.

### **Further information:**

Global Youth Limited  
Phone: 07 3876 3900  
Website: [www.globalyouth.com.au](http://www.globalyouth.com.au)

## **RESPONDING TO YOUNG PEOPLE'S NEEDS AND ISSUES**

### **1. Initiative:** *Manoora Munchies*

#### **Description:**

Manoora Munchies is a weekly program that teaches young people in Manoora how to cook and eat healthy food. The program is run by the WuChopperen Health Service at the Manoora Community Centre, and is subsidised by Community Renewal.

#### **Target group:**

Young people aged 6 – 15 years

#### **Issues addressed:**

- Healthy eating
- Socialising, sharing & cooperation
- Preparing own meals
- Learning new skills

#### **Method of delivery:**

The program provides weekly workshops as well as a recipe booklet that participants can take home. Parents are also invited to participate in the program.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- Age of participants – are they old enough to use sharp utensils?
- Providing appropriate level of supervision (especially during use of sharp utensils and stove)
- Culturally sensitive language and communication style
- Background of family experience
- Making sure that all participants have washed their hands
- Ensuring that all participants are listening
- Ingredients and methods of preparation displayed on whiteboard
- Participants are allocated certain tasks
- Recipes planned 12 months ahead by participants

#### **Further information:**

Ross Carpinter or Tanya Querro  
Cairns West Community Recreation Officers  
Manoora Community Centre  
Phone: 07 4032 3699  
Fax: 07 4032 3966  
Email: [rosscarpinter@hotmail.com](mailto:rosscarpinter@hotmail.com) or [tanya.querro@manoora.com](mailto:tanya.querro@manoora.com)

## **MENTORING/PEER SUPPORT**

### **1. Initiative:** *Youth Arts Mentoring Program* (Youth Arts Queensland)

#### **Description:**

YAMP aims to support young emerging arts workers in developing and establishing professional employment opportunities. A number of industry mentors are involved to provide mentoring and industry-based training to participants. Mentoring initiatives such as this can be used to address a range of career paths, opportunities and issues. Mentoring can be used to build relationships between young people and adults in a community, create job opportunities in a range of careers (music, dance, carpentry, mechanics, etc), develop skills, or to provide support and friendship.

#### **Target group:**

Emerging artists aged 18 – 25 years.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Employment opportunities
- ◆ Skill and personal development.

#### **Method of delivery:**

An industry-based training process involving industry professionals.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Young people (mentorees) and professionals (mentors) are required to complete and submit an application
- ◆ Applications are assessed by an industry panel of professionals from a diverse range of arts and cultural industries
- ◆ *Induction* – this involves an industry tour of key city precincts and organisations, induction kits and networking and ongoing mentoring
- ◆ *Navigation* (training) – a three-day professional development workshop, conducted by industry leaders and attended by participants
- ◆ *Employment* – participants are employed by the industry mentors;
- ◆ *Payment* – participants are paid as employees
- ◆ *Evaluation* – a three-month and final evaluation is conducted
- ◆ *Showcase* – this involves a) a virtual showcase allowing participants to develop on-line artist profiles, and b) a multi-arts presentation staged at completion of the program. This is managed by the Program Manager and a team of emerging artists who were involved in the program on a previous occasion.

#### **Further information:**

Youth Arts Queensland  
Phone: 07 3252 5115  
Fax: 07 3252 4741  
Website: [www.yaq.org.au](http://www.yaq.org.au)

## **2. Initiative:** *Youth Health Research Project* (Deception Bay)

### **Description:**

This research project investigates the barriers young people in Deception Bay face when trying to access health services. A 'Health Trek' program was designed to provide data for the project.

The program provided an opportunity for young people to visit existing health services within the Redcliffe/Caboolture Health Services District to learn about what the services do, and provide comment on their 'youth friendliness' and accessibility.

Local 'at risk' young people were trained to become peer facilitators to assist other participants in understanding the tasks, the purpose of the project and to fill out the survey forms.

### **Target group**

Young people at risk.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ 'Youth friendliness' and accessibility within existing health services in the Redcliffe/Caboolture Health Services District
- ◆ Quality of services.

### **Method of delivery:**

Young people participating in the program were asked to complete a ten-question tick and flick survey that covered a range of issues around accessibility and youth friendliness. The survey also provided room for comments on how the service could be improved.

A Youth Health Project Officer and a peer facilitator facilitated each 'Health Trek'. Both recorded verbal conversations and comments made by the young people participating in the 'Health Treks'.

### **Further information:**

Deception Bay Facilitator  
Community Renewal  
Phone: 07 3204 2369  
Website: [www.communityrenewal.qld.gov.au](http://www.communityrenewal.qld.gov.au)

### **3. Initiative: *Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America***

#### **Description:**

This initiative aims to provide adult support and friendship to young people and has been running for nearly a century in America. *Big Brothers, Big Sisters* works by volunteers interacting regularly with young people in a one-to-one relationship. Agencies take responsibility for this program and use a case management approach, which involves following through on each case from the initial inquiry through to closure.

#### **Target group:**

Young people and children aged 6 to 18 from single parent homes.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Violence
- ◆ Crime
- ◆ Single parent families
- ◆ Lack of support.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Service delivery by volunteers.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Orientation is required for all volunteers
- ◆ Volunteer screening includes a written application, background check, extensive interview and home assessment; this is designed to screen out those who may inflict psychological or physical harm, lack the capacity to form a caring bond with the child, or are unlikely to honour their time commitments
- ◆ Youth assessment involves a written application, interviews with the child and the parent, and a home assessment; this is designed to help the caseworker learn about the child in order to make the best possible match, and also to secure parental permission
- ◆ Matches are carefully considered and based upon the needs of the child or young person, abilities of volunteers, preferences of the parent, and the capacity of program staff
- ◆ Supervision is accomplished via an initial contact with the parent, young person and volunteer within two weeks of the match; monthly telephone contact with the volunteer, parent and/or youth during the first year; and quarterly contact with all parties during the duration of the match.

#### **Further Information:**

University of Colorado, Boulder  
Website: [www.colorado.edu/cspv](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv)

Big Brother, Big Sisters of America  
Website: [www.bbbsa.org/](http://www.bbbsa.org/)

#### **4. Initiative:** *Aide offerte dans leur milieu naturel* (Quebec)

##### **Description:**

The objective of this project was to offer services to street youth, to educate and sensitise these young people to the dangers of the street, and to offer them help and support as they take steps to improve their well being. Peer helpers are recruited, to work alongside professional street workers, to go out on the streets and talk to young people about the resources available to them. Peer helpers provide support to their peers and often act as a link between the young people and outreach staff.

##### **Target group:**

Young people with problems linked to drug dependency and/or prostitution.

##### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Substance abuse
- ◆ Prostitution
- ◆ Homelessness.

##### **Method of delivery:**

Peer helpers and outreach workers.

##### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Peer helpers were identified by and had links with the outreach workers of the organisation
- ◆ Peer helpers received a basic orientation to learn about the organisation. This was followed by a three-day training workshop on natural peer helping
- ◆ The organisation also offered peer helpers other types of training, as needed;
- ◆ Street workers supervised peer helpers during street outreach
- ◆ Street workers were available to provide support and guidance when needed
- ◆ Staff followed up with helpers through regular team meetings.

##### **Further information:**

Health Canada

Website: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

## **5. Initiative:** *SOS Peer Program* (Toronto, Canada)

### **Description:**

The SOS Peer Program was designed to act as a bridge for street youth making the transition away from street life. This initiative was run by the Street Outreach Services (SOS) agency. The primary objective was to use a “peer model” to educate street youth on prevention and other issues related to HIV/AIDS.

Peer educators were contracted and paid for up to 10 hours per week. They developed materials on HIV/AIDS, supervised street outreach workers, facilitated workshops, and acted as positive role models who educated/informed young people on issues of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.

This initiative also involved assisting peers to gain skills, experience and knowledge, increase self-esteem through skill building and provide work experience for young people.

### **Target group:**

Young people on the street, ages 16 to 24, involved in or at risk of becoming involved in prostitution and drug use.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Health issues
- ◆ Street life.

### **Method of delivery:**

Peer delivered outreach, education and support.

### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Prospective peers referred by their SOS worker
- ◆ Interviews conducted by the HIV/AIDS Peer Program Supervisor;
- ◆ Ongoing opportunities for training through workshops, etc
- ◆ Training was discussion-oriented and often specific in terms of facts and issues covered
- ◆ Peer educators attended weekly team or individual meetings with their supervisor to discuss work-oriented issues
- ◆ Each peer was to meet with his or her SOS worker to deal with all other issues
- ◆ Peer educators were supervised on outreach.

### **Further information:**

Health Canada  
Website: [www.hc-sc.gu.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gu.ca)

## **PARTNERSHIP**

### **1. Initiative:** *The CEO Challenge Project* (Brisbane)

#### **Description:**

The CEO Challenge aimed to reduce the incidence of domestic violence by establishing key partnerships. The project idea was established in the USA. The Brisbane project aimed to establish and mentor partnerships between the business sector and community organisations to reduce the impact of domestic violence on workers (affecting work performance) and provide resources to assist in supporting victims of domestic violence.

Partnerships were established between Watpac (major construction company) and Clayton Utz (national law firm) and member organisations of the Combined Women's Refuge Group (South East Queensland). Watpac agreed to refurbish the refuge, which included constructing a new deck and shelving, and supplying a new photocopier amongst other things.

Clayton Utz provided computers and launched an appeal for household goods. They also planned to donate office furniture, provide staff with the opportunity to volunteer in school holidays to assist in children's outings and raise funds for refurbishment of the office through the auction of children's art.

#### **Target group:**

- ◆ Young people from domestic violence situations.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Domestic violence.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Partners delivering programs, resources etc. to each other.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Increase in resources in an area that has been traditionally under funded;
- ◆ Improved quality of support and living conditions
- ◆ Increased morale among employees that see their role being understood and valued by the business sector
- ◆ Reduction of costs associated with the workplace impact of domestic violence
- ◆ Increasing morale among staff who value being part of an organisation that has made a commitment to community well-being.

#### **Further information:**

Community Business Partnership  
Website: [www.partnership.zip.com](http://www.partnership.zip.com)

## **2. Initiative:** *Meals program for the Homeless* (Ballarat)

### **Description:**

This program developed as a result of Ballarat community leaders and the Ballarat Council of Churches recognising a need for a daily meals program to help feed the growing numbers of homeless people in their community.

A partnership was established between Sunicrust Bakeries and the Ballarat Parish Mission Uniting Church Outreach Centre. Sunicrust Bakeries contributed \$30,000 to establish a kitchen and dining room where homeless people could receive at least one good meal every day of the year in a safe and comfortable environment. Furthermore, this provided a safe haven in winter months.

Every day, between 40-50 people are fed in the cafe housed within the Outreach Centre. The Outreach Centre provides more than 350 unpaid volunteers who help in the kitchen and dining room.

Sunicrust also provides a range of other resources such as fresh bread daily and advice to the Centre's staff on food hygiene matters and occupational health issues.

### **Target group:**

- ◆ Homeless young people.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Symptoms of homelessness (eg. Hunger and lack of shelter).

### **Method of delivery:**

Volunteers operating from an Outreach Centre.

### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Identify a pressing issue in local community
- ◆ Establish a partnership with one or more businesses that can provide assistance in the way of resources, etc
- ◆ Ensure the partnership benefits all parties.

### **Further information:**

Community Business Partnership  
Website: [www.partnership.zip.com](http://www.partnership.zip.com)

## **PUBLIC SPACE**

### **1. Initiative:** *Midland Gate Shopping Centre initiative (Perth)*

#### **Description:**

The Midland Gate Shopping Centre was experiencing young people hanging about in groups, vandalism, graffiti, damage to staff cars and evidence of drug use. Their initial response was to increase the level of security; however, as a result, there was an increase in the level of conflict between the young people and the security personnel.

The shopping centre management team later approached a local youth organisation, with which they began working to establish a committee for addressing the issues.

The shopping centre employed a Youth Worker to make contact with the young people, link them to support services and to make available information on leisure, employment, accommodation, education, health and legal services.

In return, young people made recommendations to the shopping centre about how their needs could be met and provided information to the community about the lack of support services. An additional positive result for young people was that some of them gained part-time employment offered by the shopping centre.

#### **Target group:**

- ◆ A range of young people using and hanging out at the shopping centre.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Young people's access to facilities, services and activities
- ◆ Public space issues
- ◆ Exclusion of young people.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Establishment of a committee – members representing the shopping centre, community, youth service, Departmental and Council staff and some young people
- ◆ The committee conducted a survey to understand the situation better and to develop a program that would attempt to address the needs of the young people and the community
- ◆ The shopping centre employed a Youth Worker – the position was funded by both the business sector and the Community Development Youth Office; and
- ◆ An office was allocated for the worker and a meeting room and resources for referral were made available.

#### **Further information:**

The Australian Youth Foundation  
Phone: 02 9357 2344  
Email: [youth@ayf.org.au](mailto:youth@ayf.org.au)  
Website: [www.ayf.org.au](http://www.ayf.org.au)

**2. Initiative:** *“Bwgcorman Speakout” Youth Participation Design Workshop for Proposed Youth Facility*  
(Palm Island Indigenous Community)

**Description:**

Community Renewal held the “Bwgcorman Speakout” workshop to gather ideas for the design of a new Palm Island youth facility. The workshop was held over two days and run as a cultural event that included workshop components. The event was well attended and successful in providing the architect a rich array of information to begin design work as well as additional information on Palm Island youth issues.

The event was successful for several key reasons:

- ◆ Local young adults planned much of the event, including setting up the marquee and organising food, advertising and entertainment
- ◆ Community Renewal was genuinely open to all ideas proposed by participants
- ◆ The entertainment throughout the workshop, including Aboriginal “pop stars” from Brisbane and an Indigenous rap group from Cairns, were relevant to local people. The pop singers were also used as role models and assisted with the workshops
- ◆ Those who facilitated workshops had specific expertise in communicating with primary school aged children. For example, teachers and staff from the Commission for Children and Young People helped encourage the children to participate, through the playing of games.
- ◆ Ideas were sought and feedback given through talking, writing, slide presentations, drawing and three-dimensional building. For example, a workshop was conducted on the beach where children were asked to develop design ideas by sculpting sandcastles.

**Target group:**

- ◆ Primary school aged children and young adults (17-25).

**Issues addressed:**

The event aimed to find out:

- ◆ What were the key issues for children and young adults on Palm Island?
- ◆ The key activities that a new youth facility should be designed to cater for.
- ◆ What would the young people like the new facility to be like?

**Method of delivery:**

- ◆ Workshop.

**Factors to consider:**

- ◆ While the event was planned, it needed to be flexible and adapt to local conditions as they presented on the days of the workshop
- ◆ As Palm Island is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, there were key cultural issues that organisers needed to be aware of.

**Further information:**

The Community Renewal Program

Phone: 07 3227 8481

Email: [communityrenewal@housing.qld.gov.au](mailto:communityrenewal@housing.qld.gov.au)

Website: [www.communityrenewal.qld.gov.au](http://www.communityrenewal.qld.gov.au)

### **3. Initiative:** *Youth Entertainment Project (Gladstone)*

#### **Description:**

This project aimed to address the lack of public space for young people to use, particularly during school holidays. The opportunity to develop this project coincided with the redevelopment of a local shopping centre. Development of the project involved consultation with the business community, which allowed the development of a number of options that shared responsibility with young people and had the support of business.

The initiative proposed:

- ◆ That area within the food court be adapted to provide an entertainment area for young people
- ◆ That young people are responsible for organising activities which are suitable to the environment
- ◆ That young people are responsible for involving other young people in the process.

#### **Target group:**

All young people.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Inclusion of young people in public space.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Youth participation and involvement.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Consultation with the business sector and young people
- ◆ Establishment of partnerships between young people and the business community
- ◆ Involvement of young people in decision making and organisation of activities
- ◆ Evaluation of the process and initiative.

#### **Further information:**

Gladstone City Council  
Phone: 07 4970 0700  
Website: [www.gladstonecc.qld.gov.au](http://www.gladstonecc.qld.gov.au)

#### **4. Initiative:** *Youth Spaces Consultation Project* (Launceston, Tasmania)

##### **Description:**

This project was a response to local concern that Launceston's young people had felt increasingly alienated and isolated from their community. This was due to a range of factors such as, 1) a lack of affordable, accessible, alcohol-free venues for recreation and entertainment and, 2) community attitudes that had tended to generalise and stigmatise young people.

The Launceston City Council and Northern Youth Coordinating Committee received funding from the Australian Youth Foundation for the project. The project involved implementing strategies to improve young people's relationship with the community through:

- ◆ Negotiation with council for some youth specific public spaces
- ◆ Consultation about their recreational needs and concerns.

##### **Target group:**

Young people in general.

##### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Public space issues.

##### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Forums/workshops – forum held included community (open), schools (via elected school representatives), Mall (youth only), skaters (open)
- ◆ Survey/questionnaire – survey was piloted, user friendly, distributed face-to-face to a broad cross-section of young people
- ◆ Out and About and on the Streets - face-to-face contact with a broad range of young people in a wide variety of environments and setting up stalls in a variety of locations
- ◆ Youth Video Consultation – all consultations with young people were recorded on video.

##### **Further information:**

The Australian Youth Foundation

Phone: 02 9357 2344

Email: [youth@ayf.org.au](mailto:youth@ayf.org.au)

Website: [www.ayf.org.au](http://www.ayf.org.au)

**5. Initiative:** *Streetwize Networks Project* (Bassendean, Western Australia)

**Description:**

The Streetwize project was developed in response to the large numbers of young people in the Bassendean area suffering from disadvantage (low socio-economic status, reduced educational achievement, lower school retention rates), youth unemployment, truancy, drug taking and offending and conflicts with authority figures.

The aim of the project was to engage young people in esteem building activities, to promote a greater awareness of options for young people and to reduce harmful activities. The project was sponsored by the Town of Bassendean and delivered through the Bassendean Youth Service with funding from the Australian Youth Foundation.

**Target group:**

Disadvantaged young people.

**Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Multiple disadvantages
- ◆ Marginalisation
- ◆ Public space.

**Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Consultation with young people on a range of issues
- ◆ Conducting a needs assessment of local services and options for young people
- ◆ Generation of positive publicity about young people
- ◆ Drafting and evaluating youth policy options
- ◆ Conducting a program of activities that promote healthy lifestyles
- ◆ Provision of information to young people on services and facilities
- ◆ Provision of opportunities for young people to participate and communicate.

**Further information:**

The Australian Youth Foundation

Phone: 02 9357 2344

E-mail: [youth@ayf.org.au](mailto:youth@ayf.org.au)

Website: [www.ayf.org.au](http://www.ayf.org.au)

## **6. Initiative:** *Logan City Public Space Initiative* (Logan)

### **Description:**

This initiative was developed in response to concerns that boredom, poor social infrastructure and a general absence of social cohesion would lead to an increase in crime and violence in the city.

The aim of the project was to find ways to reduce the instances and intensity of conflict associated with young people's use of public space. The project was part of a Statewide initiative from the Community Services Division of Department of Families and Youth and Community Care and was undertaken by Open Family Australia.

### **Target group:**

Young people generally.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Public space issues
- ◆ Crime and violence.

### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Individual interviews were conducted with identified stakeholders
- ◆ Focus groups were conducted with identified stakeholders and general public
- ◆ Audio interviews were conducted with young people in eight identified public spaces
- ◆ Workshops were held with 24 classes in seven high schools.

### **Further information:**

The Australian Youth Foundation

Phone: 02 9357 2344

E-mail: [youth@ayf.org.au](mailto:youth@ayf.org.au)

Website: [www.ayf.org.au](http://www.ayf.org.au)

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

### **1. Initiative:** *Yirra* (West Australia)

#### **Description:**

*Yirra* is a Mission Australia youth initiative that assists young people battling problematic alcohol and drug use. The project provides individual case management for young people, and works to develop a program that meets their individual needs. The *Yirra* initiative involves a combination of activities, which include:

- ◆ Individual counselling
- ◆ Therapeutic Day Program
- ◆ Residential Program
- ◆ Wilderness Adventure Program
- ◆ Outreach Counselling Program
- ◆ The Warehouse/Urban Art Program

It is strongly advised that initiatives such as *Yirra* be planned and organised in partnership with health and/or youth organisations.

#### **Target group:**

Young people with alcohol and drug use issues.

#### **Issues addressed:**

Substance abuse.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Start with an assessment of your local area and identify the need for a response
- ◆ Write a brief
- ◆ Establish partnerships with relevant expert organisations/departments, young people, the business sector, etc
- ◆ Develop an appropriate initiative structure to suit the needs of the young people and your local community
- ◆ Evaluate and document the initiative
- ◆ Make changes according to the evaluation results.

#### **Further information:**

Mission Australia  
(Queensland office)  
Phone: 07 3847 8411  
Fax: 07 3847 8022  
Website: [www.mission.com.au](http://www.mission.com.au)

## **YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

### **1. Initiative:** *Melton Youth Access Audit Team* (Victoria)

#### **Description:**

This project aimed to create opportunities for young people to participate in addressing issues that affect them in their local community. Young people were given the opportunity to work in partnership with Melton Shire Council to improve their access to public spaces and community facilities.

Young people were involved in planning and implementing the project, conducting research, encouraging local space providers to be youth-friendly, and appointing a Youth Access Audit Worker to the Council. More importantly, young people were given a voice in local government.

#### **Target group:**

Young people in general aged 10-21 using public spaces.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Negative stereotypes of young people
- ◆ Public space issues
- ◆ Access to facilities.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Employed a Resource worker to co-ordinate the project
- ◆ Form a team of young people (Audit Team) to run the project
- ◆ Form an Advisory Group to oversee the Resource worker and Audit Team
- ◆ Establish 'youth friendly' indicators of performance
- ◆ The Audit Team designed two surveys (one for young people aged 10-21 and one for businesses) to get an accurate in idea of what youth thought to be youth friendly and unfriendly and what businesses thought of the local youth
- ◆ Conduct 'youth friendliness' audits on businesses/services
- ◆ Permission sought to do audit
- ◆ Audit booklet developed ensure audits were conducted in the same way
- ◆ Businesses/services then asked to rate a number of youth friendliness categories (eg. attitude of staff, hours of operation, environment, safety) from 1-5
- ◆ Present each audited business/service with a detailed report of their audit result.

#### **Further information:**

The Australian Youth Foundation  
Website: [www.youngaustralians.org](http://www.youngaustralians.org)

Melton Shire Council  
Phone: 03 9747 7200

## **2. Initiative:** *Making Places Project* (Woodridge)

### **Description:**

Woodridge State High School students were encouraged through a school-based curriculum to get together and discuss, research and imagine a healthy and safe future for their neighbourhood. The student's aspirations for the future of their neighbourhood, and the strategies required to create community health and well being, were articulated through community research and artwork.

The artwork has taken the form of mosaic seating, banner designs, graffiti art and digital art postcards and brochures. This will give the students a lasting reminder of their commitment to their local community.

An education kit documenting all activities and processes was developed over the duration of the project to ensure the intellectual property and 'know-how' of the project was captured. This information will be made available to other interested organisations.

### **Target group:**

Year nine students from Woodridge State High School.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Public space
- ◆ Young people participating in renewal activities for their area
- ◆ Young peoples' sense of ownership and pride in their community.

### **Method of delivery:**

- ◆ A specialist facilitator was engaged to work with the school (staff and students) to develop the curriculum
- ◆ Students were taken around the local neighbourhood and asked to consider:
  - What will Woodridge look like in the future?
  - What will people be doing with their time?
  - What will family life be like?
  - What will it feel like to live in this future?
  - Skilled artists were employed to work with the students in designing the artwork.

### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Establishment of a steering committee, including students, teachers, Community Reference Group members and representatives from the local business association, local Council, Logan Art Gallery and Community Renewal
- ◆ The Steering committee agreed the students should choose the medium and design for the artwork. The only proviso was that the designs meet the requirements of the Local Council Public Art policy. This could be critical in the success or otherwise of the project
- ◆ Students had the opportunity to present the proposal for their designs to a full Council meeting

### **Further information:**

Principal Social Planner, Logan City Council  
Phone: 3826 5699

### **3. Initiative:** *Youth Action Research Project (YARP)* (Sunshine Coast)

#### **Description:**

This project aimed to improve the quality of arts and cultural development activities available to young people and the processes used to work toward this such as Action Research and peer research. The project was a joint effort between Youth Arts Queensland, Arts Queensland, the Queensland Arts Council and key people and organisations on the Sunshine Coast with an interest in arts and cultural development.

The YARP project achieved a number of valuable outcomes that benefit young people, the community and the arts and cultural industry including

- ◆ Documenting the processes in a report and video form
- ◆ Building partnerships and relationships
- ◆ Increasing youth participation
- ◆ Youth development
- ◆ Identifying young people's arts and cultural interests and needs.

#### **Target group:**

All young people.

#### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ Arts and cultural development.

#### **Method of delivery:**

Action Research and peer research.

#### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Formation of two local advisory groups & two local peer research groups;
- ◆ Delivery of two peer research training sessions (peer researchers and Project Officer)
- ◆ Interview/survey period (conducted by the peer research group using a redeveloped questionnaire)
- ◆ Data analysis (conducted by Project Officer)
- ◆ Structured dialogue groups/chart groups (conducted by project officer and peer research group, to clarify and reflect on data)
- ◆ Image-based workshops (three workshops developed to create accompanying visual images)
- ◆ Writing and publication of the YARP report.

#### **Further information:**

Youth Arts Queensland  
Phone: 07 3252 5115  
Website: [www.yaq.org.au](http://www.yaq.org.au)  
Email: [eo@yaq.org.au](mailto:eo@yaq.org.au)

Youth Arts Mentoring Program  
Email: [Mentoring@youtharts.au.com](mailto:Mentoring@youtharts.au.com)

#### **4. Initiative:** *Loganlea Student Reference Group* (Loganlea)

##### **Description:**

The Loganlea Student Reference Group was created to engage young people in the Community Renewal process, whilst incorporating this into their school curriculum. The initial training was done utilising staff from Griffith University, who used metaphors such as “glass half empty or half full” to engage the young people in how they saw the Loganlea community. Some members of the Loganlea Community Reference Group are also involved.

##### **Target group:**

Students from across all grades at Loganlea State High School.

##### **Issues addressed:**

- Training in civic skills and knowledge
- Empowerment of young people.
- Community fragmentation and inter-generational barriers.

##### **Method of delivery:**

- Monthly Student Reference Group meetings, with students following up on projects or activities they have elected to pursue outside of the meeting.

##### **Factors to consider:**

- Students were able to self-select their involvement in the Student Reference Group and members of the Loganlea Community Reference Group volunteered their participation
- Students are involved in the decision making process on projects
- This is a creative way for young people to learn and provides cross-credits for their studies, while carrying out the additional work.

##### **Further information:**

Loganlea Facilitator  
Community Renewal Program  
Phone: 07 3884 9873

## **5. Initiative:** *Cambridge Youth Participation Project* (Cambridge, England)

### **Description:**

This project aimed to involve young people aged 11 to 17 in Council decision making. Young people throughout the city were consulted through a combination of methods: surveys, focus groups and giving evidence to a jury of 14 young people. In the longer term, Cambridge City Council believed that the project had resulted in a fundamental shift in its relations with young people.

Immediate outcomes included:

- ◆ The opening of a cyber Cafe
- ◆ Funding for a youth bus as a mobile resource centre
- ◆ Funding for more city centre detached workers
- ◆ A review of the council's leisure care scheme
- ◆ A fare reduction on buses for young people.

It has also continued commitment to the active involvement of young people through ongoing funding for the project, which includes funding for a youth participation worker and a youth development officer to expand the neighbourhood profile of the project.

In October 2000, Cambridge City Council's work on youth participation received national recognition when it was declared overall winner in The Guardian/IPPR Award 2000 for excellence in public involvement.

### **Target group:**

Young people aged 11 to 17 years.

### **Issues addressed:**

- ◆ young people's needs in the community.

### **Factors to consider:**

- ◆ Young people were consulted through a combination of surveys, focus groups and through giving evidence to the jury
- ◆ Fourteen young people acted as jurors
- ◆ The young jurors received an intensive training program actively involving local councillors and led by two youth workers
- ◆ The young citizens' jury presented 32 recommendations to councillors
- ◆ An officer's report responding to each recommendation was then sent to the city board for approval.

### **Further information:**

Cambridge City Council  
Website: [www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)