

The logo consists of two stylized, overlapping curved lines that form a shape reminiscent of a smile or a pair of eyes.

**youth affairs network qld**

## **Youth Consultative Network**

# **2 / 2007**

**Brief Response to Issues Raised by  
Youth Interagencies/Networks**

February 2008

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Youth Affairs Network Queensland Inc. 2008

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## Introduction

This document provides information relevant to issues raised with YANQ by youth interagencies & networks between July and December 2007.

During this period, seven (7) interagencies formally raised issues with YANQ through the Youth Consultative Network.

## What is YANQ doing with the Information?

The information (issues, training needs and announcements of resources) that was provided to YANQ through the YCN between July and December 2007 is used in a variety of ways, including:

- forwarding collated reports to relevant Government Departments and Peak bodies and inviting them to respond<sup>1</sup>;
- making the results publicly available on YANQ's website and distributing them back via interagencies;
- informing YANQ's operational planning for the future (i.e. to help us decide what areas of work to focus on).

For the longer term, the issues raised via the YCN help YANQ to decide what issues it should seek to address through specific and more intensive projects (that we would work on in partnership with the sector).

For the short term YANQ has provided (below) information about current or past activities relevant to some of the issues that may be useful. Where possible, contact details have been provided in case interagencies would like to follow up on this information.

### For More Information...

For more information about the YCN or YANQ generally, please phone or e-mail us using the contact details to the right ('Who's Who at YANQ'). The staff member with particular responsibility for the YCN is the Network Development Officer.

The YCN website also provides further details, as well as reports from previous quarters. You can access the site at <http://www.yanq.org.au/ycn>.

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## Response to Matters Relating to Young People

### *Drug & Alcohol Misuse*

#### Additional Spending in Last Budget for Youth Detox Facilities

In last years State Budget, \$4.84 million a year over four years was announced for treatment and rehabilitation of young people experiencing complex problems relating to drug use.

YANQ has written to the Department of Health seeking an update on how this money is being spent. The Department's response will be published on YANQ's website and in the E-mail Bulletin.

<sup>1</sup> Collated reports are only sent to Government Departments and other Peaks when 10 or more interagencies participate in a period

## **Criminal Justice Responses to Drug-related Crime: Are They Working?**

Over the past seven or eight years, almost every state and territory has implemented a range of so-called drug diversion programs aimed at addressing the perceived drugs/crime nexus. This report attempts to answer the question: 'Are these programs working: are they, in fact, meeting their primary aims?'

At first glance the costs of these programs are substantial, with the Australian Government allocating supportive funding of \$340m over 1999-2000 to 2007-08 (Australia. Department of Health and Ageing 2006: 33). In addition the States have put significant amounts of money towards establishing drug courts. If these initiatives are achieving their objectives, then such costs should be more than offset by the benefits accruing to the community through a reduction in illicit drug use and related offending, improved health and wellbeing for former drug dependent offenders and reduced case loads for the criminal justice system.

This report attempts to assess this by giving an overview of key findings from national and state-based evaluations that have been undertaken of these initiatives. It will summarise the outcome-based results currently available, identify the knowledge gaps that still exist and point to areas where further work is required to provide a more definitive insight into the value of these programs.

Click here to Download the report - <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tbp/tbp025/tbp025.pdf> (PDF 2.5MB).

## **Drinking Diary – Self-Monitoring Tool**

The Australian Drug Foundation has recently updated the *Drinking diary*. This updated booklet still contains a diary for monitoring drinking behaviours as well as guidelines for identifying harmful drinking behaviour and ways to change drinking behaviours. The pocket-sized *Drinking diary*, may be a useful resource for people who are concerned about their drinking patterns and people who wish to either reduce their alcohol consumption or quit drinking.

Copies (\$1.65 each) can be ordered through the [ADF resource catalogue](http://www.booksshop.adf.org.au) or online at [www.booksshop.adf.org.au](http://www.booksshop.adf.org.au).

## **News from the National Cannabis Prevention & Information Centre**

Since the launch of its National Cannabis Information and Helpline (1800 30 40 50) the NCPIC has been approached by many agencies and organisations for materials to promote the Helpline among their clients. The NCPIC is in the process of printing a range of materials, including posters, business cards and flyers. Their website is not live as yet, but it is anticipated to become active early next week, at:

<http://www.ncpic.org.au>.

In the meantime, an A4 poster providing the Helpline number can be downloaded from the National Drug and Research Centre website at the following address: <http://www.ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au> (link live in early February 2008).

If you wish to become a NCPIC subscriber and receive a range of electronic resources (including the E-Zines and the NCPIC Bulletin Series) as well as regular updates on the Centre's activities (including free national training) please contact Paul Dillon, ph: (02) 9385 0226, email: [p.dillon \[AT\] unsw.edu.au](mailto:p.dillon@AT.unsw.edu.au).

Source: Youth Field Xpress, Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies

## **Recommendations from the Youth Violence Taskforce**

In November 2007, the Minister for Police and the Premier of Queensland released the final report and recommendations of the Youth Violence Taskforce.

Their media statement announcing the report focused on the Government's intention to "make sweeping changes to the Liquor Act ...[and] ...crack down on the secondary supply of alcohol to young people by adults."

**Below is the list of recommendations and links to download the report.**

## Recommendation 1

Queensland Government revisit the current legislative environment in relation to the secondary supply of alcohol to young people by adults, particularly their parents and that the government legislate to prohibit the supply of alcohol to minors in such quantity or circumstances where harm or a high risk of harm to a minor may eventuate.

## Recommendation 2

Queensland Government fund and deliver a highly visible community education and social marketing campaign over the next 5 – 10 years, specifically targeting young people and their parents in purpose built and wide ranging flexible delivery formats, with a view to creating and maintaining a safe drinking culture.

## Recommendation 3

Sources for revenue to deliver education campaigns are investigated including from the liquor and hospitality industry.

## Recommendation 4

Community based education programs should be funded for delivery across Queensland communities with a view to engaging youth, particularly school leavers, in the impact and effect of high risk drinking practices, including the dangers of high alcohol volume products.

## Recommendation 5

Government support an anti-violence advertising campaign focused on highlighting the consequences of violence and the choices available to manage conflict without violence, and targeted specifically at Generation Y audience (ages 12-27) through emerging communication mediums.

## Recommendation 6

The Queensland Police Service in consultation with the Department of Education, Training and the Arts utilise School Based Police Officers and QPS Operational Skills Training Officers to develop and trial for Secondary school students an educational program related to the recognition of warning signs, use of verbal communication skills and avoidance options to diffuse potentially dangerous and violent situations.

## Recommendation 7

The extension and ongoing promotion of the Queensland Police Service Party Safe initiative to raise awareness of safer party practices.

## Recommendation 8

The Department of Education, Training and the Arts investigate a range of social and emotional learning packages with a view to having all Queensland State schools deliver a package from prep through to year 12 to encourage positive behaviour and social skills in children and young people.

## Recommendation 9

Government support the Department of Education, Training and the Arts School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) approach to building responsible student behaviour.

### Download the Report Below (all downloads are PDFs):

- [The Youth Violence Taskforce Report - November 2007](#)
- [Attachment 1 - Literature List](#)
- [Attachment 2 - Presentation List](#)
- [Attachment 3 - Cleveland Report](#)
- [Attachment 4 - Youth Violence Summary Report](#)
- [Attachment 5 - Positive Behaviour Support \(SWPBS\) program information](#)
- [Attachment 6 - Accenting the positive](#)
- [Attachment 7 CRYPAR Triple P and Safe Youth Safe Communities program information](#)
- [Attachment 8 - Fast Track etc. program information](#)
- [Attachment 9 - Queensland Community Mentoring Program \(OCMP\) program information](#)

These are all available from:  
<http://tinyurl.com/26wypb>.

## **Recommendation 10**

Government support the Department of Education, Training and the Arts' Act Smart Be Safe website campaign to provide information and proactive strategies to schools, students and parents to assist with addressing issues of youth violence.

## **Recommendation 11**

The 2009 Crime Stoppers Youth Challenge Queensland target youth violence prevention.

## **Recommendation 12**

Queensland Government research, design and develop a holistic framework for identifying, targeting and reducing risky behaviour and promoting positive support systems and messages about youth.

## **Recommendation 13**

A youth engagement strategy that supports a series of Youth Forums for young people aged 15 – 17 yrs on issues affecting youth to inform Government of current trends and changes in youth culture and encourage empowerment, ownership and responsibility of young people.

## **Recommendation 14**

Government supports the further expansion of the 'Coordinated Response to Young People At Risk' (CRYPAR) program, the Triple P initiative and the Safe Youth – Safe Communities initiative to provide early intervention and support for 'at risk' youth and families in crisis.

## **Recommendation 15**

Government give further consideration of evidence based strategies for multiple risk children and youth.

## **Recommendation 16**

Establishment of an ongoing Ministerial Advisory Committee on Youth Violence to advise Government on emerging youth trends and culture issues in relation to violence.

## **Australian Winter School – Alcohol & Other Drugs (Brisbane)**

The Australian Winter School brings together professionals addressing alcohol and other drugs across health, education, law enforcement, corrections, policy and research. Its major emphasis is on the practical implementation and implications of research and policy, combined with the showcasing of innovative programs.

The title for this years Winter School is "Seen & Unseen Harms". Daily Themes are Families & AOD, Workplace AOD and Social Exclusion. It will be held from **12 – 14 May 2008 in Brisbane.**

Further details on the conference can be accessed via the web site: [www.winterschool.info](http://www.winterschool.info).

## **Alcohol & Other Drug Treatment Pamphlet**

The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) has recently released a new pamphlet titled *Alcohol and other drug treatment*. This pamphlet is part of the new *Your guide to...* series and is an overview of treatment for alcohol and drug problems. It explains common aims of treatment, terminology, types of treatment that are available and when and why a person would consider beginning treatment.

A single free copy of *Alcohol and other drug treatment* is available to all [DrugInfo Clearinghouse](mailto:DrugInfo@clearinghouse.org.au) members located within Australia. To request your free copy, email your name, organisation and postal address to [druginfo@adf.org.au](mailto:druginfo@adf.org.au) or telephone 1300 85 85 84. Subsequent copies can be ordered through the [ADF resource catalogue](http://www.adf.org.au) or online at [www.bookshop.adf.org.au](http://www.bookshop.adf.org.au).

## **FebFast – Reducing The Impact of Alcohol in our Community**

FebFast is a community education and awareness campaign that invites people to do something good for their own bodies, and someone else's by sacrificing their alcohol intake for up to one month, during February. Participants are sponsored by friends & family, with funds distributed to organisations that support young people struggling with substance use.

Funds raised through donations to FebFast will be provided to services that support adolescents and young adults who suffer from alcohol and substance abuse. The funds will be distributed via the FebFast Gift Fund Management Committee. The Committee will be establishing a funds distribution process in 2008.

For more details on the campaign visit [www.febfast.com.au](http://www.febfast.com.au).

## **Youth Drinking Cultures: European Experiences**

This is a recently-released book of research containing cross-national comparisons of drinking behaviour, which examines factors such as gender, societal context and family socioeconomic backgrounds. It's edited by Margaretha Järvinen (University of Copenhagen and Danish National Institute of Social Research) and Robin Room (University of Melbourne).

Cost is \$99.90 (USD). Published by Ashgate Publishing: ISBN: 0 7546 4996 2 / 978-0-7546-4996-0.

Source: Youth Field Xpress, Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies.

## **Housing & Accommodation**

### **20 Policy Measures to Respond to Homelessness**

In October 2007, Homelessness Australia released their report, *The Way Forward – 20 Measures the Federal Government can Adopt to Respond to Homelessness* (PDF .

The report's recommendations cover some of the following areas (among others):

- early intervention: e.g. not applying 'participation failure' penalties for social security recipients at risk of homelessness.
- crisis support: e.g. increasing SAAP funding by 35 to 40% and
- creating pathways out of homelessness: e.g. increasing funding to public housing.

The report (PDF ) can be downloaded from: <http://tinyurl.com/39pnpml>.

### **Update from Queensland Shelter following Housing Peaks Funding Changes**

By Tracey Douglas – Acting Director of Queensland Shelter

Queensland Shelter has expanded its operations under the new funding arrangements for social housing advocacy. Apart from additional administrative staff, there will be a full-time branches development officer, and four policy workers, one of which will be an indigenous worker.

The Queensland Shelter grassroots process of supporting branches will remain in place with perhaps some additional development of more special interest branches. Queensland Shelter will continue to provide support to the community in consulting with government as well as assisting both the community and government in the development of housing policies that provide positive affordable outcomes for those in housing need.

Our mission of Housing is a Human Right has never had so much relevance as today when society is facing a growing breakdown in capacity to house everyone.

For more information visit <http://www.qshelter.asn.au> or call (07) 3393 2433.

## **Commonwealth Government Announces Homelessness Inquiry**

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced on January 27 that the Commonwealth Government is setting up a

committee to investigate why homelessness is rising. The committee will make recommendations on how Australia can reduce homelessness over the next decade.

The Prime Minister stated in his announcement that "[w]e need a new approach that prevents homelessness, improves crisis services, helps people to get long-term, secure housing and stops the cycle of homelessness."

The committee will produce a White Paper report that will guide government policies on the issue. Tony Nicholson, Executive Director of the Brotherhood of St Laurence, has been appointed as the chair of the Steering Committee that will oversee the process.

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## **Response to Matters Relating to Organisations**

### ***Funding/Resources***

#### **Fair Level of Funding Project**

YANQ continues to support QCOSS's Fair Level of Funding Project. More information about the project are available at <http://www.qcoss.org.au/Article.aspx?type=news&id=660> or by contacting Tanya Hall - 3004 6916 or [tanyah@qcoss.org.au](mailto:tanyah@qcoss.org.au).

#### **Compact Negotiations Underway**

In November of last year the Queensland Government agreed to negotiate a Compact with Community Services Sector in Queensland. This follows two years of intense lobbying by the Queensland Community Services Sector Futures Forum and is the result of lots of hard work by the peaks to bring together a more pro-active and positive future for not-for-profit community organisations in this State.

A Compact is important for the future of the sector because it will provide clarity for non-government organisations as to their roles and responsibilities and those of government. A Compact will also recognise the valuable role played by the sector and help to build sector capacity. For more information about the value of a Compact visit <http://www.qcoss.org.au/Article.aspx?type=news&id=3824>.

The Compact will be across six government departments: Communities, Disabilities Service Queensland, Queensland Health, Department of Housing, Department of Child Safety and Department of Justice and Attorney General and will be signed by the Futures Forum on behalf of the Sector. The Compact will be jointly developed by government and the sector through an inter-sector reference group with representatives from each. The Community Services Futures Forum and Department of Communities are leading the process.

Work on a draft Compact document commenced in December with consultation with the sector planned for March /April. This will be an important opportunity for everyone to have input into this momentous piece of work.

For more information on the progress of the Compact please see the QCOSS website: [www.qcoss.org.au](http://www.qcoss.org.au) or contact [director@yanq.org.au](mailto:director@yanq.org.au).

### ***Staff Recruitment/Retention & Training***

#### **Research proposal for Youth Sector Workforce Development Plan**

Few readers will disagree that a well-trained, youth-centred and responsive youth sector doesn't and won't happen by accident. While one of the challenges is to ensure that workers are paid fairly, we also need a comprehensive plan that addresses the rights and needs of Queensland's young people and how we go about finding and training people to meet them. For many years now YANQ has been advocating for a systemic approach to the development and maintenance of the State's Youth Sector.

Recently YANQ, the Office for Youth, the Department of Education, Training and the Arts (DETA) and the

Health and Community Services Workforce Council began discussing a proposal for a project that will create a **Youth Sector Workforce Development Plan**.

Such a plan would provide a framework for organisations, sectors and the government to approach sector wide development.

In September last year, the Workforce Council released a report in which it identified priority areas for the Skills Alliance Projects. **One of the priorities was the Youth Sector.**

The first phase of developing a plan for the Youth Sector's workforce is to obtain data about it - size, scope, levels of training, remuneration etc.

This, and future work to develop a plan for the sector can only continue with extra funding which YANQ and the Workforce Council are pursuing. To this end, YANQ has prepared a youth sector workforce development brief describing a comprehensive research project across the state that would articulate a workforce development plan and guide the sector and assist in securing funding for future youth sector development strategies.

For more information contact Siyavash Doostkhan (YANQ's Director) - 3844 7713 / 1800 177 899.

## **Update on the Community Services Training Package Review**

The Community Services Training Package CHC02 Review Draft 2 material is now available for stakeholder review & feedback **by Monday, 31 March 2008**. To access the Draft 2 material, please click on the following link and follow the instructions on how to download the materials: CHC02 Review Draft 2 Materials (<http://tinyurl.com/ywvyyma>).

Face-to-Face feedback on the materials can be provided via the validation **focus group sessions** that the Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council is conducting in each State and Territory beginning the 18th of February 2008

The dates for focus group sessions in **Brisbane** are as follows:

- Mon 25 Feb, 9.30am - 12.30pm - Client Services Sector Validation Session
- Mon 25 Feb, 1.30pm - 4.30pm - Children's & Youth Services Sector Validation
- Tues 26 Feb, 9.30am - 12.30pm - Community Services & Development Sector Validation
- Tues 26 Feb, 1.30pm - 4.30pm - Individual Client Support Sector Validation

## **Update on the Campaign for Fair Pay/Working Conditions for Youth Workers**

In June this year YANQ and the Australian Services Union (ASU) announced that we were embarking on a joint campaign to lift the pay and conditions of youth workers. Below is a brief update on how the campaign is progressing.

### **Why we started the campaign**

As we said at the time of the announcement, delivering **quality youth services** for young people is impossible without quality, professional youth workers. Unfortunately one of the most pressing challenges facing youth services in Queensland is retaining and attracting good staff and as a result young people are missing out. One of the main reasons for this is that the pay and conditions of workers in the non-government sector have failed to grow at a suitable rate to entice and keep staff.

The aim of the campaign is to improve youth services by reducing the high levels of staff turnover. The main strategy to achieve this is to negotiate a Multi-Employer Agreement (MEA) that will, at the very least, create the legal mechanism through which improved pay and conditions can be achieved over the next few years. We are confident that additional funding from governments will result in improved pay and conditions and will entice more people to seek employment in and then stay in the sector.

Alongside the MEA strategy, the ASU and QCOSS are also working on a new Award to replace the existing Social and Community Services award. There are advantages to developing both an MEA (for all human

service sectors) *and* a new Award. YANQ is working to ensure that both strategies are complementary of each other and are likely to lead to good outcomes both for young people (e.g. no reduction in service opening hours) and youth workers (fair increases in pay and conditions).

### **What needs to be done to ensure success**

If we are to have any chance of success, we will need:

1. To increase the numbers of non-government youth workers that are members of their union. Presently only 7-8% of staff in non-government human services are members of the Union. We aim to lift this (within the youth sector) to 50%.
2. A minimum of 15 Youth services that are committed to negotiating a Multi-Employer Agreement.
3. The agreement of government funding bodies to fund the improvements that are negotiated into the MEA.

### **Union membership**

We need to increase the levels of Union Membership for two reasons. First to send a clear signal to employers and funding bodies that youth workers support this campaign. The second is to ensure that the ASU has the resources it needs to continue this campaign.

#### **Join the Union Now and show your support!**

In the first 3 months of the campaign the ASU welcomed 94 new members! YANQ has offered these new members 12 months free membership/subscription of YANQ as a small token of thanks.

**94 new union members is an excellent start** but this represents just a small overall increase. In the coming year we will continue encouraging staff of non-government youth services to join the ASU. To read more on the importance of joining the union visit <http://www.yanq.org.au/content/view/653/71/>

### **Youth services commitment to the MEA**

A Multi-Employer Agreement is an agreement between a number of services and their employees (represented by their Union). Presently 15 youth services have indicated that they will participate in negotiations.

The ASU and YANQ are very encouraged by this and we are expecting that more services will come on board in 2008.

### **Government support**

YANQ and the ASU have started meetings with Government Departments about the campaign. In December we met with representatives of the Minister for Communities and are waiting on a response to a number of questions which we raised.

We will provide updates on the support of the Department of Communities and other funding bodies via the campaign page at [www.yanq.org.au/mea](http://www.yanq.org.au/mea).

## **Suggestions re Training Needs**

### ***Update on the State Youth Affairs Conference***

Two interagencies asked for information about 'youth conferences' and "conferences, events, forums for youth workers". It is timely therefor to provide a brief update on YANQ's plans for the State Youth Affairs Conference.

This year, instead of a single 2-3 day conference, YANQ will be holding four 1-day forums across Queensland. Three of the forums will be held in regional areas and one in Brisbane between late April and July.

All the forums will focus on the topic “From Disengaged to Re-engaged: Young Peoples Right to Education and Training.” They will provide an opportunity to share ideas and gain some practical training/advice on providing services to disengaged young people.

For more information phone YANQ on 3844 7713 / 1800 177 899.