



**youth affairs network qld**

**WHAT WOMEN REALLY WANT**  
**And how the Queensland youth sector can deliver it**

**Report of the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland's  
Young Women's Sector Training Needs Analysis**

**July/November 2006**

*“As an Aboriginal woman in this country I feel we are going back into the dark ages.”*

- Forum participant

## About YANQ

The Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc. (YANQ) is the peak community youth affairs organisation in Queensland. YANQ advocates on behalf of young people in Queensland, especially disadvantaged young people, to government and the community. The interests and well being of young people across the state are promoted by YANQ in the following ways:

- disseminating information to members, the youth sector, and the broader community
- undertaking campaigns and lobbying
- making representations to government and other influential bodies
- resourcing regional and issues-based networks
- consulting and liaising with members and the field
- linking with key state and national bodies
- initiating projects
- hosting forums and conferences
- input into policy development
- enhancing the professional development of the youth sector

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## Acknowledgements

More than 200 people participated in the consultations for this paper through forums, email surveys, telephone interviews and meetings. This demonstrated the commitment of the youth and women's sectors to making Queensland a better place for marginalised young women through participation in this project. A full list of project participants is provided at the end of the paper.

Special recognition must go to all of the young women who participated in the Regional and Brisbane forums, including the young women from Keppel Alternative School in Yeppoon and Southside Education and Albert Park Flexi School in Brisbane... represent!

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I would also like to highlight the work of the Women's Sector Community Engagement Project (2005), whose findings should be read in conjunction with this paper, as well as the excellent work that the YWCA ("the Y") is currently doing for young women's policy in Queensland.

Thanks also to the former Department of Employment and Training, the Office for Women and the Office for Youth for their role in the project and in the Young Women's Steering Committee.

Claire Cottone for the Youth Affairs Network Queensland, 2006

## Executive Summary

YANQ's Young Women's Sector Training Needs Analysis project aimed to identify the training needs for the youth sector to improve and strengthen its advocacy and delivery of services to young women in Queensland, particularly those of Indigenous and CALD backgrounds, young women with disabilities, young women from rural areas and lesbian young women.

The findings and recommendations in this paper are based on consultations conducted by YANQ with Government and non-Government service providers, young women and individuals across Queensland over a three-month period. One hundred organisations and over 200 people participated in the consultations for this project via written surveys, telephone interviews, face-to-face meetings and four consultative forums (Brisbane, Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Yeppoon).

The key findings regarding the training needs of the youth sector are as follows:

1. Training at all levels of service delivery for personnel in Government and non-Government bodies engaging with young women, in the following areas:
  - i. Gender analysis training
    1. Power dynamics and the oppression of women in hierarchies, patriarchy and bureaucracy.
    2. Making your organisation women and young-women friendly: working with women and for women.
    3. Engaging and consulting with marginalised young women.
    4. Issues affecting young women specifically, especially domestic violence, sexual assault and related trauma, sexuality, power dynamics in relationships, sex education and parenting, self-esteem and body image.
  - ii. Cultural awareness training
    1. The impact of the forced colonisation of Australia on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
    2. Working cross-culturally and whiteness awareness training
    3. Engaging and consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other multicultural groups
    4. Engaging with rural and remote communities
  - iii. Political education and advocacy training
  - iv. Networking, facilitation and conflict resolution training

During the course of the consultations, participants aired many other urgent issues which went beyond the training needs of the sector to better respond to young women's issues, such as infrastructural and service delivery gaps. This report also captures some of these accompanying issues as they arose.

YANQ's Young Women's Sector Training Needs Analysis project had a very short time frame and limited resources. Therefore, this report is not an exhaustive assessment of the needs of young women or the young women's sector in Queensland.

## The Young Women's Sector in Queensland

### No leadership

The Office for Women in the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice is the lead agency driving the development of women's policy in Queensland. *The Women in the Smart State 2003–2008: Directions Statement* sets out the Queensland Government's vision, priorities and strategies that will enable "women and girls to have equal opportunity to shape, transform, access and realise the benefits of the Smart State." The Queensland Government undertakes to *meet challenges in areas where women still experience greatest under-representation, inequity and need.*<sup>1</sup>

The Office for Youth in the Department of Communities, Disability Services, Seniors and Youth is responsible for working across Government, and with communities and state wide youth organisations to address the needs of young people (aged 12 to 25) in Queensland. The Queensland Youth Charter sets out the Queensland Government's commitment to engaging with young people.

Neither the Office for Women nor the Office for Youth could identify any specific policies or programs in place for marginalised young women in Queensland. Throughout the consultations for this project, both of these offices have identified a limited capacity to engage in advocacy and policy development around the needs of young women.

In 2003-2004, the Women's Sector Community Engagement Project (WSCEP) (a joint initiative of the Queensland Women's Sector, funded by the Queensland Office for Women) engaged in lengthy community consultations regarding the continuing importance of the women's sector in Queensland.<sup>2</sup> The project held a series of forums including one forum focusing on issues for young women. The WSCEP made some excellent recommendations which the YWCA has attempted to progress through the Office for Women; however the report seems to be sitting dead on office tables.

### No peak

At present there is no identifiable peak body advocating for young women's issues in Queensland. The Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc (YANQ) is the peak body advocating for and alongside marginalised young people in Queensland. At the time of writing, policy staff at YANQ consists of the Director (5 days, male), a Network Development Officer (4.5 days, male) and a Multicultural Development Officer (3-4 days, female).

### No network

Women Along-side Young Women for Action Research and Development (WAYWARD) was formerly a very active network advocating for the needs of young women in South-East Queensland. Now, due to no funded position to coordinate the network or advance the network's aims, it has been reduced to information-sharing e-group.

### Excellent services – limited funding

There are some excellent young women's services across Queensland. Many of them identified insufficient funding and a lack of ability to engage in systemic advocacy around the needs of their young women clients in a coordinated fashion. The WSCEP Young Women's Forum identified a

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[http://www.women.qld.gov.au/Docs/Recent\\_Publications/Directions/directions\\_text.pdf](http://www.women.qld.gov.au/Docs/Recent_Publications/Directions/directions_text.pdf) (20/10/2006);

[http://www.women.qld.gov.au/Docs/Recent\\_Publications/Fact\\_Sheet/Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.women.qld.gov.au/Docs/Recent_Publications/Fact_Sheet/Fact_Sheet.pdf) (20/10/2006).

2 Read the report! You can download at <http://www.yanq.org.au/content/blogcategory/8/67/>

lack of time, resources, leadership and coordination in the young women's sector as major barriers to collective advocacy.

## Project background

YANQ conducts 6-monthly facilitated planning meetings with all staff and management committee members. Young women's issues have been consistently identified at YANQ planning meetings over the last seven years. However, without a Young Women's Policy Officer, it has been difficult to progress any of these issues, except through the Multicultural Development Officer position.<sup>3</sup>

YANQ received a small amount of funding in 2006 from the former Department of Employment and Training (DET) to "identify the training needs of the Queensland youth sector to better respond and plan for young women's issues". In more detail, YANQ undertook to **identify the training needs for the youth sector to improve and strengthen its advocacy and delivery of services to young women, particularly those of Indigenous and CALD backgrounds, young women with disabilities, young women from rural areas, LGBT young women and young women at risk.**

This allowed YANQ to employ a Young Women's Officer (YWO) for two days per week for three months to undertake the training needs analysis (the subject of this report).

YANQ also established a Young Women's Steering Committee with representation from the Office for Youth, the Office for Women, the Department of Education, Training and the Arts, to assist in advancing strategic policy and planning for young women's issues.

## Methodology

### Project reference group

YANQ's Young Women's Officer established a reference group of workers from women's, youth and young women's agencies in Brisbane to advise and support her in the running of the project. The YWO also openly invited YANQ members and subscribers to participate in the planning and running of the project.

### Regional forums

The YWO advertised the project widely across Queensland through YANQ's networks. Regionally, organisations and individuals in Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Townsville expressed interest in the project. The YWO conducted forums in Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Yeppoon. See full reports on these forums below.

### HEAR ME ROAR! Young Women's Policy Forum, Parliament House

YANQ also conducted a major Young Women's Policy forum at Parliament House in Brisbane on 17 October 2006. Approximately 80 people (mostly women) attended HEAR ME ROAR!, including about 30 young women from schools<sup>4</sup>, young parenting and arts programs, and other active young women in the community.

The forum was a *consultative* forum, drawing upon the knowledge of the participants, who broke into small groups and addressed the following four questions:

1. What is happening for young women in Queensland (policies, programs, services,

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<sup>3</sup> For example, YANQ's MDO is currently undertaking a project around Muslim young women's participation in sport and recreation.

<sup>4</sup> Albert Park Flexi School, Milpera State School and Southside Ed.

- projects)?
2. What is NOT happening for young women in Queensland?
  3. What can we do with existing resources to fill these gaps?
  4. Remaining gaps: what additional training, resources and infrastructure is needed to address these issues?

Each small group was assigned a facilitator whose job it was to ensure that all people in the group had equal opportunity to participate. Small groups then presented their findings to the large group.

Feedback from the forum indicated that participants found the forum very engaging and enjoyed the process. Young women who were involved reported that they felt very empowered by the process and enjoyed feeling as though their views were important.

HEAR ME ROAR! was very successful in gathering some strong outcomes and the recommendations in this report are strongly influenced by the HEAR ME ROAR! findings.

## E-survey

The YWO simultaneously conducted an e-survey of all youth organisations across Queensland, receiving a total of 41 responses across the State (see “survey findings” below). YANQ received 16 responses from organisations and individuals in Brisbane, and another 25 responses from organisations and individuals regionally.<sup>5</sup> Nine respondents were women’s organisations and 14 respondents were youth organisations, including four young women’s organisations. Three respondent organisations identified as Indigenous, five as multicultural, and two as Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer (LGBTQ). Three men and 38 women answered questionnaires.

**One hundred organisations and more than 200 people across Queensland participated in this study through the e-survey, telephone interviews, forum participation and individual meetings. The recommendations in this report are derived from all of the above consultations.**

This report acknowledges the findings of the WSCEP (2004), however we do not replicate them here.

## Young women’s participation

The Queensland Government defines “young people” as those aged between 12-25, and YANQ’s work focuses on this age bracket. We will adopt this definition for the purpose of this paper. However, YANQ recognises that this is an arbitrary classification of young people, and that some cultures define “young people” according to different criteria. Therefore this paper also values the contributions of people who identify as “young” but may be over 25 years old.

Four women under-30 were on the project reference group (including YANQ’s YWO). One young woman attended the Bundaberg forum, nine young women attended the Yeppoon forum, and approximately 30 young women attended the Brisbane forum. Most e-survey responses were from workers, although there were one or two responses from young women (individuals).

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation

In Brisbane, interviews were conducted with Bahloo young women’s shelter and Speak Out’s Indigenous programs workers. Other Indigenous workers also participated in the Brisbane forum. There was high representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and groups in the regional consultations. YANQ is expanding this aspect of the project by conducting two focus groups with Indigenous young women in December 2006.

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5 Specifically, the Gold Coast, Logan, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Redcliffe, Deception Bay, Redland Bay, Nambour, Caloundra, Cooroy, Hervey Bay, Biloela, Gladstone, Rockhampton and Mackay.

## Participation of other culturally and linguistically diverse groups

Members of the Multicultural Youth Network of Queensland participated in the consultations, including Milpera State High School, Al-Nisa Muslim young women's group, the Smith Family and CALD young women from Contact Inc's arts program.

## Participation of Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer organisations and people

Open Doors Youth Service and a number of queer-identifying women participated in the consultations.

# Survey Findings

## What are the major issues for young women in Queensland?

**Homelessness and lack of safe, secure and affordable housing** was the major issue affecting young women in Brisbane and in regional areas. Other issues identified are in the table below.

Issue affecting young women in Queensland	% of respondents who identified the issue	
	Regional	Brisbane
Homelessness and lack of safe, secure and affordable housing	48	50
Domestic violence	24	37.5
Relationship and family breakdown	36	12.5
Mental health	32	12.5
Drug and alcohol use	32	37.5
Poverty/budgeting	24	6.25
Self-esteem/body image	24	12.5
Employment	24	12.5
Sex education /unwanted pregnancy	16	25
Sexual assault	12	25
Parenting	16	18.75
Education	16	31.25
Suicide/self-harm	12	25

Other issues identified include criminalisation, social isolation, knowledge of rights and choices, discrimination, sexuality, access to childcare, bullying, health and transport.

Many of these issues are interconnected, for example, domestic and sexual violence plus lack of affordable housing leading to homelessness, drug use and criminalisation

## What obstacles limit organisations' ability to help young women?

51% of respondents identified insufficient funding or a lack of financial and human resources as the major barrier to their helping young women. Lack of affordable housing was another major barrier. Many young women fall outside the scope of services, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women, other culturally and linguistically diverse young women, young women in rural and remote areas, young women with disabilities, pregnant and parenting young women and lesbian young women.

## Still not enough culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women

**Case in point:** Bahloo Women's Youth Shelter (located in Brisbane) is the only Indigenous-specific

young women's shelter in Queensland. The shelter is limited to 6 permanent (up to three months) and 1 overnight beds for homeless young women from 13-17 years. Bahloo does not accommodate young women with babies. Young women at Bahloo are mostly escaping sexual abuse, and at the end of their three-month retreat often have no choice but to return to the family where the perpetrator was. Coordinator Lilly Davidson says that Indigenous young women will not use non-Indigenous shelters. Indigenous consultees in Bundaberg and Rockhampton also made the same point – see the case study on the Sistagirl project below.

## What are the training needs of the youth sector to better respond to young women's issues?

### Issues specific to young women / gender issues

Only 27% of respondents had been trained in gender analysis during their career (and for many of these it was a long time ago). This is important as the people who took the time to answer the surveys most probably had more awareness of the importance of women's issues than the greater youth sector.

62% of respondents said that the youth sector needs training on issues specific to young women and gender issues (see: “**what are the major issues for young women**”, above).

### Systemic advocacy

More respondents than not (63%) said they engage in systemic advocacy around young women's issues. Once again, this may not accurately reflect the practices of the greater youth sector because the people who took the time to participate in the survey were at some level engaging in advocacy through a peak body.

Those who indicated that they did not engage in systemic advocacy around young women's issues identified time limitations as the primary reason for this (36%), that it was not part of their brief (36%), and/or they didn't know how (29%). One person responded that they did engage in systemic advocacy, but not specifically around young women's issues.

17% of respondents said that the youth sector needs training on systemic advocacy and political education.

### Cultural awareness

10% of respondents said the youth sector needs cultural awareness training to better respond to young women's issues.

### Networking and collaboration

10% of respondents indicated that they needed training in networking and collaboration.

### Making organisations more young-woman friendly

10% of respondents said training was needed in making organisations more young woman-friendly.

### Career and educational pathways training

8% of respondents said they needed training in career and educational pathways for young women.

## How can there be a strong voice for young women in Queensland?

### Ask the young women! (And then listen to and respect what they say)

The overwhelming response to this question was that **systemic advocacy around young women's issues needs to be based on the meaningful engagement of young women in the process**,<sup>6</sup> through: meaningful consultation with young women, representation of young women in

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<sup>6</sup> Over 50% of respondents indicated this.

organisations, on boards and in Parliament, empowering young women to engage with systems and structures, directing funding towards engaging young women in decision-making processes, increasing support and safety so that women can express their views without pressure or discrimination, and by raising the profile of young women socially.

## Networks and peak bodies

Respondents also strongly indicated the importance of creating strong **networks** and **lobby groups** in the young women's sector and increasing young women's representation through **peak bodies** such as YANQ and QCOSS (e.g. through paid women's policy positions). At present, the young women's sector is very disjointed and Queensland does not have a strong young women's network or an identifiable peak body that advocates on young women's issues.

## Regional case study: Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Yeppoon

YANQ's YWO travelled to Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Yeppoon to conduct consultations with communities.

### Bundaberg

Bundaberg's Indigenous Community Education Counsellor coordinated the Bundaberg consultation at the School of Arts Building in the Town Centre. 25 people attended, representing a diverse cross-section of the community as far out as **Childers, Gin Gin** and **Agnes Waters**. Participants included members of the local Elders Group, members of the Sistagirl group (see feature below), a Bundaberg High School student, the Youth Support Coordinator and other educational support workers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous health and sexual health workers, community development workers (including multicultural community development), career and employment workers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth, child and family workers including the YACCA worker and young mothers' program workers, domestic violence workers, Council workers and workers from Neighbourhood Centres.

This excellent attendance demonstrated a strong commitment to the needs of young women in this community, and the most resounding tone of the day was everyone's excitement in **coming together** to network, discuss issues and plan for the future.

YANQ's YWO facilitated the meeting, which broke into small groups and identified the following major gaps, solutions and roadblocks for young women in Bundaberg and surrounds:

### 4 major gaps for young women in Bundaberg

#### 1. Housing and accommodation

- a. No crisis accommodation for young women
- b. Need for supported accommodation
- c. Need for single women (not in crisis) accommodation

#### 2. Family

- a. Need for coordinated response to domestic violence
- b. Need for reconnect and outreach services
- c. Lack of parental role models and negative impact of parents' lifestyles

#### 3. Health

- a. Need for sex education in schools (presently taboo; schools are not receptive)
- b. Response to chroming, drug and alcohol abuse
- c. Cutting of funding for mental health support

#### 4. Education

- a. Lack of support for pregnant young women in schools to keep them engaged; huge stigma

- attached to youth pregnancy and social rejection
- b. Lack of relevance of the syllabus and alienating nature of the system
- c. Parental engagement in education

### **Solutions as identified by the community**

- 1. Better coordination of services for young women**
  - joint service delivery where mainstream and Indigenous work together
  - a coordinated response to domestic violence
- 2. Creation of a local women's network with high young women's representation**
  - to share resources and information
  - to act as a lobby group and spearhead political campaigns
- 3. Parental education on young people's issues, especially the education system**

### **Additional training/resources needed**

- 1. Crisis accommodation**
- 2. Youth awareness training workshops including training around engaging/consulting with young people**
- 3. Alternative schooling programs**

### **Rockhampton**

Girls Time Out and the local Youth Support Coordinator coordinated the Rockhampton consultation, which was attended by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Reconnect workers, youth workers, Council representatives, Queensland Police, High School support workers, family planning, and Youth Justice Services.

### **Major gaps for young women in Rockhampton**

- 1. Housing and accommodation**
  - no crisis accommodation for young women
  - no women's-only safe spaces
- 2. Sex education**
- 3. Education and career pathways**
- 4. Racism**

### **Solutions as identified by the community**

- 1. More education and promotion of young women's issues**
- 2. Creation of consultation mechanisms with young people/women**
- 3. Better use of interagencies and stronger action-based networks**
- 4. Build on existing women's only services**

### **Remaining roadblocks**

- 1. 12-15 year old age group excluded from many services due to Child Safety Legislation and SAAP guidelines**
- 2. Need training on networking, lobbying, tackling hard issues such as housing and careers**

### **Yeppoon**

YANQ's YWO met with nine young women and youth workers from Keppel Alternative School at Verbyl Youth Space in Yeppoon.

Common issues faced by these young women were homelessness and finding affordable housing, bullying, domestic and sexual violence, family breakdown, body image and eating disorders. The young women asked for more child and youth mental health workers, for the youth space to be open longer hours and on weekends, more sex and women's education, youth housing, a women's business camp, and more support for young women who chose to have children.

## Case study: the Sistagirl Network, Wide Bay - Burnett Region

**My dream is for the young ones to step up and be in control of their own destiny and their own issues in this region. They need support, acknowledgement and respect. Young people should be seen AND heard!**

Sistagirl founder, Jenny Springham

**Sistagirl Vision:** A strong network of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women sharing strength and supporting the choices of each other to heal, advocate and have a voice in our future.

**Herstory:** The Sistagirl network commenced in 2002 as a mostly volunteer-run group and is about to become incorporated with funding from the Indigenous Coordinating Centre to become a regional Indigenous voice in the Wide-Bay Burnett region.

**Purpose:** The network brings together clusters of women's support groups in Central Burnett, Hervey Bay, Maryborough, Cherbourg, Gympie, Childers and Bundaberg, and the aim is to foster the continuance and development of these local groups and their initiatives. These women's groups advocate around issues affecting women, such as

- Family violence
- Parenting
- Trauma
- Lack of cultural pride and self-respect
- Leadership
- Women in isolation and lacking social support

**Structure:** Sistagirl operates on a mentoring basis (according to founder Jenny Springham, this is more relevant than a "leadership" model). Women in the network identify mentors in their cluster areas, who then engage with women and girls in their local community through activity-based programs and setting up local support groups as needed in each area. Older mentors will eventually step out of their roles and let the next generation come up. This process also re-teaches the young people respect of their elders, and rebuilds their relationships, which have been eroded by "Put-Downs".

"In Cherbourg, where domestic violence is prevalent, we have two great young mothers who have taken on a big role engaging with up to thirty 13-30 year old women. They have some great momentum. The girls identify their own issues (not the mentors), then they come up with a project plan about how they can address the issues and come up with solution and outcomes. Our mentor in Childers has been able to engage with heaps of young women struggling at home, to take them off the streets and get them out of trouble.

The Sistagirl network, with very little funding support, has managed to address many issues which otherwise would not have been addressed and could not have been addressed by mainstream, culturally inappropriate services."

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are derived directly from YANQ's consultations with the youth sector through the written surveys, telephone interviews, face-to-face meetings and the four consultative forums (Brisbane, Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Yeppoon). One hundred organisations and over 200 people participated in the consultations for this project through these mechanisms. A full list of participating organisations is provided in Appendix 3.

1. Training at all levels of service delivery for personnel in Government and non-Government bodies engaging with young women, in the following areas:
  - i. Gender analysis training
    1. Power dynamics and the oppression of women in hierarchies, patriarchy and bureaucracy.
    2. Making your organisation women and young-women friendly: working with women and for women.
    3. Engaging and consulting with marginalised young women.
    4. Issues affecting young women specifically, especially domestic violence, sexual assault and related trauma, sexuality, power dynamics in relationships, sex education and parenting, self-esteem and body image.
  - ii. Cultural awareness training
    1. The impact of the forced colonisation of Australia on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
    2. Working cross-culturally and whiteness awareness training
    3. Engaging and consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other multicultural groups
    4. Engaging with rural and remote communities
  - iii. Political education and advocacy training
  - iv. Networking, facilitation and conflict resolution training
2. Young women are consulted by Government, youth and women's agencies about decisions and policies concerning them and are appropriately supported to participate in social processes.
3. The Office for Women and the Office for Youth extend their advocacy roles to act as lead agencies in the advancement of young women's rights and policy development in Queensland.
  - i.. The Office for Women and the Office for Youth work in partnership with women's, youth, Indigenous and multicultural, disabilities, mental health and other relevant agencies to drive this agenda.
  - ii.. Young women are meaningfully engaged in the process through culturally appropriate consultation and affirmative hiring policies.
  - iii. The Office for Women and the Office for Youth develop young women-specific policies to ensure stability of funding and other support for young women's services.
  - iv. The Office for Women and the Office for Youth prioritise the needs of **marginalised** young women in Queensland (not only advantaged women through leadership and business programs etc).

- v. Increase transparency and accountability of Government structures.
4. Creation of young women's policy and advocacy worker positions in peak bodies and other community organisations State-wide and regionally.
  5. Creation and resourcing of young women's networks, State-wide and regionally, for the purposes of:
    - i. Information and resource sharing
    - ii. Issue identification and coordinated responses to issues
    - iv. To act as lobby groups and spearhead political campaigns
    - iv. Identification of training needs
    - v. Mutual support
  6. Increase the number of women and young women in decision-making positions through:
    - i. Affirmative action strategies for hiring female staff
    - ii. Affirmative action strategies for recruiting women on boards
    - iii. Improving support and supervision structures for women workers and provision of training for women for higher management
  7. Youth agencies adopt women's statements and develop young women-specific policies.
  8. Government and non-Government agencies review all research projects and project reports over the past 10 years, including the Women's Sector Community Engagement Project report, to take stock of the information, data, analysis and recommendations.

## Conclusion

The young women's sector in Queensland is under-resourced, fragmented, and from many viewpoints, barely visible. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women, other culturally and linguistically diverse young women, young women in rural and remote areas, young women with disabilities, pregnant and parenting young women and lesbian young women are some of the most invisibilised groups in Queensland.

The Queensland youth sector lacks the capacity to advocate for the needs of marginalised young women. Queensland does not have an identifiable peak body that advocates on young women's issues and there are few active young women's networks or lobby groups across the state (and these are hardly resourced, if at all). Most youth workers lack the capacity to partake in systemic advocacy around the needs of young women because they are not funded for this and because they lack the know-how. The youth sector also lacks the capacity to articulate the needs of young women as there is a limited understanding of gender issues across the sector.

All of this exists in a white, patriarchal, hierarchical system in which white men hold most positions of power and make the bulk of decisions affecting women and young women and everyone else. It is difficult to effect positive change for women in such a system, but not impossible. The status quo must be challenged, women's skills and rights must be recognised through education and training, and women must be meaningfully included in socio-political processes.

## Appendix 1 – additional reading: young Australian and Indigenous women

Provided by Dr. Helen Johnson from the University of Queensland.

### Young Women

Aapola, Sinikka, Marnina Gonick and Anita Harris; consultant editor, Jo Campling. *Young femininity: girlhood, power and social change*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005

Harris, Anita (Ed). *All about the girl: culture, power, and identity*, New York: Routledge, 2004

*Future girl: young women in the twenty-first century*, New York: Routledge, 2004

Probert, Belinda and Fiona Macdonald. *Young Women: poles of experience in work and parenting*, Fitzroy, Vic.: Brotherhood of St Laurence, 1999

Vernon, Cheryl. *Demons, damsels, or discards: exploring the legal needs of young women*, Perth, W.A.: Youth Legal Service Inc., 2002

### Young Indigenous Women

Cowlishaw, Gillian. *Blackfellas, whitefellas, and the hidden injuries of race*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004

Purcell, Leah. *Black Chicks Talking*, Sydney: Hodder, 2004

### Gender Mainstreaming

*Gender Mainstreaming in the public service: a reference manual for governments and other stakeholders*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1999

Rai, Shirin M. Ed. *Mainstreaming Gender, democratizing the State?: institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003

### Women's Sector in Queensland

Report of the *Women's Sector Community Engagement Project* (April 2005), available at <http://www.yanq.org.au/content/blogcategory/8/67/>



## Appendix 3: List of organisations who participated in the consultations through forums, interviews and surveys

<p>Albert Park Flexi School          Al-nisa Youth Group          Amnesty International          BACW Women Elders Group (Bundaberg)          Bahloo Women's Youth Shelter          Basic Inc. (Bundaberg)          Beaucare          Boystown Logan          Brisbane City Council          Brisbane Domestic Violence Advocacy Service          Brisbane Rape &amp; Incest Survivors Support Centre          Bundaberg Child and Family Centre          Bundaberg Community Development          Bundaberg High School          Bundaberg Neighbourhood Centre          Caboolture Mums and Little Ones          Caloundra Community Centre          Capricornia Training Co.          Childers Neighbourhood Centre          Children by Choice          Commission for Children and Young People          Community Health Services Biloela          Community Solutions          Community Solutions Incorporated (Pialba)          Congress Community Development and Education Unit Ltd.          Contact Inc          Cooroy Family Support Centre          Darumbal Youth Services (Rockhampton)          Department of Education, Training and the Arts          Department of Emergency Services (Rockhampton)          Discovery Coast Community Health Services          Domestic Violence Resource Service (Mackay)          East Brisbane Community Centre          Education Queensland          Elise Koppe Creative Connections          Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland          Family Planning Queensland          Family Planning Queensland (Rockhampton)          Girls Time Out (Rockhampton)          Glenmore State High School          Gold Coast Youth Service Inc          Guides Queensland          Indigenous Employment Centre (Bundaberg)          Immigrant Women's Support Service          IMPACT (Bundaberg)          Interlink Housing and Support          Ipswich Community Youth Service          Isis Centre for Women's Action on Eating Issues          Isis High          Isis Shire Council Neighbourhood Centre</p>	<p>JPET – Gladstone          Jundal Aboriginal Coop for Young Women          Keppel Alternative School          Legal Aid Queensland          Lifeline Bundaberg          Lifeline Darling Downs &amp; South West Qld          Milpera State High School          Nambour Community Centre          North Bundaberg High          Office for Women          Office for Youth          Office of the Attorney General and Minister for Justice          Office of the Minister for Child Safety          Office of the Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Youth          Open Doors Youth Service          Othilas          Queensland Council of Social Services          Queensland Health          Queensland Police          Queensland Services Union          Reconnect (Rockhampton)          Redcliffe Area Youth Space          Redland Shire Council          Rockhampton City Council          Salvation Army Youth Outreach Service          Sistagirl          Sisters Inside          Southside Education          Speak Out          Sunshine Coast Regional Housing Council Inc          The Change Agency          The Smith Family          Tranzitions at Work          University of Queensland (Social Science)          Urangan State High (Hervey Bay)          Verbyl Youth Space (Yeppoon)          West End Community House          Women Alongside Young Women for Action          Research and Development          Women's Legal Aid – Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service          YACCA (Bundaberg)          YAMMAD Youth Services (Bundaberg)          Young Parents Program          Young Women's Place          Youth Affairs Network of Queensland          Youth Information Referral Service Inc (Mackay)          Youth Justice Services (Rockhampton)          YWCA ("the Y")          Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre</p>
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