



youth affairs network qld

When a flower doesn't bloom,
you fix the environment in
which it grows, not the flower.

Alexander Den Heijer



ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016



Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc.

Annual Report 2015- 2016

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YANQ acknowledges support from:

Individual and organisational member as well as other NGO's that have assisted us financially and supported our work in so many ways. YANQ would also like to thank networks and communities that invited, hosted or worked with YANQ in various capacity during the past twelve months.

Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

We believe that the primary culture of Australia is Aboriginal. We recognise that Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander peoples are 3 separate cultures. We recognise Aboriginal people as the permanent custodians of mainland Australia, including those areas of land whose owners have been wiped out as a result of racist policies and acts. We use the term custodianship in the context of protection and care for the land.



YANQ is committed to respecting Murri communities and individuals. We seek to understand their responses to policies and issues affecting them. We are committed to learning about their understandings of the impact of decisions on them. YANQ apologises for the past and present social mistreatment of Murri and Islander people created by colonisation, and is committed to supporting the healing process.

A Summary of YANQ's Values

At YANQ, we believe that everyone is unique. At the same time, human beings share a lot in common, and are essentially social. We envisage a society where everyone lives in harmony. For this to happen, society must both value every individual and seek the best outcome for the community as a whole. There is the same diversity amongst young people as the rest of the community; like everyone else, young people need to feel respected and valued. When young women and young men are treated as important, the rest of society will gain from their insights and experiences.

We aim to contribute to developing a society that genuinely includes all its members. That's why we are committed to promoting multiculturalism (in its widest sense), and supporting and respecting the wide range of cultures that are part of Australian society. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people always have been, and always will be, the first people of this land. Because of their special relationship with the land, indigenous culture will always have a particular significance in Australian society. Focussing on reconciliation with indigenous people is an important starting point toward creating a more inclusive society. It also provides a model for other areas of action, including strategies toward improving the situation of young people.

We believe that the most effective way to achieve constructive social change is for people to work together. Economic, social and political change is happening all the time, and it is critical that we

constantly assess and reassess our strategies if we are to influence change. Both the process and outcomes of change must be fair if sustained, constructive social change is to occur.

We believe that everybody is entitled to have their basic emotional and material rights met. The central role of governments is to ensure that this occurs. Unfortunately, at the moment, governments in Australia focus on supporting global economic interests. Whilst we believe that everyone is fundamentally equal, some sections of our society do not have access to their fair share of society's resources. This includes young people, whose basic human rights are currently not being met. YANQ is committed to encouraging positive discrimination on behalf of those groups which miss out in society so that this type of social injustice will be overcome. It is only when everyone's fundamental rights are fulfilled, and each has the means to fully participate, that it will become relevant to talk about "mutual obligation" between society and its members.

We believe that a range of strategies is required to achieve constructive social change. Governments in Australia appear committed to stopping the voice of those who challenge their misplaced priorities. YANQ is responsible for being a strong public voice which lobbies and advocates on behalf of those young people who particularly miss out in society and of young people as a whole. To undertake this role effectively, it is crucial that we draw on the expertise of those working most closely with issues affecting particular groups of young people - young women and young men themselves, youth workers and youth organisations. That's why networking is another important social change strategy; it enables the youth sector to participate in collective action.

Ultimately, YANQ's credibility is maintained by practising what we preach. Our whole structure is designed to ensure that our values and vision permeate the organisation. We are committed to maintaining an open, flexible, accountable, consistent, inclusive, valuing approach in all our dealings - within YANQ, and in our relations with our members and the wider community. We are committed to applying our values in everything we say, and everything we do.

About the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland

The Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc (YANQ) is the peak community youth affairs organisation in Queensland, representing individuals and organisations from Queensland's youth sector.

We promote the interests and well-being of young people across the state by:

- 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

We advocate on behalf of young people in Queensland, especially disadvantaged young people, to government and the community.

We promote and support cultural diversity. We encourage the development of policies and programs that respond to the rights and needs of young people.

The YANQ Team from July 2015 to June 2016

Committee Members

Mr Jude Saldanha (President)
 Mr (Kuot) Elijah Buol (Vice-President/ Treasurer)
 Ms Whit Church (Secretary)
 Ms Matilda Alexander
 Mr Alvin Hava
 Mr Gavin Tyson
 Ms Deb Kilroy ex officio
 Mr Siyavash Doostkhah ex officio

Staff

Siyavash Doostkhah Director	Sue McComber Finance Officer	Amber Hansen Administration & Communication Officer
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Consultants

Prof. Martin Mills, University of Queensland
 Dr Glenda McGregory, Griffith University
 Karen Mitchell (Accountant)
 Liz Archer
 Suzi Quixley

President's report

2015/2016 has been another significant and challenging year for YANQ. We continued to operate as the peak body representing the youth sector and rights of young people without any Government funding what so ever.

Despite funding limitations YANQ has been involved in many projects in the past 12 months. A plethora of work in advocacy, lobbying, research and policy development has been undertaken by YANQ all of which are outlined in more detail throughout this report. Please contact our Director if you would like any further information and/or clarification about any of the issues documented in this report, or if you would like to engage with any of our ongoing work.

A special thanks to all our members for your ongoing support of YANQ's work. Without its members YANQ will cease to exist. Your financial support as well as your engagement with policy and advocacy strategies has made us a collective force that even without any funding is still achieving positive outcomes for young people and the youth sector.

One of the biggest achievements has been the success of our long campaign to remove children from adult prisons. For almost two decades YANQ members from across the state have participated in various strategies to advance this campaign. Your hard work and tenacity was acknowledged by the Minister for Youth in her speech during the debate that led to changes to the law in the Queensland Parliament. As a sector we should be proud and celebrate that collectively we ensure the voice of a highly marginalised group of young people are heard and that we did whatever in our capacity to remove them from harm's way.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the rest of YANQ's management committee who have supported me in my role as the President of YANQ in the past twelve months. I would also like to thank our staff and volunteers who are doing a great job under very difficult circumstances.

Finally, I hope that in the coming year we can continue to build on our strengths in partnership with the sector across Queensland and build YANQ's capacity to become a stronger voice for young people and youth sector in Queensland.

Jude Saldanha
President
Youth Affairs Network Queensland

Why government should reinstate YANQ's funding and stop the silencing of young people

In January 2013, the LNP Government ceased funding the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland (YANQ). This has excluded young people, youth workers and youth organisations from most policy debates on youth issues. Despite this, YANQ has continued to maintain some key functions on a shoestring budget. However, YANQ is not sustainable at this level for much longer!

YANQ is widely engaged with the youth sector throughout Qld. Our membership includes over 470 young people, youth workers and NGO's. We have a proud history as the lead youth sector peak in Qld for over 25 years.

YANQ is a lean, highly networked organisation which can respond rapidly to critical issues affecting young people, particularly marginalised young people (e.g. DFV, LGBTI, ice, child protection, terrorism). We offer a rich source of intelligence for government on the changing experiences and needs of young people – in rural, remote and urban Qld.

YANQ promotes the interests and wellbeing of young people in Qld through:

- Information to the youth sector
- Government committees and working groups
- Policy advice and submissions
- Campaigns and lobbying
- Regional and issues-based networks
- Research and consultation
- Forums and conferences
- Youth sector development and training.

YANQ is distinguished from many other peaks by our innovative, decentralised model – CPLAN. Our highly regional structure enables all Qld young people and youth workers to play an active role in identifying youth worker needs; engaging in customised locally-relevant training; undertaking local research and consultation; and actively contributing to state-level policy development.

An investment in YANQ is the most cost-effective means of ensuring government access to sophisticated, evidence-based, solution-focused, practical advice on issues affecting young people across portfolios. Adequately resourced, YANQ could, once again, be a critical conduit of information on all issues affecting young people throughout Qld. The Labor Government has a fabulous opportunity to reinvigorate this unique resource and benefit from our contributions.

YANQ At a Glance

Govt invests in YANQ – the Qld peak body for youth issues and the youth sector.



YANQ helps create a vibrant, genuinely state-wide, youth sector which attracts and retains competent youth workers.

Varied groups of youth workers and young people become informed and comfortable engaging in policy processes.



YANQ partners with universities to undertake research on issues affecting young people.

YANQ analyses available research and conducts consultations to provide informed and succinct briefings to government stakeholders.

YANQ leads strategies to strengthen the capacity of the youth sector workforce.



Government youth policies strategies and programs are better able to make informed decisions in the interests of young people from throughout Qld.



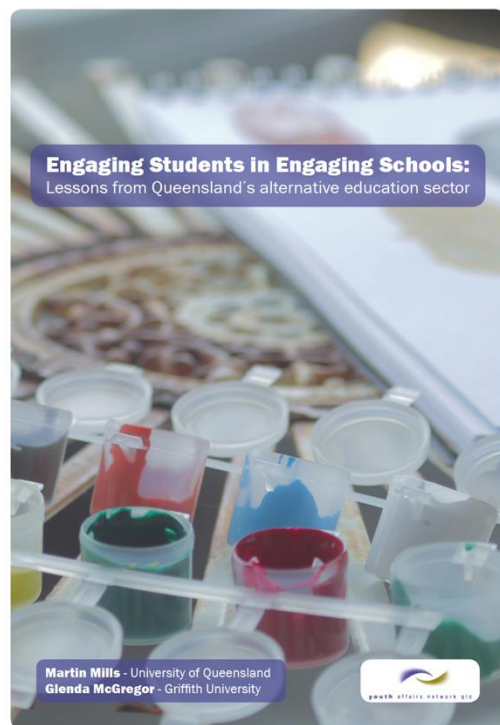
Positive outcomes for young people

The year at a glance

Young People's Reengagement with Learning

This project, with its genesis back in 2003 and the publication of a discussion paper entitled *What Are Schools For?* was the first time YANQ steered away from reactive policy processes, i.e. responding to government policy agenda, and focussed on the youth sector's own prioritised policy issues. During this time YANQ allocated most of its policy resources to proactive policy development, allowing us to be in charge of processes which are empowering to all parties involved and which deliver significant outcomes for young people and the sector.

Since then YANQ has led an ongoing campaign for greater support of young people who are disengaged from schooling through a range of research projects, publications and other advocacy and lobbying processes.



For the past 4 years YANQ and our research partners at The University of Queensland and Griffith University have been exploring the provision of existing alternative/flexible learning pathways in Queensland for young people who have become disengaged from mainstream schooling. We have been seeking to assess educational principles and practices that work in such sites so as to develop a framework of educational 'best practice' that may inform this sector and influence the operations in mainstream schools.

The result of this work is the research report titled: *Engaging Students in Engaging Schools: Lessons from Queensland's alternative education sector*. The report was completed in early 2016 and since then YANQ and the education reference group have been working behind the scenes to ensure uptake by Education Queensland. We are still awaiting confirmation by the Education Minister about a suitable time to launch the report. Our intention is to promote this report to all schools across Queensland and to encourage adoption and implementation of its recommendations.



We have also set up a Vimeo channel on our website and have uploaded several videos made by young people as part of validating this research project. In these short videos young people talk about their perspective on what is different about alternative education settings and why they have reengaged with learning and maintained their engagement in these settings.

Youth Unemployment and a Genuine Response from the Youth Sector

As reported last year, YANQ had lodged a funding proposal to the Department of Communities to undertake research on how the youth sector can genuinely engage with employment creation for young people. This research project was to examine the potential of place-based or 'community economic' approaches to youth unemployment. Of particular interest were community enterprises, work cooperatives and small business innovations for highly marginalised groups that provide relevant levels of social support along with work/economic benefits. The project was to explore the sort of support and scaffolding that is most helpful to young people through these alternative models. More specifically, we were seeking to understand what responses to long-term youth unemployment might look like, that take seriously issues of place, social needs, available work, individual capacity, and community capabilities. A \$50,000 research grant was offered to YANQ by the Department of Communities.

YANQ met with Dr Peter Westoby from University of Queensland about our research into Cooperative as he has vast experience in this area from his work both in Australia and overseas. YANQ developed a partnership arrangement for undertaking the research into cooperatives with UQ as well as Nundah Community Living Program and Deception Bay Community Youth Programs, all of which have got experience in Cooperatives and were interested in our research.

The Community Development unit at University of Queensland also joined our team and offered to assign as many as 26 students during the 2016 study year to this project.

YANQ hosted several meetings of our partners and worked with this group to finalise our research proposal to Office For Youth to investigate 'Cooperatives' and how they could tackle youth unemployment. After much negotiations with the Department of Communities on the outcomes of the proposed project a formal proposal was lodged by YANQ in November 2015.

Looking at how YANQ could expand and build on the above mentioned research YANQ met with Edgware which is company focused on training in the area of creative entrepreneurship and business planning. They have worked with many young people and youth organisations in the past two decades.

YANQ also met with the head of Queensland University of Technology's design faculty, Prof Marcus Foth. Marcus who was in the process of applying for an Advance Fellowship to undertake research into Youth Entrepreneurship providing new career pathways for young people in regional Queensland. Professor Foth had already secured almost \$400k from QUT, Townsville Council and Nambour Council. As well as the fellowship that is worth \$350K he is also applying for an ARC Linkage Grant. Over all this could turn into a multi-million dollar 3-4 year research project. We have formally partnered with QUT on this project and our main contribution is going to be in-kind support tying our research into cooperatives to this project as much as possible.

It took the Department of Communities almost 12 months of consistently telling YANQ that the funding was on its way and even telling us that the Minister has signed off on it and we will receive a letter shortly, suddenly in October 2016 we were informed that the Department will not be funding this project.

Not only has the State Government not provided YANQ with any operational funding at all, the

extra work load put on YANQ to coordinate, develop partnerships, negotiate terms and submit proposals all have taken up much of YANQ's little resources.

More on Youth Unemployment

In the past 12 months there has been some level of focus on unemployment issues including youth unemployment across Australia. Utilising the current public interest YANQ wrote a short piece for the Courier Mail about this issue which was published on 22nd April.

YANQ has been assisting the Brotherhood of St Laurence with a national research project looking at *Factors enabling entry into, and engagement with, VET for young early school leavers*. The research will investigate factors that impact on young people's participation, engagement and completion of vocational training with a particular focus on young people at the margins of the system: those who are at high risk of not engaging in, or completing vocational training programs. The research will also engage with adult intermediaries who are in close proximity to these young people.

The research will provide information about the factors that impact on young, disadvantaged people's intent to enrol, the quality of their enrolment experience, and their level of engagement and completion.

This research will seek the views of young people and 'intermediary' support services and agencies on the factors that restrict access and lead to the exclusion from, or negative experiences with, VET for the most disadvantaged and 'hard to reach'.

As well as a number of teleconferences with the research team, YANQ promoted the research across Queensland and compiled contact details of people interested in being interviewed by the research team. CPLAN Facilitators have also been assisting the research team with accessing appropriate people to be interviewed.

YANQ also met with the Social Innovation Manager at Marist Youth Care. They are looking at social enterprise models that they might roll out across Queensland. Marist Youth Care is a large service provider in NSW and it looks like Queensland is next on their list for service expansion.

CPLAN: Communities of Practice Leaders Action Networks

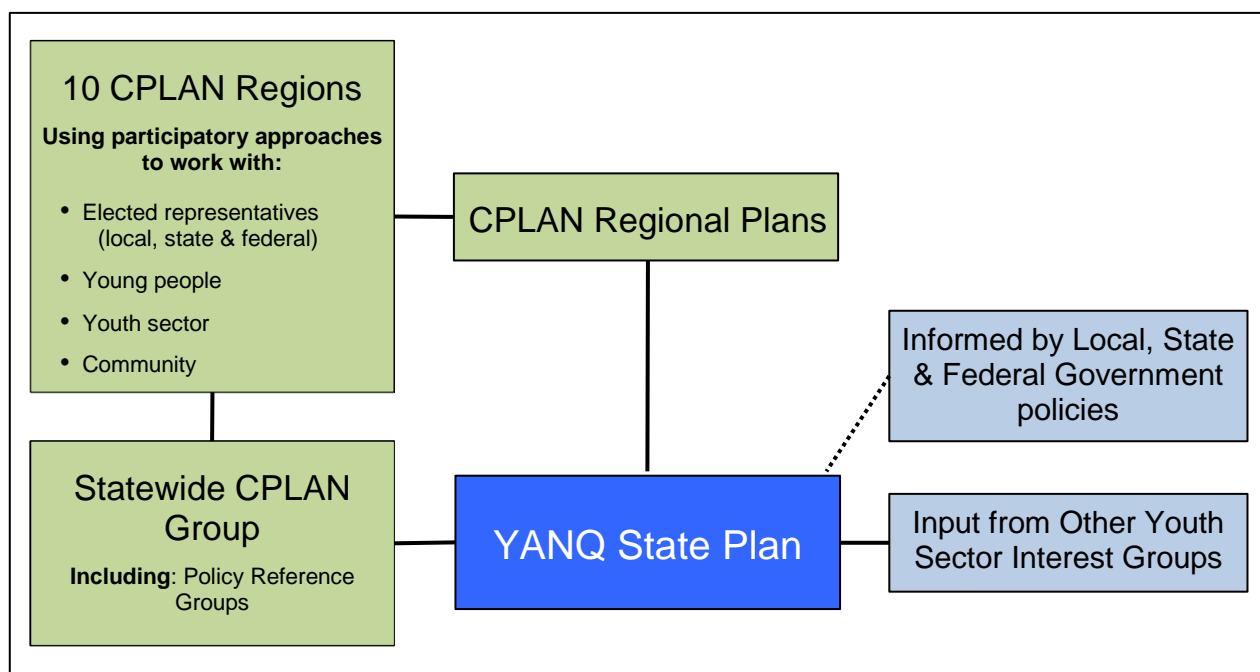
With very little resources YANQ has continued to promote the CPLAN model to the sector and the Government. Our innovative model, launched in 2011, is called CPLAN (Communities of Practice Leaders Action Networks). Between 2011 and 2013, YANQ employed 10 Regional CPLAN Facilitators throughout Queensland. These were existing youth workers in 10 regions who, with the support of their employer, work 1 day per month for YANQ. We also appointed an (unpaid) Co-facilitator in each region.

The work of CPLAN was integral to YANQ's day-to-day operations and decision-making structures. It provided a unique opportunity for us to undertake bottom-up, inclusive, sector-driven policy development. Regional CPLAN groups identified priority regional issues and local workers

contribute their ideas. If more than one region has shared interest in a policy area, they can form a Policy Reference Group, which directly contributes to the development of State-level policy.

During the past 12 months we have had two representatives on board from Central West Queensland and are now looking for representatives from Central and Far North Regions.

The following diagram CPLAN informs the YANQ policy and planning process:



CPLAN seeks to strengthen existing regional structures rather than create a whole new system. We recognise that locally-appropriate networks and groups have developed over time, and that workers often struggle to find the time (or access to transport) to participate. In most regions, CPLAN has been embedded into existing non-government networks or interagency youth sector groups, or (in one case) a local government youth sector network. In a couple of regions, where suitable structures did not exist, a new CPLAN group has been formed. Feedback from the regions has been extremely positive. Workers have said that CPLAN added to the sense of purpose of their regional structures and provided genuine support for local workers.

The success of this model is reflected in the fact that, despite the absence of funding for Regional Facilitators over the past 3 years, CPLAN groups have continued to operate and participate in YANQ (mainly via teleconference), in 8 of the 10 regions.

Celebrate Don't Medicate Campaign

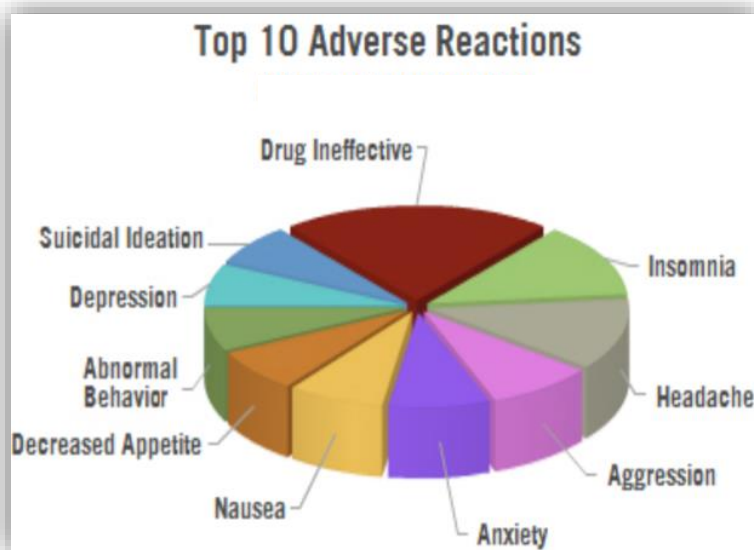
History has taught us the lesson of “The Big Lie”. Whole societies have bought into ideas and concepts that have later proven to range from baseless to maniacal. Reading with any sort of an open mind through the voluminous literature on the topic of “ADHD” in the early 21st century, one cannot help but be reminded of reading through treatises on slavery in the 18th century. How could something so horrible and so egregious be happening in a “civilized” society? Why didn’t those people take a hard look at what they were doing?

We have no doubt that someday people will look back on the massive drugging of children in Australia in the same way.

YANQ has continued to raise awareness of the over-diagnosis and over medication of children and young people who are labelled with “ADD, ADHD, ODD, CD” etc.

In particular, YANQ has been raising its concern with department of Child Safety in regards to the use of medication as a form of chemically restraining children. YANQ has been lobbying for this practice to stop for over 13 years. YANQ has evidence that a very high number of children, as young as one-year-old, in care of the Child Safety Department are chemically restrained. In recent times YANQ has been raising these concerns and seeking support from the Public Guardian. A series of meetings with representatives from the Child Safety department as well as the Australian Medical Association are planned for the near future.

Top ten adverse reactions to ADHD medication:



Children in Adult Prisons

Although technically this AGM report relates to the period of July 2015 till June 2016 it is hard for us to not celebrate with our members and supporters the success of one of the longest campaigns YANQ has been running; the campaign to remove children out of adult prisons. As you would be aware on 3rd November 2016 the Queensland Parliament voted to change the law that will see 17 year old children be included in the youth justice system. This will mean from November 2017 children will no longer be locked up in adult prisons.

YANQ has been advocating for this change for almost 20 years. The youth sector’s collective advocacy and public education on this matter has been inspiring. So has the level of collaboration between various advocacy groups. We managed to change so much of the public opinion on this issue. The sector really needs to be congratulated for standing solidly together for so long and advocating for a group of children that had been forgotten by the rest of society, a group that

various governments in the past 25 years didn't want to know about.



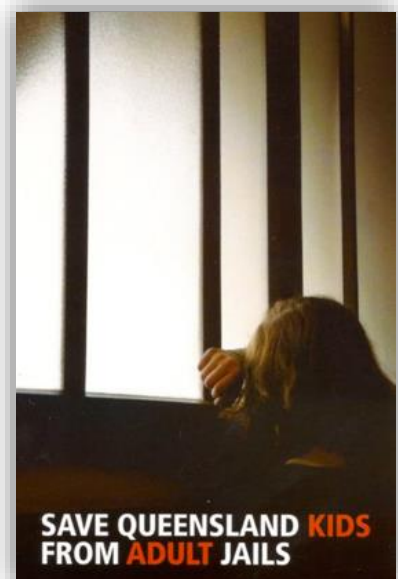
Changes to the Youth Justice Act

As you are probably aware, the changes to the Youth Justice Act went through the parliament on 17th June 2016. YANQ did some media work around this and had good traction with a story printed in Sunday Mail, as well as coverage on ABC and 4RR Western Qld Radio. Although the changes are good, they only take us back to where we were before the Newman LNP government and the extreme changes they had made to the Youth Justice Act. So we need to keep up the pressure to get the government to implement much more progressive policies in this area and in particular to fund youth services instead of increasing the funding to youth detention centres.

Beyond Prisons

This is a new advocacy group which has been established in Queensland with a commitment to the ultimate abolition of prisons – recognition that prisons are ineffective in reducing crime and addressing the causes of criminalisation. YANQ has been involved in the initial conceptualisation of this group. We have three broad aims:

1. To ensure the significant involvement of people with lived experience in the group.
2. To undertake activism and systemic advocacy on prisoner issues.
3. To respond to the need for services for people leaving prison.



Strategic Principles which will underpin our actions are:

- Focus on external activism/advocacy rather than internal government consultation mechanisms
- Use engagement methods that do not rely on Queensland Corrective Services (prison or parole) approval

Borallon Prison

YANQ responded to the Queensland Government's announcement about reopening the Borallon Prison and got good media coverage from a range of sources from the *Weekend Courier Mail* to the *Green Left Weekly*. Social media also picked this up and we had a lot of engagement with this issue. This is of major concern as it adds almost 500 additional prison beds and all designated for young people under 25. The prison was decommissioned a number of years ago because of hanging points in cells and as a follow up to recommendations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Deaths in Custody report.

Youth Justice Forums

YANQ attended the Crime, Justice and Social Democracy Forum which was put together by QUT. They kindly provided YANQ with two complementary registrations.

YANQ also attended a one-day Youth Justice Forum focusing on restorative justice. This was an initiative of Griffith University and was opened by the Attorney General. It was a great opportunity to network with some key people and also to connect with Rob Hulls who is currently the Director of the Centre for Innovative Justice at RMIT. Rob was the Attorney General of Victoria back in 2005 when the State Government there changed the practice of locking up 17 year olds in adult prisons. The experience in Victoria has been very positive and Rob indicated he is prepared to support our campaign to convince Queensland Government to do the same.

Youth Strategy, Office For Youth and PCYC

YANQ lodged a tender proposal for developing a framework for consultations with young people, the sector and the Government to inform the Queensland Youth Strategy. This was a less than ideal process having only two weeks to lodge the proposal.

It was to our surprise that we were informed that YANQ had not been successful and that the contract had gone to PCYC, an organisation with no history of policy development and/or consultation with the youth sector. YANQ requested feedback from the department about the application process and received very poor reasoning about why they had given the contract to PCYC.

Since then YANQ has received feedback from our members about the consultation forums run by

PCYC. Some people have expressed that at least there was a consultation but others have been complaining about the lack of information and opportunity for the youth sector to participate. Also some of the content of consultation has been concerning.

YANQ is highly concerned that the whole process of developing this strategy was not much better than what was done under the previous Government. It was the poor process of engaging with the youth sector and marginalised young people that prompted YANQ to advocate to the new Minister for Youth, the need for developing a new whole of government youth policy during our first meeting with her. The Minister did accept our advice however the departmental officers were highly resistant to the idea telling YANQ that they had worked hard to develop the previous strategy under the LNP government.

Here are a couple of pictures from the PCYC led consultations which clearly demonstrates who were the main participants.



Submissions, inquiries and other formal processes

YANQ made a submission to the inquiry into the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. The focus of our submission was the nexus between Corporal Punishment and Domestic Violence. This was totally omitted by the Quentin Brice's report early this year and the recommendation adopted by the Queensland Government. YANQ also put out a media release at the same time in order to put additional pressure on the committee not to hide this issues. The media release was picked up by print and electronic media outlets.

Royal Commission into Child Abuse in Institutions

YANQ met with representatives from the Commission and discussed various issues in regards to the youth sector and the vulnerability of young people the sector works with.

We also raised concerns passed on to YANQ over the years about a high level group of professional pedophiles operating in north Queensland. The commission has heard similar information and are interested in investigating further although it is outside their terms of reference.

Pre-Budget Submission

YANQ lodged a Pre-Budget Submission to Queensland Government seeking additional resources for extra Youth Workers and Youth Services in Queensland. We lodged the submission with both the Queensland Treasury as well as Department of Communities.

In our submission we stated that within an increasing array of concerns to the youth sector, YANQ considers the following as essential to re-instate immediately.

- A robust whole of Government youth strategy and policy to guide this, including adequate resources to enable sufficient stakeholder consultation, its implementation and its ongoing monitoring review and evaluation;
- Funding for YANQ as youth peak body to continue consulting with the sector, including funding for CPLANs and other capacity building and research activities
- Reintroduction of successful programs the Youth Support Coordinator Program which linked vulnerable young people into education

From here, the youth strategy would identify a service mix to be gradually implemented which includes prevention and early intervention, as well as crisis or other support services for young people across key areas of concern including health, education, culture & identity, family life, justice, accommodation, employment and income.

The following are four key interrelated critical action areas which the State Government needs to address in order to develop an effective and responsive youth sector, guided by well evidenced policies:

1. Policy framework to support whole of Government youth strategy
2. Building capacity of the youth sector and its peak body
3. Increase implementation funding, funding of existing youth services and funding of new services
4. Investment to respond directly to youth issues

YANQ attended the budget lockdown and found out that unfortunately the budget did not include any of our proposals and the youth sector remains in desperate need of a funding injection. The entire youth funding in Queensland is now just over \$20 million.

It was also sad to see both sides of politics cutting youth service funding and reducing the overall funding level to this. On top of this, the cuts to Federal Youth programs will also impact on the sector and together these issues will have a major impact on the remaining youth services and marginalised young people. The State Government has also aligned with the conservative opposition and announced trials of Social Impact Bonds. This is another policy leftover from the

Margaret Thatcher style privatisation agenda that both Labor and the more conservative governments around the world have been implementing.

Community Services Strategy

YANQ provided input to the Department of Communities on Youth Sector Workforce issues for it to be integrated in the department's whole-of-sector workforce development strategy. YANQ responded to the Department of Communities draft 'Community Services Strategy' which is looking at workforce issue across the whole "industry". YANQ highlighted the need for specific strategies and flexibility needed in the youth sector.

Safeguarding Democracy

YANQ participated in an interview and supported the Human Rights Law Centre with their research and campaign titled *Safeguarding Democracy*. YANQ's contribution was around freedom of speech and our experience with the Queensland Government's attempt to silence us. The Human Rights Law Centre released the final report in early 2016, the report can be accessed here: http://hrlc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/HRLC_Report_SafeguardingDemocracy_online.pdf

KAIROS Community College

YANQ attended the opening of the KAIROS Community College, a new alternative education centre in Deception Bay. It was great to see so many happy young people engaged in the launch of the school and more broadly in pursuing their education in a community setting.

Registered Training Provider

YANQ has been exploring the possibility of becoming a Registered Training organisation (RTO) again. Over a decade ago YANQ became an RTO focusing on delivery of youth work training in rural and regional Queensland, in particular where access to other training was very limited. The cost of delivery of quality face to face training in rural/regional Queensland was too high and without any subsidy YANQ could not continue the delivery and as such we gave up our registration. In recent times we have been increasingly concerned about the quality of training provided by a range of training organisations. To this end we are exploring how YANQ could position itself in the new market place and potentially deliver youth work training at a national level.

Queensland Young Achievers Award

2016 was the first time these awards were presented in Queensland. YANQ was asked to be one of the executive judges for the awards. It took some serious advocacy to convince the other judges to agree with YANQ for choosing the overall winner, an 18-year-old Murri woman, Justice King, from Mount Isa. Justice has a long track record of working in the community in various capacities including being a mental health advocate and starting The Youth Club, which brings together 12- to 18-year-olds who run youth events to deter crime and act as positive role models. The awards were presented at a gala dinner event by Shannon Fentiman, Minister for Youth. YANQ has been asked again to sit on the panel for the 2017 awards.



Building Stronger Society (CEBuSS)

YANQ joined a high level team led by the University of Queensland to apply for funding from the Australian Research Council to establish a Centre of Excellence for Building Stronger Society (CEBuSS).

To future-proof Australia we must lead the world in understanding the social underpinnings of successful relations between citizens and society. The vision of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Building Stronger Society (CEBuSS) is to be a focal point and repository for such understanding and to be a leading international centre for the analysis and cultivation of stronger society. CEBuSS will do this by bringing leading national and international researchers together with key industry partners to address the challenges of promoting social engagement in ways that build a stronger and more harmonious society.

CEBuSS will involve close collaborations with major industry partners for whom engagement is a key issue. This will include public- and private-sector organisations, as well as stakeholders in the not-for-profit sector. Together, we are committed to the process of developing and delivering solutions that have a transformative impact on the communities and institutions at the heart of Australian society.

Federal Budget and Election

YANQ participated in a teleconference with other peak bodies and unions after the federal election and discussed particular impacts on the sector and coordinating of our messaging. The budget was overshadowed soon after its release by the announcement of the date for the federal Election and the long campaign. Collectively with our sister organisations across Australia we have promoted enrolment amongst young people and we have been highly successful in getting a

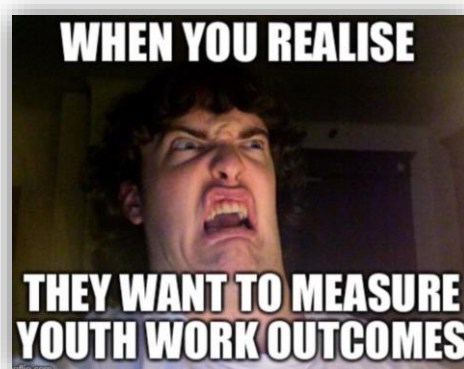
record number of young people registered. We are still working with other youth peaks trying to highlight youth issues as part of the election campaign of all major political parties.

YANQ also participated in processes coordinated by Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) in the lead up to the federal election including the development of an election platform and a National Youth Strategy with campaigns at state and federal levels.

More than 1 in 5 Australians are aged 12-25. Young people face a future of insecure work and housing. Economists warn that young people are missing out on our country's wealth – the first generation likely to have lower standards of living than their parents. Unfairly, some young people have even less opportunities, just because of their background or identity.

This is a big problem for everyone. We'll rely on young people most to support our ageing population. If young people feel valued and connected to our community, we will all benefit.

Young people want to be heard on many issues, from tax and justice to marriage equality and climate change. But the Australian Government has removed all ways to hear from or engage with young people. We have no national youth strategy – a government plan to support young people. We have no funding for the youth peak body, young people need voice in politics. Furthermore, from 2017, they've even cancelled National Youth Week.



The Australian Government must:

- Appoint a Minister for Youth to engage with young people through a national youth strategy
- Commit to a national voice for young people, like the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition
- Guarantee ongoing National Youth Week funding, and celebrate all young people's contributions to our country.

Meetings and Networking

During the year YANQ had a number of meeting with Shannon Fentiman, Minister for Youth as well as her senior advisor and chief of staff. They have all been very supportive of YANQ and the role we play as the peak body for the sector.

YANQ had a visit by the educational coordinator of Mercy Family Services. We discussed YANQ's research into reengaging young people with education as well as issues relating to youth justice which some of their clients are facing.

YANQ met with representatives from Salvation Army who are interested in social enterprise models to integrate with their flexi school services and wanted to get advice from YANQ on how to proceed with this strategy.

YANQ continued to participate in State and Territories Youth Peaks teleconferences throughout the year. This has become more necessary after the defunding of the National Youth Peak, AYAC. There has been a number of federal government policy issues that we have collectively responded to as state peaks.

YANQ had a visit by Jeremy Young and Jennifer Thomas, Assistant Secretary of the Services Union. Jeremy is a new organiser and wanted to introduce himself and Jennifer has been involved with the branch for many years and worked with YANQ over ten years ago trying to unionize the youth sector and to instigate a multi-employer agreement to force government to properly fund youth organisations for wages.

Biannual State Youth Affairs Conference

With the Youth Minister expressing interest in sponsoring the conference, YANQ postponed the conference from early 2016 to October 2016. The department of Communities took a long time to formally respond to YANQ and the offer of support by the Minister and very late in the process offered YANQ less than one-fifth of what we had requested. As such YANQ had no choice but to postpone the conference to 2017 and explore other options for sponsorship of the conference.

YANQ's communication

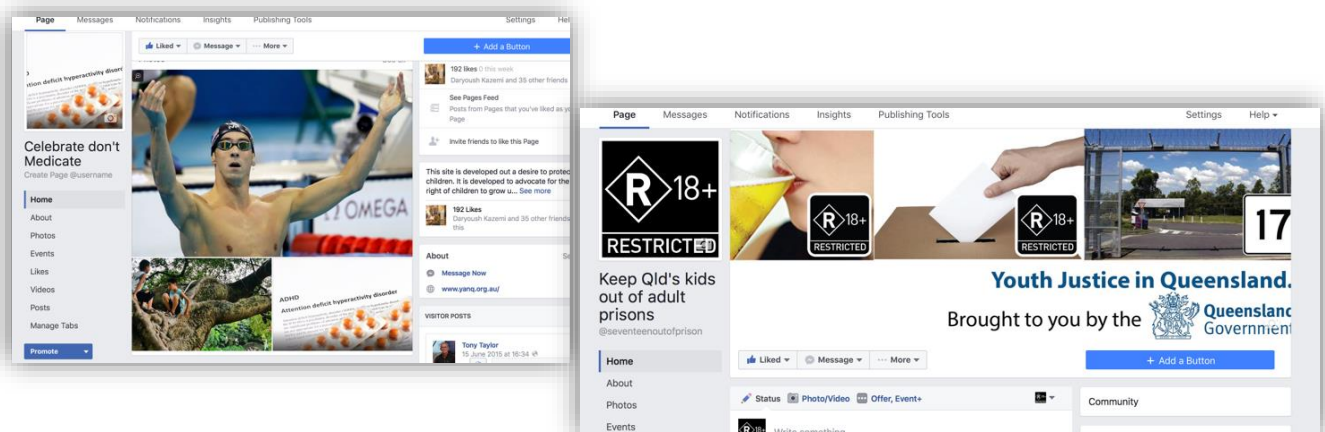
YANQ's membership has increased to 470. A quarter of these are organisations and the rest are individual youth workers and young people. The majority of our members are from outside of South-East Queensland.

YANQ continued to have a significant presence in print, radio and digital media covering issues such as youth unemployment, youth justice, and removing 17-year-old children from adult prisons.

YANQ's Facebook page likes have increased from 680 last year to 846 this year. Some of our posts reach 15,000 to 20,000 people in a very short period of time. YANQ also manages two other FB sites for specific campaigns. One is called '*Celebrate Don't Medicate*' and the other is '*Keep Qld's kids out of adult prisons*'.

YANQ's website continues to be classed as Tier 1 which is the category for sites with the highest traffic and is an equivalent classification to the websites of large national organisations. Our website has high traffic of between 30,000 - 40,000 unique visitors per year (approximately 278,000 page views).

YANQ also continues to send out periodic email bulletins to over 800 recipients.



Treasurer's Report 2016

It is with great pleasure that I present our Accountant's Report for the year ending 30th June 2016.

As YANQ received no funding from any government sources again in 2016, we have had the organisation's financial records reviewed and verified by an approved accountant. Our financial records show that the association has book keeping processes in place to adequately record the association's income and expenditure and dealings with its assets and liabilities.

We hope that in the current financial year we will see YANQ's funding being reinstated and that we will be presenting a full audited report at our next AGM in 2017.

Clearly the lack of funding which has resulted in the downsizing of the organisation has had a very negative impact on YANQ's ability to support the membership and the broader youth sector. However, despite the funding situation, YANQ has continued to be a strong voice for the rights of young people in Queensland. In order for the sector to respond appropriately to challenges faced by young people and communities we require a healthy youth sector. That's why YANQ's work in the sector development area is paramount to the creation and maintenance of a vibrant youth sector in Queensland.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all YANQ members and subscribers for their financial contribution to YANQ. Our current membership stands at 470, the largest number of members since YANQ's inception. Approximately a quarter of our members are organisations and the rest individual youth workers and young people. It is of significance also that the majority of these members are from outside South-East Queensland. I would also like to thank our many donors for their contributions, of both time and money, which has helped maintain an independent voice for the youth sector in Queensland.

If you would like further any information, please contact our office.

Elijah Buol
Treasurer

Karen Mitchell FCA

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Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc. ("YANQ")
ABN 28 205 281 339

ACCOUNTANT VERIFICATION STATEMENT

In respect of the financial statements for Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc. setting out the income and expenditure for the year ended 30 June 2016 and the financial position as at 30 June 2016, I verify the following:

I have sighted the association's financial records and the financial records show that the association has book keeping processes in place to adequately record the association's income and expenditure and dealings with its assets and liabilities.

The Financial Statements are based on the financial accounts and supporting records of the association as at 30 June 2016.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Karen Mitchell', written over a horizontal line.

Karen Mitchell FCA

..... 21 November, 2016