



youth affairs network qld

# ANNUAL REPORT

2009 / 2010



**SAVE QUEENSLAND KIDS  
FROM ADULT JAILS**



NEYON Re-engagement Forum at Nudgee College

# YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC.

Annual Report 2009-2010

## YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC.

ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010

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Queensland Government

YANQ acknowledges funding support from:

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES – OFFICE FOR YOUTH**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND**

**(FEDERAL) DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

YANQ extends its appreciation to Telstra for again donating 5000 \$5 Telstra cards for distribution to marginalised young people across Queensland.

YANQ would also like to thank all its members, all networks and communities that invited, hosted or worked with YANQ in various ways during the past twelve months.

Sincere thanks to Kate Morioka and Lou Myles for their generous support of YANQ.

**Report layout and cover design by**  
Niche Studio



Pay Equity Rally in Brisbane

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# Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

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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.<sup>1</sup>

## Aboriginal Flag



The Aboriginal flag was designed by Harold Thomas in 1971, and first flown in Adelaide's Victoria Square. The flag is still widely recognised today as being the symbol of the Aboriginal people for the Aboriginal people.

The flag is made up of three colours-black, red and yellow. Black represents the Aboriginal people of this land, the red represents the earth we live and feed off and the yellow represents the sun, "the giver of life".

## Torres Strait Island Flag



The Torres Strait Island flag was designed in 1992 by a 15 year old student, Bernard Namok of Thursday Island. The flag has a white star underneath it.

The green represents the land and the Deri is a symbol of all Torres Strait Islander people.

The black represents the people and their culture while the five pointed star symbolises the many island groups and represent peace. The flag also stands for unity and identity of all Torres Strait Island people.

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1. This is an extract from YANQ Values – for a full outline of YANQ's values see [www.yanq.org.au/values](http://www.yanq.org.au/values).

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# About the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland

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y o u t h   a f f a i r s   n e t w o r k   q l d

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.

YANQ employs a small team in its Brisbane based secretariat. The organisation is managed by a committee.

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## A Summary of YANQ's Values

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### 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.

## The YANQ Team from July 2009 to June 2010

### Committee Executive



Ms Angela Barnes  
**President**  
(Vice President July-Dec 2009)



Mr Barry Springett  
**Vice President**  
(Treasurer Oct-Dec 2009)



Mr Adam Barnes  
**Secretary**



Ms Anne Castles  
**Treasurer** July to Oct 2009



Ms Patricia Ferrier  
**Treasurer**  
(President June-Dec 2009)

### STAFF

Mr Siyavash Doostkhah  
**Director**

Mr David Powell  
**Network Development Officer,**  
resigned May 2010

Mr Daniel Walker  
**Multicultural Development Officer**

Ms Marilyn Topp  
**Administration & Financial Officer**

Ms Caroline Woods  
**Project Officer**  
**Re-engagement Project and YDAQ**

Ruth Twomey  
**Student on Placement - Griffiths University**

Dr Bob Jacobs  
**Volunteer - Director of YDAQ Campaign,**  
resigned May 2010

### Committee Members



Ms Gillan Mason  
Johnson



Ms Tamsin McGuin



Ms Kerri Byenhof



Dr Bob Jacobs



Ms Yassmin  
Abdel-Magied



Mr (Kuot) Elijah Buoi



Mr Robert Hayes



Mr Jude Saldanha



Ms Deb Kilroy  
ex officio

### CONSULTANTS

Mr Tim Johannessen  
How Now Solutions  
Prof. Martin Mills UQ  
Dr Glenda McGregor, Griffith University  
Suzi Quixley  
John Anderson  
Del Daly  
Suzanne Thompson  
Laurel Blow  
Fred Binge  
Sue Fox  
Trish Mene Tomitschek  
Adrian Hepi  
Lee George  
Uncle Jacob George

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# President's Report

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Well it has been another significant year for YANQ and the Queensland Youth Sector!

One of the key achievements would have to be the Youth Sector Development Plan. A very innovative, exciting and arguably long overdue piece of work! The research has been completed and it is great to be part of the implementation of this Plan and to hear of its potential influence on the sector,

I would also like to particularly mention the Reengagement in Education research report, which we have been working on for the past three years in partnership with a number of YANQ organisational members, University of Qld and the Griffith University. This project was the first time YANQ diverted most of its resources over a number of years towards a policy issue identified by the sector and it has certainly resulted in fantastic report that will continue to have a role to play in advocating for changes to how we offer Education to our most marginalised young people.

As well as these two great projects YANQ has been involved in many other projects across the state this year and a plethora of other work in advocacy, lobbying, research and policy development all of which are outlined in more detail throughout this report. Please contact our staff 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, which we outline on a fortnightly basis via our email bulletin.

We also had to face some challenges this year, with the biggest of these being the cessation of funding for our Multicultural Development Officer. This role was highly unique voice for multicultural young people and the services that support them and this is the first time in 15 years that such a vacuum has been created in Queensland youth sector. We continue to lobby hard for this role and would welcome you to join us in this!

Of course all of this work is not possible without a great team of people within and behind YANQ.

A big thanks to all of YANQ members for your continued support of our work. Without members YANQ ceases to exist as we continue to work as we have always since being established in the 1980's to represent the sector. We believe that we continue to be a strong voice for the rights of young people and the development of our sector and welcome working with you!

I also would like to sincerely thank our staff and volunteers. Siyavash is a tireless advocate who spearheads the organisation in a way that ensures its values are true and regularly revisited. Daniel and Marilyn



PHOTO: Angela Barnes, President

have also contributed significantly this year, often working above and beyond their roles.

It was with sadness this year that we farewelled David Powell who had been such an integral part of YANQ for many years. I know that all who knew David would agree he had contributed a great deal to the work and vision of YANQ and we wish him all the best in his future pursuits.

I would also like to acknowledge my fellow Management Committee members for their hard work and dedication and especially to the Executive, Trish Adam and Barry. It has been a pleasure to work with you all over the last two years and I look forward to staying involved this next year, although less so as I take some leave to have a baby!

On behalf of YANQ I also like to thank our all of our funding bodies and donors for their financial contribution to the work of YANQ.

Finally I hope that in the coming year we can continue to build on our strengths in partnership with the sector across Queensland and greatly look forward to watching both the Workforce Project across the state and the Youth Conference scheduled for the middle of 2011 to really bring about some great linkages and work across Qld.

Angela Barnes  
**President**

Youth Affairs Network Qld





## Our Communication – Website, Twitter, Email Bulletin and newsletter Network Noise

2009/2010 was another busy year for communications and publications from YANQ. Our website ([www.yanq.org.au](http://www.yanq.org.au)) continues to be an active resource for the youth sector throughout Queensland. Popular website articles throughout the year (based on the site's 'hit' meter) related to the wage increase campaign, updates and resources from the NEYON and Re-Engagement projects, and research articles and updates. There is also a very clear indication from our website statistics that visitors use the site as a 'go-to' point to find details on networks and interagencies, training and events, funding resources, and research relevant to youth issues.

The YANQ Email Bulletin, which is sent out each fortnight with updates from the website, is a very popular resource, and the mailing list has grown to over 900 recipients this year. Feedback on the Email Bulletin has continued to be positive, with readers appreciating the user-friendly layout, the relevance of the updates, and the opportunity to promote their own events and news. David Powell gave the Email Bulletin a significant 'make-over' this year, redesigning the layout to bring it closer in line with YANQ's particular branding, our associated colours of purple and green, and to allow a clearer 'snapshot' of the articles and a link for further information. This has proven to be a popular change, and has received numerous compliments.

YANQ continued its ventures into the world of social networking, with two ongoing campaign pages on Facebook. The first, for the Eracism! Project, operates as a Facebook "Fan Page" with YANQ having control over the content and posts. The second, the Campaign for a Youth Disability Advocacy Service in Queensland, now runs as a self-managed group, with nearly 1000 members! This just goes to show the type of reach and impact a well-run online campaign can have. We also currently have a twitter account for the Eracism! Project, and have future plans to establish a general YANQ twitter account, which will broadcast updates and important news.

We released some great reports this year, the most significant of which was the The Youth Sector in Queensland report, part of the Workforce Development project (See Page 12). Others included "A Snapshot of Queensland's Re-Engagement Services" (<http://is.gd/hnUhA>) which presents the findings from the Census of 'Re-engagement' Services in Queensland, conducted by YANQ in 2008. The aim of the Census was to learn more about what was available in Queensland to support young people (aged 12 to 18) who were disengaged from Education and Training. This report was prepared by David Powell and Tiara Shafiq. Another was the NEYON report (See Page 17).

Of course, our members and subscribers still received our quarterly newsletter, Network Noise, which contains detailed reports on campaigns, project updates, and stories.

## Youth Consultative Network

### INTERAGENCIES THAT PARTICIPATED 2009:

The Interagencies that shared their information with YANQ were as follows:

- Logan Youth Network
- Goodna & Ipswich Youth Interagencies (combined submission)
- South West Youth Network
- Bundaberg District Youth Sector Network

### CHALLENGES FACING YOUNG PEOPLE

According to the five Interagencies, the young people they support are facing a variety of challenges, including:

- Misuse and abuse of drugs and alcohol (binge drinking);
- Homelessness, insecure housing and lack of access to the private rental market.

- Maintaining a connection to education and learning.

Both drug and alcohol abuse (inc. binge drinking) were raised as issues of concern. In response, the South West Youth Network would like to organise forums and peer education training for young people.

Interagencies pointed to the limited number of emergency accommodation placements, as well as affordable longer term housing for young people. Apparent discrimination against young people in the private rental market was also raised as a barrier to housing for young people. The related issue of poor public transport (making it difficult to find accommodation) was also raised.

In response, services in the Wide Bay Burnett region are compiling data to inform future planning models and services in Logan are organising a forum on the issues. The Logan interagency also called for changes to legislation that would make it easier for young people under 18 to sign contracts for accommodation related services (telephone, electricity etc). The Ipswich and Goodna networks argued that greater support to keep families together was needed.

Disengagement from school, for a variety of reasons was another common concern for youth services. According to the networks some of the factors influencing this include: inflexible/rigid education services; parents not supporting their children to attend school; young people's own caring responsibilities; and bullying.

Goodna and Ipswich Interagencies suggested increased family support and early parenting education was part of the solution. Much is being done in the Logan area to respond, including: Beenleigh Together against Truancy Initiative; numerous non-traditional education services in the area (e.g. Get Set for Work through Boystown and Centre Education); and the Federal Government trial in which families whose children are truant will have their social security payments cut. Logan also called for the re-introduction of 'in-school' suspensions.

### CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH SERVICES

According to the five Interagencies, youth services are struggling with a number of difficulties, including:

1. Limited funding & Service Capacity Issues – longer term funding is needed, and healthier recurring funding packages to help cope with growing client numbers and increased case loads.
2. Worker well-being – staff are fatigued, leading to high staff turnover.

Services discussed how the lack of long-term funding, and the inadequacy of funding generally was inhibiting their ability to meet increasing demand. For example, youth workers in Logan are reporting that they have less time for professional development as more of their time is spent

supporting the increasing numbers of clients.

Services in the Bundaberg area also discussed the long waiting lists for some services and limited after-hours support for young people. Similarly, services in South West Queensland raised concerns about the limitations they face providing support to young people in isolated and remote areas.

All of these issues are in turn impacting on workers wellbeing. Services in Ipswich and Goodna pointed out the impact that the high and complex case-loads were having on staff. Services in South West Queensland suggested that a lack of support for staff was leading to high levels of turnover and that vacancies were remaining open for lengthy periods of time.

### AGENCIES THAT PARTICIPATED IN 2010

Participating Interagencies/Networks

- Logan Youth Network
- Hervey Bay Youth Sector Workers Network

### CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH SERVICES:

- Drug and alcohol problems
- Mental and emotional health
- Housing/Homelessness and Accommodation

Gambling addiction was also mentioned, along with drug and alcohol addiction in young people.

Homelessness was raised as a particular concern for under 16 year olds. Housing and rental affordability was a concern across regions, as well as issues of access to various levels of housing support, including crisis, medium, and long-term.

Cyberbullying had become a significant contributor to mental and emotional health concerns. In response to this issue, the Hervey Bay Youth Sector Workers Network had worked with a 'cyberbullying working group' that linked parents with schools. Cyberbullying and other mental and emotional health contributors have highlighted concerns such as self-esteem, self belief, suicide and self-harm.

### CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH SERVICES:

- Funding / Resources
- Training
- Collaboration / Cooperation

Networks pointed out a lack of awareness of services across their regions, a need for integration of services, and also a need for both specialised and holistic services.

Workers had received pay rises in many organisations, following successful union action, but in order to afford these pay rises, most organisations had to cut hours. This is a 'win' in terms of achieving the pay rise, but realistically, the outcome has had negative aspects as well.

Concerns were raised about service programs losing funding, or not being refunded, despite ongoing reporting and strong outcomes. Workers spend a great deal of time completing reports for funding bodies, and feel that there is little point when these reports are not taken into account.

Funding was also mentioned as a problem because funding requirements are often too specific. Successful service delivery and special programs for young people often require flexible timeframes, but funding guidelines are usually too strict to allow such flexibility. In response, Logan Youth Network is looking for any opportunities to work collaboratively and pool resources. It will also investigate good practice models of flexible funding and individual case management funds.

## Telstra Phone Cards for Young People

Once again this year, in partnership with Telstra, YANQ distributed more than 5000 Telstra \$5.00 Phone Cards across the state. Youth sector members from various regions have been assisting YANQ with promotion and distribution of these cards amongst marginalised young people across Queensland.

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# Leading the Sector Workforce Development

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## Youth Sector Development Plan

In early 2009, Youth Affairs Network of Queensland (YANQ) received funding support from the Department of Education and Training (DET) and Department of Communities (DoC) to undertake a Youth Services Workforce Skills and Training Project.

YANQ has been advocating for a systematic approach to the development and maintenance of the youth sector workforce to ensure quality services for young people for some time. The project has paved the way towards this goal through the development of a Youth Sector Development Plan, creating a platform to support a vibrant and sustainable youth sector workforce that protects and promotes young people's rights.

The "Youth Sector in Queensland" report provides a summary of the data gathered during the project, key themes that emerged and recommendations that can

be used to inform skilling and workforce development initiatives. The report can be accessed at ([http://www.yanq.org.au/images/stories/Documents/youth\\_sector\\_report\\_2010.pdf](http://www.yanq.org.au/images/stories/Documents/youth_sector_report_2010.pdf))

To assist in the considerations and prioritization of workforce development projects and activities YANQ established two groups:

### **1. INDUSTRY REFERENCE GROUP**

- The Industry Reference Group (IRG) is made up of key stakeholders who inform and influence the direction of the project and the future of the youth services workforce in Queensland.
- The IRG brings together key stakeholders such as employers, industry associations, government agencies, training and education providers, businesses and youth workers to develop a deeper understanding

of workforce development through strategic alliances that will assist in identifying the real causes of skills shortages and barriers to workforce development, and contribute to the development of solutions.

- Further, the IRG provides YANQ and the Youth Sector Leadership Group (YSLG) with strategic advice about leveraging from other projects underway, key policy and program information relevant to the implementation of this project and to explore opportunities for collaboration where possible. The advice received from the IRG was tabled to form part of the deliberations at the YSLG meetings before finalisation and implementation of the project plan.

## 2. YOUTH SECTOR LEADERSHIP GROUP

- The Youth Sector Leadership Group (YSLG) is made up of youth sector managers who have previously worked with YANQ on Youth Sector issues.
- The YSLG prioritised the work of the Youth Sector Development Project with input and advice from the Industry Reference Group through critical and strategic conversations.

The following workforce development projects and activities stemming from the Youth Sector Development Report that have been prioritized through the IRG and YSLG to create the infrastructure for ongoing and sustainable sector development.

### PRIORITY AREA 1: COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE LEADERS GROUP

This project aims to create an ongoing and sustainable structure across the seven DET regions in Queensland to support a consistent focus on the workforce development needs of the youth sector from a local, regional and state perspective. The establishment of seven Communities of Practice Leadership Groups falls under the existing structure of the IRG and the YSLG and will utilise and leverage off the comprehensive network of youth inter-agencies and networks across the state.

### PRIORITY AREA 2: YOUTH WORK PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

This project aims to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in a dialogue on creating a working definition of what youth work is and who the youth sector represents. Universities, TAFE's and the youth sector will be engaged to clearly articulate what the youth sector is, how it is defined and identify core and unique characteristics aimed to generate discussion papers and journal articles to promote the sector. As discussed in the Youth Sector Report 2010, Youth Work is being diluted and merging into other professions, lacking clear articulation and professional boundaries. The discussion paper is the first step in addressing this finding.

### PRIORITY AREA 3: SECTOR SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Throughout discussions with both the IRG and the YSLG, specific sector support strategies were discussed and priorities identified for the next 12 months. These areas were highlighted in the Youth Sector Report 2010 and viewed as fundamental in supporting youth service organisations in successfully addressing workforce development issues. Further, these activities are able to be implemented in a relatively short timeframe providing valuable momentum to the Youth Sector Development Project.

YANQ will be working with the sector in the coming year to implement all the strategies outlined under the above three priority areas. We look forward to your active participation in these processes and shaping the future of our sector.

## Murri Workforce project



PHOTO: Murri Youth Sector Development Consultation Forum

The Murri Youth Sector Workforce Development project has also been underway. Interviews have been held in Brisbane, Cherbourg and Central Coast. The North West region was also visited and we conducted interviews in Normanton, Burketown and Karumba. We also held a large forum in Rockhampton and will be validating the reports findings across Queensland in the coming year.

We also continued to distribute the discussion paper "Which Wei? Values in Youth Work : A Murri Perspective" ([http://www.yanq.org.au/images/stories/Documents/values\\_in\\_youth\\_work-murri\\_perspective.pdf](http://www.yanq.org.au/images/stories/Documents/values_in_youth_work-murri_perspective.pdf)). This Discussion Paper is about what youth work actually means in Murri culture, why values are important, and what difference it makes to youth work to have these Murri values in mind.





### Remand Reduction

YANQ has continued to lobby the State Government regarding the high number of young people being held on Remand in Youth Detention facilities. YANQ held a number of meetings with the Premier's Department in regards to our action research proposal to reduce the number of young people ending up in Youth Detention on Remand. YANQ has also been working with the South West regional Department of Communities and NGO's in the region about this project.

### "Reengaging Students with Education" report

The "Reengaging Students with Education" report is based on research conducted by YANQ, The University of Queensland, Griffith University and the Queensland University of Technology. The research aimed to identify the key factors that drive success for students in alternative education settings. The report can be accessed at ([http://www.yanq.org.au/images/stories/Documents/yanq\\_report\\_final-art\\_press.compress.pdf](http://www.yanq.org.au/images/stories/Documents/yanq_report_final-art_press.compress.pdf)).

The genesis of this report goes back at least to 2003 with the publication of a Discussion Paper entitled "What are Schools for". In that report, YANQ welcomed the Beattie Government's plans to fund community organisations to employ youth workers in schools around Queensland. In the same report however we also called for greater support for young people who were marginalised from



education and not attending schools (and therefore unable to benefit from the support of youth workers in schools).

Since that report, YANQ has continued to agitate for greater support for young people who are disengaged from schooling through a range of publications and research projects, such as the following:

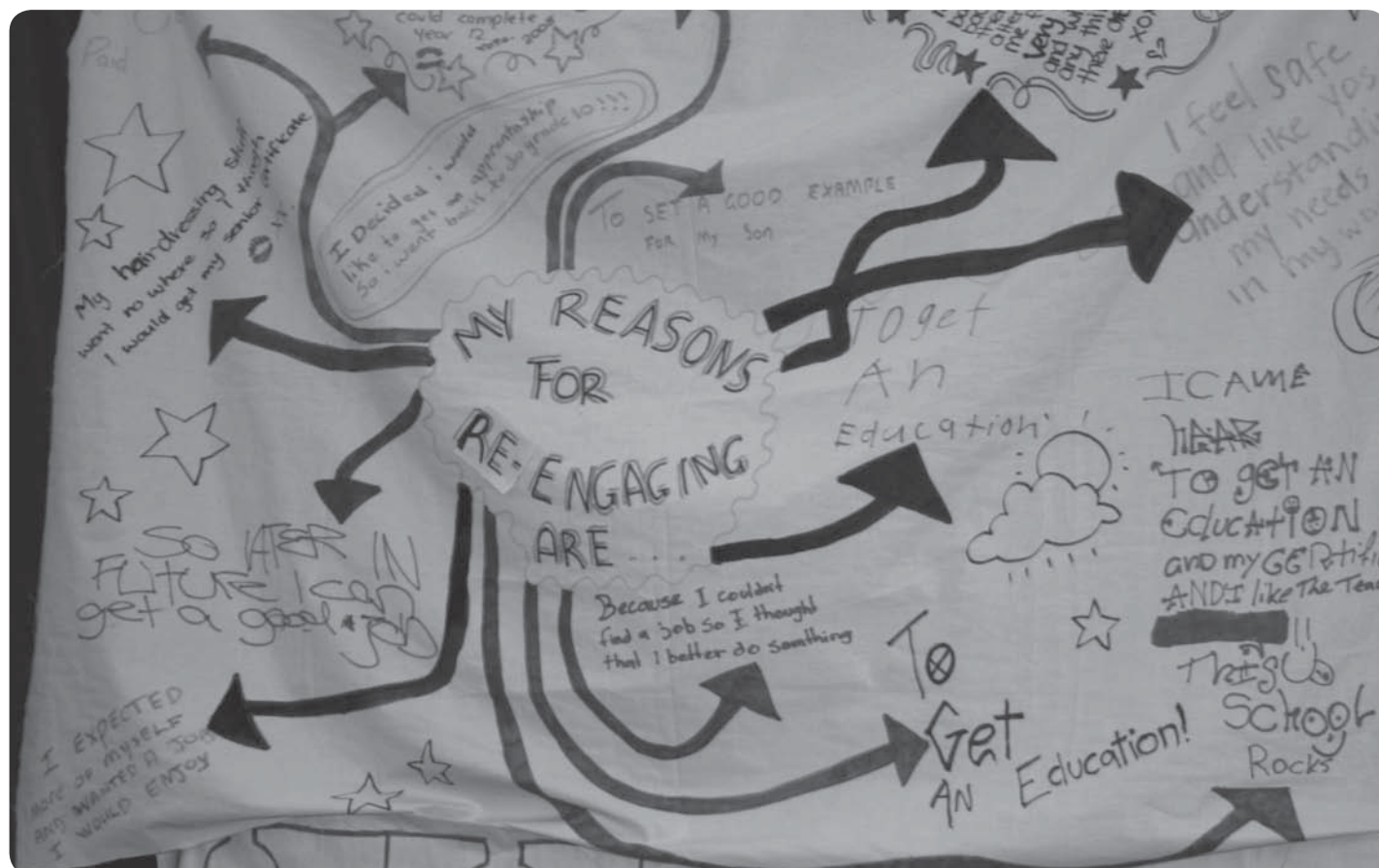
- *Let's Invite Everyone*, a Discussion Paper written to encourage discussion and debate about the ETRF process (2004).
- Submissions to the State Government's review of Education Laws in Queensland (2005 and 2006).
- A small research project to assess the level and nature of support that was available for young people (12 to 18) who were disengaged from education and work (2007).

This last project highlighted the inconsistent (and in some cases non-existent) levels of support for young people who had become disengaged from education and were rarely, if ever, attending school. Based on this research, YANQ made the decision to commit significant time and energy into improving our advocacy for young people marginalised from education – and so the Re-engagement Project was born.

The Re-engagement Project has had 3 ambitious goals:

- To map re-engagement services available to young Queenslanders – i.e. services that supported young people to re-engage with meaningful learning of some form.
- Encourage a deeper understanding within the youth sector, governments and the community about disengagement and the types of re-engagement services that can work in different communities. Further details are available at [www.yanq.org.au/reengage](http://www.yanq.org.au/reengage).
- Develop, articulate and publish models of successful re-engagement services.

The first goal was achieved to some extent by conducting a Census of Re-engagement Services in Queensland - the results of which are available on YANQ's website at [www.yanq.org.au/reengage/2173-census](http://www.yanq.org.au/reengage/2173-census)



The second goal was achieved through the publication of a special 'Re-engagement' edition of new Transitions (see [www.yanq.org.au/reengage/nt2008](http://www.yanq.org.au/reengage/nt2008)) featuring 23 articles by youth workers, young people, academics and program coordinators. To encourage discussion in the youth and education sectors YANQ also worked with a range of partners to hold forums and seminars in Moreton Bay and Townsville in 2008 and in North Brisbane in February 2010.

This research report then is the beginning of YANQ's attempt to achieve the third goal.

The impetus for the research came from the talented group of youth workers, educators and academics who, at YANQ's invitation, formed a steering committee to help us investigate successful models of re-engagement for young people.

It wasn't long, perhaps one or two meetings of the committee, before the topic of 'flexi' or 'alternative' schools was raised and suggestions were made to investigate these in more detail.

In those early meetings it became clear through the stories we heard and the research reports we read that for many young people who have become disengaged from mainstream schooling, 'flexi' schools offer a viable

alternative. Indeed as you will read in the report many young people expend significant efforts to attend these schools when (on the surface at least) it might seem easier for them to enrol at their nearest State High School.

With this in mind and after much discussion the steering committee agreed to work together to investigate what it was exactly that attracted young people to these so-called 'alternative' schools – what are the factors that enable these schools to support and engage young people who would otherwise remain disengaged from education?

In seeking some answers to this question, one of the central aims throughout this project has been to consider which, if any, of these factors can be transferred to 'mainstream' schooling. YANQ doesn't believe in establishing an 'alternative' system of schooling, but rather in building a diverse schooling system. That is, a system in which a diverse range of school types are all encouraged (through funding and other means) to do everything they can to support young people from all backgrounds and in all situations to remain engaged and excited by the opportunities that an education provides.

We hope this report goes some way towards achieving that aim.



# NEYON Forum, under 15's disengaged from Education



## PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report ([http://www.yanq.org.au/images/stories/Documents/neyon\\_forum\\_report.pdf](http://www.yanq.org.au/images/stories/Documents/neyon_forum_report.pdf)) presents the major recommendations and findings arising from a discussion forum and research project that investigated the challenges facing young people under 15 who have become disengaged from education.

The forum, held 3 February 2010, was initiated by the North East Youth Organisations Network (NEYON) with the aim of encouraging further action on the issue.

It is hoped that this report will be a catalyst for ongoing action, or at the very least, ongoing debate and discussion that may lead to the implementation of positive solutions.

## MAJOR RECOMMENDATION

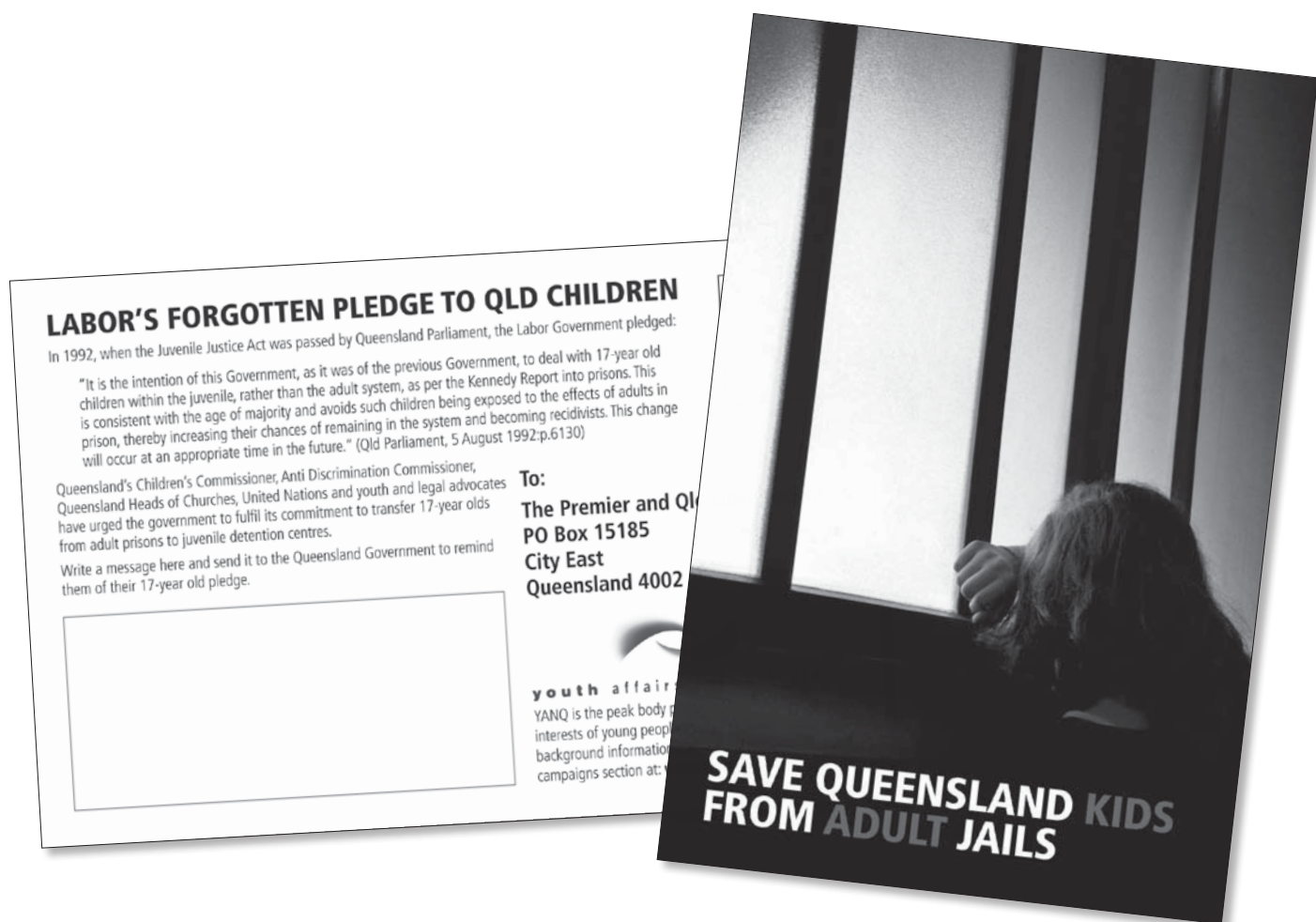
The major outcome of the forum is a recommendation that a research project/s be funded that seeks to achieve the following three aims:

1. Collect data on the number (and ages) of school age young people in the North Brisbane Education District who (over a 12 month period) are
  - a) disengaged from education (attending school rarely, if at all);
  - b) at risk of becoming disengaged from education; and
  - c) suspended or excluded from schools in this District;
2. Identify the key causal factors of disengagement for these young people in the North Brisbane District;
3. Identify and document successful re-engagement and retention programs (for 'at risk' groups).

## INSIGHTS: WHAT CAN COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, SCHOOLS & GOVERNMENTS DO?

During the forum and within the research delegates and respondents were asked to identify further strategies they believed would help address the challenges facing young people under 15 who are marginalised from education. The following table summarises the main insights from the workshop regarding the role that the following sectors can play:

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS CAN...	SCHOOLS CAN...	GOVERNMENTS CAN...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote positive community perceptions of young people.</li> <li>Develop connections and improve the flow of information between services, community members, businesses.</li> <li>Support young people to have a say on how support should be provided.</li> <li>Provide community education about different pathways for learners &amp; the need for research to increase awareness of learning journeys of young people.</li> <li>Support teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop links support services and clubs;</li> <li>Implement strategies that support young people's transitions between school.</li> <li>Strengthen in-school support services or encourage community services to have a presence in schools.</li> <li>Improve early identification of 'at-risk' young people and develop programs to address (e.g. mentoring)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fund services and programs to support young people 8 to 14 years both in and out of schools;</li> <li>Encourage and support (through funding and other means) the establishment of partnerships between schools and community services.</li> <li>Encourage and support the establishment of a diversity of schools.</li> </ul>



## Children in adult prisons

YANQ has enjoyed a good level of success in recent times highlighting the plight of 17 year olds in adult prisons. YANQ received coverage in the Sunday Mail, an ABC Radio interview and an article in The Australian. The ABC Radio broadcasted a story on the issue a number of times during the Christmas period and it also went on ABC Television.

YANQ developed a postcard targeting the State Government and reminding them of their pledge back in 1992 to include 17 year olds in the juvenile system.

YANQ has been distributing the campaign post cards across Queensland and we understand the Premier has been receiving them. The Premier also responded to our correspondence in relation to the matter stating that her government is looking at this matter. It seems we have been successful in putting the issue firmly back on the government's agenda.

YANQ also lodged several Right to Information applications covering all main departments and Ministers' offices concerning the costing for transfer of young people to Youth Detention facilities. Unfortunately all our efforts were blocked and we still have not seen any documents relating to this matter.

YANQ has been working with Minister Struthers' office to organise a briefing meeting for Labor members of Parliament on the issue of 17 year old in adult prison. YANQ has also discussed this issue with the Treasurer and the Attorney-General. We also made a submission to the Federal Government requesting the inclusion of the issue of 17 year olds in Queensland adult prison in the contents of the Australian Government's report to UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review.



## Indigenous juvenile justice

YANQ made a submission to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs in regards to their Inquiry into the high levels of involvement of Indigenous juveniles and young adults in the Criminal Justice System.

## Hep C , HIV and Sexual Health

YANQ has been appointed the chair of the Youth Working Group of the Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Sexual Health (QMAC HAHCSH). At the QMAC HAHCSH meeting held on 17 March 2010 it was agreed there was a need to establish a Working Group to address the ongoing needs and issues in relation to young people

Young people are a recognised priority population within the strategy and one of the core groups requiring further support to address the increase in STI's, particularly chlamydia. It was acknowledged that education both within the school environment and in settings outside of the school environment continue to be both inconsistent and fail to address the issues young people would like addressed. It was agreed that sexuality education needs to encompass relationships and negotiation skills as well as healthy body image in addition to information regarding transmission of STI's.

The aim of the working group is to identify the needs/ issues in relation to young people in Queensland, recommend strategic approaches to address issues, and advise the Deputy Premier via the QMAC HAHCSH of these matters and implications for other departments or whole of government issues.

## QLD Abortion laws

As you probably have been hearing from media, the debate about Qld Abortion laws has escalated. YANQ, as a member of the newly formed Pro Choice Qld is involved in this campaign. Pro Choice Qld has been campaigning heavily for the full repeal of Queensland's 1899 abortion laws since a young couple in Cairns were charged over an abortion in April. The State Government has stated repeatedly since April that it has no plans to change the current laws, but was forced into conceding some reform after doctors at the RBWH ceased offering medical abortion due to the ambiguous law and the charges laid in Cairns.

## Young people with disability

YANQ representatives went to Canberra to meet with Bill Shorten putting a case for funding of the Youth Disability Advocacy Service in Queensland. Unfortunately all our efforts so far to attract funding from State or Federal Government has been unsuccessful however we did receive funding from the Federal Government for a Governance Training for young people with disabilities pilot project. With this funding, YANQ will develop a resource for organisations, boards and committees who want to include young people with disabilities in their governance structure. The resource will be developed and distributed by June 2011.

## "ADHD"

YANQ's campaign of "Celebrate Don't Medicate" has continued. We have been having several discussions with a planning committee organising a national forum looking at the question of Is "ADHD" a fraud?

YANQ has also been monitoring the growth of "ADHD" medication in Queensland and have expressed our concerns to relevant government departments and also the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.

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## Meetings and Forums

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### Juvenile Justice Conference

YANQ attended the ATSI Juvenile Justice Conference staged by the Australian Institute of Criminology in Sydney and presented findings from our report into the Remand issues in Queensland which was well received.

### Attorney-General

YANQ representatives met with the Attorney-General in regards to a number of issues including the 17 year old children in Queensland adult prisons, the high number of young people on remand and what could be done about it. We also discussed changes necessary to the Criminal Rehabilitation Act and/or the Incorporated Association Act and also the review of sentencing options.

### Youth Violence Task Force

YANQ attended meetings of the Ministerial Taskforce on Youth Violence. We also attended a forum on alcohol and youth violence and provided feedback to government on this issue.

### Quarterly meetings of peaks with Department of Communities

YANQ attends the quarterly meetings of the Director-General of the Department of Communities with peak and state-wide organisations. Some of the key issues raised by YANQ during these meetings include the way the Department's funding increase for wages has been targeted at crisis workers and that this is inconsistent with the aim of the Department moving from crisis response to prevention. We also raised concern that the new structure of the Department does not articulate how the peaks can work with the government and that the process of consulting with the NGO sector about the Common Service Agreement was not in line with the signed Compact between the State Government and the Qld NGO's.

### 2009 Australia's Youth Representatives to UN

YANQ representatives met with Chris Varney who was the 2009 Australia's Youth Representative to UN and Samah Hadid, who is the 2010 representative. We briefed them on overall youth issues in Queensland and focused on Juvenile Justice; 17 year olds in adult prison and also the high number of Murri young people on Remand.

### Young Workers

YANQ maintained its role as a member of the advisory group to the Young Workers Advisory Service (YWAS).

### Anti-Discrimination

YANQ attended the Youth Advisory Group meetings of the Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland.

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## Regional, Rural & Remote Activities

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NEYON Re-engagement Forum at Nudgee College

### Mackay Youth Sector Forum

YANQ delivered a keynote speech to the Mackay Youth Sector Forum. YANQ also made links in Mackay with the Murri community who are looking at establishing a spiritual retreat for young people in that region.

### South West Qld

YANQ has been working with a number of services in the South West Qld region on a proposal for establishing a service to focus on reducing the number of young people ending up on Remand. The Department of Communities has used a pool of money from the prevention strategy of the Treasury Department to fund the South West Qld Indigenous Family and Youth Coaching and Mentoring Service.

### North West Qld region

As part of the Workforce Development Project, YANQ visited Normanton, Burketown and Karumba in the North West region.

### Interagencies across the State

Also as part of the Workforce Development project, YANQ staff and project consultants visited several Youth Interagencies across the State.

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# Alliances and partnerships

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## Australian Youth Affairs Coalition

Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) (National Youth Peak Body) held its planning meeting on 3rd and 4th August 2009 in Sydney. Following from this meeting the organisation focused on employing paid staff and commencing the implementation of the organisations operational plans. During the year YANQ stepped down from its role as the Treasurer of the organisation but maintains a close link as a member of the Policy Advisory Committee and also worked together on the Federal Election strategy.

## South Bank Youth Violence project

The South Bank Youth Violence project (Promoting Community Cohesion & Understanding Intra/Inter-cultural Youth Conflict) was a research project which YANQ undertook in partnership with Brisbane City Council, University of Queensland and the Praxis Coop.

During the project:

1. Street-level profiles of localised groups in the South Bank/South Brisbane Precinct was documented.
2. A youth-training package aimed at equipping young people in the target communities with "peace-building"/ "conflict-de-escalation" skills was delivered.
3. Young people completing the youth training package received a Certificate of Achievement from the School of Social Work and Human Services at the University of Queensland.
4. Peer-trainers and peer-researchers were identified from the training sessions. These young people will be supported to lead future community-based initiatives.

## Criminal Justice Network

YANQ was involved in planning and successfully launched the Criminal Justice Network (CJN) with about 80 people attending the launch and signing up to the network. The CJN meets 4 times a year and provides the mechanism for the NGO sector to share information and organise various collaborative actions in response to criminal justice issues.

The NGO Prison Inter-agency has also been meeting with YANQ attending and networking with other service delivery and advocate organisations.

## Convention on the Right of the Child

YANQ participated in a teleconference with the National Child Rights Taskforce to discuss how we organise Australia's NGO Shadow Report to UN on the implementation of the Convention on the Right of the Child.

## Packaging Rules of qualifications

YANQ played a lead role in consulting with all State and Territory youth sector peak bodies about the recently introduced new requirements relating to the Packaging Rules of Qualifications in Training Packages and as a result have sought an exemption for the CHC51408 Diploma of Youth Work until a comprehensive review is undertaken.

## Sustainability of small NGO's

YANQ has been working with a number of other peak bodies in relation to supporting the sustainability of small to medium size NGO's. The working group is planning a one-day forum to bring together representatives from smaller NGO's to work together in developing a platform for common action.

This was another difficult year, funding-wise, for the Multicultural Development Officer (MDO) position. Having lost our specific funding for the role, which came from Multicultural Affairs Queensland (MAQ) (via the CAMS program), we set about campaigning to have this funding renewed, while also searching for alternative sources. We met the Premier's Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs, Julie Attwood about our lost CAMS funding. We also met with Premiers multicultural advisor and Director of MAQ on a number of occasions.

We were extremely fortunate in this financial year to have support from the National Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (NMYAN), on which YANQ has long been the representative for Queensland. NMYAN had received some one-off funding from the Federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) to support capacity building at a state and national level. NMYAN very generously gave a portion of this funding to YANQ to support the MDO position on a part-time basis for several months, and combined with funding sourced from YANQ, we were able to continue to MDO role throughout the 2009/2010 financial year. It was our intention to use this period to find a source of recurring funding. Having attempted many conversations with MAQ and related bodies over the last few months of the previous financial year, we decided instead to examine the problem more broadly.

We hosted two forums in partnership with the National Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network for key workers and managers in the multicultural sector to discuss and plan the future of the MYNQ network, and the place of multicultural youth issues in Queensland. This was in preparation for operating without funding after June 2010.

Unfortunately we have been unsuccessful in sourcing recurrent funding for the MDO position and therefore our capacity will be greatly reduced after June 2010, but the needs of young people from CALD backgrounds will continue to be a priority for YANQ. We will continue to advocate for a specific Multicultural Development position based with in the youth peak, and hope that it will not be too long until we are able to provide dedicated sector development and advocacy targeted at the multicultural youth sector once again.

Young people from CALD backgrounds are among the most disadvantaged in the State, and a strong commitment to their particular needs is required at a government and NGO level. At this stage, the State Government seems to have no mechanism for prioritising or even supporting young people from CALD backgrounds.

As well as lobbying for funding during the past year, YANQ's Multicultural Development Officer continued to convene the Multicultural Youth Network Qld (MYNQ) and took part in a number of other networks and committees, including:

- The National Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (NMYAN) (including two face-to-face meetings in Sydney and Melbourne)
- The Centrelink Multicultural Advisory Committee
- The Southside Multicultural Network
- The Cultural Diversity Network (Toowoomba)
- The Community Health Action Group (CHAG)
- Multicultural Employment Advocacy Network (MEAN)
- Milpera State High School Advisory Board
- The South East Queensland Intercultural Cities Forum (SEQICF)
- Access to Interpreters Working Group
- CALD People who Identify as LGBTI Working Group
- MAQ Policy Review Operational Working Group
- ADCQ Advisory Committees

YANQ also:

- Submitted a response to the MAQ Multicultural Policy Review Discussion Paper
- Took part in a collaborative project examining issues of conflict among young people of CALD background in public spaces
- Met with The Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP about funding for the MDO position
- Submitted MAQ Multicultural Assistance Programs funding applications'
- Organised two sessions of our Cross Cultural Youth Work Practice Training, one in Brisbane, and one in Hervey Bay
- Spoke at a conference hosted by Family Planning Qld on CALD youth health
- Developed a Facebook page and maintained the website for the ERACISM! Project.



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## Treasurer's Report

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I have pleasure in presenting the independent auditor's report for the year ending 30th June 2010.

YANQ has continued to be a strong voice for the rights of young people and the development of the youth sector in Queensland and we have had to do this within strict fiscal restraint. With loss of the Multicultural Development position funding, which represented a quarter of YANQ's core income, we have had to make a number of changes to our operations.

Overall however the organisation is in a healthy financial position thanks to the finance subcommittee of the organisation which worked closely with the committee and staff throughout the year leading the restructuring of our financial structure and implementing a much more efficient system in collaboration with our new accountant.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members and subscribers for their financial contribution to YANQ. I also would like to thank our funders and donors for their contribution. If you require any further information in regards to the audited reports please contact our office.

Trish Ferrier  
**Treasurer**

Youth Affairs Network of Qld Inc



PHOTO: Trish Ferrier, Treasurer

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## Congratulations to YANQ's Young Queenslander of the Year!

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YANQ Management Committee member, Yassmin Abdel-Magied receiving the Young Queenslander of the Year Award



## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC**

### Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc (the Association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2010, and the income statement and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the Management Committee.

#### *Management Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report*

The Management Committee of the Association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981* and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Management Committee's responsibilities also include establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

#### *Auditor's Responsibility*

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Management Committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Management Committee's financial reporting under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

*Continue to Next Page* ➔

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC (continued)**

*Independence*

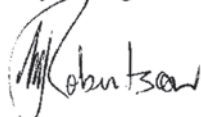
In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

*Auditor's Opinion*

In our opinion, the financial report of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of the Association as at 30 June 2010 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*.

Hayes Knight Audit (Qld) Pty Ltd.

Hayes Knight Audit (Qld) Pty Ltd



**AM Robertson**  
Director

Level 19, 127 Creek Street,  
Brisbane, QLD, 4000

Date: 21 October 2010

<b>ABC</b>	Australian Broadcasting Commission
<b>ADCQ</b>	Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland
<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
<b>ATSI</b>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
<b>AYAC</b>	Australian Youth Affairs Coalition
<b>CALD</b>	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
<b>CAMS</b>	Coordinated Advocacy in the Multicultural Sector
<b>CCYWPT</b>	Cross Cultural Youth Work Practice Training
<b>CHAG</b>	Community Health Action Group
<b>CJN</b>	Criminal Justice Network
<b>CMY</b>	Centre for Multicultural Youth
<b>DET</b>	Department of Education and Training
<b>DoC</b>	Department of Communities
<b>DEEWR</b>	(Federal) Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations
<b>HRCn</b>	Human Rights Commission
<b>IRG</b>	Industry Reference Group
<b>INC</b>	Incorporated
<b>LGBTI</b>	Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual Transgender Intersex
<b>MAQ</b>	Multicultural Affairs Queensland
<b>MDO</b>	Multicultural Development Officer
<b>MEAN</b>	Multicultural Employment Advocacy Network
<b>MYNQ</b>	Multicultural Youth Network of Queensland
<b>NEYON</b>	North East Youth Organisations Network
<b>NDO</b>	Network Development Officer
<b>NGO</b>	Non-government Organisation
<b>NMYAN</b>	National Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network
<b>QMAC HAHCSH</b>	Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Sexual Health
<b>QLD</b>	Queensland
<b>QPASTT</b>	Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma
<b>RBWH</b>	Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital
<b>SEQICF</b>	South East Queensland Intercultural Cities Forum
<b>STI</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infection.
<b>TAFE</b>	Technical and Further Education
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>YANQ</b>	Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc.
<b>YCN</b>	Youth Consultative Network
<b>YSLG</b>	Youth Sector Leadership Group
<b>YWAS</b>	Young Workers Advisory Service



youth affairs network qld

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2009 / 2010

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