



Community Development and Justice Standing Committee

Cultivating promise

**Building Resilience and Engagement for At-Risk Youth
through Sport and Culture**

**Report No. 13
August 2016**

Legislative Assembly
Parliament of Western Australia

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Published by the Parliament of Western Australia, Perth.

August 2016.

ISBN: 978-1-925116-72-4

(Series: Western Australia. Parliament. Legislative Assembly. Committees.
Community Development and Justice Standing Committee. Report 13)

328.365

Community Development and Justice Standing Committee

Cultivating promise

Building Resilience and Engagement for At-Risk Youth through Sport and Culture

Report No. 13

Presented by

Ms M.M. Quirk, MLA

Presented to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and deemed tabled on
15 August 2016

Chair's Foreword

"A strength-based approach with a positive perspective is so much more effective than a no capacity approach and a negative perspective. It's a simple and powerful philosophy – work with the communities' many strengths rather than focus on the 'challenges' and problems."

These are the words of Karyn Lisignoli, chief executive officer of Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sport, contained in a submission to the Committee. These "challenges and problems" for many young Western Australians readily come to mind. They include addiction, dysfunctional family life, abuse, family violence, racism, loss of cultural identity, unemployment, marginalisation from mainstream education and sexualisation.

What is less well canvassed or known is how we may better foster these young people to fully engage through sporting or creative endeavours.

The objective of engaging otherwise disaffected youth through sport or culture is not about finding "diamonds in the rough" who can participate at an elite level. It is about building resilience and self-worth. It is about enabling individuals to discover what they feel passionate about, thereby steering a course for their lives ahead. Moreover it is to prevent ongoing (or transition to) criminal conduct.

Irrespective of the location or type of program which the Committee examined, common themes quickly emerged which provided a template for our findings as to what elements are key to successful participation of youth at risk.

In collecting evidence for this Inquiry, the Committee was privileged to meet with two participants of Artful Dodgers Studios, a sprawling conglomeration of art and music studios, offices, common rooms and kitchen and laundry facilities in Collingwood.

Run by Jesuit Social Services, Artful Dodgers has used art and music as a way of engaging youth and then connecting them with the support they need for the past 20 years.

Both of the young people we met had traumatic histories but had become confident in their futures thanks to their sustained involvement with people they could trust and relate to. They were disarmingly candid in their accounts of the challenges of homelessness and addiction – which was exactly what we wanted. Hearing directly from young people who had been brought back from the brink was both confronting and inspiring.

While Artful Dodgers mainly supports youth with multiple and complex problems, other groups the Committee met focussed on engaging young people early to ensure they did not reach that point. This often involved consciously reaching out to communities where youth were at risk of becoming isolated or perhaps becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.

It requires a high level of understanding and compassion and a willingness to be flexible. Time and again we heard how groups had adapted programs to accommodate different ethnic communities. The 15 nationalities that make up St Mary's Netball Club in Dandenong is testament to their success in consciously creating a welcoming environment over a period of years.

Creating opportunities for Indigenous youth to connect with their culture is also important, and in New Zealand it was heartening to see the extent to which Maori culture is embedded in sports and arts activities. Knowing where you come from and being proud of that history was at the core of many programs for disenfranchised Maori youth, and the presence of strong role models played a key role in this.

At home in Western Australia, we met some polite and impressive young men at the Clontarf Academy, and heard how the program delivers lasting change in the lives of boys who might otherwise have bleak prospects.

Local organisations, such as the Edmund Rice Centre, Communicare and the Community Arts Network, deliver some terrific programs in specific suburbs and towns to engage ethnic minorities and Indigenous kids. There are projects here and there that deliver wonderful outcomes – such as the Yiriman Project to engage Indigenous youth in culture in the Kimberley and BighART's highly-awarded comic book project in Roebourne.

But a program here and there is not good enough. Provision of sport and arts programs for at-risk youth is patchy; project by project funding means that there are few opportunities to establish the long-term programs and sustained commitment that can really make a tangible difference.

Ad hoc delivery means that some parts of the State receive multiple programs and others receive nothing. The absence of any system for monitoring or auditing program delivery also means that some groups are not well catered for. Girls, for instance, lose out unless they are targeted through Indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse programs.

The tendency to focus on the development of elite athletes or artists is also concerning. Not all young people have the potential (or desire) to be high level players or performers, but their participation pays dividends nonetheless.

There is, by now, enough evidence that demonstrates the cost-benefits of investing in young people before they become involved in the juvenile justice system. As Nobel Laureate in Economics Professor James Heckman has shown, a pre-school program for at-risk children can deliver a social return on investment of \$7 for every \$1 invested, since, by age 20, participants are more likely to have finished high school and less likely to have needed remedial help or to have been arrested.

The cost of keeping one juvenile in detention for a year is around \$300,000; but a similar amount invested in a sport or arts or cultural program could deliver many more thousands of dollars in savings by diverting a young person at-risk from the more costly path that leads to justice, social services and health interventions.

I want to specially acknowledge the role of the many volunteers we encountered whose commitment and passion enriched the experience of the program participants.

Likewise the candour and frank disclosures of the young people we spoke to was appreciated and valued. Because of this, the Committee is confident that our findings and recommendations reflect a course of action which young Western Australians would be prepared to embrace.

Or, to put it another way, as Kate from Ladder WA said in a submission to the Committee:

“It is crucial that we tap into what the young people need and want as opposed to us telling them what they need.”

In conducting this Inquiry, I have appreciated the thoughtful contributions of my fellow Committee members: Deputy Chair Dr Tony Buti MLA, Mr Mick Murray MLA, Mr Chris Hatton MLA and Ms Libby Mettam MLA.

I also thank the Principal Research Officer, Dr Sarah Palmer, and Research Officer, Ms Franchesca Walker, for their professional support of the Committee’s work.

Finally, this will be the last report of this Committee for the 39th Parliament. Accordingly, I take this opportunity to make observations about the committee process.

It has become increasingly evident that the commitment and diligence of the Committee in highlighting the need for reform, changes to public policy or the law is frequently met by a tepid, dismissive and dilatory response by government.

Despite the composition of the Committee, more often than not there was unanimous agreement on recommendations and the contents of reports. For that reason our work should not be so readily discounted.

The development of public policy and in-depth research through parliamentary committees is an important counterbalance to the politically expedient and hurried decision-making which the executive is often required to make.

I have made these observations in the present context because I regard the modest but considered findings and recommendations of this report as deserving of close examination and implementation.

Acted upon, they will help to ensure that a future generation can more fully participate in our community. It will evidence the sentiment that our young are worthy of the kind of investment of resources which improve their capacity as leaders of the future.

Conversely, if ignored, it will speak of a lack of confidence and interest in our young. Potential may remain unrealised and, most importantly, many who might otherwise be diverted from crime or mental health issues may founder. Such a lack of investment will also lead to the negative externality of increased costs to government as outlined in this report.

This Inquiry has led us to make the same observation as American actress Jane Fonda, writing in 2010 about the need to support vulnerable youth:

*"The capacity of young people to persevere, even under the most adverse conditions, never ceases to amaze me."*¹



MS M.M. QUIRK, MLA
CHAIR

1 Jane Fonda, 'Fostering success', in *Rewire*, 4 January 2010. Available at: <https://rewire.news/article/2010/01/04/fostering-success/> Accessed 11 August 2016.

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Executive Summary

THIS Inquiry set out to establish what sport and cultural programs exist in Western Australia for at-risk youth, and whether access to these is affected by place of residence or by being Indigenous, female or from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) background.

In Perth, the Committee conducted nine public hearings and a briefing with the Clontarf Foundation. The Committee was assisted in determining the characteristics of successful programs by conducting 19 briefings with sport/recreation and arts/culture organisations, participants and experts in Melbourne and New Zealand.

For the purposes of this Inquiry:

Sport refers to sport and recreational activities, including traditional competitive sport and social sport or physical recreation, organised in some way and involving others.

Culture is defined as cultural activity (e.g. participating in arts activities related to music, dance, theatre, visual arts, literature) and also activity related to a group's identity (e.g. customs, traditions and values).

Youth was defined as young people between the ages of 10 and 25 years, although definitions vary among organisations and experts.

At-risk youth were considered to be young people at heightened risk of:

- engaging in negative or dangerous behaviours, such as truancy, self-harm, anti-social behaviour, drug/alcohol abuse, juvenile offending, and disengaging from education, training or employment;
- displaying poor social and communication skills, low self-esteem, emotional instability, suicidal intent;
- being impacted by homelessness, social and/or economic disadvantage, social isolation, family and domestic violence, substance abuse in the home/peer group/community, family transience, unemployment.

While Aboriginal youth at risk of suicide are among the broader cohort of at-risk youth, the Committee did not focus on this group, given the parallel inquiry into Aboriginal youth suicide being conducted by the Education and Health Standing Committee.

How can participation in sport and culture build resilience and engagement?

Resilience refers to the ability of individuals to overcome adversity. Perseverance, motivation, hopefulness and the capacity to negotiate for the provision of resources

are traits of resilience. Increasing levels of depression, suicide ideation, anxiety, low self-esteem and self-worth, obesity and stress are partly attributed to a lack of resilience, as are anti-social behaviours and alcohol and drug abuse.

Engagement in youth programs can enhance a young person's resilience by developing an increased sense of autonomy, empowerment and independence.

Specifically, participation in sport and cultural activities can assist young people to develop or enhance some of the protective factors identified as necessary to build resilience. Participation in team sport, for example, develops important life skills such as communication, conflict resolution, self-discipline, trust and problem solving. The use of sport to integrate marginalised groups such as migrant or refugee populations has become more common in Australia in recent years.

While art's impact on resilience is a relatively new area of research, community arts programs have been found to enable participants to make friends, build social networks and/or increase their social empowerment. They can also bring together marginalised groups and people who are not considered at risk.

Studies of the impact of sports programs of arts programs both show that participants are more engaged in learning and achieve better academic results.

Over the past decade, there has been growing recognition in Australia that activity related to a group's identity (e.g. customs, traditions and values) – is fundamental to individual wellbeing and resilience. Activities which establish or maintain Aboriginal people's connections to country, culture and kin develop a positive sense of community and a robust self-identity.

Who participates?

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 44 per cent of young adults (15-24 years) participated in organised sport in the 12 months before being surveyed.

An estimated 60 per cent of all children aged 5 to 14 years participated in at least one organised sport activity outside of school hours. Participation was higher for boys than girls and was lower for single-parent families and where parents were unemployed.

Some surveys show comparable rates of participation between metropolitan and rural youth and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth, however statistics vary.

The participation rate in organised sport for children born in a non-English speaking country is lower than for children born in an English-speaking country.

Adolescent girls have consistently lower levels of participation in physical activity, including in Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) groups.

ABS data shows that 35 per cent of people aged 15 to 24 participated in at least one cultural activity in the 12 months prior to being surveyed.

Regional participation in the arts is on a par with metropolitan, according to an Australia Council survey. The Mission Australia Youth Survey 2015 records Indigenous participation in arts/cultural/music activities as slightly higher than for non-Indigenous.

There is very little data on participation in arts and culture by CaLD communities. An Australia Council survey shows participation as being lower for people whose main language is not English. Young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to participate, citing cost as the main reason.

Barriers to participation for at-risk youth

The Committee's evidence largely aligned with the literature in identifying four main barriers to participation: socioeconomic factors, geographical, cultural and gender.

Many youth in the at-risk category come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, which can make paying for fees, equipment and uniforms impossible. It can also mean that they have no access to transport.

This is a greater problem for those living in areas with limited facilities and programs, making travel essential. Almost 40 per cent of regional survey respondents in an Australia Council survey found arts activities hard to get to, compared with 23 per cent of metropolitan respondents.

Being Aboriginal or from a CaLD background presents challenges, some linked to socioeconomic status and geographical factors and others to religious or cultural beliefs, language difficulties, cultural misunderstandings and historical trauma.

Statistics show the rate of participation by Indigenous young people in sport and cultural activities as comparable with non-Indigenous youth, but there may be differences in the types of activities undertaken, with more formal structures throwing up barriers to Indigenous youth.

Most research on participation due to gender relates to girls' participation in sport. Australian girls of a low socioeconomic position were found to experience a disproportionately high number of barriers to sports participation.

Girls in ethnic communities were particularly disadvantaged, with household responsibilities often precluding them from extra-curricular activities.

Sources of funding

The Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) provides the majority of funding to sports programs in WA, paying around \$64 million in grants and subsidies in 2014-15.

Some DSR programs and initiatives relevant to at-risk youth are co-funded by other State Government departments, including WA Police, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, the Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. The Department of Education provides support to recreation programs which engage youth in educational settings, and the Department of Health funds some health-focussed programs.

The Federal Government provides significant funding specific organisations (e.g. Clontarf Foundation and Role Models and Leaders Australia Girls Academies). Local government authorities often deliver sports and recreation programs but may need to apply to other funding sources themselves in order to do so. Corporate sponsorship and donations occur to varying degrees.

The majority of arts funding provided by the State Government is allocated to the Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA) for distribution. For 2016-17, about \$29 million was allocated to support the delivery of arts and cultural activities across WA.

There is no DCA funding program which specifically caters for young people. Organisations seeking funds for projects aimed at at-risk youth would need to compete for the three million dollars distributed annually across several grants streams.

DCA contracts CAN (Community Arts Network) to run the Catalyst Community Arts Fund, which provides funding support to community-driven arts and culture activities. In 2015 \$278,498 was distributed to 27 projects, some of which involved at-risk youth.

The Department of Local Government and Communities also provides a reasonable amount of funding to arts groups and one-off projects. Other state government agencies have worked in partnership with the DCA or other groups to deliver programs.

In 2016 a number of WA organisations which provide programs for at-risk youth received four-year funding from the Commonwealth Australia Council for the Arts, including CAN, Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC) and Yirra Yaakin Aboriginal Corporation (theatre group).

Local governments provide small amounts of funding for arts projects or support other organisations. Corporate and philanthropic sponsorship of arts and cultural activities for at-risk youth is limited.

Significant sport and recreation and arts and culture programs in Western Australia

One of the key programs for increasing participation in sport by disadvantaged youth which the DSR administers is the KidSport program, which provides a voucher for up to \$200 to eligible children (5 to 18) who are unable to afford club fees.

There are two major recreation programs for at-risk youth in the metropolitan area – the North West Metro Inclusion Project, and the Communicare Get Active Inclusion Project, which serves the south-eastern suburbs. Both aim to increase the participation of CaLD and Aboriginal youth in sport and recreation and help to transition refugee youth to mainstream clubs.

The Clontarf Foundation’s football academies for Indigenous boys now operate in eight metropolitan schools and in 12 regional schools, and a similar program for Indigenous girls, Role Models and Leaders Australia (RMLA) Girls Academy, operates in one metropolitan and seven regional locations.

The Wirrpanda Foundation also targets Indigenous youth with four programs in selected metropolitan and regional locations, as does Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sports.

A number of programs contain elements of both recreation and culture or identity-building. Youth centre programs fall into this category, with the most prominent being the Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC), which specifically target juvenile offenders. In the metropolitan area there are PCYCs in Fremantle, Gosnells, Kensington, Midland, Rockingham, Serpentine and Subiaco. There are 12 centres in regional areas.

The programs run at the centres vary. The Stepping Stones program run by Gosnells PCYC has been particularly successful in combining recreation and culture to engage at-risk youth.

In Albany, the Wumbudin Kool-yee-rah Strong and Proud program is an after-school recreation program for Aboriginal youth aged 12 to 16. Outdoor activities are inspired by the six Noongar seasons and include bush survival skills, seed collection skills and cultural heritage.

The Kimberley-based Yiriman Project is one of few cultural programs which targets at-risk youth – in this case Aboriginal. Yiriman has had documented success in helping to change the lives of the troubled young people it takes on country.

Another successful program, running in the Pilbara since 2010, is the Yijala Yala Project, set up by national company BighART. One of its notable creations is the comic book series Neomad, which has taught Aboriginal students scriptwriting, literacy, Photoshop, filmmaking and sound recording skills.

The Aboriginal-led Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company runs workshops for schools which explore questions relating to culture of all kinds (not just Indigenous), and it also has an Indigenous training initiative and cultural leadership initiative.

Other organisations targeting youth are the metropolitan-based FNTS Movement, which provides hip-hop dance and recording opportunities; and Albany’s Open Access

Youth Art Studio, which is based on a similar model to Melbourne's Artful Dodgers Studio.

Short-term projects are most likely to be the result of funding provided by CAN or by small grants administered by the Department of Local Government and Communities. CAN's Strong Culture, Strong Community program in Narrogin resulted in the highly successful Noongar Pop Culture project.

Gaps in service provision

There is no system for recording sport and recreation programs across the State, making it impossible to accurately determine gaps in service provision.

However, based on evidence provided to (and sourced by) the Committee:

- there are fewer sport and recreation programs targeting at-risk youth in regional areas than in metropolitan areas;
- there are few if any sports programs which target CaLD youth in regional areas;
- there are more arts and culture programs in regional WA than the metropolitan area, largely due to Aboriginal programs;
- CaLD youth are more likely to be catered for in terms of arts and cultural programs in the metropolitan area than in regional areas;
- programs targeting female participation are rare, although there are a few sports and cultural identity/leadership programs aimed specifically at Aboriginal girls, and some programs cater for CaLD girls in the metropolitan area;
- services for at-risk youth are not evenly distributed within the metropolitan area and across regional Western Australia.

Policy gaps

The Department for Child Protection and Family Support has an At-Risk Youth Strategy but this does not acknowledge the role of sport and the arts in assisting vulnerable young people.

An across-government Youth Strategic Framework called "Our Youth – Our Future", launched in 2012, was developed in partnership with 14 State Government agencies, led by the Department of Local Government and Communities. The DCA and DSR had input into this.

The strategic approach included "encouraging young people to be active, creative and involved by offering diverse sport, recreation, arts and culture options that adapt to

changing lifestyles”. However, the Committee did not receive any evidence in relation to the success or otherwise of the Youth Strategic Framework.

The DSR’s policy and strategy documents demonstrate a commitment to the inclusion of marginalised groups, including at-risk youth. In contrast, the DCA does not have any dedicated programs to address youth or youth at risk, and these groups are largely absent from policy documents.

The DCA has been more active in terms of the delivery of Aboriginal cultural programs, proposing (in partnership with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs) that the DCA becomes a member of the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee. The Committee supports this proposal.

At the local government level, a study co-authored by CAN found that only 13 per cent of councils had an overarching strategy or plan for arts and culture.

Information gaps

Data on sport and culture programs available to at-risk youth in WA and statistics revealing who participates is lacking.

Lack of funds to implement research to assess programs contributes to the data void.

Challenges for service providers

Challenges for service providers centred around trying to work in a system which is fragmented, working across a number of government departments, sourcing and securing funding – particularly for longer term projects, demonstrating outcomes, and accommodating participants with different cultural requirements.

With so many different agencies providing funding to so many different organisations, it is not surprising that service provision is somewhat fragmented. This can lead to duplication of services and ineffective use of resources.

Programs funded by more than one department also face challenges in satisfying potentially competing priorities. Arts or sports programs which are not the core business of an agency (for example the Department of Corrective Services) are often the first to be axed when funding is constrained.

Service providers are often required to demonstrate the outcomes of their programs in order to justify further funding. This was seen as necessary to ensure that those targeted were receiving a quality service and to weed out groups that were not delivering good programs.

However, social outcomes are difficult to measure and evaluations are often not conducted rigorously, if at all. While quantitative measures are often used, many saw these as meaningless and advocated for the use of qualitative measures.

Organisations overwhelmingly agreed that funding for longer-term projects, or at least successive funding to continue short-term projects, is necessary to implement meaningful change. Both the DSR and the DCA clearly saw the value of long-term funding but were limited in what they could provide from their budget allocations.

Many organisations survive on a handful of smaller grants from multiple sources. The time consumed in seeking out funding and completing grant applications places considerable strain on organisations.

Increased competition for funding means that quite often smaller, less experienced organisations miss out.

Organisations also had to tread a careful path when providing services to multicultural groups, often acting as the conduit between club volunteers and participants with specific cultural needs or practices. They worked closely with both parties to promote understanding.

Characteristics of successful programs

Successful programs have common factors related to their environments, people and processes that enable them to develop the protective factors necessary for resiliency and engagement.

While some young people are referred to programs, most organisations providing programs need an effective means of engaging young people in the first instance. This could include using sport as a hook to introduce vulnerable youth to other support services; including young people in the development of programs, to ensure their interests and values are being met; and making programs accessible in terms of location (for example, in a park), time of day (for example, late at night) and transport.

Environment

The social environment of a program can significantly influence a young person's transition from disengagement to investment. A supportive and inclusive environment that is non-judgemental, respectful and empathetic will make participants feel welcome. Young people are quick to perceive if a service is not genuine and does not have their best interests at heart.

Programs also need to be prepared to adapt their delivery methods to meet the unique needs of their participants, which might mean adapting a uniform or developing less structured models (for example, discarding weekly practice sessions). In arts programs,

facilitators needed to be prepared to allow the young people to drive the artistic vision so that it was relevant to issues affecting them.

Service providers also needed to have a consistent presence in a community. Regular engagement over a long period of time was required to build a relationship that could have an impact. An organisation which was always there when it said it would be there was often the most consistent thing in a young person's life.

People and relationships

The importance of having the right staff in the right positions was emphasised throughout the Inquiry. While it is impossible to pinpoint the qualities in a youth mentor, program facilitator or coordinator that will make a difference to a young person, it was apparent that participants needed to find someone they could relate to.

All programs using mentoring initiatives recognised that sustained and enduring contact between mentors and mentees was required to generate real change in the lives of young people.

Several organisations emphasised the benefits of an organisation reflecting the composition of the communities it serves. In addition, it is widely acknowledged that to address issues within a specific group or community, that group or community should be intimately involved in the solution.

KALACC noted that culturally embedded services, rather than government-controlled culturally appropriate services, were required if there was to be any impact on suicide rates and juvenile offending in the Kimberley.

Organisations providing services for youth from Aboriginal or CaLD backgrounds noted that buy-in from the community ensured the program had maximum impact. Reversing the process and connecting young people from marginalised groups to the mainstream community also had benefits.

Building relationships with families of participants was also particularly important for programs aimed at young people from Indigenous and CaLD backgrounds.

Processes

The most successful programs had enabled empowerment and capacity-building in participants, either informally or, more often, through formal pathways. Structured, leadership-focused pathways were the most common method of empowering participants. New experiences, skills and responsibilities would be introduced at each stage.

Engagement in school and education is a protective factor contributing to resilience, and hence there is value in aligning programs with primary or secondary schools. This

had led to increased attendance, retention and engagement. Even programs without direct links to schools tended to increase youth engagement with education.

Programs which provide employment pathways are also valuable. Few programs explicitly set out to develop professional artists or sportspeople. However, it was quite common for participants to return to their programs as employees or volunteers, and some organisations actively encouraged this.

In line with the conclusion that sport or culture does not, by and of itself, build resilience, it is important that sport and culture-based programs are linked to other service providers. Collaboration allows organisations to develop programs that they would otherwise be unable to provide.

Sport and culture can aid in the creation of a strong sense of identity, which is a fundamental characteristic of resilience. A common characteristic of successful youth programs was the inclusion of activities that enable youth to connect to their cultures and, in doing so, develop a stronger sense of self-identity.

The connection between culture, identity and resilience was particularly emphasised in relation to Aboriginal youth. According to the DCA, culturally-based programs received inadequate funding from federal and state governments, despite such programs consistently having the strongest outcomes.

Finally, despite the difficulties associated with evaluation of programs, a successful program needs an effective and meaningful way of measuring its success.

In conclusion

Expenditure on sport and culture programs for at-risk youth is regarded by many – including the DSR and the DCA – as an investment. There are long-term savings to be made if a program prevents a young person from homelessness, poor health or entering the juvenile justice system.

However, , preventative or engagement programs do not seem to attract the same level of funding as intervention programs, accessible to youth once they have entered the juvenile justice system.

There is general agreement that sport and culture programs work best if they do not operate in isolation, which means government departments which cater for the various needs of young people need to work together.

But until an agency takes on the practical responsibility of coordinating services and funding for at-risk youth – including integrating sport and culture - this group may remain on the fringes of society.

Ministerial Response

In accordance with Standing Order 277(1) of the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly, the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee directs that the Premier, the Minister for Culture and the Arts and the Minister representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs report to the Assembly as to the action, if any, proposed to be taken by the Government with respect to the recommendations of the Committee.

Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1

Page 24

Measurements of participation are quantitative rather than qualitative and do not necessarily capture the nature and duration of involvement.

Finding 2

Page 35

The cessation of Commonwealth funding for Aboriginal Sports Development Officers in Western Australia has resulted in the withdrawal of these officers in locations where they play a vital role in sports delivery.

Recommendation 1

Page 36

That the State Government urges the Federal Government to reinstate the funding for Aboriginal Sports Development Officers, and, if unsuccessful, explore alternative sources of funding.

Finding 3

Page 45

The PCYC model is in a transitional stage and needs to better identify the demand for its services and provide greater clarification of its role.

Finding 4

Page 52

There is no system for collating demographic information relating to participants in sport and cultural programs across the State, making it impossible to accurately determine gaps in service delivery.

Finding 5

Page 52

There are more sports and recreation programs targeting at-risk youth in the metropolitan area than in regional areas.

Finding 6

Page 54

There are more arts and culture programs and recreation/cultural programs targeting at-risk youth in regional areas than in the metropolitan area, largely as a result of rural Indigenous programs.

Finding 7

Page 54

Culturally and linguistically diverse youth are not specifically targeted and catered for in regional Western Australia, both in terms of sport and recreation programs and arts and culture programs.

Finding 8 **Page 54**

Where programs targeting at-risk girls are provided, they are generally for Indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse groups. Girls that do not fit into either of these two groups face the prospect of missing out.

Finding 9 **Page 55**

Services for at-risk youth are not evenly distributed within the metropolitan area and across regional Western Australia.

Finding 10 **Page 55**

Single-focus programs are unable to transform the lives of young people with multiple problems and complex needs.

Finding 11 **Page 57**

The role of sport and the arts in assisting vulnerable young people is not acknowledged in the Department for Child Protection and Family Support's At-Risk Youth Strategy 2015-2018.

Finding 12 **Page 58**

The across-government Youth Strategic Framework "Our Youth – Our Future" contains admirable strategies for the engagement of at-risk youth in sport and culture, but the extent to which this has guided and continues to guide practice is unclear. In addition, no specific resources have been allocated to implementing the strategy.

Finding 13 **Page 59**

The Department of Sport and Recreation's policy and strategy documents demonstrate a commitment to the inclusion of marginalised groups, including at-risk youth.

Finding 14 **Page 61**

The Department of Culture and the Arts does not have any dedicated programs to address youth or youth at risk, and these groups are largely absent from policy documents.

Recommendation 2 **Page 61**

That the Department of Culture and the Arts review its strategy and policy documents to ensure that they address the needs of at-risk youth.

Recommendation 3 **Page 62**

That the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs acts to include the Department of Culture and the Arts as a member of the Aboriginal Affairs Cabinet Sub-Committee.

Finding 15 **Page 66**

Delivery of sports and arts programs to at-risk youth is fragmented, due to a lack of coordination of government agency and non-government organisation programs. This can lead to duplication in some areas and a paucity of programs in others.

Finding 16 **Page 67**

Ancillary arts and sports programs are most vulnerable when State Government departments (other than the arts and sport portfolios) are subject to budgetary constraints.

Finding 17 **Page 70**

Measurement of outcomes of arts and sport programs for at-risk youth is either absent or lacking in clarity due to its complexity.

Recommendation 4 **Page 71**

That appropriate resources be made available to government departments to conduct rigorous evaluations of the programs they fund. Evaluations should include a qualitative component.

Finding 18 **Page 74**

Short-term funding of arts and sports programs does not generally lead to long-term benefits for at-risk youth. It also impedes the ability of organisations to attract and retain staff with the skills to interact with this cohort.

Finding 19 **Page 74**

The complex criteria to be met for Department of Culture and the Arts grants is a deterrent for groups seeking funding for projects for at-risk youth.

Finding 20 **Page 97**

Economic analysis shows that investment in programs for at-risk youth deliver a very high social return.

Finding 21 **Page 112**

Sport and culture-based programs that successfully assist at-risk youth to build resilience and enhance engagement:

- Use art or sport as a “hook” or incentive for young people to engage in the program;
- Include young people and target communities in the development of programs to develop culturally-relevant and effective solutions to challenges facing at-risk youth;

- Ensure that programs are accessible to young people in terms of location and hours of service provision;
- Develop and maintain welcoming and supportive environments, which includes some degree of mentoring and staff to whom at-risk youth can relate;
- Ensure programs are adaptable in order to respond more effectively to youth interests and youth needs;
- Provide a reliable, long-term and ongoing service for young people;
- Involve the families of at-risk youth;
- Empower young people by offering leadership-focused and/or employment pathways;
- Collaborate with other services to reduce duplication and increase the support received by young people;
- Focus on building or enhancing the identities of young people, particularly their cultural identities.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter provides a brief background to the Inquiry and contents of the report, and defines key terms. Drawing on existing literature, it discusses the importance of resilience and engagement and how they can be enhanced by sport and cultural participation.

I want to stand as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all the kinds of things you can't see from the center.

– Kurt Vonnegut

SPORT and culture have played an important role in the lives of many Western Australians. As children, we may have hit boundaries for our local cricket team or learnt to patrol the waves for our surf club. We may have begun learning an instrument in primary school or participated in activities that connected us with our culture. And while our participation may have been initially out of interest, enjoyment, a competitive spirit or pressure from family or friends, it has been well-established that we would have also received valuable social, emotional and health benefits.

But how are the recognised benefits of participation in sport and cultural activities being used to enhance the resilience and engagement of at-risk youth in Western Australia? For various reasons this group is one of the hardest to engage but stands to benefit the most.²

Thus, the Committee set out to investigate what programs and approaches work best for at-risk youth, the challenges they face in accessing sport and cultural programs, and whether there are gaps in the delivery of sport and culture to at-risk youth in Western Australia.

In doing so, the Committee has not sought to provide a detailed audit of programs, and does not claim to have uncovered every sports or cultural program available for at-risk in Western Australia. What is provided by way of this report is an appreciation of the status of sports and arts programs for at-risk youth in Western Australia and a sense of what is missing.

To assist in determining what works best for at-risk youth, the Committee saw value in gathering evidence from at least one other Australian city and one international

2 The Smith Family, 'Sport, culture and the internet: Are Australian children participating?', *The Smith Family Research Report*, June 2013, p2.

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location. Given its status as the cultural and sports capital of Australia, Melbourne was deemed the most appropriate Australian city to visit. It is also culturally diverse, with around 35 per cent of its population born overseas.³

New Zealand was considered an appropriate international focus since it faces some of the same challenges as Western Australia with regard to the social inclusion of migrant and refugee youth and engagement of at-risk Indigenous youth. It has strong models of culturally-based and culturally-owned programs that are government-funded, which the Committee was keen to learn about.

Both locations are home to innovative and well-established sport and cultural programs and the 19 briefings with sports and arts organisations and experts provided a valuable complement to the hearings conducted in Western Australia.

1.1 Establishment of Inquiry

In accordance with its functions and powers (*see Appendix 2*), the Committee notified the Speaker of its intention to undertake an *Inquiry into Building Resilience and Engagement for At-Risk Youth through Sport and Culture* on 7 April 2016.

An advertisement for submissions appeared in *The West Australian* newspaper on 16 April 2016. Seven submissions were received (*see list at Appendix 3*). In the course of the inquiry, the Committee conducted 9 public hearings with 17 witnesses (*see Appendix 4*) and also a briefing with the Clontarf Foundation and several staff and students at Clontarf Aboriginal College in Waterford.

In Melbourne and New Zealand the Committee conducted 19 briefings with various youth service providers, experts and young people. The Committee appreciated those who shared their knowledge, particularly those young people who discussed their often difficult life experiences.

1.2 Definition of terms

When the Committee resolved to undertake this Inquiry, it adopted specific definitions for some of the terms used. These definitions included:

- **Sport**, which was defined as sport and recreational activities, including traditional competitive sport and social sport or physical recreation. The Committee stipulated that the focus on engagement in the Inquiry implied that the activities are organised in some way and involve others. Hence, some physical activities, such as going for a walk on one's own, may be beneficial but for the purposes of the Inquiry are not considered to be engaging in sport.

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Australian Social Trends, 2014](#), ABS, Catalogue Number 4102.0. Released March 2014.

- **Culture**, which was defined as cultural activity (e.g. participating in arts activities related to music, dance, theatre, visual arts, literature) and also activity related to a group's identity (e.g. customs, traditions and values). The Committee noted that these two forms of culture can overlap.

As the Inquiry progressed, it became clear that the Committee's initial definitions of "youth" and "at risk" required re-examination.

1.2.1 What do we mean by "youth"?

The Committee initially defined "youth" as young people aged 10 to 18 years in line with the Department for Child Protection and Family Support's *At Risk Youth Strategy 2015-2018*. While recognising that the term "youth" historically included those between the ages of 12 and 18 years, this strategy nevertheless sets its own age range at 10 years old "to reflect the increasing trend of younger children identified as at risk".⁴

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) sets the age range at 15 to 24 years for statistical purposes, but notes that youth is "a more fluid category than a fixed age-group".⁵

UNESCO further suggests that "youth" should be viewed as a "period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood".⁶ Dr Peter Wright, an associate professor at Murdoch University who appeared as a witness, supported this interpretation, noting that young people are now experiencing development stages later in life than previous generations.

You engage people in different ways at different ages, but everybody who needs support needs support no matter how old they are ... Within realistic and achievable bounds, we start as early as we can and mentor until they are ready to go and mentor themselves. — Joe Moniodis, Edmund Rice Centre

*That is because stages of development — what might have happened in our generation with young people leaving home and moving on — does not happen so much now. There is an extended adolescence in a sense that goes through to 25.*⁷

4 Department for Child Protection and Family Support, [At Risk Youth Strategy 2015-2018](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2015, p5.

5 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, ['What do we mean by "youth"?'](#), 2016.

6 *ibid.*

7 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p10.

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Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer of the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA), said that children were also exhibiting behaviours more often associated with older youth, including drug and alcohol abuse, sexualisation and a noted presence on the streets at night.

While YACWA defines youth as young people between the ages of 12 and 25, service providers needed to be flexible, given that children as young as eight could be on the streets engaged in crime and in environments that were not safe.⁸

The use of age to define youth can result in at-risk young people missing out on important assistance. Many WA programs are only funded to provide services to youth while they are at school or under 18 years of age, including the flagship program of the Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR), KidSport (*see Appendix 7*).⁹

Staff at Jesuit Social Services' Artful Dodgers Studios, a Melbourne art and music studio where young people are supported by professional artists and youth workers, said that at-risk young people between the ages of 21 and 27 are especially under-served. They had limited programs available to them, despite this period being especially chaotic.¹⁰

Given this evidence and the opinions of many of the youth service providers consulted in briefings, the Committee now considers "youth" to be young people between the ages of 10 and 25 years. The Committee recognises, however, that youth programs may work with young people outside of this age range, depending on the services that they provide and the outcomes they wish to achieve in their communities.

1.2.2 What do we mean by "at risk"?

The Committee initially defined "at risk" as young people at heightened risk of:

- engaging in negative or dangerous behaviours, such as truancy, self-harm, anti-social behaviour, drug/alcohol abuse, juvenile offending, and disengaging from education, training or employment;
- displaying poor social and communication skills, low self-esteem, emotional instability, suicidal intent;

8 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA), *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p6.

9 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p2. See also Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, p3; Submission No. 4 from Department of Local Government and Communities, 23 May 2016, p2; Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC), [Police and Community Youth Centres Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres, Perth, 2015, p16.

10 Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

- being impacted by homelessness, social and/or economic disadvantage, social isolation, family and domestic violence, substance abuse in the home/peer group/community, family transience, unemployment.

The Committee further considered these to be behaviours which go beyond expectations of normal adolescent behaviour and experimentation.

Evidence received in the course of the Inquiry identified specific groups of young people that were more likely to experience or be affected by these behaviours, including young people living in regional or remote communities,¹¹ from Aboriginal backgrounds, from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds,¹² living with a disability, and/or who are homeless.¹³

Mr Wortham framed at-risk youth according to a “spectrum of need”, with young people with “extremely complex needs” (homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health issues, anger issues) at one end of the spectrum, those “on the precipice of experiencing or having behaviours that we would consider at risk” in the middle and young people not engaging in or experiencing any of those behaviours at the opposite end of the spectrum.¹⁴

Dr Wright challenged the use of the term “at-risk youth”, suggesting that youth who exhibit some of the behaviours identified above should instead be thought of as “young people of promise”, emphasising their strengths rather than their limitations:

I think that is a really interesting and helpful way to think about it; about developing capacities within young people, which are perhaps

11 See Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p6; Submission No. 5 from Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC), 19 June 2016, p3; Submission No. 7 from YACWA and Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA), 29 June 2016, p4; Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p5; Mr John Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer, PCYC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p8.

12 See Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, p2; Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p4; Submission No. 5 from KALACC, 19 June 2016; Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, pp4, 5, 19; Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, pp5, 6; Mr Troy Cook, Health and Leadership Manager, Wirrpanda Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p1; Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p5; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, Women’s Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association (WOWMA), *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

13 See Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p4; Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p5; Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, pp4, 5.

14 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p8.

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*dormant or repressed, and strengthening those so that we start to see people become more purposeful and active within their lives.*¹⁵

Wendy Preston, the Creative Producer and Director of Mixit, a New Zealand-based project that uses dance, music and drama to work with young people from predominantly refugee backgrounds, introduced the Committee to the term “edge walkers” to describe refugee youth in particular. She indicated that, despite having one foot in their home country and one in their place of settlement, refugee youth did not feel like they belonged in either.¹⁶

The Committee saw this marginalisation or “walking on the edge” in other young people in the course of the Inquiry, regardless of their cultural or ethnic backgrounds. Facing challenges that were not always experienced by the wider public, these at-risk youth – or young people of promise – were essentially walking on the edge of their communities.

1.3 Key concepts

1.3.1 What is resilience and why is it important?

Resilience, as it is commonly understood, refers to the ability of individuals to overcome adversity. Consisting of inter-related traits such as perseverance, motivation and hopefulness,¹⁷ it is said to develop from the interaction between individual and environmental risk and protective factors that exist in one’s life.¹⁸

Resilience can also be regarded as a process, relying on both a person’s capacity to access the resources that support their wellbeing and his or her ability to negotiate for the provision of these resources in culturally appropriate ways.¹⁹

It is generally accepted that resilience is vital if people are to navigate their way through life without significant negative consequences. Without it, young people

15 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p3.

16 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

17 Oliver, K.G. et al., 'Building resilience in young people through meaningful participation', *Australian e-Journal for the Advancement of Mental Health*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2006, p1.

18 *ibid.*; Ungar, M., 'A Constructionist Discourse on Resilience: Multiple Contexts, Multiple Realities among At-Risk Children and Youth', *Youth Society*, vol. 25, no. 3, March 2004, pp343, 344; Bonanno, G.A., 'Loss, Trauma, and Human Resilience: Have We Underestimated the Human Capacity to Thrive After Extremely Aversive Events?', *American Psychologist*, vol. 59, no. 1, January 2004, p27.

19 Ungar, M., [Report of the 2014 Thinker in Residence: Resilience](#), Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, Subiaco, May 2014, pp14, 13; Ungar, M., 'A Constructionist Discourse on Resilience: Multiple Contexts, Multiple Realities among At-Risk Children and Youth', *Youth Society*, vol. 25, no. 3, March 2004, p344; Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader for Sport in Society program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

struggle to continue positive development and may instead experience a range of emotional, social and mental difficulties.

Increasing levels of depression, suicide ideation, anxiety, low self-esteem and self-worth, obesity and stress amongst young people are partly attributed to a lack of resilience, as are anti-social behaviours (including crime) and alcohol and drug abuse, which young people may adopt as maladaptive coping strategies.²⁰

The relationship between resilience and wellbeing has gained increasing recognition in Australia over recent years, in part because of the high suicide rates amongst young people. In 2014 (the most recent data available), suicide was the cause of over a quarter of all deaths for males and females aged 15 to 29 years, despite accounting for only 1.9 per cent of all deaths in Australia.²¹ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities were particularly affected, with males between the ages of 15 and 19 years 4.4 times more likely than non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander males to die from suicide and females 5.9 times more likely.

[R]esilience is much more than a latent quality or trait of a child waiting to be expressed. Resilience is also the quality of the 'soil' in which children grow (their homes, schools and communities) and these environments can be complex, particularly when the child or young person faces significant adversity or has limited supports. – Michael Ungar

In recognition of the “worrying number of suicides among Aboriginal youth in Western Australia”, the Education and Health Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly of WA is inquiring into what can be done to “tackle this crucial issue facing the State”. The committee is due to table its report at the end of 2016.²² For this reason Aboriginal youth suicide was not a specific area of focus of this Inquiry, although Aboriginal youth are among the cohort of at-risk youth within this Inquiry’s scope.

In response to this issue, the Western Australian government has incorporated the promotion of resilience into its mental health and suicide prevention strategies.²³ There

20 Department for Communities, Office for Youth, [Promoting Resilience in the Millennial Adolescent: The Lighthouse Model](#), Government of Western Australia, West Perth, May 2008, p8; McAtamney, A. and A. Morgan, 'Key issues in antisocial behaviour', *Research in Practice*, summary paper no. 5, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, December 2009, p4.

21 ABS, [Causes of Death, Australia, 2014](#), ABS, Catalogue Number 3303.0. Released March 2016.

22 See the Committee website for more information at: <http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/>

23 See Mental Health Commission, [Suicide Prevention 2020: Together we can save lives](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2015; Mental Health Commission, [Better Choices. Better Lives. Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2015. See also Department of Health and Ageing, [Living](#)

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is a realisation that by failing to actively develop resilience “we are dooming people to suffer the nastiest consequences of adversity.”²⁴

1.3.2 What is engagement and why is it important?

Youth engagement is generally used to describe the meaningful participation and sustained involvement of young people. It is most frequently discussed in literature in relation to the development, implementation and evaluation of programs or policies that affect young people in a range of contexts, including education, voluntarism, health and community development.²⁵

Research has shown that, when carried out in a purposeful way that incorporates forms of participation that are meaningful to young people and that adequately accounts for socio-cultural and socioeconomic contexts,²⁶ youth engagement benefits both young people and the programs or policies to which they are contributing. Not only do youth programs increase in relevance and sustainability but young people experience positive health and personal development outcomes such as an increased sense of autonomy, empowerment and independence – traits which, in turn, enhance resilience.²⁷

In addition, such engagement may provide young people with increased opportunities to develop positive relationships with their peers and supportive adults. It can also facilitate wider social integration by connecting young people to community leaders, promoting community values and a sense of social responsibility, and introducing youth to the inner workings of community organisations.²⁸ Further flow-on effects can include a reduction in both anti-social behaviour (i.e. vandalism and theft) and a

[is For Everyone \(LIFE\) Framework: A framework for prevention of suicide in Australia](#), Australian Government, Canberra, 2008.

- 24 Bahr, N. and D. Pendergast, *The Millennial Adolescent*, ACER Press, Victoria, Australia, 2007, p184, in Department for Communities, Office for Youth, [Promoting Resilience in the Millennial Adolescent: The Lighthouse Model](#), Government of Western Australia, West Perth, May 2008, p8.
- 25 Paterson, B.L. and C. Panessa, 'Engagement as an ethical imperative in harm reduction involving at-risk youth', *International Journal of Drug Policy*, vol. 19, 2008, p25.
- 26 *ibid.*, pp24-32; Vromen, A. and P. Collin, 'Everyday youth participation? Contrasting views from Australian policymakers and young people', *Young: Nordic Journal of Youth Research*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2010, pp97-112.
- 27 Checkoway, B. and K. Richards-Schuster, 'Youth participation in community evaluation research', *American Journal of Evaluation*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2002, pp21-33; Gurstein, P., C. Lovato and S. Ross, 'Youth participation in planning: Strategies for social action', *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2003, pp249–274; Couch, J., 'Mind the gap: Considering the participation of refugee young people', *Youth Studies Australia*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2007, p40.
- 28 Camino, L., 'Youth-Adult Partnerships: Entering New Territory in Community Work and Research', *Applied Developmental Science*, vol. 4, supp. 1, June 2000, pp11-20; Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, and Ms Radiya Ali, Youth Coordinator, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

propensity to resolve conflict through violence (which can protect against violent extremism).²⁹

More broadly, it is an oft-cited (though no less valid) fact that young people are our future. Prior to the 2016 Federal Election, more than 60 social services providers, unions, academic and Indigenous representatives issued a statement to all major political parties that stressed the importance of youth to the future health and wellbeing of Australia:

*In the years to come, we'll rely on young people most to lead our communities, drive our economy and support our ageing population. If young people feel valued and connected to our country, we will all benefit.*³⁰

In short, it is in the interests of us all to encourage youth engagement.

1.3.3 The role of sport and culture in building resilience and engagement

Developing resilience in young people and encouraging their engagement is not a precise science. If two children are faced with the same traumatising experience, it is impossible to identify with absolute certainty which child will thrive and which child will experience behavioural problems.³¹ Nevertheless, there are indications that participation in sport and cultural activities can contribute to the development of both resilience and engagement.

International and Australian literature has identified a series of individual, social and environmental qualities that, when present, can assist children and young people to build resilience.³² For example, Michael Ungar, one of the foremost experts on

29 Cameron, M. and C. MacDougall, '[Crime Prevention Through Sport and Physical Activity](#)', *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 165, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra September 2000, pp3-4; Johns, A., M. Grossman and K. McDonald, "'More Than a Game': The Impact of Sport-Based Youth Mentoring Schemes on Developing Resilience toward Violence Extremism', *Social Inclusion*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2014, p68.

30 Maher, S., 'Young voices 'need to be heard'', *The Australian*, 28 June 2016, p7; Law, A. et al., '[Statement in support of a national youth peak body: Young Australians must have a voice into government](#)', 28 June 2016.

31 Ungar, M., 'A Constructionist Discourse on Resilience: Multiple Contexts, Multiple Realities among At-Risk Children and Youth', *Youth Society*, vol. 25, no. 3, March 2004, p343.

32 See Department for Communities, Office for Youth, '[Promoting Resilience in the Millennial Adolescent: The Lighthouse Model](#)', Government of Western Australia, West Perth, May 2008, pp9-10; McAtamney, A. and A. Morgan, '[Key issues in antisocial behaviour](#)', *Research in Practice*, summary paper no. 5, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, December 2009, p4; Shand, M., Understanding and building resilience with art: A socio-ecological approach, Masters Thesis, Edith Cowan University, 2014, pp2-12.

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resilience (and director of the Resilience Research Centre), identified nine factors that are present in the lives of resilient children.³³ (See Box 1.1).

BOX 1.1

Nine factors present in the lives of resilient children

- Structure
- Consequences
- Parent-child connections
- Lots and lots of strong relationships
- A powerful identity
- A sense of control
- A sense of belonging/culture/spirituality
- Rights and responsibilities
- Safety and support

He states that while “not all nine need

to exist ... the more of these nine factors a child has the more likely he or she is to be protected from the negative consequences that follow exposure to risk”.³⁴

Similarly, the current Western Australian suicide prevention strategy identifies 27 protective factors that contribute to the development of resilience (see Table 1.1 for the protective factors related to stages of childhood and adolescence).

Sport and cultural activities can assist young people to develop or enhance some of these protective factors, although

the exact nature of the relationship and its reliance on particular circumstances is contested. (See Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of what makes a program successful).³⁵

Evidence indicates that sport participation can strengthen young people’s relationships, assisting them to develop larger social networks, strong connections with adults (i.e.

33 Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p4; Ungar, M., *Report of the 2014 Thinker in Residence: Resilience*, Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, Subiaco, May 2014, pp20-24.

34 Ungar, M., *Report of the 2014 Thinker in Residence: Resilience*, Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, Subiaco, May 2014, p20.

35 Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader for Sport in Society program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Clarke, G.H., Why do youth step out of sport and into court: A narrative-based exploration, Masters Thesis, The University of Waikato, 2012; Haudenhuyse, R. and M. Theeboom, 'Sport Plus and Socially Vulnerable Youth: Opening the Black Box', in Segaert, B. et al. (eds.), *Sports Governance, Development and Corporate Responsibility*, Routledge, New York and London, 2012, pp44-61; Rookwood, J. 'Constructing Peace and Fostering Social Integration: Sport and Play in Azerbaijan', in Segaert, B. et al. (eds.), *Sports Governance, Development and Corporate Responsibility*, Routledge, New York and London, 2012, p38; Spaaij, R., 'Sport as a vehicle for social mobility and regulation of disadvantaged urban youth: lessons from Rotterdam', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, vol. 44, no. 2-3, June 2009, pp247-264; Fraser-Thomas, J.L., J. Côté and J. Deakin, 'Youth sport programs: an avenue to foster positive youth development', *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, vol. 10, no. 1, February 2005, pp19-40.

their coaches) and strengthen bonds between peers – including those from different cultural groups from their own.³⁶

Table 1.1: Protective factors identified as necessary to build resilience in *Suicide Prevention 2020*³⁷

Life stages through to young adults	Targeted protective factors
Parents, perinatal and early years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing; • Caring and healthy relationships; • Effective parenting and coping skills; • Extended family and community support; • Positive early childhood development and healthy attachment; and • Access to child health nurses, quality childcare and local family centres.
School age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of good self-esteem, communication and coping skills; • Supportive relationships with family, peers and the wider community; • Engagement in school, education and recreation activities; • Development of self-worth, personal safety and healthy boundaries; and • Significant adult who is a positive role model.
Young adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to care for their own health and wellbeing and access support; • Capacity to create satisfying personal and social relationships; • Skills to cope with difficult emotions or problems; • Development of skills to live independently and reach personal goals; and • Successful transition from school to work or study.

36 Witt, P. and L. Caldwell, *The Rationale for Recreation Services for Youth: An Evidenced Based Approach*, National Recreation and Park Association, Ashburn, V.A., 2010, p13; Cameron, M. and C. MacDougall, '[Crime Prevention Through Sport and Physical Activity](#)', *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 165, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra September 2000, p5; Johns, A., M. Grossman and K. McDonald, '"More Than a Game": The Impact of Sport-Based Youth Mentoring Schemes on Developing Resilience toward Violence Extremism', *Social Inclusion*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2014, p68; Ms Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p3; Fraser-Thomas, J.L., J. Côté and J. Deakin, 'Youth sport programs: an avenue to foster positive youth development', *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, vol. 10, no. 1, February 2005, pp24-25.

37 Excludes the final two stages of life identified: family and working age, and older age. See Mental Health Commission, [Suicide Prevention 2020: Together we can save lives](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2015, p25.

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For example, the Clontarf Foundation, which operates football academies for Aboriginal boys in schools across Australia, not only provides a strong adult presence for students in the form of Clontarf staff, but also works closely with students' families so that they can, in turn, support their sons' future endeavours.³⁸

Further, DSR submitted to the Committee that sport and recreation provides a setting and shared interest through which families can spend time together.³⁹

According to the literature, identity building is also supported through physical activity; by experiencing a range of sport and recreational activities, young people can discover activities that align with their personalities and to which they can attach their identities.⁴⁰

Participation in team sport can support the development of life skills such as communication, conflict resolution, self-discipline, trust, reciprocity and problem solving.⁴¹ Sporting activities provide opportunities for achievement, for example, which in turn build self-confidence and motivation.⁴²

Similar benefits have been identified for those participating in the arts. Although art's impact on resilience is a relatively new area of research, international studies have found art therapy and community arts programs to increase self-esteem and self-confidence in participants.⁴³ Community arts programs enable participants to make friends, build social networks and/or increase their social empowerment.⁴⁴

38 Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer and Mr Craig Brierty, Chief Operations Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

39 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p2.

40 Witt, P. and L. Caldwell, *The Rationale for Recreation Services for Youth: An Evidenced Based Approach*, National Recreation and Park Association, Ashburn, V.A., 2010, p13; Fraser-Thomas, J.L., J. Côté and J. Deakin, 'Youth sport programs: an avenue to foster positive youth development', *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, vol. 10, no. 1, February 2005, p31.

41 For studies that address these factors, see Johns, A., M. Grossman and K. McDonald, "More Than a Game": The Impact of Sport-Based Youth Mentoring Schemes on Developing Resilience toward Violence Extremism', *Social Inclusion*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2014, p58. See also Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, pp3-4; Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, pp3-4; Mrs Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, pp3, 5-6.

42 Fraser-Thomas, J.L., J. Côté and J. Deakin, 'Youth sport programs: an avenue to foster positive youth development', *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, vol. 10, no. 1, February 2005, p24; Witt, P. and L. Caldwell, *The Rationale for Recreation Services for Youth: An Evidenced Based Approach*, National Recreation and Park Association, Ashburn, V.A., 2010, p13; Rookwood, J., 'Constructing Peace and Fostering Social Integration: Sport and Play in Azerbaijan', in Segaert, B. et al. (eds.), *Sports Governance, Development and Corporate Responsibility*, Routledge, New York and London, 2012, p31; Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p2.

43 See Shand, M., Understanding and building resilience with art: A socio-ecological approach, Masters Thesis, Edith Cowan University, 2014, pp13, 15, 16; Department of Culture and the Arts,

At least one study also suggests that community arts programs that are open to everyone enable people who are at risk (in this example, people living with mental illness) to develop new identities (i.e. as artists). By bringing together marginalised groups and people who are not considered at risk, such arts programs also act as a bridge, connecting those with greater needs to their community.⁴⁵

In terms of engagement, sport is regularly discussed in relation to social integration or, put another way, social inclusion through inclusion in sport. The use of sport as a means of integrating marginalised groups such as migrant or refugee populations has found particular support in Europe,⁴⁶ and has gained in popularity in Australia in recent years.⁴⁷

As explained in a good practice guide to the inclusion of migrants through sport, by participating in sport individuals can increase their social networks as “training and practice sessions take place regularly and almost without exception in groups, and that sporting activities often take place within the framework of other social activities”.

Sports clubs in particular are “places for social interaction and civic engagement”, providing individuals with the opportunity to “gain experience and acquire skills, which they can apply to other social contexts, such as schools, workplaces and communities.”⁴⁸

Positive examples of sport’s impact on youth engagement are not restricted to the social inclusion of young people from migrant or CaLD backgrounds. For example, a review of literature conducted by DSR found that physical activity improved cognitive

[2010-2013 Artist-in-Residence Grants Program in Western Australia: Evaluation Report](#), report prepared by D. Bennett and V. Caulfield, Curtin University, Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2015, pp9, 259, 260.

44 Shand, M., Understanding and building resilience with art: A socio-ecological approach, Masters Thesis, Edith Cowan University, 2014, pp13, 15.

45 Howells, V. and T. Zelnik, 'Making Art: A Qualitative Study of Personal and Group Transformation in a Community Arts Studio', *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, vol. 32, no. 3, 2009, pp215-222.

46 See, for example, the European Commission’s Erasmus + program, which links the goal of increased social inclusion to sports funding: European Commission, [Erasmus + Programme Guide](#), version 2, 2016, p14.

47 Johns, A., M. Grossman, and K. McDonald, “‘More Than a Game’: The Impact of Sport-Based Youth Mentoring Schemes on Developing Resilience toward Violence Extremism”, *Social Inclusion*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2014, pp57-70; Spaaij, R., 'Refugee youth, belonging and community sport', *Leisure Studies*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2015, pp303-318; Keogh, V., *Multicultural Sport: Sustaining a Level Playing Field*, Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, Victoria, 2002, [p4]; Ethnic Communities’ Council of Victoria, *Multicultural Youth Engagement in Sport*, Ethnic Communities’ Council of Victoria, Carlton, 2010, pp9-12.

48 Sport Inclusion Network (SPIN), [Inclusion of Migrants in and through Sports: A guide to good practice](#), Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation, Vienna, 2012, p4.

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functioning and behavior in children, thereby increasing their engagement in school and academic achievement.⁴⁹

Sport has also been used as part of diversion programs, preventing young people from participating in anti-social behaviours by providing alternative activities.⁵⁰

Similarly, studies have shown that youth who have high levels of involvement with the arts, including those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, are more engaged in learning,⁵¹ achieve better academic results and show greater civic engagement than less active participants in the arts.⁵² Arts participation also can build social, cognitive and emotional skills, empower participants, provide an avenue for self-expression or act as a diversion from anti-social behaviour.⁵³

Over the past decade, there has been growing recognition in Australia that the third form of activity examined in this Inquiry – activity related to a group’s identity (e.g. customs, traditions and values) – is fundamental to individual wellbeing and resilience. Mirroring international trends, research in this area has tended to focus on Indigenous communities, concluding that activities which establish or maintain Aboriginal people’s connections to country, culture and kin develop a positive sense of community and a robust self-identity.⁵⁴

49 Smith J., *Brain Boost: How sport and physical activity enhance children’s learning*, Department of Sport and Recreation, Leederville, 2015.

50 McMahon, S. and J. Belur, [Sports-based Programmes and Reducing Youth Violence and Crime](#), Economic and Social Research Council, Swindon, 2013; Morris, L. et al., '[Sport, Physical Activity and Antisocial Behaviour in Youth](#)', *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 249, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, April 2003; Cameron, M. and C. MacDougall, '[Crime Prevention Through Sport and Physical Activity](#)', *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 165, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, September 2000.

51 Department of Culture and the Arts, [2010-2013 Artist-in-Residence Grants Program in Western Australia: Evaluation Report](#), report prepared by D. Bennett and V. Caulfield, Curtin University, Department of Culture and the Arts, Perth, 2015, pp9, 259, 260.

52 Catterall, J. et al., *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies*, research report no. 55, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C., March 2012, pp12-16, 18-21.

53 Ware, V., '[Supporting healthy communities through arts programs](#)', resource sheet no. 28, Closing the Gap Clearing House, Canberra and Melbourne, January 2014, pp5-13; European Crime Prevention Network, [Sport, science and art in the prevention of crime among children and youth](#), report prepared by A. Nuytiens, EUCPN Secretariat, EUCPN Secretariat, Brussels, January 2012.

54 See Commissioner for Children and Young People, '[Listen To Us”: Using the views of WA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to improve policy and service delivery](#)', Commissioner for Children and Young People, Subiaco, 2015, pp47-52; Department of Health, [WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework, 2015-2030](#), Government of Western Australia, [2015], pv; Colquhoun, S. and A.M. Dockery, '[The link between Indigenous culture and wellbeing: Qualitative evidence for Australian Aboriginal peoples](#)', Centre for Labour Market Research (CLMR) discussion paper series 2012/01, Curtin University, January 2012; Dockery, A.M., '[Traditional Culture and the Wellbeing of Indigenous Australians: An analysis of the 2008 NATSISS](#)', CLMR discussion paper series 2011/01, Curtin University, 2011; Submission No. 3 from

The Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) further submitted that culture and identity is the very first step in reducing the socioeconomic disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal youth.⁵⁵

Commissioner for Children and Young People Colin Pettit captured the essence of the relationship between sport and culture in his submission:

*In sport and cultural activities, a young person has structure (the rules of the game, or their cultural customs); consequences (rules are clear and sanctions are known and enforced); parent-child connections (support from family); strong relationships (with team members, fellow participants, coaches, officials); a powerful identity (as part of a team, a skilled person and a person with knowledge); sense of control (ability to take controlled risks in attempting skills); sense of belonging (as a team member, or as a knowledgeable person); rights and responsibilities; and safety and support.*⁵⁶

Interestingly, evidence received during briefings suggested that the benefits of engaging in Indigenous cultural activities extended to non-Indigenous youth as well. In New Zealand, some program providers told the Committee that they had observed positive outcomes amongst participants as a result of their engagement with Māori history and culture, including an increased sense of belonging and greater sense of community responsibility.⁵⁷ This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p3; Department of Culture and the Arts and Department of Aboriginal Affairs, *Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The role of culture in gaining more effective outcomes from WA State Government services*, discussion paper, Department of Culture and the Arts, Perth, May 2016 in Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, pp39-50.

55 Submission No. 5 from KALACC, 19 June 2016, p3.

56 Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p4.

57 Youth coordinators, leaders, and participants, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.



Word cloud created from the 100 most frequently used words in the evidence to the Inquiry.

Chapter 2

Barriers to participation

This chapter examines what the statistics and literature tell us about which groups of youth participate in sport and cultural activities. It then considers barriers identified as inhibiting participation – that is, factors related to socioeconomic status, geographic location, culture and gender.

Only 12.5% of children living in the most disadvantaged communities participated in both sports and cultural activities, compared with 36.6% of their peers living in the most advantaged communities

– The Smith Family⁵⁸

YOUNG people do not have equal access to sport and cultural activities. Quite often the circumstances that have led to young people being categorised as at-risk are also what prevent them from participating easily in sports and arts activities – those from minority groups, poor families and remote areas, for example.

2.1 Who participates?

While there is no research that provides data specifically on the participation rates of at-risk youth as a discrete group, there is data showing the participation rates of youth in general and of particular socio-demographic groups within this age bracket which are more likely to be represented in the at-risk category.

2.1.1 In sport and recreation

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data related to participation in sport is aggregated according to children (aged 5 to 14) and adults (aged 15 and over), which means the age bracket the Committee regards as youth falls across both categories. The most recent data is from 2013-14, when around 60 per cent of the Australian population aged 15 years and over indicated that they had participated in sport and physical

58 The Smith Family, 'Sport, culture and the internet: Are Australian children participating?', *The Smith Family Research Report*, June 2013, p2.

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recreation at least once during the 12 months prior to the survey. Participation peaked in the 15–17 age-group at 74 per cent.⁵⁹

The overall participation rate in organised sport, as a player or in a non-playing role (such as a coach or official) was 28 per cent of all adults, and again this was highest in the young adult age group (15-24 years), with a rate of 44 per cent.⁶⁰

An estimated 60 per cent of all children aged 5 to 14 years participated in at least one organised sport activity outside of school hours in the 12 months prior to the survey. The highest participation rate was among the 9-11 age-group (66%). On average, children who participated spent five hours per fortnight playing or training for organised sport outside of school hours. The survey also found that:

- Participation in organised sport was higher among boys (67%) than among girls (54%);
- Among girls the most popular sports were netball, swimming, gymnastics, football (soccer) and basketball. Among boys the most popular sports were football (soccer), swimming, Australian football, basketball and cricket;
- Participation was lower for single-parent families (48%) and if the parent or parents were unemployed (around 30%).⁶¹

The ABS data provides important insights into participation rates of different groups of young people which government departments draw on when deciding where to target resources. However, the ABS data is no longer being provided. To fill this void, the Australian Sports Commission and the Committee of Australian Sport and Recreation Officers are managing a national participation survey, with a baseline for Western Australian participation expected to be established within the next 12 months.⁶²

The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children found that three-quarters of children aged 10 to 11 participated in organised sport outside school (as reported by their parents). This is higher than the ABS figure, most likely due to variations in survey methodology. Girls participated less than boys (69% compared to 80%).

Participation was also lower for children from relatively low socioeconomic backgrounds than for all other children (64% compared to 81%). There was however no

59 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2013-14](#), ABS, Catalogue Number 4177.0. Released February 2015.

60 ABS, [Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2013-14](#), ABS, Catalogue Number 4177.0. Released February 2015.

61 ABS, [Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, April 2012](#), ABS, Catalogue Number 4901.0. Released October 2012.

62 Department of Sport and Recreation, [Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, 2015, pp129-130.

significant difference in participation in organised sport between children living in metropolitan and regional areas.⁶³

However, other studies have found that geographical differences do have an impact on physical activity, with adolescents living in regional/rural areas are more likely than metropolitan adolescents to be disadvantaged by limited facilities and activities, distance to facilities and cost and availability of transport.⁶⁴

The participation rate is also said to be lower for Indigenous Australians, although this is not necessarily reflected in the statistics. The 2008 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social survey (NATSISS) (managed by the ABS) shows that almost two-thirds (64%) of Indigenous children aged 4-14 years had taken part in some form of physical activity or sport in the previous 12 months.

This is slightly higher than the ABS figure for the general population, although that figure of 60 per cent only represents organised sport outside of school. The figure for Indigenous people aged 15 years or older was 30 per cent, with participation levels higher for males (38%) than for females (23%).⁶⁵

According to the 2015 Mission Australia Youth Survey of 15 to 19-year-olds, participation in sport was the same for Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondents – 74 per cent. Participation by boys was higher than girls in both groups, with Indigenous girls recording the lowest participation level (70%).⁶⁶

ABS Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey data shows that half of Indigenous children (aged 5-17 years) in non-remote areas met daily physical activity recommendations compared to only one-third of non-Indigenous children. In remote areas 82 per cent of non-Indigenous children met the recommended amount of physical activity. Walking and running made up the majority of the physical activity, with playing football or soccer accounting for one-third.⁶⁷ Indigenous youth spend

63 Mullan, K. and B. Maguire, 'How engaged are children in organised sport and other physical activity during their late primary school years?' in *The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children annual statistical report 2012*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2012, pp129-147.

64 Eime, R. et al., 'Family support and ease of access link socio-economic status and sports club membership in adolescent girls: a mediation study', *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2013.

65 Gray C., R. Macniven and N. Thomson, [Review of physical activity among Indigenous people](#), Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, 2013.

66 Cave, L. et al., *Mission Australia's Youth Survey Report 2015*, Mission Australia, Australia, 2015.

67 ABS, [Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey: Physical activity, 2012-13](#), ABS, Catalogue Number 4727.0.55.004. Released December 2014.

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more time outdoors and less time in front of computers than non-Indigenous youth,⁶⁸ but their participation in organised sport and structured recreation is lower.⁶⁹

It is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions about participation of Indigenous youth in sport compared to non-Indigenous youth when the data is not comparable between sources (i.e. different age ranges, different definitions of sport and physical activity). The Committee concurs with Dalton et al. (2015), who note that “findings regarding levels of participation in sport among Indigenous Australians are highly variable”.⁷⁰

Gray et al. (2013) also note that physical activity is often conceptualised differently by Indigenous people, which can impact on self-reported levels of activity. Western measurement of space and time is foreign to some Indigenous people, who use seasons and the natural environment as measures. Surveys which require participants to specify frequency, duration and types of activity are therefore unsuitable for some Indigenous communities.⁷¹

In its 2013 inquiry into the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs also noted that data on Indigenous participation was limited and recommended that more data be collected.⁷²

Participation rates of youth from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds are also known to be lower.⁷³

ABS data shows that the participation rate in organised sport for children born in a non-English speaking country is 40 per cent, compared to 65 per cent for children born in an English-speaking country. Where parents were not born in Australia, children of

68 ABS, [Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey: Physical activity, 2012–13](#), ABS, Catalogue Number 4727.0.55.004. Released December 2014.

69 Smith, B., M. Thomas and D. Batras, ‘Overcoming disparities in organised physical activity: findings from Australian community strategies’, *Health Promotion International*, 2015, p2.

70 Dalton, B. et al., ‘Australian Indigenous youth’s participation in sport and associated health outcomes: Empirical analysis and implications’, *Sport Management Review*, vol. 18, 2015, p60.

71 Gray C., R. Macniven and N. Thomson, [Review of physical activity among Indigenous people](#), Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, 2013.

72 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, [Sport – More Than Just a Game](#), Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, June 2013.

73 Smith, B., M. Thomas and D. Batras, ‘Overcoming disparities in organised physical activity: findings from Australian community strategies’, *Health Promotion International*, 2015; Eime, R. et al., ‘Family support and ease of access link socio-economic status and sports club membership in adolescent girls: a mediation study’, *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2013; Spaaij, R. et al., ‘A Fair Game for All? How Community Sports Clubs in Australia Deal With Diversity’, *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2013; Office of Multicultural Interests, [‘Not Drowning, Waving’: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Young People at Risk in Western Australia](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2009.

parents born in English-speaking countries had higher participation rates than children of parents born in other countries (69% compared to 42%).

The Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) says that only half of Western Australians born in non-English speaking countries are members of local and state sporting clubs, although more are actively involved in informal sports (e.g. in parks and with family and friends).⁷⁴ This is consistent with Spaaij et al.'s (2014) findings that diversity was not being promoted widely in community sports clubs in Victoria.⁷⁵

Adolescent girls have consistently lower levels of participation in physical activity, and specifically sport, than males.⁷⁶ This is the case among the general population and in specific populations, such as Indigenous and CaLD groups.

According to Vella et al. (2014), girls from lower socioeconomic areas who receive little parental support are most at risk of non-participation.⁷⁷

In Eime et al.'s (2013) study of female adolescent Year 7 and Year 11 students in Victoria, the highest levels of participation were associated with “monolingual Australian-born families, with two parents, at least one of whom was well-educated, with both parents employed, and high levels of parental assistance, engagement and support”.⁷⁸

2.1.2 In arts and cultural activities

As with data related to sports participation, there is no specific data on participation of at-risk youth in arts and cultural activities. Again, ABS data does not match the youth age-bracket, being split between children (5 to 14) and adults (15 and over). There is data about participation of minority groups (Indigenous, CaLD) but not in relation to the young people within those groups.

Statistics about arts participation also vary according to what is regarded as participating; for the purposes of this Inquiry, the Committee is interested in

74 Department of Sport and Recreation, '[Participation – Multicultural – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Groups](#)'.

75 Spaaij, R. et al., 'A Fair Game for All? How Community Sports Clubs in Australia Deal With Diversity', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2013.

76 Eime, R. et al., 'Family support and ease of access link socio-economic status and sports club membership in adolescent girls: a mediation study', *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2013.

77 Vella, S., D. Cliff and A. Okely, 'Socio-ecological predictors of participation and dropout in organised sports during childhood', *International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 11, no. 62, 2014.

78 Eime, R. et al., 'Family support and ease of access link socio-economic status and sports club membership in adolescent girls: a mediation study', *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2013, p1.

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involvement in arts and cultural activities, and not just attendance at an event or venue.

According to ABS data, 27 per cent of people aged 15 and above participated in at least one cultural activity (which includes visual arts, crafts, performing arts, writing and other cultural activities) in the 12 months prior to the survey (conducted in 2013-14). The participation rate was highest (35%) for people aged 15 to 24, and higher generally for women (30%) than men (24%).⁷⁹

According to the 2012 ABS survey of Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, 35 per cent of children aged 5 to 14 were involved in at least one of four selected organised cultural activities outside of school hours. This is almost half the rate of participation in organised sport outside of school hours for this age group.



Young people from diverse backgrounds take part in a dance workshop as part of a regular Saturday arts program run by Mixit in Auckland, New Zealand.

Playing a musical instrument was the most common activity, followed by dancing, singing and drama. The rate of participation by girls was higher than for boys in all of these activities, especially dancing (27% compared to 4%).⁸⁰

According to the Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA), 37 per cent of WA's young people participated in some activity after school hours – slightly higher than the national average.⁸¹

79 ABS, [Participation in Selected Cultural Activities, Australia 2012-14](#), ABS, Catalogue Number 4921.0. Released February 2015.

80 ABS, [Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview, 2014](#), ABS, Catalogue No. 4172.0. Released July 2014.

An Australia Council telephone survey of 3000 Australians aged 15 or more reported a higher rate of creative participation in at least one artform – 48 per cent – than the ABS figure.⁸² The youth participation rate was also higher – 65 per cent.

The Mission Australia Youth Survey 2015 figure of 51 per cent (for 15 to 19-year-olds) is almost exactly between the ABS figure and the Australia Council figure.⁸³

Young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to participate. Integration of ABS data and data which ranks communities according to economic disadvantage⁸⁴ shows that 42 per cent of children (aged 5 to 14 years) in the lowest quintile (the most disadvantaged areas) had not attended a cultural venue or event in the previous 12 months. For the highest quintile, the figure was 18 per cent. Twice as many children in the highest quintile had attended three or more venues/events as those in the lowest quintile (28% compared to 14%).⁸⁵

According to the Australia Council survey, the main reason given by young people for not creatively participating in the arts was that it cost too much. This was cited by 51 per cent of young people who did not creatively participate, but only 34 per cent of people in other age groups.⁸⁶

Regional participation in the arts is on a par with metropolitan, according to the Australia Council survey (49% compared to 48%), although there are no figures for regional youth participation.

Indigenous participation is also comparable to non-Indigenous, and in some surveys it is recorded as higher. The Mission Australia Youth Survey 2015 records Indigenous participation in arts/cultural/music activities at 54 per cent, slightly higher than for non-Indigenous (51%). Indigenous participation by both girls and boys is higher than non-Indigenous participation, with non-Indigenous boys recording the lowest level (40%).

The Australia Council survey records a slightly lower rate of Indigenous participation (44%) than non-Indigenous (48%), but doesn't show rates for young Indigenous people.

There is very little data on participation in arts and culture by CaLD communities. The Australia Council survey shows that for people whose main language is not English, the

81 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016.

82 Australia Council for the Arts, [Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts](#), Australia Council, Canberra, May 2014, p12.

83 Cave, L. et al., *Mission Australia's Youth Survey Report 2015*, Mission Australia, Australia, 2015.

84 Index of Relative Socioeconomic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD).

85 The Smith Family, 'Sport, culture and the internet: Are Australian children participating?', *The Smith Family Research Report*, June 2013.

86 Australia Council for the Arts, [Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts](#), Australia Council, Canberra, May 2014, p82.

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rate is 40 per cent (8 percentage points lower than for the general population) and slightly lower again for those born in a non-English speaking country (38%). People in this group were less likely to agree that there are plenty of opportunities to get involved in the arts (64% compared with 73% who speak English at home).⁸⁷

According to the DCA, in the State's most disadvantaged communities, 60 per cent of children (under 18) did not participate in either sport or cultural activities.⁸⁸

Finding 1

Measurements of participation are quantitative rather than qualitative and do not necessarily capture the nature and duration of involvement.

2.2 Barriers for at-risk youth

Numerous studies refer to factors which may prevent or inhibit participation in sports and cultural activities by disadvantaged groups. The Committee's evidence largely aligned with the literature in identifying four main barriers:

- Socioeconomic factors
- Geographical
- Cultural
- Gender

The factors are often interrelated; for example, geographical location may make transport to activities difficult, but may become prohibitive due to cost (of petrol or fares) or cultural issues only applicable to girls (not permitted to travel on public transport alone).

Some general factors apply across the board: according to the DSR, fewer children are participating in sport at school due to a decrease in specialist sports teachers in schools. Children at public schools are also less likely to be involved in after-school activities on school grounds, since teachers were directed not to stay after school for extra-curricular activities without pay.⁸⁹ Vella (2014) also found that at a community

87 Australia Council for the Arts, [Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts](#), Australia Council, Canberra, May 2014, p77.

88 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p3.

89 Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016; Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

level, children who had access to a specialist physical education teacher were more likely to participate in organised sports.⁹⁰

Dr Wright also says that the arts are not being taught well in schools. He says it is “not about just teaching a musical instrument or putting on a performance at the end of the year”, or providing a lesson which might be pushed aside for apparently more important literacy and numeracy lessons.⁹¹

If there is no opportunity to participate at school for free, the only option is to find a free after-school program or the money to pay for a program. This is more difficult for at-risk youth.

Some barriers to participation are personal, such as lacking the confidence to participate in a group activity or lacking confidence in skills and ability.⁹² Social barriers for young people include not having anyone to do activities with, and, particularly in the case of the arts, not getting enough information about activities.⁹³

The Australia Council study on participation in the arts notes that many young people who do not participate creatively in the arts prefer sports at this stage of their life. This was mentioned by half of young people, compared with around a third of respondents in other age groups.⁹⁴

Socioeconomic barriers

Many youth in the at-risk category come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. This can make paying for program fees, special equipment and uniforms impossible – hence the importance of free or subsidised programs. It can also mean that they have no access to transport – perhaps no car, no money for petrol and no means to pay for public transport.⁹⁵

90 Vella, S., D. Cliff and A. Okely, 'Socio-ecological predictors of participation and dropout in organised sports during childhood', *International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 11, no. 62, 2014.

91 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p9.

92 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p6.

93 Australia Council for the Arts, [Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts](#), Australia Council, Canberra, May 2014, p83.

94 *ibid.*

95 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer/Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Commissioner for Children and Young People, [Culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people: A literature review](#), report prepared by Lisa Roberts, Three Rings Advisory research consultancy, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Subiaco, October 2014; Smith, B., M. Thomas and D. Batras, 'Overcoming disparities in organised physical activity: findings from Australian community strategies', *Health Promotion International*, 2015, p2.

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Eime et al. (2013) note that “as long as the activities require financial payment there is a barrier for persons with lower SES [socioeconomic status]”.⁹⁶ In addition, there are often other prohibitive factors related to being in a low socioeconomic area, such as fewer/poorer quality recreation facilities and the propensity for crime in public places, which may inhibit participation.

Parental education level has been linked with participation rate, and parental and family support is seen to be a critical factor in participation, with larger family size negatively associated with participation rates.⁹⁷ More children generally means less time and less money to go around.

As noted previously, young people cited cost most frequently as the reason for not participating in cultural activities.

According to DCA’s Director of Policy, Planning and Research Colin Walker, research shows that it is lack of opportunity rather than lack of interest from members of low socioeconomic groups in engaging in cultural activities. “If the opportunity is there, it gets taken up.”⁹⁸

Several leaders of groups both in WA and in New Zealand indicated that in lower socioeconomic areas, access to activities may be dependent on the passion of an individual to provide a service.⁹⁹

Geographical barriers

Where you live impacts on access to activities. Living in an area with limited facilities and programs means travel will be essential. As noted previously, this can be a problem if parents are not comfortable with their children using public transport or are unable to afford it. This can mean “their lives are limited to their suburb”, according to Mixit’s Wendy Preston, who has made a pick-up service a standard part of her program.¹⁰⁰

96 Eime, R. et al., ‘Family support and ease of access link socio-economic status and sports club membership in adolescent girls: a mediation study’, *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2013, p8.

97 Vella, S., D. Cliff, and A. Okely, ‘Socio-ecological predictors of participation and dropout in organised sports during childhood’, *International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 11, no. 62, 2014; Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p4; Clearinghouse for Sport, [Sport Participation in Australia](#), prepared by Dr Ralph Richards, Australian Sports Commission, last updated 11 July 2016.

98 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p4.

99 Participants, MPHS Studio, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Mr Peter Caccioppoli, Senior Activation Advisor, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

100 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

Access issues can be particularly problematic in regional areas. The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) and Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA) note that in country towns it can be more difficult to break into established clubs (which there are also less of). There are often fewer programs on offer, limited out of hours access to facilities (due to fewer staff), and perhaps not enough players to form teams for less popular sports. Whilst these barriers could also be found in metropolitan regions, it was more often the case in regional WA.¹⁰¹

The Australia Council survey found that regional respondents were less likely to agree that there are plenty of opportunities to get involved in the arts (66% compared to 75% of metropolitan respondents). Half of regional respondents said that there were not enough opportunities to participate creatively in the arts close to home, compared with 29 per cent of metropolitan respondents. Almost 40 per cent found arts activities hard to get to, compared with 23 per cent of metropolitan respondents.¹⁰²

Cultural barriers

Being Aboriginal or from a CaLD background presents its own set of challenges to participation, some of which are linked to socioeconomic status (incomes for these groups are generally lower) and geographical factors (living in a remote area, in the case of some Aboriginal children). Other barriers may be linked to religious or cultural beliefs and language, language difficulties, cultural misunderstandings and historical trauma.

Couch (2007) notes that for refugees, atrocities witnessed in their war-torn countries leave a mark, with some distrustful of authority and wary.¹⁰³ Several people the Committee met at briefings confirmed this.¹⁰⁴ Historical trauma and a lack of trust in mainstream programs also applies to many Indigenous communities.¹⁰⁵

Children of refugee parents suffering medical conditions (including post-traumatic stress disorder) may also be called upon to provide support to their parents. Parents may depend on their children to accompany them to appointments and act as an

101 Submission No. 7 from Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) and Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA), 29 June 2016, p4.

102 Australia Council for the Arts, [Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts](#), Australia Council, Canberra, May 2014, p80.

103 Couch, J., 'Mind the gap: Considering the participation of refugee young people', *Youth Studies Australia*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2007, p38.

104 Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, Women's Organization of the Waikato Muslim Association (WOWMA), *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Mr Majok Ngong, AFL Victoria Multicultural Development Officer trainee, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

105 Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, p5.

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interpreter if their English language skills are poor, limiting time for recreational pursuits.¹⁰⁶

Migrant or refugee children, as well as Indigenous children, may feel unsure of where they belong, often being taught one thing at school and another at home.¹⁰⁷ This can be confusing, making children unsure of how to engage.

Program leaders, too, note challenges in communicating with parents whose style of communication is often very different from what leaders are accustomed to. For example, Ms Preston noticed that African families, unlike Anglo-Saxon New Zealand families, did not tell each other what was happening in their lives and how they were feeling. It was not uncommon to find that parents did not even know their children had been attending her arts program.¹⁰⁸

The Committee also heard about differences in understanding of sport. Auckland Council sports program representatives noted that some CaLD participants had no concept of playing as part of a team; participants played for themselves and saw themselves as winners if they kicked a goal, regardless of the team outcome.¹⁰⁹

While it was generally accepted among Australian families that children would be ferried to sports activities on the weekend, the same commitment was not a given in a lot of CaLD families, according to Edmund Rice Centre Youth Programs Coordinator Joe Moniodis. A community event, someone's birthday or a church celebration were priorities, but sporting events were not. "Sport is not seen in the same way generally."¹¹⁰ Religious commitments on weekends meant that some parents could never attend games, even if their children found a way to get there.¹¹¹

In Muslim communities in particular, religious requirements could prevent girls from participating in outdoor activities and overnight stays.¹¹² Dress requirements or the requirement not to mix with males may also be a barrier for Muslim girls.¹¹³ Access to

106 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, p5.

107 Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

108 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

109 Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016.

110 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p4.

111 Mr Peter Dye, Operations and Development Assistant, Dandenong Stingrays Football Club, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

112 Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

113 Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch, Get Active Project Officer, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p6.

activities may then be dependent on the provision of women-only groups and female instructors.



The Butler Falcons female football team, which emerged from the North West Metro Inclusion Project. Photo supplied by Edmund Rice Centre.

CaLD children are often unfamiliar with a game their peers have played for years,¹¹⁴ which can be intimidating. Others simply may not know how to go about getting involved. The DSR noted that groups which may benefit from funding did not necessarily know the programs were there or how to do an application and acquit it.¹¹⁵

Cultural barriers to physical activity experienced by Indigenous people include differing perceptions to the white community about health, inclusion of family or community and concepts of time or structure, according to Gray (2013).¹¹⁶

YACWA identified cultural misunderstandings, social isolation, discrimination, poverty and limited access to Aboriginal-led programs.¹¹⁷ As the DSR noted, an Indigenous youth may not want to join in an activity at the local recreation centre because he or she would be the only Indigenous youth taking part.

¹¹⁴ Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch, Get Active Project Officer, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p2; Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p6.

¹¹⁵ Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p5.

¹¹⁶ Gray C., R. Macniven and N. Thomson, [Review of physical activity among Indigenous people](#), Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, 2013.

¹¹⁷ Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, p5; Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p6.

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As noted previously, statistics show the rate of participation by Indigenous young people in sport and cultural activities is comparable with non-Indigenous youth. The differences may lie in the types of activities, with more formal structures throwing up barriers to Indigenous youth.

Community or peer expectations were also a barrier for Indigenous girls, who faced considerable peer pressure to “have a boyfriend, start drinking alcohol, have a baby and settle down at a young age with a young teenage boyfriend” rather than being involved in other activities, according to a contributor to YACWA’s submission.¹¹⁸

Gender

The participation statistics tell us that more boys than girls participate in sports-based activities and more girls than boys participate in arts-based activities. Young women may feel self-conscious about participation in physical activity due to a lack of self-confidence and body-image insecurity, according to the DSR.¹¹⁹ In terms of arts-based activities, the most popular activities after playing a musical instrument are dancing, singing and drama – activities more often associated with girls than boys.

The types of arts activities which appeal to boys are not as numerous. Arts education expert Peter Wright notes that adolescent males are the hardest group to engage.¹²⁰ The efforts being made to attract girls to sport may also need to be applied to attracting boys to cultural activities.

Most research in regard to barriers to participation due to gender relates to girls’ participation in sport. According to Vella et al. (2014), “Australian girls of a low socioeconomic position experience a disproportionately high number of barriers to sport participation when compared with their peers”.¹²¹

As a result of briefings with a number of groups which cater for CaLD girls – either specifically or as part of a general program – the Committee became aware that girls in ethnic communities are particularly disadvantaged. They often have responsibilities which their male counterparts do not, such as household chores and looking after siblings. Several providers told us that families regarded an extra-curricular activity for girls as a low priority.¹²²

118 Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, p5.

119 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p6.

120 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p4.

121 Vella, S., D. Cliff, and A. Okely, 'Socio-ecological predictors of participation and dropout in organised sports during childhood', *International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 11, no. 62, 2014, p2.

122 Mrs Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p6; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland

Boys were generally well-catered for in terms of the activities provided,¹²³ and parents from ethnically diverse communities were more prepared to take a boy to a sporting fixture than a girl.¹²⁴

*There are lots of opportunities for men but women are starved of opportunities for various reasons – economic, cultural, body image ... there are a lot of pressures on women.*¹²⁵

Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016; Mrs Christine Ware, Administration Officer, Dandenong and District Netball Association, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

123 Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch, Get Active Project Officer, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p6; Mrs Christine Ware, Administration Officer, Dandenong and District Netball Association, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

124 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

125 Mrs Christine Ware, Administration Officer, Dandenong and District Netball Association, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

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Current status of programs in Western Australia

This chapter outlines the way programs for at-risk youth are funded in WA and the scope of programs on offer, in order to assess where the gaps may be. Challenges for service providers are also considered.

... the non-existence of targeted programs that directly support and are tailored for at-risk young people is a big barrier. There is a gap within the service provision of targeted support services.

— Ross Wortham, CEO, Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia¹²⁶

SPORT and recreation programs and arts and cultural programs which are specifically aimed at youth regarded as at-risk are limited in Western Australia.

Some programs include youth at risk as part of a broader target group, and there are others that cater to a specific at-risk group, such as Indigenous boys.

Some are delivered by government agencies, some are delivered by other organisations with complete or partial funding from government and others are delivered by groups which receive little or no government support.

3.1 Sources of funding

There are many permutations when it comes to the way service providers fund and deliver their programs. Any combination of funding from various Commonwealth and State government departments and agencies may be deployed, along with local government grants and support from private corporations or philanthropists.

In addition to recurrent funding for programs, various government departments provide grants aimed at smaller groups or individuals. These are usually one-off small amounts of money which would not fund a program in its entirety but might contribute towards a single event (such as a festival) or equipment.

¹²⁶ Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA), *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p2.

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3.1.1 Sport and recreation

State Government funding

Department of Sport and Recreation

The Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) is the State Government department that provides the majority of funding to sports programs in WA, but other departments also contribute funds to sports programs for at-risk youth.

The DSR paid out around \$64 million in grants and subsidies in 2014-15, representing 68 per cent of total expenses (excluding capital funds used for infrastructure).¹²⁷

State Government funding accounted for 90 per cent of revenue (\$65.3 budget allocation plus \$9.8 million from Royalties for Regions), with Commonwealth grants and contributions accounting for only 3 per cent.

The DSR also receives funds from Lotterywest (\$15.5 million in 2014-15) and the Sports Wagering Account (\$4.7 million in 2014-15) to support sporting organisations in WA.¹²⁸

In addition to the KidSport program, which provides a voucher for eligible children who are unable to afford club fees, the DSR provides key funding for a number of programs aimed at increasing participation in sport by disadvantaged youth.

In 2015-16 these included:

- North West Metro Inclusion Project (\$135,000), run by the Edmund Rice Centre for marginalised youth in the north-west metropolitan area;
- Communicare Get Active Inclusion Project (\$85,000), for youth in the South-East metropolitan area;
- Community Participation Funding (\$150,000), providing grants of up to \$5000 each for community organisations wanting to implement initiatives targeting low participation groups;
- Ignite Basketball Project (\$50,000), a youth diversion program in the City of Armadale;
- Youth Engagement Scheme (\$457,000), which provides 13 local governments or not-for-profit organisations with funding to deliver programs targeting disengaged and at-risk youth in lower socioeconomic areas.¹²⁹

127 Department of Sport and Recreation, [Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, 2015, p84.

128 *ibid.*, p92.

The DSR also provides annual grants to State Sporting Associations and Industry Representative Organisations to assist them in increasing participation, addressing community needs and providing a welcoming and safe environment, through its Organisation Sustainability Program.

Its Regional Grants Scheme provided \$901,129 in 2014-15 to help build the capacity of regional sport and recreation associations and clubs, and to support regional initiatives and local events. These may or may not include initiatives for at-risk youth.

The DSR has also funded some specific projects in regional areas, such as Esperance Inclusive Communities, which looked to increase the participation of marginalised community members in sport and active recreation.

It also funds the Aboriginal Sport Development Program, a program of State-wide sport and recreation initiatives targeting Aboriginal communities. The scheme includes a network of Aboriginal Sport Development Officers (ASDOs) who work throughout the State to help develop and promote sport and recreation among the Aboriginal community; however, these positions have been reduced since funding provided by the Commonwealth Indigenous Sports Program for the ASDOs ceased.¹³⁰

The DSR said that the officers play a vital role in connecting Aboriginal people to mainstream sporting organisations and overseeing the development and delivery of programs. The department would now need to reconsider its role in the delivery of sport and recreation opportunities to Aboriginal people.¹³¹ DSR director general Ron Alexander noted:

*... we have had to let five Indigenous sport officers go simply because we do not have the budget to replace them.*¹³²

The Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC) agreed that the ASDO positions should be funded, saying that without them there would be no coordination of activities.¹³³

Finding 2

The cessation of Commonwealth funding for Aboriginal Sports Development Officers in Western Australia has resulted in the withdrawal of these officers in locations where they play a vital role in sports delivery.

129 Ms Claire Cummings, Policy Officer, Department of Sport and Recreation, Electronic Mail, 21 July 2016.

130 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p5.

131 *ibid.*

132 Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p4.

133 Mr John Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer, Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC), *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, pp13-14.

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Recommendation 1

That the State Government urges the Federal Government to reinstate the funding for Aboriginal Sports Development Officers, and, if unsuccessful, explore alternative sources of funding.

Other departments

Some DSR programs and initiatives are co-funded by other State Government departments, including WA Police, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, the Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

The Office of Multicultural Interests (part of the DLGC) also gives \$20,000 to the WA Football Commission for the Welcome to the AFL project, which focuses on developing cultural and linguistically diverse (CaLD) youth capacity.

The Department of Education provides support to programs which engage youth in educational settings (for example, PCYC's Stepping Stones program) as does the Department of Health (for example, Troy Cook's Health and Leadership Program run by the Wirrpanda Foundation).

Other funding

The Federal Government provides one-third of the Clontarf Foundation's funding and also funds its female equivalent, Role Models and Leaders Australia Girls Academies.

The Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sports organisation (see section 3.2) receives substantial Federal Government funding through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. Funding for other programs has come by way of the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Local government authorities often deliver sports and recreation programs but may need to apply to other funding sources themselves in order to do so. They also may co-fund programs provided by other organisations. For example City of Stirling and City of Wanneroo are key sponsors of the Edmund Rice Centre multicultural sporting teams.

Corporate sponsorship and donations occur to varying degrees. The DSR mentions a number of corporations as sponsors or partners (e.g. Newcrest Mining, HBF and RAC),¹³⁴ and the Wirrpanda Foundation derives just over half (52%) of its funding from corporate and philanthropic donations. Edmund Rice Centre receives funding for programs for younger people from The Smith Family.

¹³⁴ Department of Sport and Recreation, [Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, 2015, p72.

3.1.2 Arts and culture

For Australia as a whole, the split between the three tiers of government for expenditure on cultural activities in 2012-13 was one-third (33%) from the Federal Government, almost half (47%) from state and territory governments and one-fifth (20%) from local governments.¹³⁵

The estimated cultural expenditure by the WA Government in 2012-13 was \$581 million, with \$128 million (22%) expended on arts activities. Cultural funding by local government in WA was \$155 million.¹³⁶

State Government funding

The majority of arts funding provided by the State Government is allocated to the Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA) for distribution. The Department of Local Government and Communities also provides a reasonable amount of funding to arts groups and one-off projects.

Other state government agencies, such as the Department of Education, Mental Health Commission, WA Museum and State Library of WA have also worked in partnership with the DCA or other groups to deliver programs.

Department of Culture and the Arts

The total budget for DCA for 2016-17 is \$217.7 million. This includes \$93.9 million for capital works. About \$29 million has been allocated to support the delivery of arts and cultural activities across WA.¹³⁷

The DCA provides recurrent funding to 35 organisations (*see Appendix 6*) which accounts for, on average, 20 per cent of each organisation's operational funding. Funding for additional targeted activities – for example, for at-risk youth – needs to be funded separately, according to the DCA.¹³⁸ Some of the 36 organisations provide programs or activities for at-risk youth as part of broader programs.

The DCA have previously provided what is described as “Young People and the Arts grants” for individuals and groups for creative, social and commercial development. Between July 2012 and June 2016 there were 79 awarded, 13 of which were “provided to independent organisations for the delivery of specific programs for young people,

135 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Cultural Funding by Government, Australia, 2012-13](#), ABS, Catalogue No. 4183.0. Released May 2014.

136 *ibid.*

137 Department of Culture and the Arts, [State Budget 2016-17: Fact Sheet](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, [2016].

138 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 29 June 2016, pp10, 21.

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youth experiencing disability, or Aboriginal communities for skills development workshops and community arts projects that engage children and/or young people”.¹³⁹

However the DCA says it does not have a Young People and the Arts program as such, and young people are simply directed to the same grants pool as everybody else.¹⁴⁰

They would need to compete for the three million dollars in grants distributed annually across the Creative Development, Commercial Development, Community Engagement, Aboriginal Arts and Scholarship and Fellowships programs. Applicants can apply to one of two streams: over \$15,000 or under \$15,000.

The DCA combines its own grants program funding with Royalties for Regions Creative Regions program funding to support various artists and organisations in regional areas, some of which target youth at risk.

The DCA also contracts independent organisation Country Arts WA to run the Drug Aware YCulture Regional Fund. This offers up to \$4000 (or up to \$6000 for those living above the 26th parallel or in very remote WA) towards community arts projects that are run by young people for young people across all art forms.

DCA contracts CAN (Community Arts Network) to run the Catalyst Community Arts Fund, which provides funding support to community-driven arts and culture activities. In 2015 \$278,498 was distributed to 27 projects, some of which involved at-risk youth.¹⁴¹

There are three funding categories. The Innovate and Create categories are both for grants of up to \$15,000 and the Develop category is for grants of up to \$10,000. A fourth category, Explore, was funded by the Mental Health Commission for projects focussing on mental health for four years, but the commission is no longer funding the program.

CAN also received funding of \$90,962 in 2014-15 to run the Creative Networks Regional Local Government Fund, which supports local regional government authorities to develop their capacity to use art and culture to improve the lives of people living in regional WA.¹⁴²

In January 2015, the DCA provided \$21,000 funding towards the arts and cultural component of the Friendship Games, an international sporting and cultural exchange for students aged 12 to 17.

139 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 29 June 2016, p14.

140 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p8.

141 Community Arts Network, *CAN 2015 Annual Report*, Community Arts Network WA Ltd, 2016, p9.

142 Department of Culture and Arts, [Annual Report 2014-15](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, [2015], p33.

Department of Local Government and Communities

The DLGC funded projects for National Youth Week, providing \$71,000 in grants for 73 projects developed and delivered by young people and \$54,000 to joint organiser Propel Youth Arts. These were not specifically for at-risk youth.

In 2015-2016, grants of up to \$5000 were provided for arts projects in Port Hedland and Morawa.

While the DLGC funds numerous organisations to provide support services to families and the community, few are specifically arts or sports programs directed at vulnerable youth. For example small grants of up to \$5000 each were provided through the DLGC's Youth Activity Grants program in 2015-16 to several arts/recreation-based groups. Most, however, were leadership and civic engagement programs, which are no doubt valuable but outside the terms of reference of this Inquiry.

The Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) also provided grants of up to \$5000 for three projects showcasing the creative talents of young people from CaLD backgrounds, and \$49,250 to the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) for the Shout Out project, aimed at CaLD young people.

The OMI also provides Social Innovation Grants of almost half a million dollars for the South East Corridor Youth Partnership Project (YPP) and the South West Metropolitan Partnership Project, both of which work to improve services and provide support for at-risk young people in those areas. It is unclear whether there are any sports or cultural components.¹⁴³

Other funding

In 2016 a number of WA organisations which provide programs for at-risk youth received four-year funding from the Australia Council for the Arts: CAN, the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC), Yirra Yaakin Aboriginal Corporation (theatre group), Magabala Books and Warburton Youth Arts Centre.¹⁴⁴

Smaller amounts of annual funding (less than \$100k) were provided to a range of groups and individuals, including Wirlomin Noongar Language and Stories Project and Theatre Kimberley.

Federal funding is also sourced at times from the Ministry for the Arts, Indigenous Culture Support and the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

Local governments will provide small amounts of funding for arts projects or support other organisations, but according to CAN the degree of local government support

143 Submission No. 4 from Department of Local Government and Communities, 16 May 2016, pp4-7.

144 Australia Council for the Arts, '[Australia Council Grants List](#)', Australian Government.

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waxes and wanes according to whether there are “passionate advocates on the council or amongst the staff”.¹⁴⁵

The DCA does not run specific programs to engage local authorities, instead providing incentives for the not-for-profit sector to deliver programs.¹⁴⁶

Corporate and philanthropic sponsorship of arts and cultural activities for at-risk youth is not well advanced.

CAN’s website mentions Alcoa and Rio Tinto as corporations which might provide arts sponsorship, with philanthropists listed as The Ian Potter Foundation, Sidney Myer Fund/Myer Foundation, Macquarie Group Australia, Telstra Foundation and Impact 100 WA. One of the focus areas last year for Impact 100 WA was youth at risk, while a focus area this year is arts and culture.¹⁴⁷

Woodside funds BighART’s Yikala Yala project in the Pilbara (*see section 3.2*), but the Committee is not aware of any other corporations sponsoring arts programs for at-risk youth.

Although WA has a Philanthropy Incentive Program, introduced by the DCA in 2008, DCA’s Director of Policy, Planning and Research Colin Walker says the community still needs encouragement to engage in philanthropy.¹⁴⁸

The incentive scheme, the only one in Australia, encourages individuals, groups and businesses to establish charitable foundations to benefit arts organisations. At the commencement of the fund, the DCA makes an initial donation to an organisation of the fund’s choice. This establishes a relationship between the fund and the organisation which hopefully results in further grants being made directly from the foundation.

To date, the DCA has invested \$430,000 in the program and distributed \$409,498. The nine family-based foundations have made additional grants of \$468,018 to 17 arts organisations. The organisations range from flagship arts groups to smaller, lesser known groups. Some of these groups may provide programs for at-risk youth.¹⁴⁹

145 Ms June Moorhouse, co-General Manager, CAN (Community Arts Network), *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June, p8.

146 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p3.

147 Impact 100 Western Australia, [‘Welcome to Impact100 WA’](#) and [‘2015 Finalists and Winners’](#).

148 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p11.

149 Creative Partnerships Australia, *Philanthropy Incentive Program*, report prepared by James Boyd, State Manager WA and SA, Creative Partnerships Australia, July 2016.

James Boyd, the State Manager of Creative Partnerships Australia, which administers the Philanthropy Incentive Program, said that in WA support for the arts was 80 per cent corporate and 20 per cent philanthropic, while in the Eastern States it was more likely to be an even split.¹⁵⁰

3.2 Overview of programs

Programs which cater for at-risk youth are sometimes set up specifically for that purpose, while others reach young people at risk by dint of the groups that they target. For example, programs which have been set up for CaLD and Indigenous youth automatically include a high proportion of youth considered at risk, since these groups experience higher levels of disadvantage than mainstream groups.

Some organisations run programs in multiple metropolitan and regional centres. Others are set up in a single location, either metropolitan or regional.

Some programs have elements of both sport/recreation and arts/culture, particularly cultural identity programs which include outdoor recreational activities as a way of connecting with culture or building resilience. These have been considered in a separate category below.

As explained in the previous section on funding, grants are available for one-off projects or short programs, and some recent projects of that type are mentioned in this section. However it is not possible to cover every activity that may have occurred in the past year. The focus is on enduring and /or wide-reaching programs that have established an ongoing service of sport or arts or cultural provision for youth at risk.

As this section serves as an overview, more detailed descriptions of some of the programs or projects mentioned have been provided in Appendix 7.

3.2.1 Sport and recreation

One of the key programs for increasing participation in sport by disadvantaged youth which the DSR administers is the KidSport program, which provides a voucher for up to \$200 to eligible children (5 to 18) who are unable to afford club fees.

From the start of the program in 2011 to mid-March 2016, 90,000 vouchers had been distributed. Around 30,000 vouchers are expected to be given out in 2016.¹⁵¹ The

150 Morgan, Emily, '[Arts incentive worth supporting](#)', *Business News Western Australia*, 24 August 2011.

151 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p2.

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program has been particularly important as way of increasing Indigenous participation.¹⁵²

There are two major recreation programs for at-risk youth in the metropolitan area – one in the northern-western suburbs and one servicing the south-east corridor.

The North West Metro Inclusion Project, serving the cities of Stirling and Wanneroo and Joondalup, is run by Edmund Rice Centre in Mirrabooka, a not-for-profit, non-government organisation which provides educational programs and community development activities for refugee and Indigenous families.

As at January 2016, 1300 youth had been engaged through 12 sport and recreation pathway programs, with 38 per cent transitioning into sporting clubs.¹⁵³

In the south-eastern suburbs, Communicare, a not-for-profit organisation providing a range of support services to the cities of Armadale, Gosnells, Belmont, Canning and Victoria Park, runs the Get Active Inclusion Project. Get Active also aims to increase the participation of CaLD and Aboriginal youth in sport and recreation and helps to transition recently arrived refugee youth to mainstream clubs and sporting associations.

Other smaller scale programs in the metropolitan area include Ignite Basketball in Armadale (plus similar programs in Hilton, Midland, Fremantle/Cockburn and Mandurah), Balga Detached Youth Work Project and the 1ARoo boxing program in Wanneroo.

In terms of targeting Indigenous youth (across metropolitan and regional areas) the Clontarf Foundation's network of football academies for boys is one of the most heralded programs.

The football academies are established in partnership with local schools. In WA, there are programs in eight metropolitan schools and in 12 regional schools. Clontarf staff mentor and counsel students on a range of behavioural and lifestyle issues while the school looks after their educational needs.

Any Aboriginal male enrolled at the partner school is eligible to participate, but to remain in the program he must attend school regularly, apply himself to his studies and embrace the Academy's requirements for behaviour and self-discipline.¹⁵⁴

152 Department of Sport and Recreation, [Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, 2015, p88.

153 Racing and Wagering Western Australia, '[Edmund Rice North West Metro Inclusion Project Proceeds to Second Year After Great Success](#)', 15 January 2016.

154 Clontarf Foundation, [Clontarf Foundation Annual Report 2015](#), Clontarf Foundation, WA, 2016, p2.

One of Clontarf's measures of success is the year 12 completion rate, which is much higher for Clontarf boys (60-70%) than for other Aboriginal boys.¹⁵⁵

Role Models and Leaders Australia (RMLA) Girls Academy is a similar program aimed at Indigenous girls. In the same way as the Clontarf Academies for boys, the RMLA Girls Academies use sport as a tool for engaging Aboriginal secondary school girls in education.

Originally based around basketball, the academies now provide a range of sports including netball, cricket and football. The program operates in eight locations in WA with plans to expand to 12 in the next year. All, apart from one based at Clontarf, are in regional WA: Broome, Derby, Fitzroy Valley, Kununurra, Roebourne, Kalgoorlie and Bunbury. There are approximately 565 Indigenous girls enrolled in WA academies.

The academies have improved the rate of year 12 completion for Indigenous girls. In 2015, 92 per cent of RMLA Year 12 participants either completed Year 12, gained their Year 12 certificate or gained employment before completing Year 12.¹⁵⁶

Impact of the Clontarf Academies program

In 2014 ACIL Allen completed an analysis of the quantifiable impact of the Clontarf Academies. Some of their findings are as follows:

- *The rate of Year 12 completion for Clontarf boys is 60 to 70 per cent*
- *Between the ages of 18 and 64, Clontarf males are 12 to 18 per cent more likely to be employed than non-Clontarf males.*
- *Non-Clontarf males offend at a rate approximately six times higher than Clontarf males by the age of 24. The costs avoided amount to almost \$5000 per boy per year.*
- *Over the working life, savings due to avoided costs of offending for a Clontarf male are estimated to be approximately \$114,000.*
- *The health system costs per person of non-Clontarf males, taking into account the increased likelihood of having a chronic health condition at each age, are significantly higher than those for Clontarf males.*
- *Overall, \$1 invested in the Clontarf Academies returns \$8.13, a benefit of \$2.17 after accounting for the time value of money.*
- *For more remote locations the return is \$9.41 (a benefit of \$2.60) and for less remote \$7.46 (a benefit of \$1.96).*

(Source: Clontarf Foundation and Skilled Group, *Impact of the Clontarf Academies*, report prepared by ACIL Allen Consulting, Melbourne, November 2014).

155 Clontarf Foundation and Skilled Group, *Impact of the Clontarf Academies*, report prepared by ACIL Allen Consulting, Melbourne, November 2014, p14.

156 Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, pp7-8.

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The Wirrpanda Foundation also targets Indigenous youth. Established in 2005 by former West Coast Eagles player David Wirrpanda with the support of the Eagles, the foundation seeks to improve the quality of life for Indigenous youth by promoting strong, Indigenous role models and healthy life choices.

Its programs include:¹⁵⁷

- Troy Cook's Health and Leadership Program, developed by former professional footballer Troy Cook and being delivered through schools in Mandurah and Warnbro with funding from the Department of Health;
- Deadly Brotha Boyz, a health and education program for disengaged Aboriginal boys in the Great Southern and Kwinana, involving football, athletics, basketball and boxing;
- Deadly Sista Girlz, which focuses on building self-esteem and confidence for girls at Gilmore College in Kwinana, Medina Primary School, Lynwood Senior High School, Northam Senior High School and St Mary's College in Broome; and
- Moorditj Ngoorndiak, an intensive mentoring scheme for boys (12-19 years) in contact with the youth justice system, launched in 2015 and extended to the Banksia Hill Detention Centre this year.

Another organisation providing recreational services for Indigenous youth is the Maylands-based Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sports (NWS). NWS delivers various sport and recreation programs in collaboration with key stakeholders to various age groups, although the majority of participants are young people. There are metropolitan and regional programs.¹⁵⁸

The South-East Engagement (SEE) Project, run by the WA Football Commission and developed in partnership with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, also targets Indigenous youth, using football as a vehicle to promote community harmony and social inclusion in the south-east metropolitan area.¹⁵⁹

In regional WA, organisations such as Fair Game help to ensure under-served communities have access to equipment and sports shoes. While it doesn't target youth specifically, it began in Indigenous communities in the Pilbara and disadvantaged youth are one of the main beneficiaries.¹⁶⁰

157 Wirrpanda Foundation, '[Troy Cook Health and Leadership](#)', '[Deadly Brotha Boyz](#)', '[Deadly Sista Girlz](#)' and '[Moorditj Ngoorndiak Mentoring Program](#)'.

158 Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sports, '[About us](#)', 2016.

159 West Australian Football Commission Inc, '[Aboriginal Football Programs](#)', 2016.

160 Fair Game, '[Our Programs](#)', 2015.

In 2014-15, the Aboriginal Sports Development Program, run by the DSR, focussed on the Northern Goldfields communities of Laverton, Leonora and Menzies. Other programs which encourage participation of at-risk youth in regional areas may be being delivered by local government authorities or local organisations, but the Committee is not aware of specific programs.

3.2.2 Recreation and culture

A number of programs contain elements of both recreation and culture or identity-building. Youth centre programs fall into this category, with the most prominent being the Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC) which specifically target juvenile offenders. The PCYC delivers two broad youth services: development (intervention) programs and recreational activities.

In the metropolitan area there are PCYCs in Fremantle, Gosnells, Kensington, Midland, Rockingham, Serpentine and Subiaco. There are 12 centres in regional areas. The programs run at the centres vary.

Juvenile offenders are referred to the PCYC by the police, local governments or schools. WA Police Assistant Commissioner for Judicial Services Duane Bell said that by working with the district's WA Police Youth Crime Intervention Officers (YCIOs) in partnership with the PCYC, the rate of offending of those youths was likely to be halved.¹⁶¹

Recreation and cultural identity programs assist in this. While the PCYC's 2015 program catalogue shows an arts program such programs appear to be a very small component of what is currently operating around the State.¹⁶²

The Stepping Stones program run by Gosnells PCYC has been particularly successful in combining recreation and culture to engage at-risk youth (*see Case Study 3.1*).

However, since WA Police stopped managing PCYC centres and withdrew officers from the centres, the PCYC has struggled to provide services, partly due to lack of resources.

The organisation appears to be grappling with finding a clear direction since becoming independent, and resources are not necessarily being targeted in the areas of greatest need. (*See also section 3.3. Gaps in service delivery.*)

Finding 3

The PCYC model is in a transitional stage and needs to better identify the demand for its services and provide greater clarification of its role.

161 Mr Duane Bell, Assistant Commissioner for Judicial Services, Western Australia Police, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p3.

162 WA PCYC Program Catalogue 2015, spreadsheet supplied by PCYC, 5 July 2016.

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Case Study 3.1 – PCYC Stepping Stones program

Stepping Stones, run by Gosnells PCYC in partnership with Centacare Employment and Training and the Department of Education, is aimed at year 11 and 12 students who are not turning up to school.

It uses activities that are “hands-on” (such as physical recreation and art) and applicable to real life to build skills that will enable the participants to access further education, training or employment.

Many of the students had opted out of school due to mental health issues, family breakdown or homelessness, family financial constraints, learning disorders and substance abuse and had little respect for themselves or others.

*In May the program was awarded a Community Services Excellence Award in the partnerships category.*¹⁶³

Many local government authorities also provide youth centres. Some are drop-in centres where young people can gather informally, engage in recreational activities and seek support, while others may also run specific art or recreation programs. They are generally not specifically targeted at youth at risk but may attract young people in need.

Some youth centres are also provided by non-government organisations but serve much the same function and provide similar activities (for example Swan City Youth Services). YMCA WA’s youth and community services include mentoring for young people aged 7 to 20 years and counselling. From its multi-purpose facility YMCA HQ in Leederville, YMCA WA also offers art and music events alongside youth support.

Others, such as the Youth Involvement Council in Hedland, run programs with funding from departments such as the Department for Child Protection and Family Services and the Department of Corrective Services.

In Albany, the Wumbudin Kool-yee-rah Strong and Proud program (supported by the DSR and the Wirrpanda Foundation) is an after-school recreation program for Aboriginal youth aged 12 to 16. Outdoor activities are inspired by the six Noongar seasons. The current program includes orienteering and bush survival skills, mountain-biking, bushwalking and seed collection skills and cultural heritage.¹⁶⁴

3.2.3 Arts and culture

Most of the organisations which receive recurrent funding from the DCA are mainstream groups, although these groups may on occasions create projects which involve at-risk youth. However the involvement is often as a viewer and not as a

¹⁶³ PCYC, ‘Gosnells PCYC’, 2010.

¹⁶⁴ South Coast Natural Resource Management, ‘[Wumbudin Kool-yee-rah “Strong and Proud” back for term 2!](#)’, 20 April 2016.

creative participant (for example tickets were made available to disadvantaged families for the Awesome Arts Festival and WA Ballet performances).

Some groups work with or for youth in general (for example Barking Gecko Theatre Company, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, WA Youth Theatre Company and contemporary dance group CO₃) but not specifically with youth at risk.

The Artist-in-Residence (AiR) program, which has seen 68 WA schools between 2010 and 2015 provided with an artist-in-residence, estimates its engagement of at-risk youth as 11.6 per cent Indigenous, 23.6 per cent of regional and remote and 13.3 per cent CaLD.¹⁶⁵ The program was jointly funded by the Australia Council for the Arts, the DCA and the Department of Education but has been discontinued since losing Australia Council funding.¹⁶⁶



Anyone Can Live in a House, by Alaska - an image from YACWA's Home Is Where My Heart Is project. Alaska's photography mentor was Susie Blatchford.
© Home Is Where My Heart Is 2016.

The Aboriginal-led Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, which has received four-year funding from the Australia Council, also has a strong education and community engagement component. It provides a free workshop program for schools, Culture 2.0 | Respect Yourself Respect Your Culture, which invites young people to explore questions relating to culture of all kinds (not just Indigenous), and an Indigenous training initiative and cultural leadership initiative.

165 Between 2010 and 2013.

166 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, pp2-3.

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However, the peak State body for youth arts, Propel Youth Arts WA, does not appear to specifically target at-risk youth or minority groups, apart from supporting YACWA's Home Is Where My Heart Is photography project for homeless youth. While the group is dedicated to creating opportunities for young people to engage in the arts, its support seems primarily aimed at young people already engaged in the arts who need a forum or some mentoring to help them progress to the next stage.

The Yiriman Project is one of few cultural programs which targets at-risk youth – in this case Aboriginal. Yiriman has had documented success in helping to change the lives of the troubled young people it takes on country; however, as a Kimberley based program only targeting Indigenous youth its reach is narrow.

Kimberley Girl, a program run by Goolarri Media Enterprises, teaches Aboriginal girls work readiness, how to set goals, and skills to overcome adversity through their preparations for a fashion show. It is partially funded by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Another successful program, which has been running in the Pilbara since 2010, is the Yijala Yala Project, set up by national award-winning arts company BighART. *See Case Study 3.2.*

The Committee has found evidence of only a couple of other organisations specifically providing arts or cultural services for at-risk youth. One of these is the metropolitan-based FNTS Movement, founded by Burundian Rachdar Abubakar Giraneza (also known as G-Marl Jamal); and the other is Albany's Open Access Youth Art Studio, which is based on a similar model to Melbourne's Artful Dodgers Studio whereby youth workers work alongside community artists and musicians to support troubled youth.

Short-term projects targeting at-risk youth are most likely to be the result of funding provided by the Community Arts Network (CAN) or by small grants administered by the Department of Local Government and Communities.

Some of the projects approved by the Catalyst fund, which CAN administers on behalf of the DCA, target at-risk youth, although CAN is unable to be more specific about the number of projects in this category because it does not gather this type of data.¹⁶⁷

CAN suggested that projects most likely to be targeting at-risk youth would be in the Explore category of the Catalyst fund, a category which ceased to exist after 2015 when the Mental Health Commission stopped funding it. Between 2012 and 2015, funding

¹⁶⁷ Ms June Moorhouse and Ms Monica Kane, co-General Managers, CAN, Letter, 11 July 2016.

was approved for 28 projects through Explore, with at least 23 indicating a high level of youth involvement. However, whether the youth were at risk is not specified.¹⁶⁸

Case Study 3.2 – Yijala Yala Project

The Yijala Yala Project was set up in Roebourne in 2010 by Big hART, a national award-winning not-for-profit arts company that uses theatre, film, television, paintings, photography, dance, radio and other creative processes to support groups and communities that lack opportunities. Funded by Woodside through a Conservation Agreement with the Commonwealth government, Yijala Yala is a long-term inter-generational cultural arts project.

One of its most successful creations involving more than 40 young people is Neomad, a comic book series also available as interactive iPad app and a book. It follows the futuristic adventures of the Love Punks, a group of tech-savvy youngsters from the Pilbara who zip around the desert on a “hoverquad” and are led on a journey across the cosmos.

Students took part in workshops for scriptwriting, literacy, Photoshop, filmmaking and sound recording over an 18-month period, and award-winning illustrator and interactive designer Stu Campbell taught them to apply a complex colouring system to more than 600 scenes to create the comic book.

Some of the students travelled to South Korea in 2012 to attend an international comic festival, and taught their skills to other young people. Neomad was also a finalist in the New Media Awards in Los Angeles in 2013, was awarded ‘Best game/multimedia production’ at the ATOM awards. In April 2016 the comic won the Gold Ledger, Australia’s premier comic book award.¹⁶⁹

Murdoch University’s Peter Wright, who has evaluated many of BighART’s projects, says the key to the effectiveness of Yijala Yala is finding something that people are interested in and care about. This could act as both a buffer for young people in difficult situations, and as a means of moving forward:

“The arts can do that in very powerful ways ... It works with teaching these young people arts skills and arts processes, it gives them responsibility – so it moves towards developing something. It develops in a social setting, so it builds connections and teaches perseverance. If you have something ... that is going to be put out in public and people are going to see you doing this work, it encourages people to persevere forward and it provides a range of alternative pathways towards the world of work or education.”¹⁷⁰

The list of organisations/projects approved for funding in the other three categories of the Catalyst fund suggests that at-risk youth may also be represented in these projects, although it is not possible to confirm this.

168 Ms June Moorhouse and Ms Monica Kane, co-General Managers, CAN, Letter, 11 July 2016.

169 BighART, ‘[NEOMAD](#)’, 2016.

170 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p3.

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Apart from administering the Catalyst fund, CAN runs its own projects and many of these involve marginalised youth. Many of CAN's activities take place in rural settings and there has been a focus on Indigenous groups.

In 2010 CAN was invited by a federal government department to work in Narrogin where the Indigenous community was "traumatised and fractured" due to family feuding.¹⁷¹ They set up an office there and rolled out a series of projects. One of the most successful was Strong Culture, Strong Community, which worked with students at Narrogin Senior High School. (See Case Study 3.3).

Case Study 3.3 – Strong Culture, Strong Community

This program was initiated by CAN and uses culture and the arts to improve the wellbeing and resilience of Aboriginal students at Narrogin Senior High School. One of the projects within the program, Noongar Pop Culture, worked with students to translate pop songs into the Noongar language and to film them. The students learnt language, filmmaking, hip-hop dance and drama.

A recent social impact assessment of the program (see also section 4.5.6) found that it had been instrumental in encouraging Noongar students to return to school and had improved the social skills and wellbeing of program participants.

Noongar students had reconnected with their Aboriginal culture and parents and guardians believed their children were more resilient and better able to deal with community feuding.

According to one student: "When CAN came it entertained me and showed me that I could do other things like singing. This was the same for all of the Noongar kids. They always ask me when Noongar Pop Culture is coming back as they want to do these things too."

CAN has also worked extensively in Kellerberrin, where it used to have an office. One of its successful youth projects is detailed in Appendix 7.

The Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) provided small grants of up to \$5000 each through its Youth Activity Grants program in 2015-16 for several arts-based projects. These included: the Perth Projector Bike project, a series of film workshops using a theme based around the Act-Belong-Commit message of social inclusion; Creating Freedom Australia's Expressifestival 2015, for empowerment of youth experiencing disadvantage and homelessness; the City of Armadale Young Women's Development Project for teenagers 13 to 17 years, aimed at building leadership skills and the capacity to become involved in mentoring, and cultural workshops; YACWA's

171 Ms Monica Kane, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p4.

and Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network's Catalyst Youth Summit for multicultural young people living in WA (part funded through OMI's Community Grants Program).¹⁷²

The OMI also provided grants of up to \$5000 for projects showcasing the artistic and creative talents of young people from CaLD backgrounds.

Regionally, County Arts WA also supports regional organisations to provide activities to a broad cross-section of the community through its Core Arts Fund, although it is not known how many of these target at-risk youth.¹⁷³

The DCA also continues to support the Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Cultural Centre archive project, an intergenerational program in which young people work with senior members of the community to digitally document histories, mythologies and information relating to the Mowanjum collection.¹⁷⁴



Narrogin Senior High School students Marion Slater, Nathan Ugle and Kiara Jones, who took part in CAN's Noongar Pop Culture project.

Photo: Tanya Voltchanskaya, courtesy of CAN.

3.3 Gaps in service delivery

3.3.1 Service provision

It has been a challenge in this Inquiry to establish gaps in service provision for at-risk youth, given that there is no systematic recording of services for this group. This is in itself a gap.

172 Submission No. 4 from Department of Local Government and Communities, 16 May 2016, pp4-6.

173 Department of Culture and Arts, [Annual Report 2014-15](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, [2015], p33.

174 *ibid.*, p38.

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The system of service provision in both sport/recreation and arts/culture is fragmented. Funds are distributed by the DSR and the DCA to a wide array of organisations, either for ongoing programs or short-term projects in the community.

However, information about who has participated in or benefited from the programs is not collated by the departments and as such there is no accurate way of knowing which groups are being well-catered for and which are not.

In addition to this are organisations which may be providing services independently of government, which should also be accounted for in service provision statistics.

Finding 4

There is no system for collating demographic information relating to participants in sport and cultural programs across the State, making it impossible to accurately determine gaps in service delivery.

Thus, the Committee's conclusions regarding gaps in service delivery are based on evidence provided to the Committee in the form of submissions, hearings and briefings and on material available in the public arena (e.g. organisation websites).

All of the main programs the Committee became aware of¹⁷⁵ which catered specifically or substantially for at-risk youth were positioned on a chart according to their status as metropolitan or regional programs and as sport/recreation or arts/culture programs (or a combination) (see *Figure 3.1*).

Figure 3.1 shows there are fewer sport and recreation programs targeting at-risk youth in regional areas than in metropolitan areas. Sports programs for minority groups in regional areas are mostly targeted at Indigenous youth, with few if any programs targeting CaLD youth.

Finding 5

There are more sports and recreation programs targeting at-risk youth in the metropolitan area than in regional areas.

Figure 3.1 shows more arts and culture programs in regional WA than the metropolitan area, largely because of Aboriginal arts programs. Again, CaLD youth are more likely to be catered for in terms of arts and cultural programs in the metropolitan area than regional areas.

¹⁷⁵ Those presented in the previous section and in Appendix 7.



Figure 3.1: Distribution of sport and recreation and arts and culture programs for at-risk youth in metropolitan and regional Western Australia.

Note: The diagram does not show individually the small-scale one-off projects funded by OMI. These are labelled collectively as "OMI grant projects". The Wirrpanda Foundation programs are also not listed individually.

YACWA chief executive officer Ross Wortham said that the migrant/refugee young people that his organisation deals with were still experiencing discrimination, barriers due to language, cultural misunderstanding, and a failure to tap into their interests.¹⁷⁶

Programs which include elements of both recreation and culture are also more common in regional WA than metropolitan WA. Most of the regional participants in these programs are Indigenous, even if the programs do not specify this group as the target.

¹⁷⁶ Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, pp5-6.

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Finding 6

There are more arts and culture programs and recreation/cultural programs targeting at-risk youth in regional areas than in the metropolitan area, largely as a result of rural Indigenous programs.

Finding 7

Culturally and linguistically diverse youth are not specifically targeted and catered for in regional Western Australia, both in terms of sport and recreation programs and arts and culture programs.

Programs targeting female participation are rare, although there are a few sports and cultural identity/leadership programs aimed specifically at Aboriginal girls.

The needs of CaLD girls are also catered for in the metropolitan area through programs run by Edmund Rice Centre and Communicare, for example, and by local authorities who ensure sports facilities are inclusive.

Note that activities are often part of a broader program, or simply the result of barriers to participation being removed, rather than the result of a program specifically targeting CaLD girls. The Committee was not aware of any programs targeting girls independently of ethnicity.

Wirrpanda Foundation health and leadership manager Troy Cook said that the foundation started its Deadly Sista Girlz program after recognising that there were “a lot of things for boys out there” but that there was “a massive gap” when it came to young women.¹⁷⁷

Conversely, Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP) Colin Pettit said that there were “an extraordinary range” of programs targeted to Aboriginal girls but that there was a lack of coordination of services.¹⁷⁸

Finding 8

Where programs targeting at-risk girls are provided, they are generally for Indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse groups. Girls that do not fit into either of these two groups face the prospect of missing out.

What the diagram does not show is the gaps within the regional and metropolitan areas. Programs are not distributed evenly, with some regional towns receiving multiple services and others receiving few or none. For example, the larger regional

177 Mr Troy Cook, Health and Leadership Manager, Wirrpanda Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p3.

178 Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p5.

centres – Broome, Kununurra, Geraldton, Albany – attract a range of service providers while the smaller but no less needy towns do not have access to permanent programs.

Even so, youth in towns with supposedly more services – such as Broome – lamented the lack of interesting after school programs. The CCYP’s report of a recent visit to Broome notes that the youth wanted more targeted programs – particularly for older youth – which they believed would keep them out of trouble.¹⁷⁹

The same is true for metropolitan suburbs. For example, there is no PCYC presence in the northern suburbs or in Armadale – two high-need areas. The DSR-funded programs aimed at engaging CaLD and Indigenous youth in sports (North West Inclusion Project and Communicare Get Active) service the north-western and south-eastern suburbs, leaving out areas of high need to the south (e.g. Rockingham).

An audit survey of programs across the State would reveal more precisely where the geographical gaps lie.

Finding 9

Services for at-risk youth are not evenly distributed within the metropolitan area and across regional Western Australia.

Services in a particular area may also be unable to serve the needs of all at-risk youth, given that these can be wide-ranging. Mr Wortham said that the “spectrum of need” ranged from extremely complex (for example, any combination of homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health issues and anger issues) to those “on the precipice” of experiencing hardship or exhibiting behaviours considered at risk.¹⁸⁰

Lesser-funded programs may be able to make a difference for a young person with less complex problems, but were unlikely to be able to transform the life of a person with complex needs.

Finding 10

Single-focus programs are unable to transform the lives of young people with multiple problems and complex needs.

Several contributors to the Inquiry mentioned gaps in the provision of sport and arts by the education system. One was created when public school teachers were directed not

179 Commissioner for Children and Young People, ‘[Regional Visit Report: Broome and Fitzroy Crossing, 4-8 April 2016](#)’, 16/3078, Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, Subiaco, 2016.

180 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p8.

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to work after hours unless they were paid for those hours – a gap which DSR director general Ron Alexander said was hard to fill.¹⁸¹

Another other factor was that since the introduction of NAPLAN testing, teachers increasingly adhered to “what gets tested gets taught”. This meant a focus on literacy and numeracy but not necessarily arts and sport.¹⁸²

A DCA and Department of Education commissioned report tabled in February 2016 noted that 70 per cent of primary teachers and 82 per cent of secondary teachers felt there was too little or far too little arts education in WA.¹⁸³

The lack of alternative education opportunities was also noted by YACWA:

*... the mainstream education system does not work for every young person ... The flow-on effect from that with at-risk young people, which is what we are talking about, is often disengagement and/or lack of success within the academic space within school. We know that the education department is flat out. The schools are extremely overburdened and so being able to respond to the needs of at-risk young people, behavioural challenges et cetera is limited, often leading to expulsion or suspensions, which then leads to young people completely disengaging from the education system. The flow-on effect is welfare engagement, lack of employment et cetera. We would say that there is still significant work that needs to happen to engage young people in alternative educational opportunities and to build some of those skills to create resilience.*¹⁸⁴

3.3.2 Policy gaps

The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS) has an at-risk youth strategy which has as the first of three aims:

*Increase the Department's presence and involvement in the across government and community service sector organisations that relate to at risk young people, including where appropriate taking a lead role in the coordination of the activities and initiatives of these groups.*¹⁸⁵

181 Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p3.

182 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p9.

183 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p9.

184 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p7.

185 Department for Child Protection and Family Support, [At Risk Youth Strategy 2015-2018](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2015, p4.

To this end, the DCPFS chairs a Child Safety Directors' Group of executive level officers of "relevant state agencies". There are 15 State and two Commonwealth agencies listed as members, but the DSR and the DCA are not among them.¹⁸⁶

Despite the strategy's subtitle, "Supporting vulnerable youth to reach their potential", sport and the arts are obviously not deemed sufficiently relevant to vulnerable youth. It is possible that community sector organisations which work in partnership with the DCPFS may receive funding for programs for at-risk youth from the DSR or DCA, thus creating an indirect relationship.

The only other reference to recreation or culture in the strategy is in relation to programs with a cultural focus for Aboriginal young people. Action 12 of the strategy is to "support the development and delivery of local solutions that emphasise cultural and community links".¹⁸⁷

Finding 11

The role of sport and the arts in assisting vulnerable young people is not acknowledged in the Department for Child Protection and Family Support's At-Risk Youth Strategy 2015-2018.

In addition to the At-Risk Youth Strategy, the WA Government has a Youth Strategic Framework called "Our Youth – Our Future", which was launched in 2012. The framework was developed in partnership with 14 State Government agencies, led by the Department of Local Government and Communities.¹⁸⁸

The work is guided by across-government frameworks and strategies and the strategic plans of individual agencies. This includes those of the DCA¹⁸⁹ and the DSR.¹⁹⁰

The framework document says that "Our Youth – Our Future" is underpinned by "a strong commitment to help young people who are struggling, or where life can provide

186 Answer to Question Without Notice (of which some notice has been given) No. C893, asked in the Legislative Council by Hon Sally Talbot and answered by the Minister for Child Protection, Hon. Helen Morton, Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), 19 August 2015.

187 Department for Child Protection and Family Support, [At Risk Youth Strategy 2015-2018](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2015, p15.

188 Department of Local Government and Communities, [Youth Strategic Framework](#), electronic copy, Government of Western Australia, Perth, 8 January 2016.

189 Department of Culture and the Arts, [Creating Value: An arts and culture sector policy framework 2010-2014](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, [2010]; Department of Culture and the Arts, [Young People Strategic and the Arts Action Plan 2011-2012](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, [2011].

190 Physical Activity Taskforce, [Active Living for All: A Framework for Physical Activity in Western Australia 2012-2016](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2011; Department of Sport and Recreation, [SD5: Strategic Directions for the Western Australian Sport and Recreation Industry, 2011-2015](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, 2011; Department of Sport and Recreation, [SD6: Strategic Directions for the Western Australian Sport and Recreation Industry, 2016-2020](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, April 2016.

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extra challenges, with programs and services that work well for these young people's particular needs".

The Government committed to providing "A range of targeted youth services to support at-risk young people" and to recognising "the diverse nature and needs of young people".

Strategic approaches included:

- Providing flexible youth services, programs and resources, with a focus on a coordinated approach, so that young people can access them when they are needed, wherever they live;
- Facilitating involvement by all young people, including those in rural, regional and remote areas and those from disadvantaged or marginalised backgrounds, by addressing barriers to participation;
- Encouraging young people to be active, creative and involved by offering diverse sport, recreation, arts and culture options that adapt to changing lifestyles;
- Providing mentoring support for young people in sports, arts and culture.

The Committee did not receive any evidence in relation to the success or otherwise of the Youth Strategic Framework. The framework was not mentioned in the DLGC's submission to this Inquiry.

Finding 12

The across-government Youth Strategic Framework "Our Youth – Our Future" contains admirable strategies for the engagement of at-risk youth in sport and culture, but the extent to which this has guided and continues to guide practice is unclear. In addition, no specific resources have been allocated to implementing the strategy.

The DSR actively promotes the role of sport as a vehicle for positive social change, as outlined in its mission statement and priorities. It notes that:

*Sport has the power to engage young people and once engaged they are likely to be open to change. At the very least, sport programs run on targeted days and times are very effective at diverting youth at risk of anti-social activities.*¹⁹¹

191 Department of Sport and Recreation, [Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, 2015, p8.

Recent policy documents, annual reports and the DSR website all demonstrate an understanding of the social benefits of sport and a desire to increase participation and to make sporting groups inclusive. The agency's position on inclusive participation states:

*The DSR expects all Western Australians to have the opportunity to participate in sport and recreation activities regardless of their age, gender, religion, cultural background, sexual orientation, disability, income or geographical location.*¹⁹²

The DSR's latest Strategic Directions for the Western Australian Sport and Recreation Industry document, SD6, identifies 13 challenges to be tackled over the next five years. Challenge 11, "Participation, Culture and Affordability", recognises that "sport and recreation provides opportunities to embrace those otherwise often excluded in the community" and that "opportunities should be affordable and provide equitable access to encourage participation of people from diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds".¹⁹³

It notes "cultural differences, unwelcoming environments, and lack of suitable facilities for people with culture-specific requirements" as barriers which require strategies and investment to overcome.

Finding 13

The Department of Sport and Recreation's policy and strategy documents demonstrate a commitment to the inclusion of marginalised groups, including at-risk youth.

In contrast, the DCA's Strategic Plan 2016 mentions "Community and arts sector engagement" as one of five key priorities but does not mention youth – let alone at-risk youth – at all.

The Strategic Directions Framework 2015-2030 for Arts and Culture in WA, prepared by the Arts Leadership Group,¹⁹⁴ notes the "strong evidence supporting the principle that fostering creativity with the arts at the core at a young age will build the foundations of

192 Department of Sport and Recreation, '[Inclusive participation](#)', 17 May 2016.

193 Department of Sport and Recreation, [SD6: Strategic Directions for the Western Australian Sport and Recreation Industry, 2016-2020](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, April 2016, p7.

194 The Arts Leadership Group (ALG) was established in September 2014 to guide the long-term strategic direction and development of arts and culture in WA, and set the infrastructure, policy and funding priorities for consideration by successive State Governments. The ALG is made up of chief executives and directors general from key State Government departments, industry and arts organisations, and chaired by the Director General of the Department of Culture and the Arts. Regular meetings of the ALG were held throughout the year. See Department of Culture and Arts, [Annual Report 2014-15](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, [2015], p15.

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a resilient population, armed with capacities for critical inquiry, lateral thinking, innovative solutions and powerful communication”.¹⁹⁵

It also notes:

*Shared experiences of cultural and creative pursuits has the potential to achieve social outcomes and help form an inclusive Western Australian identity. This process begins at home and continues through our education system so strategies are required to ensure full accessibility to the arts for the community throughout their lives... How we embed our most creative people into our civic decisions will be one of the most important challenges in reaching 2030.*¹⁹⁶

However, perhaps because this is a fairly new guiding document, there is not much evidence that anything has progressed beyond this acknowledgement of the value of arts for young people. There do not seem to be any mechanisms for ensuring that arts programs reach a broad range of people.

The DCA used to have a Young People and the Arts action plan “which led to specific initiatives”.¹⁹⁷ However, it has decided to hand over responsibility for youth programs to the key arts organisations that provide services directly to youth.

DCA’s position is made clear in its submission:

... there is no dedicated program directly delivered to address youth or youth at risk by DCA. As a targeted program this could only occur if:

- (a) Existing programs ceased and were diverted*
- (b) Additional funding injection occurred to the existing grants program*
- (c) A substantial partnership initiative across government that particularly targets youth at risk addressing the identified weaknesses of scale, availability and longevity.*¹⁹⁸

195 Collard, P., [Report of the 2011 Thinker in Residence: Unlocking Creativity](#), Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, Subiaco, 2011, cited in Department of Culture and the Arts, [Strategic Directions Framework 2015-2030](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, [2015], p21.

196 Department of Culture and the Arts, [Strategic Directions Framework 2015-2030](#), Government of Western Australia, Perth, [2015], p21.

197 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p8.

198 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p22.

Finding 14

The Department of Culture and the Arts does not have any dedicated programs to address youth or youth at risk, and these groups are largely absent from policy documents.

Recommendation 2

That the Department of Culture and the Arts review its strategy and policy documents to ensure that they address the needs of at-risk youth.

Where the DCA has been more active in terms of policy for marginalised groups is in the delivery of Aboriginal cultural programs. The DCA recently released a discussion paper, *Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The role of culture in gaining more effective outcomes from WA State Government services*, prepared in partnership with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA).

In preparing the paper, the DCA reviewed the outcome of government expenditure on Aboriginal culture and arts to assess how that investment could “contribute to positive outcomes for Aboriginal people across employment, culture, education, mental health, and general health and wellbeing”.¹⁹⁹

The discussion paper notes that while a number of government agency service reviews recommend culture be appropriately integrated to achieve better outcomes, there is no policy that encourages responsiveness to Aboriginal culture across State Government service providers.

This is in line with the Aboriginal Youth Expenditure Review, which identified an “unclear policy environment, with numerous operating frameworks across government”.²⁰⁰

The DCA and the DAA jointly proposed a cultural policy aimed at addressing Aboriginal disadvantage. In order to advance the policy they recommended that Culture and Arts be added as a focus area of the Aboriginal Affairs Cabinet Sub-Committee and that the DCA becomes a member of the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee.²⁰¹

199 Department of Culture and the Arts and Department of Aboriginal Affairs, *Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The role of culture in gaining more effective outcomes from WA State Government services*, discussion paper, Department of Culture and the Arts, Perth, May 2016, p4 in Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p42.

200 Department of the Premier and Cabinet, [Aboriginal Youth Expenditure Review 2013](#), Government of Western Australia, West Perth, 2013, p10.

201 The purpose of the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee “is to coordinate effectively the activities of all persons and bodies, corporate or otherwise, providing or proposing to provide service and assistance in relation to persons of Aboriginal descent”. It comprises 14 government departments or agencies. They play a key role in supporting the Aboriginal Affairs Cabinet Sub-Committee, established in 2013 to identify and deal with targeted issues.

Recommendation 3

That the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs acts to include the Department of Culture and the Arts as a member of the Aboriginal Affairs Cabinet Sub-Committee.

However, the Committee wishes to emphasise that a serious review is dependent upon more than just meetings between bureaucrats. Evaluation needs to be robust (see *section 3.4.2 Demonstrating outcomes*) and action needs to result from it.

The low number of Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) amongst local government authorities was noted as a barrier to creating effective long-term relationships with Aboriginal people.²⁰²

A report into Arts and Culture in WA Local Government, prepared by CAN (Community Arts Network) and the Chamber of Arts and Culture WA, found that only six per cent of local government authorities had a RAP and that regional local governments stood out as having systemic issues around creating effective relationships with Aboriginal people.

The study also found that 90 per cent of respondents believed that arts and culture plays a significant role in the community, however, only 13 per cent of councils had an overarching strategy or plan for arts and culture.²⁰³

3.3.3 Information gaps

As mentioned at the start of section 3.3, there is no system for collating information about who has participated in or benefited from sports and arts programs.

The DCA can provide lists of organisations which they fund; grant recipients and amounts are recorded in the interests of accounting for money spent, but not the details of the individual programs or projects that result. As Mr Walker stated: “What we do not have – this is really important – is identifiers of projects that work with at-risk youths.”²⁰⁴

However, the DCA had been working to standardise quality metrics which would provide that kind of data through its Culture Counts program.²⁰⁵ Evaluation research was often too expensive for organisations to undertake but Culture Counts was

202 Ms June Moorhouse and Ms Monica Kane, co-General Managers, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p8.

203 CAN WA, [CAN WA's Plan to Boost Skills Development for Local Government](#), Media Release, CAN WA, Perth, 25 March 2015.

204 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p7.

205 The Culture Counts technology enables real-time collection of data which captures the experiences of the participant as well as demographic data. This allows organisations/government departments to benchmark perceptions of quality and understand the characteristics of audiences. See *ibid.*, p5.

intended to provide a cost-effective way of determining whether a program was working.

As Mr Walker acknowledged: “We believe that we do have an issue with data and we do have an issue with targeting, each of which we are trying to deal with.”²⁰⁶

The DSR is also experiencing issues with data since the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics – a unit of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – was disbanded following Federal Government funding cuts in 2014. Like other states and territories, the DSR relied on the ABS surveys to identify participation levels.

The Australian Sports Commission has since initiated its own data collection process but the interruption to continuity and minor variations in methodology will mean it will have to be regarded as a new starting point, according to DSR director general Ron Alexander.

Limited available data on the ethnic or cultural background of sports and recreation participants was noted by Dalton (2015), and a CCYP report noted the importance of better data collection to address the issues faced by CaLD children and young people.²⁰⁷

Lack of funds to implement research to assess programs – particularly longitudinal studies which can reveal longer term benefits – also contributes to the data void.²⁰⁸

While some groups have collected quantitative or qualitative data to be used in evaluation (e.g. Clontarf Foundation, RMLA Academies, CAN’s Strong Communities, Strong Culture program, Communicare, BighART, Wirrpanda Foundation and KALACC for the Yiriman Project), most organisations (as well as government agencies) did not have the capacity to assess the programs they were funding or implementing.²⁰⁹ (See also section 3.4.2 *Demonstrating outcomes*)

206 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p5.

207 Commissioner for Children and Young People, [Culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people: A literature review](#), report prepared by Lisa Roberts, Three Rings Advisory research consultancy, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Subiaco, October 2014, p5.

208 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p4.

209 *Ibid*; Commissioner for Children and Young People, [Culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people: A literature review](#), report prepared by Lisa Roberts, Three Rings Advisory research consultancy, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Subiaco, October 2014, pp5-6; Mrs Christina Ward, Deputy Director, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p10.

3.4 Challenges for service providers

There were a number of challenges for organisations providing sport and recreation or arts and cultural programs which were raised consistently.

These centred around: trying to work in a system which is fragmented; dealing with a number of government departments; demonstrating outcomes; sourcing and securing funding – particularly for longer term projects; and accommodating participants with different cultural requirements.

3.4.1 Fragmentation and inter-agency collaboration

With so many different agencies providing funding to so many different organisations, it is not surprising that service provision is somewhat fragmented. This is particularly the case for the arts sector, as acknowledged in the DCA's submission:

*The arts infrastructure across the State is fragmented. There is no state-wide network of 'clubs' as there is with sport. Collaborations and partnerships between and within the arts sector usually occur in response to a particular project or initiative driven by discrete funding when this is available.*²¹⁰

Individual organisations or community groups deliver programs to meet their own priorities and goals, and hence they “are not necessarily created to specifically address youth at risk as a targeted group with clear objectives for them established”.²¹¹

As noted earlier, there is no arts and culture strategy for at-risk youth and no system for coordinating the provision of services. This results in ad hoc delivery and can lead to duplication of services and less effective use of resources.²¹²

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Colin Pettit saw this as a particular problem in regional areas, where services “may not be well coordinated and communities may be over-served in some areas but lack in others”.

He said that a review of expenditure on services in Roebourne and the Martu communities, undertaken by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in 2014 as part of the Regional Services Reform program, found “fragmented services and considerable duplication” with 35 services for the 247 young people in Roebourne.

210 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p21.

211 *ibid.*

212 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p3; Ms Monica Kane, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p8.

Half of these were sport-based, but their effect was limited due to the lack of coordination of complementary support services. Mr Pettit said this situation was not isolated:

*... during my visits to regional centres in WA I am continually told about the gaps in some services, duplication in others and a general failure of these service providers, particularly government, to engage with the community.*²¹³

The broader Aboriginal Youth Expenditure Review, conducted in 2013, found that there were 15 government agencies delivering 144 projects.²¹⁴ It was not stated how many of these were sport or arts and culture projects, but only 11 per cent of expenditure was on projects targeting youth who demonstrated at-risk behaviour but were not yet entrenched offenders.²¹⁵

The tendency to provide intervention rather than prevention programs is reflected in the chart for expenditure by agencies, which shows that half of all government expenditure on Aboriginal youth programs in 2012-13 was by the Department of Corrective Services. The departments of Sport and Recreation and Culture and the Arts presumably fall into “other”, which accounts for 15 per cent of total expenditure.²¹⁶

The review found inadequate coordination between agencies in the planning and delivery of services, with agencies separately funding “discrete and narrowly focused services”. This fragmented service provision led to duplication and overlapping programs.²¹⁷

The CEO of YACWA, which is currently funded to be part of the Aboriginal youth investment reforms process following on from the review, said that fragmentation created challenges to collaboration because of potentially different or competing priorities within the funding streams.²¹⁸

Satisfying the requirements and priorities of several different government agencies which had provided funding was mentioned by a number of organisations, including one in Melbourne. Jesuit Social Services’ Julie Edwards said that when programs

213 Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p5.

214 Department of the Premier and Cabinet, [Aboriginal Youth Expenditure Review 2013](#), Government of Western Australia, West Perth, 2013, p4.

215 *ibid.*, p10.

216 *ibid.*, p7.

217 Department of the Premier and Cabinet, [Aboriginal Youth Expenditure Review 2013](#), Government of Western Australia, West Perth, 2013, p10.

218 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p7.

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crossed several portfolios, each particular minister wanted to know “how am I getting my pound of flesh, or ensuring accountability for what I fund?”²¹⁹

She said that programs which attempted to deal with multiple risk factors were often the first to face funding cutbacks because they were more complicated to fund and crossed over funding silos. The DSR submission supports this contention:

*In tight budgetary conditions, other state government agencies who are currently involved in at-risk youth engagement may make the decision to pull back to the core business of their agencies, reducing the number of initiatives which are available. This naturally places pressure on those agencies who continue to work in the pre- and early intervention end of the spectrum. There is a risk that ‘soft’ intervention initiatives may suffer for lack of funding and at-risk youth start to fall through the gaps left by resource pressures.*²²⁰

YACWA made the identical observation, with reference specifically to the Department of Corrective Services (DCS):

*Currently we are seeing across the board, state government departments going through measures of review, in particular expenditure due to tight fiscal environments. That is leading to several departments in particular who are positioned to look after the most vulnerable young people in Western Australia pulling back to core business. DCS in particular is focussing on young people who are already engaged in the justice system...*²²¹

The Committee notes that at-risk youth are an easy target since they are already by definition marginalised and lacking the capacity to raise objections.

The review of Aboriginal youth programs has raised questions about the effectiveness of programs, and the need to know whether money is being well spent. But this is not relevant only to Aboriginal programs; organisations across the board raised this same issue. This leads to the question of program evaluation and the challenge of how to demonstrate or measure effectiveness.

Finding 15

Delivery of sports and arts programs to at-risk youth is fragmented, due to a lack of coordination of government agency and non-government organisation programs. This can lead to duplication in some areas and a paucity of programs in others.

219 Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

220 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p5.

221 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p3.

Finding 16

Ancillary arts and sports programs are most vulnerable when State Government departments (other than the arts and sport portfolios) are subject to budgetary constraints.

3.4.2 Demonstrating outcomes

Service providers are often required to demonstrate the outcomes of their programs in order to justify further funding. While this is necessary to ensure that money is being used effectively, there are inherent difficulties in trying to measure social outcomes.

As Ware (2014) notes, benefits are often diffuse and long-term and therefore difficult to measure. As a result, measurements of outcomes and impacts tended to be “via indirect means or proxy measures, such as improved attendance and retention at school, or reduced ambulance and police call-outs”.²²²

Houlihan and White (2002) concur:

*... given that so much of sports development activity is directed towards the achievement of complex social outcomes, such as safer communities and social inclusion, it will be difficult to identify indicators which provide valid evidence of specific contribution that sports development is making to social outcomes.*²²³

Given this, some say that program acquittals based solely on quantitative data are largely meaningless.²²⁴

Nevertheless, many of the youth programs consulted used quantitative measures, including the average number of participants or total number of sessions/workshops provided.²²⁵ Programs co-located with schools tended to use year 12 attainment,

222 Ware, V., '[Supporting healthy communities through arts programs](#)', resource sheet no. 28, Closing the Gap Clearing House, Canberra and Melbourne, January 2014, p5.

223 Houlihan, B. and A. White, *The Politics of Sports Development: Development of Sport or Development through Sport*, Routledge, London, 2002, p214 cited in Evans, J.R. et al., 'Indigenous Participation in Australian Sport: The Perils of the 'Panacea' Proposition', *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Journal*, vol.7, no. 1, 2015.

224 Allain, G., 'An art-based healing process: the Aurukun Creative Livelihoods Project at the Wik and Kugu Arts and Craft Centre', *Australasian Psychiatry*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2011 cited in Ware, V., '[Supporting healthy communities through arts programs](#)', resource sheet no. 28, Closing the Gap Clearing House, Canberra and Melbourne, January 2014, p5.

225 Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch, Get Active Project Officer, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p8; Caccioppoli, P., 'AMP'd Evaluation Report, April 2010 – March 2011', Manukau Leisure Services, Manukau, April 2011, pp6-8, 10-12, 16-18; Caccioppoli, P., 'AMP'd Evaluation Report, April 2011 – March 2012, Manukau Leisure Services, Manukau, April 2012, pp7-9, 11-12, 14, 17-19.

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academic achievement and school attendance rates as performance indicators,²²⁶ while programs aimed at juvenile offenders referred to recidivism rates.²²⁷

At least four of the programs consulted in the Inquiry aimed to transition young people into mainstream sport clubs, and most had key performance indicators (KPIs) relating to the number of participants who joined club as a direct result of the programs.²²⁸ However, some found that it was an unrealistic measure that did not necessarily take into account the needs of the communities.²²⁹

The use of qualitative measures in preference to quantitative measures was strongly supported by Anita Coy-Macken, who was involved in implementing the Auckland-based local government initiative Connect2Sport. Programs should focus on capturing the quality of relationships between participants, communities and program facilitators rather than participant numbers, she said, suggesting that strong relationships are vital to stimulate real change in young people's lives.²³⁰

Many programs appeared to support Ms Coy-Macken's preference for qualitative evidence, referring to largely unmeasurable changes that they observed in their participants when asked how they assess the success of their programs. These included improved confidence,²³¹ communication skills,²³² understanding of cultural identity,²³³

226 Clontarf Foundation and Skilled Group, *Impact of the Clontarf Academies*, report prepared by ACIL Allen Consulting, Melbourne, November 2014, p15; Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, pp6, 8; Community Arts Network, *Summary Report Forecast Social Return on Investment Analysis: Strong Culture, Strong Community program*, report prepared by A. Hoskisson, Resourceful Communities, Community Arts Network, Perth, January 2016, p3; Department of Culture and the Arts, [2010-2013 Artist-in-Residence Grants Program in Western Australia: Evaluation Report](#), report prepared by D. Bennett and V. Caulfield, Curtin University, Government of Western Australia, Perth, 2015, pp9, 260.

227 Miss Natasha Laden, Senior Contract Officer, Wirrpana Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, pp2, 7; Sergeant Rob Woodley, General Manager, Genesis Youth Trust, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

228 Caccioppoli, P., 'AMP'd Evaluation Report, April 2010 – March 2011', Manukau Leisure Services, Manukau, April 2011, p10; Caccioppoli, P., 'AMP'd Evaluation Report, April 2011 – March 2012, Manukau Leisure Services, Manukau, April 2012, p11; Connect2Sport and Sport New Zealand, 'Active Communities Investment: Project Exit Report – Connect2Sport', Connect2Sport and Sport New Zealand, Auckland, September 2014, [p17]; Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch, Get Active Project Officer, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p8.

229 Connect2Sport and Sport New Zealand, 'Active Communities Investment: Project Exit Report – Connect2Sport', Connect2Sport and Sport New Zealand, Auckland, September 2014, [p30].

230 Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016.

231 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, Women's Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association (WOWMA), *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; participants and mentors, Dig Deep, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016; Dr Dave Kelman, Artistic Director, Western Edge Youth Arts, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Community Arts Network, *Summary Report Forecast Social Return on Investment Analysis: Strong Culture, Strong Community program*, report prepared by A. Hoskisson, Resourceful Communities, Community Arts Network, Perth, January 2016, p3.

leadership skills,²³⁴ reduction in negative behaviours,²³⁵ improved engagement and sense of belonging for programs targeting CaLD youth,²³⁶ and improved perceptions of Aboriginal students for programs targeting Aboriginal youth.²³⁷

Ramón Spaaij, research program leader for the Sport in Society program at the Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living at Victoria University, said that another negative effect of using KPIs to evaluate programs is that those with the most complex issues will not show up in the KPIs as success stories. A program may have made a big difference to a very troubled young person but they will not necessarily be represented in figures for study or employment, which was what the funders focussed on.²³⁸

Organisations generally supported the need for some evaluation of effectiveness, not only to ensure that those targeted were receiving a quality service but to weed out those groups that were not delivering good programs.

Clontarf Foundation chief executive officer Gerard Neesham felt that fewer, better quality programs would produce better outcomes.²³⁹

The DCA and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs has recently developed a discussion paper *Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The role of culture in gaining more effective outcomes from WA State Government services*, which addresses this issue, and the DCA's Culture Counts program has also been implemented to provide an indication of effectiveness.

Edmund Rice Centre Youth Programs Coordinator Joe Moniodis said that evaluation should be conducted properly and suggested that an accreditation system be put in place.²⁴⁰

232 Participants and mentors, Dig Deep, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016; Mr Xavier Moloney, Diversity Manager, AFL Victoria, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Dr Dave Kelman, Artistic Director, Western Edge Youth Arts, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

233 Mr Wiremu Mato, Kaihautu – Manager, He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makarau, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016; Mr Xavier Moloney, Diversity Manager, AFL Victoria, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

234 Mr Brent Jones, Development Officer, Coastlines and Bay of Plenty, and Mr Tony Lajpold, CoachForce Development Officer, Upper Central Zone Rugby League, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

235 Mr Mana Winikerei, Waka Taua Wellness Program Coordinator, Raukawa Charitable Trust, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Mr Tony Lajpold, CoachForce Development Officer, Upper Central Zone Rugby League, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

236 Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, and participants, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p8.

237 Community Arts Network, *Summary Report Forecast Social Return on Investment Analysis: Strong Culture, Strong Community program*, report prepared by A. Hoskisson, Resourceful Communities, Community Arts Network, Perth, January 2016, p3.

238 Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader, Sport in Society Program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

239 Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

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As the centre's deputy director Christina Ward said,

*... we could say anything on our reporting back to the department. We could increase our numbers, we could take pictures off the internet and we could really just say this is it, but the people that are ticking that off or acquitting the grant would probably say, 'Yes, this is great'. But they would not know actually what we were doing.*²⁴¹

Mr Moniodis said that assessors needed to come to the centre over a period of time, not just one session, to see what was being achieved. By looking at participation numbers, costs per child and what each child was achieving, a grading could be attached to the program. Programs that were not doing well – anything less than a four-star rating – could be given a certain period to improve but if they did not they would be discontinued.

*I have seen a lot of programs refunded... People have an interest in it, organisations have an interest in it and government departments have an interest in continuing the funding for whatever reason, which is certainly not the quality of service that they deliver to the participants. I think you have got to be courageous to say, "Right, that's not working. That's enough. What is working? Let's get more money into that."*²⁴²

The Committee can see merit in such a system but the assessment criteria would need to be thoughtfully designed to capture complex social outcomes. The relevant government departments (those providing the funds) would also need to be suitably resourced to conduct rigorous evaluations.

It is also unlikely to be suitable for all programs, especially longer term project-based programs. These require longitudinal studies, which are rarely funded.²⁴³

Finding 17

Measurement of outcomes of arts and sport programs for at-risk youth is either absent or lacking in clarity due to its complexity.

240 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p9.

241 Mrs Christina Ward, Deputy Director, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, pp9-10.

242 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p9.

243 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p9.

Recommendation 4

That appropriate resources be made available to government departments to conduct rigorous evaluations of the programs they fund. Evaluations should include a qualitative component.

3.4.3 Securing funding

Two aspects to securing funding dominated the evidence: one was the challenge of accessing long-term funding and the other was the time spent applying for funds.

Organisations overwhelmingly agreed that funding for longer-term projects, or at least successive funding to continue short-term projects, is necessary to implement meaningful change.

Organisations were frustrated at being able to achieve only so much in the short period for which they were funded. This was the case across the sports/recreation and the arts/culture sectors.

*One of my frustrations coming into this job is you only get so much funding for a short period of time or small funding for 12 months, which you can only run on an oily rag. Therefore, when that program stops, especially in those remote areas, what have those young people got to look forward to? Nothing.*²⁴⁴

Both the DSR and the DCA clearly saw the value of long-term funding but were limited in what they could provide from their budget allocations. According to the DSR:

*Many of the current initiatives are by necessity on a short-term funding basis and thus have an uncertain future, despite the positive outcomes that they achieve.*²⁴⁵

And the DCA acknowledged:

*In the majority of cases, at-risk children and young people predominately have access to one-off engagement opportunities with artists and/or arts and cultural organisations in both metropolitan and regional communities. Long-term engagement projects, particularly in the education context, have the ability to transform the academic, social and wellbeing outcomes of children and young people. Addressing this is a matter of scale and therefore funding.*²⁴⁶

244 Mr John Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer, PCYC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p12.

245 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p7.

246 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p21.

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Mr Walker said that building engagement through activities “that have some longevity” was “a fairly essential feature”.²⁴⁷

CAN said that being funded project by project was an ongoing challenge.

*We have actually been able to sustain our work in a community like Narrogin or in the Eastern Wheatbelt over long periods, but only through securing successive funding. I think, in terms of talking about gaps, we are now finding that some of that funding has wound up and we are having to exit those communities. So, for example, we have had to close our office in the Eastern Wheatbelt at Kellerberrin. We are anticipating that we will need to close our office in Narrogin at the end of this year.*²⁴⁸

Many organisations, even those that are well-established, survive only by cobbling together smaller grants from multiple sources. This can lead to the complications outlined the previous section in regard to acquittals and satisfying the demands of more than one master.

With budgetary constraints making funding already tight (both DCA and DSR mentioned that they were working in a competitive or tight fiscal environment),²⁴⁹ groups are forced into a situation of competing for a limited pool of money.

This places considerable strain on organisations which are often also struggling with maintaining ample human resources.

For example, the Edmund Rice Centre’s funding from the DSR was reduced two years ago forcing one of their staff members to resign for three months and use that time to source alternative funds.²⁵⁰

In response to a suggestion from the Committee chair that organisations like Edmund Rice Centre spent “way too much time having to chase the money”, Youth Programs Coordinator Joe Moniodis said: “Yes. Let us put that on the record.”²⁵¹

247 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p4.

248 Ms June Moorhouse, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, pp4-5.

249 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, pp5, 7; Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p21; Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p8; Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, pp6-7.

250 Mrs Christina Ward, Deputy Director, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

251 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

Their director had recently spent three days applying for a grant for an Aboriginal arts program, even though he did not really have the time to do so.²⁵²

CAN's experience was similar. Working across several government agencies and across different levels of government (e.g. State, Commonwealth and local) was time-consuming, according to CAN. The multiple levels of government that they needed to engage with to sustain a community arts program made it "much harder" when it came time for them to exit a community.

*We are not really sufficiently resourced to put in the strategic work into getting them to own that and embed those relationships. There are two challenges there. One is a level of resistance or difficulty in engaging those levels of government and the other is the amount of time it takes to do that when, in fact, we are funded more to do this project work ...*²⁵³

Increased competition for funding means that quite often smaller less experienced organisations missed out. CAN noted that since other avenues of funding had diminished, applications for the Catalyst fund, which they administer, had increased. Catalyst traditionally attracted organisations which did not have the capacity to apply for larger grants and who perhaps required language and numeracy support in preparing their applications (e.g. CaLD and Aboriginal groups).

... we started to get larger organisations and local government auspicing coming to the grants, and when you laid that out, their applications were stronger. We fed this back to the Department of Culture and the Arts that it meant that probably the people in need the most were then missing out again.

The DCA said that because they were only funding 20 per cent of applications through their grants programs, it was inevitable that only the strongest applications would be accepted – hence, the benchmark was quite high.²⁵⁴

Experienced organisations may have no problem completing complex application and acquittal forms, but the Committee formed the view that the DCA's grant application criteria were prohibitively difficult to meet for the sorts of groups which might provide services for at-risk youth.

252 Mrs Christina Ward, Deputy Director, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

253 Ms June Moorhouse, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p7.

254 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p11.

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On the other hand, CAN runs workshops on how to prepare applications for its grants programs. “If people can become comfortable with our processes, which are that much more accessible, they will perhaps not be quite so intimidated by some of the government funding that they can access.”²⁵⁵

The DSR simplified its application and acquittal process some years ago after realising the applications were too complex.

*The acquittals were quite difficult, so we went back to the drawing board and pruned all those back to what a person could understand. Also, I can remember being a bit dismissive of the words “substantive equity”, which for those who maybe are not quite sure is to actually go out and find the people who, firstly, do not know the funding is there; secondly, do not know how to do the application; and, thirdly, do not know how to acquit it.*²⁵⁶

The Committee found the whole process of applying for grants, particularly in the arts sector, inimical to youth at risk. While they – or organisations completing applications on their behalf – may struggle to meet sophisticated application criteria, youth at risk often have life experience which, if channelled into artistic endeavours, would make a powerful statement. Evidence before the Committee suggested a focus on elite arts practitioners rather than engaging more broadly.

Finding 18

Short-term funding of arts and sports programs does not generally lead to long-term benefits for at-risk youth. It also impedes the ability of organisations to attract and retain staff with the skills to interact with this cohort.

Finding 19

The complex criteria to be met for Department of Culture and the Arts grants is a deterrent for groups seeking funding for projects for at-risk youth.

3.4.3 Accommodating participants with different cultural requirements

Service providers in areas with high multicultural populations face additional challenges in delivering their programs.

255 Ms June Moorhouse, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p3.

256 Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p5.

According to PCYC chief executive officer John Gillespie, the range of minority groups in the metropolitan area meant that there were a lot of competing challenges “with different groups wanting different things and different needs”.²⁵⁷

Clubs often had to go out of their way to accommodate young participants from multicultural backgrounds, which could sometimes lead to resentment from non-CaLD groups.²⁵⁸

Working closely with club presidents was key, according to Mr Moniodis. The club needed to understand that it was not a case of favouring particular kids, but merely providing the opportunity to participate.

*We worked with a club recently where they said, “The kids are great. They come to our home games but they don’t go to the away games. They’re letting the team down.” So the club was saying to the kids they are letting the team down. The kids would show up at 5.00 am if you asked them to. But it is just the culture around it. It is about really bridging that cultural divide. And often it means that our kids have to be really independent. They might get dropped off somewhere and the president takes them... There is a whole intricate network working to make sure every kid gets the best opportunity.*²⁵⁹

Communicare’s acting coordinator of Cultural Services Brittany Lance said that organisations such as theirs need to be respectful of the fact that clubs were run by unpaid volunteers. They were careful not to impose an extra burden on clubs by asking them to be culturally inclusive.

*It is working with them and saying, “Hey, like if you’ve got problems, come to us and we can help and support you”, because what they are doing in the clubs is so incredible.*²⁶⁰

Inclusion of Aboriginal communities still had a long way to go, according to CAN. Their research into arts and culture provision by local government found that only six per cent of Western Australian local government authorities had Reconciliation Action Plans. Regional local government stood out as having “some systemic issues around

257 Mr John Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer, PCYC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p12.

258 Mrs Christine Ware, Administration Officer, Dandenong and District Netball Association, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

259 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, pp4-5.

260 Mrs Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

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their ability to create the long-term relationships with Aboriginal people,” according to Ms Kane.²⁶¹

Mr Moniodis said that Western concepts of successful programs did not always translate into CaLD or Aboriginal communities.

*Western models might be thought of as models of best practice on one side but on the other side people could not care less.*²⁶²

261 Ms Monica Kane, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p8.

262 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p8.

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Characteristics of successful programs

Sport and culture can generate long-term change in a young person's life when they come together with a range of additional measures in youth programs. This chapter establishes best practice, outlining the methods of engagement, environmental factors, relationships, and processes shared by programs that successfully support at-risk youth to build resilience and engagement.

... if any organisation is going to be successful in working with young people, there's got to be that relationship connection where young people feel free to come ...

- Teina Rima, Youth Coordinator, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre

4.1 Introduction

WITNESSES and evidence to the Inquiry recognised that sport and culture needs to be part of a broader raft of measures in order to successfully build resilience and engagement with at-risk youth. This is particularly the case for those at the upper end of the spectrum of needs.²⁶³ Simply providing young people with a paintbrush or football with no other support will neither assist them in overcoming the barriers that hinder their meaningful participation nor address their complex needs.

What characteristics, then, must sport and culture programs have in order to produce the desired outcomes? This chapter begins by examining the ways in which young people enter such programs. The primary focus of the chapter, however, is the common factors of successful programs which enable them to develop the protective factors necessary for resilience and engagement.

²⁶³ Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, p2; Submission No. 7 from Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) and Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA), 29 June 2016, p2; Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p8; Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader, Sport in Society Program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Mr Xavier Moloney, Diversity Manager, AFL Victoria, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016; Mr Craig Brierty, Chief Operations Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016; Mr Wiremu Mato, Kaihautu – Manager, He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makarau, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016; Mr Mana Winikerei and Mr Haami Winikerei, Waka Taua Wellness Program Coordinators, Raukawa Charitable Trust, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, Women's Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association (WOWMA), *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

4.2 Methods of engagement

4.2.1 Referrals

Many young people are first exposed to sport and cultural programs for at-risk youth through referrals. Government departments such as child protection, education, corrective services and police all refer youth to programs, including the Communicare Get Active project and Police and Community Youth Centre (PCYC) programs in Western Australia.²⁶⁴ Schools, local governments or religious groups may also refer young people exhibiting anti-social behaviour.

4.2.2 Appealing to the interests of young people

The majority of programs consulted attracted at-risk youth by appealing to their interests, using sport and the arts as a “hook”, incentive, or soft entry point to other support services.²⁶⁵

Ramón Spaaij, research program leader for the Sport in Society program at the Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living at Victoria University, told the Committee that programs using sport in this way more adequately address the needs of at-risk youth than programs adhering to the “romanticised” view that sport participation is, by and of itself, transformational.²⁶⁶ His research has found that successful programs use personal and social development approaches, with sport merely the means through which these approaches are implemented.²⁶⁷

The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) and Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA) also emphasised the need for wrap-around services. While they regard engagement of young people in sport as a constructive thing, they stressed that “sport does not build resilience on its own.” To truly address the needs of

264 Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch, Get Active Project Officer, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p9; Mr John Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer, Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC), *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p3.

265 Information on this point included Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, p2; Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p5; Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p5; Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, pp2-3; Mr Gordon Musulin, Field Support Manager, PCYC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p14; Mr Craig Brierty, Chief Operations Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016; Ms Marianna Codognotto, Arts and Culture Coordinator, Artful Dodgers Studios, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Mr Wiremu Mato, Kaihau – Manager, He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makarau, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016.

266 Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader, Sport in Society Program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

267 See Spaaij, R., 'Building Social and Cultural Capital among Young People in Disadvantaged Communities: Lessons from a Brazilian Sport-based Intervention Program', *Sport, Education and Society*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2012, pp77-95; Spaaij, R., 'Beyond the Playing Field: Experiences of Sport, Social Capital and Integration among Somalis in Australia', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 36, no. 9, 2012, pp1519-1538.

young people, YACWA and AHCWA recommend that skilled professionals (i.e. youth workers) are embedded in sport-based programs.²⁶⁸

Case Study 4.1: Amber Rose, past Artful Dodgers Studios participant

Amber Rose first encountered Artful Dodgers Studios when she was around 18 years old, homeless, and living in an emergency shelter. To occupy her during the day, a social worker took her to the studios and left her there.

At first she just used the free internet, but over time began engaging with staff. With their support, she enrolled in Certificate 1 in Visual Arts and eventually found transitional housing.

Believing that she no longer needed them, Amber Rose stopped visiting the studios. But she still wasn't flourishing; most days were spent in her barely-furnished apartment, "staring at the wall".

After two years of this isolation, a woman from the studios telephoned Amber Rose and invited her to apply for one of their programs, which involved a 6-month mentorship with an artist. Initially, her lack self-confidence caused Amber Rose to reject the invitation; however, the woman persisted and successfully assisted Amber Rose with her application.

The intensive mentoring program increased Amber Rose's self-worth. As she put it, there was no sense that participants were seen as "poor down-trodden losers" who could only draw cats. Instead, they were valued – Amber Rose's mentor helped her to follow her interest in digital art, she was given a \$500 budget, and eventually exhibited at the National Gallery.

She applied for university, which she never would have done had she not been supported by Artful Dodgers Studios.

From there, she was head-hunted for an internship with a virtual reality start-up company. She put her degree on hold and, after just six months as an intern, was appointed as a product manager at the company's Shanghai office. During her year in China, she became an expert in product development, mass manufacturing, cross-cultural teams and virtual reality.

Now back in Melbourne, Amber Rose is completing her degree and looking to volunteer back at Artful Dodgers Studio. She has guest lectured at one of the top universities for art and design in Australasia.

Reflecting on her journey, Amber Rose said that she never used to know what she was capable of because she was simply "struggling to not die that day". Now, however, she knows that she can do anything.²⁶⁹

Many of the programs observed by the Committee were, at their core, social or personal development programs using sport or the arts as a tool to engage youth,

268 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, pp2-3; Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, pp2-3.

269 Amber Rose, former participant, Artful Dodgers Studios, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

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thereby enabling program facilitators to build the trust necessary to address the more complex needs of young people.²⁷⁰

The Artful Dodgers Studios, run by Jesuit Social Services in Collingwood, Melbourne since 1996, is a key example. Young people drop into the open access studios and work on visual arts or music projects with the support of professional artists and musicians. Social workers develop relationships with young people as they complete their projects and, through sustained engagement, determine a young person's needs and provide referrals to wrap-around support services (i.e. one-to-one counselling).²⁷¹

The studio is unique in that Jesuit Social Services also offers a range of mental health, wellbeing, education and employment programs. The transition between studio and support services is therefore smooth; due to their existing relationship with Jesuit Social Services, young people already know the values underpinning the support services and have trust in the counsellors, mentors and process.²⁷²

4.2.3 Inclusion of young people in program development

The inclusion of youth in the development of programs was emphasised by several organisations, echoing the literature and highlighting the positive impact that such involvement had on youth engagement.²⁷³

When young people are not consulted, methods traditionally used to address the needs of at-risk youth can fail to attract their target audience. Staff at Artful Dodgers Studios used the example of a toll-free telephone number introduced by the previous government as a new intake and assessment process for young people with mental illnesses. As Jesuit Social Services chief executive officer Julie Edwards pointed out: "Many young people don't know they have a mental health issue necessarily – they don't think 'Oh I must ring that 1800 number'".²⁷⁴

270 See Mr Tony Lajpold, CoachForce Development Officer, Upper Central Zone Rugby League, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Mr Craig Brierty, Chief Operations Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016; Sergeant Rob Woodley, General Manager, Genesis Youth Trust, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Mr Wiremu Mato, Kaihautu – Manager, He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makarau, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, pp2, 4; Mr Gordon Musulin, Field Support Manager, PCYC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p14.

271 Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

272 Amber Rose, former participant and Aiden, participant, Artful Dodgers Studios, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

273 Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016; Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p21; Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, pp2-3; Mr Peter Caccioppoli, Senior Activation Advisor, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, p5; Mr John Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer, PCYC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p9.

274 Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

Youth involvement in the development of programs also increases their effectiveness. New Zealand youth development program Raise Up, which is run by young people in suburbs with high levels of socioeconomic deprivation, was based on the principle of inclusion. Program facilitators conducted a youth summit and found that young people wanted to participate in unstructured multi-sport activities and rated socialising as more important than competition.

Young people also liked having loud music played during activities as it created a laid-back atmosphere. These aspects were integrated into Raise Up and have reportedly contributed to positive program outcomes, including diversion and leadership development.²⁷⁵

Consulting youth when developing programs can also save authorities money, according to some witnesses.²⁷⁶ YACWA Chief Executive Officer Ross Wortham spoke of the disconnect between young people's expectations of drop-in centres and the assumptions of local government agencies or service providers.

Youth-led discussions revealed that young people did not want state-of-the-art centres in which millions of dollars had been invested, but were content with "simple" and "grungy" spaces.²⁷⁷

Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator at the Edmund Rice Centre, made a similar point about the way programs are framed or advertised. He suggested that understanding the way young people think about intergenerational programs (and, more importantly, realising that they have an aversion to such programs) would help programs to frame themselves in ways that attract young people:

[M]oney is not really being ... put to where it is most effective, and that is really listening to your communities, listening to young people and actually allowing them to be the decision-makers, rather than instead of—and no disrespect—someone in Perth making decisions for a population in the Kimberley without actually an effective engagement with that community.

*– Shaun Wyn-Jones, Policy Officer,
Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia*

275 Mr Peter Caccioppoli, Senior Activation Advisor, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016. See also YMCA, 'Raise Up'.

276 Mr Peter Caccioppoli, Senior Activation Advisor, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p11.

277 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p11.

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You might do an intergenerational program, but do not call it that ... in Common Goal we get the parents coming down and having a kick and we get the young people coming down and having a kick. ... Whereas if I say, “I am running a father-and-son program down at the community centre, come down”, you are going to get nobody there.²⁷⁸

Failing to recognise youth views meant many programs were “not hitting the mark” and, as a result, “there is a lot of money that is not utilised in the most efficient way”.²⁷⁹

4.2.4 Accessibility

An obvious aspect of youth engagement is the ability of young people to physically access programs on offer due to irregular or non-existent public transport services. While programs may exist that could assist young people in building their much-needed resilience and engagement, their effectiveness is decreased by the fact that their client base cannot access them in the first place.

Some programs overcame this obstacle by basing themselves “where the children are or where the youth are”²⁸⁰ – in other words, by going to where the need is greatest. A youth worker with the Edmund Rice Centre, for example, developed a soccer program for young men in a park in Butler after realising that they had nothing to do; they would accompany their sisters to the centre’s Australian football program and then mill around until they could take them home again.²⁸¹

Another approach used by some metropolitan programs is to base themselves close to public transport lines in the central city. Hip-hop and urban music mentoring program Dig Deep, for example, runs out of Art Centre Melbourne, only 450 metres from Flinders Street Railway Station. According to participants, this location is “fair” because everyone has to travel to attend the workshops; no one is advantaged because the program is based in their suburb.²⁸²

At least one organisation visited by the Committee provided transport for participants to ensure that they had access to their services,²⁸³ but some program facilitators cautioned against this approach as it could develop a “culture of dependency” among

278 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, pp7-8.

279 *ibid.*, p8.

280 Mrs Christina Ward, Deputy Director, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p10.

281 *ibid.*, pp8-9; Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p9.

282 Participants, Dig Deep, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

283 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

participants.²⁸⁴ They instead supported techniques that built the capacity of young people and their families, such as teaching them how to navigate public transport routes.²⁸⁵

However, the absence of public transport in some areas and/or the reluctance of parents to allow their children to take public transport alone mean that for some, privately provided transport is the only way to access the programs. Context is everything – some communities may benefit from capacity building approaches, while others may benefit from transport to and from activities.

To further increase the accessibility of their services, some programs are run outside of normal business hours. A few table tennis clubs in New Zealand offer programs in the middle of the night to meet the needs of their communities. This has apparently led to an increase in club membership at a time when membership at other less flexible clubs has decreased.²⁸⁶ YACWA and AHCWA supported such flexibility, identifying the relative absence of out-of-hours services as an area for improvement in the provision of services to at-risk youth.²⁸⁷

4.3 Environment

Bringing young people through the door is arguably the least difficult aspect of engagement; getting them to “buy into” the program, its values and processes can be much more elusive.²⁸⁸ According to evidence received by the Committee, however, the social environment of a program can significantly influence a young person’s transition from disengagement to investment. Some of the themes that emerged from conversations with youth participants and program facilitators are outlined below.

4.3.1 Welcoming and supportive environment

One of the initial factors determining whether a young person actively engages with a program is the degree to which they feel welcomed and supported by both facilitators and other participants. The role of program facilitators in the developing this environment is discussed further in section 4.4.1.

284 Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Mrs Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p9.

285 *ibid.*

286 Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016.

287 Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, pp3, 4, 6.

288 Ms Sally Farr, General Manager, Western Edge Youth Arts, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

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According to good practice principles and witnesses who came before the Committee, inclusion policies support the development of a welcoming environment which, in turn, enhances youth participation.²⁸⁹

For example, mainstream sports clubs with zero tolerance for discrimination, flexibility about minimum requirements for uniform compliance, and that discourage heavy drinking and promote their club to diverse communities have increased their membership amongst people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds.

Young people previously at risk of marginalisation had gained an expanded social network, a sense of purpose and direction, and decreased their likelihood of participating in anti-social behaviour.²⁹⁰

St Mary's Netball Club in Dandenong, which the Committee visited, is an example of this process. Over the last few years St Mary's has increased its number of teams from seven to 13, partly as a result of its "welcoming and culturally responsive club culture". Many players are from refugee and migrant backgrounds.²⁹¹ When asked why they liked St Mary's Netball Club, some of the players indicated that it was the club's welcoming environment and lack of judgment.²⁹²

According to evidence gathered by the Committee, the presence of the following characteristics further contributes to a welcoming and supportive environment:

- Avoiding labels;²⁹³
- Freedom from judgment (i.e. in relation to a young person's experiences or actions, background or physical appearance);²⁹⁴
- Respectful treatment of participants;²⁹⁵

289 See Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch, Get Active Project Officer, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7; Mrs Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p3; Auckland Council, Sport Auckland and Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC), [Connecting with Diversity: Auckland Sports Toolkit](#), Auckland Council, Sport Auckland and Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC), Auckland; Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, *Report into Good Practice Sports Inclusion Models for Young People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities*, report prepared by Garry Henshall and Associates, Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, Victoria, November 2005.

290 Morgan, L., *The Role of Sport in Assisting Refugee Settlement*, Refugee Council of Australia, Melbourne, [2007], pp10-11.

291 Centre for Multicultural Youth, ['Game Plan Case Study 2: Increasing Cultural Inclusion – St Mary's Netball Club'](#).

292 Players, St Mary's Netball Club, Dandenong, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

293 Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader, Sport in Society Program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

294 Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Players, St Mary's Netball Club, Dandenong, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Sergeant Rob Woodley, General Manager, Genesis Youth Trust, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Mr Teina Rima, Youth Coordinator, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

- Adhering to a code of conduct (for program facilitators, participants or both);²⁹⁶ and
- Understanding of past experiences and empathy.²⁹⁷

Peter Caccioppoli, Senior Activation Advisor at Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library in New Zealand, made the observation that young people recognise immediately when programs do not have their best interests at heart, suggesting that they are reluctant to engage as a result.²⁹⁸

This was borne out by a participant at Artful Dodgers Studios who said that he knew the studios were “real” the very first day he stepped through the doors. In contrast to other services, which were often chaotic, rude, paternalistic and patronising, the studios felt genuine and authentic.²⁹⁹

Youth programs like AMP’d, run by Mr Caccioppoli and his team, intentionally purchase high-quality giveaways for young people, in order to reinforce how much they are valued.³⁰⁰ Similarly, Mixit, which uses dance, music and drama to work with young people from predominantly refugee backgrounds, and Artful Dodgers Studios only employs well-respected and well-known artists to work with its participants.³⁰¹

4.3.2 Adaptability of program

Research regarding the engagement of at-risk youth has found the most successful programs are those with the ability to adapt their delivery methods to meet the unique needs of their participants.³⁰²

295 Amber Rose, former participant, Artful Dodgers Studios, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

296 Mr David Rodan, Multicultural Engagement Coordinator, AFL Victoria, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Mr Tony Lajpold, CoachForce Development Officer, Upper Central Zone Rugby League, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

297 Youth coordinators, leaders, and participants, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

298 Mr Peter Caccioppoli, Senior Activation Advisor, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

299 Amber Rose, former participant, and Aiden, participant, Artful Dodgers Studios, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

300 Mr Peter Caccioppoli, Senior Activation Advisor, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

301 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

302 Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader, Sport in Society Program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Larson, R.W., 'Toward a Psychology of Positive Youth Development', *American psychologist*, vol. 55, no. 1, 2000, pp170-183; Haudenhuyse, R. and M. Theeboom, 'Sport Plus and Socially Vulnerable Youth: Opening the Black Box', in Segaert, B. et al. (eds.), *Sports Governance, Development and Corporate Responsibility*, Routledge, New York and London, 2012, pp44-61; Spaaij, R. and R. Jeanes, 'Education for Social Change? A Freirean Critique of Sport for Development and Peace', *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, vol. 18, no. 4, 2013, pp442-457.

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For some programs, this can be recognising that participants may be prevented from attending practice for a sport team or performance and allowing them to participate on a casual basis.³⁰³ For others, it may mean allowing uniforms to be adapted so participants can adhere to their cultural requirements.³⁰⁴

Flexibility can also be displayed by questioning traditional understandings of what constitutes a particular sport or physical activity, discarding the accepted model (i.e. weekly practices and organised games), and developing less structured models.

New Zealand local government initiative Connect2Sport, which initially sought to transition CaLD youth in Auckland from casual sport participation to club membership, found that participants preferred “adapted play” provided through leagues and school programs rather than mainstream sport clubs.³⁰⁵ As a result, Connect2Sport developed 6 to 8-week futsal leagues,³⁰⁶ which met CaLD communities’ needs – the leagues did not demand the same commitment as mainstream football or cost as much to participate.³⁰⁷

Some sport-based programs pride themselves on their capacity to adapt sport in order to respond effectively to the needs of at-risk youth. In one New Zealand program, He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makaurau, the traditional Māori sport kī-o-rahi is adapted to reflect the life goals or values of players. Points are scored in kī-o-rahi by touching the ball first to a pole and then to a central target.

Wiremu Mato, manager of He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makaurau, said that when working with prisoners, each kī-o-rahi pole becomes an objective that participants are seeking in their own lives (i.e. being with their families). The number of poles can also

303 Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader, Sport in Society Program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

304 Mrs Christine Ware, Administration Officer, Dandenong and District Netball Association, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Participants, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Auckland Council, Sport Auckland and Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC), [*Connecting with Diversity: Auckland Sports Toolkit*](#), Auckland Council, Sport Auckland and SPARC, Auckland, p24.

305 Connect2Sport and Sport New Zealand, 'Active Communities Investment: Project Exit Report – Connect2Sport', Connect2Sport and Sport New Zealand, Auckland, September 2014, [pp18, 30, 42].

306 Futsal is a form of soccer that involves five players per side playing on a smaller pitch, usually indoors.

307 Connect2Sport and Sport New Zealand, 'Active Communities Investment: Project Exit Report – Connect2Sport', Connect2Sport and Sport New Zealand, Auckland, September 2014, [p42]. The Waka Taua Wellness Program also adjusts its program to match the experiences of participants. See Mr Mana Winikerei, Waka Taua Wellness Program Coordinator, Raukawa Charitable Trust, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

increase, depending on the number of personal goals participants are working towards.³⁰⁸

Similarly, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, a creative arts initiative aimed at youth who have been excluded from school, uses a young person's interests to determine the art form that will be used as an engagement tool. As mentor Todd Williams said, although he is a musician, he can explore painting with young people if that is where their interests lie. He considers a program which adapts to meet the needs or interests of a young people, rather than the young person adapting to conform to the program's expectations, to be much more effective.³⁰⁹

Western Edge Youth Arts (WEYA) uses professional and emerging artists to work with young people in Melbourne's western suburbs and develop performances about contemporary issues. WEYA Artistic Director Dave Kelman said that any performance must emerge from the vision and ideas of young people; while the WEYA artists assist young people to produce artistically sophisticated work, the artists are ultimately just facilitators, allowing youth to explore their own ideas.³¹⁰

4.3.3 Consistency of service

While a program's methods should remain flexible to respond effectively to youth needs, the ongoing presence of the program and/or program facilitators should not. Consistency of service is a key characteristic of successful programs.³¹¹

Peter Wright, an associate professor at Murdoch University with considerable experience in evaluating the impact of arts programs on the lives of marginalised youth, explained the need for consistency in order to engage young people, saying time is required to profoundly change the life trajectories of young people. He said that Big hART, a national not-for-profit arts company that uses creative processes to support groups and communities that lack opportunities, was so successful because its programs are based on the "notion of long-term commitment—being in and with and for community over time".³¹²

*Particularly in communities that are marginalised or disenfranchised,
they do not want somebody to come in and drop in on the top of them*

308 Mr Wiremu Mato, Kaihautu – Manager, He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makarau, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016.

309 Mr Todd Williams, Youth Mentor, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

310 Dr Dave Kelman, Artistic Director, Western Edge Youth Arts, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

311 Mr Gerard Veltre, Artistic Director, Phunktional, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016; Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, pp7, 8; Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

312 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p7.

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*and say, “This is what we’re going to do; we’re going to fix you up” and then go. It just does not work.*³¹³

Gerard Veltre of Phunktional and Mr Moniodis agreed that the “fly-in, fly-out” approach used by some organisations, whereby young people are provided with large, one-day events or programs that run only for a few weeks, is ineffective.³¹⁴ “You need a regular engagement over a long period of time to build a relationship and then mentor the young person into some form of success,” said Mr Moniodis.³¹⁵

Similarly, Mr Wortham explained that consistency fosters a sense of trust which assists with the engagement of young people:

*We know that trust is one of the most important things that young people need to feel so that they can engage in any service, and so when there is a constant turnover of staff due to short-term funding we see a significant breakdown in trust when it is built.*³¹⁶

Reliability and stability is a cornerstone of the Mixit practice, according to the program’s creative director and producer, Wendy Preston. For 10 years, Mixit has run every Saturday at 2pm, irrespective of public holidays. Ms Preston said that the program is the most consistent thing in some participants’ lives; therefore knowing that the Mixit team will be there “every time we say we will be there” holds considerable importance for those young people.³¹⁷

The Committee heard of the outcomes that emerge from such consistency and trust throughout the Inquiry, including those experienced by Amber Rose, Yvonne, Aiden, Poutapu, and Radiya (see *Case studies 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4 – 4.6*).

The importance of consistency has implications for funding. To implement meaningful change in young people’s lives, funding agencies need to support programs over an extended period of time rather than committing for a year or two (see *Finding 18*).

4.4 People and relationships

4.4.1 The right staff in the right positions

People are central to the effective engagement of young people in sport and culture programs. Australian research has found, for instance, that the inclusion of people from

313 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p8.

314 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7; Mr Gerard Veltre, Artistic Director, Phunktional, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

315 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

316 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, YACWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p3.

317 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

CaLD backgrounds in mainstream sport clubs “almost invariably” begins with an individual or group driving a diversity program due to their personal sense of social and moral responsibility. This reliance on individuals generally means, however, that the promotion of diversity will “fall off the agenda” if they are no longer involved with the club.³¹⁸

Case Study 4.2: Yvonne, Ngā Rangatahi Toa participant

Yvonne’s father died when she was in her early teens. Grieving, she found it difficult to return to school and stayed at home for around two months.

Education officials, alerted to Yvonne’s non-attendance, gave her an ultimatum: return to school or go into alternative education. Yvonne went with the latter, which thrust her into a system that Ngā Rangatahi Toa founder and Executive Director Sarah Longbottom claims is under resourced and creates inequitable outcomes for students, with less access to registered teaching staff than mainstream schools.³¹⁹

To make matters worse for Yvonne, she was made homeless and began staying temporarily with anyone who would take her in.

Eventually, Yvonne came across Ngā Rangatahi Toa, an initiative using creative arts projects to empower youth in Auckland, New Zealand. Sarah invited Yvonne to participate in a 6 week, group mentoring program that included mentor and rapper Todd Williams. Although Yvonne was initially reluctant to participate, Todd created a safe environment that “made us feel like we could do whatever we wanted to do”.

This experience forced Yvonne out of her comfort zone and she enjoyed it so much that she jumped at the chance to participate in Manawa Ora, a two week, one-to-one mentoring project. Paired with well-known New Zealand actress Teuila Blakely, she created a spoken work about her life. It was extremely challenging for Yvonne, but she gained strength from the knowledge that everyone in Ngā Rangatahi Toa “had my back”.

“It was the best thing that’s happened to me ever since my Dad passed away. Just the vibe that everyone had made me want to be in this environment. It made me stay and want to come more. It was the most fun thing going on.”

Today, Yvonne is almost unrecognisable as the girl who dropped out of mainstream education. Through Sarah’s contacts, she now has a permanent home (which both Yvonne and Sarah stress is central to her development), is attending a mainstream school and is “loving it”. Her Ngā Rangatahi Toa mentors still keep in contact and offer to help with her school work (not that she needs it; she has passed everything since returning to mainstream education). To top it all off, in 2016 she will intern at Ngā Rangatahi Toa, learning how to develop, fund and run projects like Manawa Ora.³²⁰

318 Spaaij, R. et al., 'Diversity Work in Community Sports Organizations: Commitment, Resistance and Institutional Change', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, (publication pending), pp9, 20, 27.

319 Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Nine To Noon, '[Funding woes for NZ's most difficult students](#)', *Radio New Zealand*, 26 April 2016.

320 Yvonne, participant, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

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The importance of having the right staff in the right positions was emphasised throughout the Inquiry. Chief Executive Officer of the Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC) John Gillespie told the Committee that PCYC had replaced two-thirds of centre managers “because they were not the right person”, suggesting that the most successful centres were those run by people with a passion for, and commitment to, their community.³²¹

Nevertheless, it is impossible to pinpoint the exact qualities in a youth mentor, program facilitator or coordinator that will make a difference to a young person. When asked to explain their “light bulb” moment (i.e. when they chose to stop engaging in negative or dangerous behaviours), many young people cited their relationship with mentors or facilitators, but some could only describe the impact of such people in general terms. “Just the vibe that everyone had made me want to be in this environment,” said one young person.³²²

It seems apparent that, in order to engage and build resilience, participants need to find something or someone to which they can relate; they need to find a mentor that reflects at least one aspect of themselves. Dr Wright described this as the need for “human connectedness ... the notion of belonging somewhere, which is important for all of us”.³²³

Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director of Ngā Rangatahi Toa, suggested that true youth engagement required mentors and participants to have a shared understanding of the world:

*We work very hard in matching kids up ... with the right mentor. And it's not around putting the artists with the artists, the musicians with the musicians; it's around how we find two humans – one's an adult, one's a kid – that function the same way in the world.*³²⁴

The Committee observed that many employees at successful programs could empathise with at-risk youth because they shared similar backgrounds or experiences. As one program coordinator explained:

*We've been in the dark and we know what it's like to hang around down there. And we know what it's like to be in the light and how to stay there.*³²⁵

321 Mr John Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer, PCYC, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, pp9, 13.

322 Yvonne, participant, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

323 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p6.

324 Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

325 Mr Mana Winikerei, Waka Taua Wellness Program Coordinator, Raukawa Charitable Trust, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

Armed with first-hand knowledge of the challenges facing young people, these individuals contributed to the welcoming and supportive environment necessary to engage youth with complex needs. In fact, most of the organisations that met with the Committee had specific pathways through which they nurtured participants into mentoring roles in order to retain this understanding within their programs (see sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.3).

Some organisations, particularly those working with Indigenous or CaLD youth, adhered to good practice and ensured that their workforce reflected the ethnic and/or cultural diversity of program participants.³²⁶

Case Study 4.3: Majok Ngong, Australian Football League (AFL) Victoria Multicultural Development Officer trainee

Majok arrived in Australia from Southern Sudan when he was 14 years old.

At first, he continued playing soccer but struggled to find a sense of belonging. He said that every soccer clubs' members tend to come from the same ethnic backgrounds; he played for an Italian club and an Albanian club and never felt connected to his local community.

This all changed when Majok began playing (as he put it) the "egg ball game" of Australian football. He initially joined the Wyndham Vale Football Club, which was right next to his house, and increased his connection to Australian culture. As he said, "now I feel Australian because I have something to talk about on Monday."

The next year, a new club was established and he was approached by the club president to be its wellbeing officer.

Today, he is a Multicultural Development Officer trainee with AFL Victoria, encouraging people from diverse communities to take up Australian football.

Majok said that, like him, a lot of people from African communities aspire to find the sense of belonging that is offered through Australian football. He believes that the sport also offers many employment opportunities for people from CaLD backgrounds, including administration positions and as community ambassadors.³²⁷

As the Committee has noted in previous reports, this approach has been found to create greater understanding of Indigenous or CaLD cultures within an organisation and increase cooperation from these communities.³²⁸

326 Sergeant Rob Woodley, General Manager, Genesis Youth Trust, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016. The Waka Taua Wellness Program and Wirrpanda Foundation also use this approach.

327 Mr Majok Ngong, Multicultural Development Officer trainee, AFL Victoria, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

328 Community Development and Justice Standing Committee (39th Parliament), [*How do they manage? An investigation of the measures WA Police has in place to evaluate management of personnel*](#), Report No. 12, Parliament of Western Australia, Perth, March 2016, pp6-7.

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In essence, it addresses a question put to the Committee during its investigative travel: “Unless I see myself there, how am I ever going to think that this is something for me?”³²⁹

The benefits of an organisation reflecting the composition of the communities that it serves were reinforced throughout the Inquiry. The Wirrpanda Foundation, which focuses on the improvement of educational, employment and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, employs predominantly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to deliver its programs. Senior Contract Officer Natasha Laden said that one of the “most amazing things” she has encountered while working with the foundation is the knowledge that mentors have in relation to each new participant:

*When the young people are referred to the program [the program managers] generally know the families. It is not like a mentoring program—and I am not being critical of other services—but a program where they are non-Aboriginal workers. These people know the families and generally know the issues, the family conflict, that is going on.*³³⁰

Radiya Ali, Youth Coordinator in the Women’s Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association (WOWMA), said that it was the involvement of a well-known and respected member of the Muslim community in Hamilton, New Zealand – WOWMA founder and lead coordinator Aliya Danzeisen – that overcame her parents’ initial opposition to her participation in some of the program’s activities.³³¹ And the Committee noted that Mana and Haami Winikerei, the program coordinators of the Waka Taua Wellness Program (which is operated in accordance with a Māori worldview and approach), were trusted so deeply by local Māori families that they were often approached directly for assistance with young people with behavioural problems.³³²

329 Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016. Ms Sally Farr, the general manager of Western Edge Youth Arts, also asked: “If you’re a person of colour, you don’t see yourself reflected on the stages, so where do you possibly get the idea you could be an actor?” See Sally Farr, General Manager, Western Edge Youth Arts, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

330 Miss Natasha Laden, Senior Contract Officer, Wirrpanda Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p4.

331 Ms Radiya Ali, Youth Coordinator, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

332 Mr Haami Winikerei, Waka Taua Wellness Program Coordinator, Raukawa Charitable Trust, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

4.4.2 Mentoring

Youth mentoring, as defined by the Australian Youth Mentoring Network, is a “structured and trusting relationship that brings young people (mentees) together with caring individuals (mentors) who offer guidance, support and encouragement”.³³³

Although the literature is vague about the exact activities and features that a mentoring program needs to create the best outcomes for at-risk youth, it is generally agreed that pairing at-risk youth with mentors helps to decrease problematic behaviours (i.e. aggression and drug use) and/or increase academic achievement.³³⁴

With every successful program, I've found that the key to success is accessing and utilizing well respected mentors or project leaders, to work with the kids throughout the program. – Gail, quoted in YACWA and ACHWA submission

In essence, mentoring provides young people with some of the protective factors necessary to develop resilience, including a strong relationship and a positive, adult role model (see Chapter 1).

After reviewing 41 years of literature on mentoring programs for at-risk youth, Tolan et al. (2014) found that four processes broadly characterised mentoring:

1. *identification of the recipient with the mentor that helps with motivation, behaviour, and bonding or investment in pro-social behaviour and social responsibility;*
2. *provision of information or teaching that might aid the recipient in managing social, educational, legal, family, and peer challenges;*
3. *advocacy for the recipient in various systems and settings; and*
4. *emotional support and friendliness to promote self-efficacy, confidence, and sense of mattering.*³³⁵

As discussed above, the effectiveness of many of these processes rely on mentors with whom at-risk youth identify, either culturally or experientially.

³³³ Australian Youth Mentoring Network, 'Aims and Objectives'.

³³⁴ See the meta-analytical review of 163 studies about mentoring programs for youth at risk, published 1970 to 2011, in Tolan, P.H. et al., 'Mentoring Programs to Affect Delinquency and Associated Outcomes of Youth At-Risk: A Comprehensive Meta-Analytic Review', *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, vol. 10, no. 2, June 2014, pp179-206.

³³⁵ Quoted directly from *ibid*.

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Several organisations provided evidence to the Committee that they incorporated, to varying degrees, mentoring into their youth programs. Some, like Ngā Rangatahi Toa and the Genesis Energy Trust, have one-to-one mentoring as part of their core business. Others use less intensive mentoring practices (i.e. one individual mentoring several young people) or have mentoring as simply one in a suite of intervention practices.³³⁶

All programs using mentoring initiatives, however, appeared to recognise that sustained and enduring contact between mentors and mentees was required to generate real change in the lives of young people. “We have learnt that it’s not really a quick fix,” said Haami Winikerei, program coordinator with the Waka Taua Wellness Program (which is operated in accordance with a Māori worldview and approach). “You’ve just got to be patient and keep nurturing and nurturing.”³³⁷

Ngā Rangatahi Toa runs a series of mentoring projects with a core group of young people throughout the year: one-to-one mentoring project Manawa Ora (2 weeks), group mentoring program Art ACTION (6 weeks), and Takatu, which centres on peer-to-peer teaching and learning (8 weeks).

These projects are structured in a way that can encourage enduring relationships. Mentors are engaged in the program through Ms Longbottom’s personal networks. When inducted into the program, they are taught that its approach is based on three elements: love, kindness and compassion. As a result, mentors can maintain contact with mentees beyond the life of the program.³³⁸

Ngā Rangatahi Toa also has an engagement team, which Ms Longbottom calls the “back bone” of its success. The team maintains prolonged contact with participants and their families, which assists them to transform their own lives.³³⁹

Similarly, Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer of the Clontarf Foundation, said that the organisation is with Clontarf students “for life”. For example, when former

336 Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Sergeant Rob Woodley, General Manager, Genesis Youth Trust, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, pp2, 3, 5; Mr Troy Cook, Health and Leadership Manager, Wirrpana Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, pp1, 6; Ms Stephanie Syme, Chief Financial Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

337 Mr Haami Winikerei, Waka Taua Wellness Program Coordinator, Raukawa Charitable Trust, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

338 Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, and Yvonne, participant, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

339 Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, Electronic Mail, 7 August 2016.

participants transfer between towns, they will often seek assistance from Clontarf offices at the destination.³⁴⁰

Case Study 4.4: Aiden, Artful Dodgers Studios participant

Artful Dodgers Studios came into Aiden's life at a time when he wanted to die. His father (who was also his best friend) died by suicide around two years earlier and Aiden struggled to continue. He explained, "When you deal with grief like this it doesn't go away – I just live moment to moment."

He found a psychologist who helped him to get off drugs and stop drinking, but he still had no motivation. His psychologist put him on to the Support After Suicide program that, like Artful Dodgers Studios, was run by Jesuit Social Services.

Aiden booked a session with Jesse Hooper (of Killing Heidi fame) at the studios, which changed his life. With Jesse's help, he explored his music ideas and produced videos – something he didn't even think about before he came to the studios.

Aiden said that without Artful Dodgers Studios he would struggle to get out of bed in the morning and probably would've returned to using drugs and alcohol. But now he has hopes for the future, including making a living off his music.³⁴¹

4.4.3 Engagement with community

Today, it is widely acknowledged that to satisfactorily address issues within a specific group or community, that group or community should be intimately involved in the development and implementation of a solution. In Australia, the need for community-based and community-owned initiatives is most often discussed in relation to programs or services that seek to address the socioeconomic disadvantage affecting Aboriginal communities.³⁴²

The rationale for community-based and community-owned initiatives, as stated by the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia, is that:

340 Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

341 Aiden, participant, Artful Dodgers Studios, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

342 See Gordon, S., K. Hallahan and D. Henry, [Putting the picture together, Inquiry into Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities](#), Department of Premier and Cabinet, Western Australia, July 2002, pp427-428; Dudgeon, P. et al., [Hear our voices: Community Consultations for the Development of an Empowerment, Healing and Leadership Program for Aboriginal people living in the Kimberley, Western Australia: Final Research Report](#), Australian Government, March 2012, pp86-88; Hudson, L. et al., [The Elders' Report into Preventing Indigenous Self-harm and Youth Suicide](#), People Culture Environment and Our Generation Media, [Yuin, NSW], 2014; The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP), [Youth Roundtable Report, 16 March 2015 – Healing Foundation](#), ATSISPEP, Perth, March 2015, pp12-13; Department of the Premier and Cabinet, [Aboriginal Youth Expenditure Review 2013](#), Government of Western Australia, West Perth, 2013.

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*... community-based and community-owned initiatives are inherently responsive to the problems faced by the community and are culturally appropriate to that community. They are driven by real community need...*³⁴³

The Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) made a distinction between these types of “culturally-based” and “culturally-embedded” initiatives and

“government owned and controlled ‘culturally-appropriate’ services”.

The answers to whatever issues you face are already in the country that you're in – they're in the land, they're in the culture, they're in the language. – Sarah Longbottom, Ngā Rangatahi Toa

The latter has received significant funding in recent years, KALACC submitted, but has had little impact on suicide rates or juvenile offending in the Kimberley. The former, meanwhile, had received “absolutely minimal” government funding, despite widespread recognition of the positive

outcomes arising from Aboriginal owned and controlled programs.³⁴⁴

Much of the evidence presented to the Committee agreed that including community leaders from relevant cultures or communities into program design and/or implementation benefitted the programs, their target audience, and the wider community.

Organisations providing services for youth from Aboriginal or CaLD backgrounds in particular noted that such involvement ensured the program had maximum impact; not only were programs more culturally relevant (and thus more attractive) to participants, but Elders and leaders often became advocates for the program within their communities, thereby increasing a program's reach.³⁴⁵

343 Law Reform Commission of Western Australia, [*Aboriginal Customary Laws: The interaction of Western Australian law with Aboriginal law and culture: Final Report*](#), Project No. 94, Government of Western Australia, Perth, September 2012, p36, referred to in Submission No. 5 from the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC), 19 June 2016, p5.

344 Submission No. 5 from KALACC, 19 June 2016, pp8, 9, 18.

345 See *ibid.*; Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, p2; Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, pp5-6; Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p5; Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, pp2-3, 5; Mrs Christine Ware, Administration Officer, Dandenong and District Netball Association, and Ms Penny Collins, President, St Mary's Netball Club, Dandenong, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016; Ms Radiya Ali, Youth Coordinator, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

This interaction was highlighted by Monica Kane, co-General Manager of CAN (Community Arts Network), in relation to the organisation's work in Narrogin. CAN was invited into the town in 2010 after a period of feuding between families and increased youth suicide risk.

CAN consulted families and “asked for their support in opening an office, with the condition that both sides of the family are employed in the office”.³⁴⁶ Since then, CAN has continued to build relationships within the Noongar community.

If you're funding something that's coming into a community, it's not going to work. If you're funding something that's coming from a community, that'll work.

—Sarah Longbottom, Ngā Rangatahi Toa

According to an evaluation commissioned by CAN, this approach resulted in the following benefits for the young people and the broader community:

1. Participants obtained increased confidence, improved their school attendance and re-engaged with the learning process.
2. Parents, caregivers and Elders benefitted from observing the increasing resilience of their young people.
3. Narrogin Senior High School received increasingly engaged Noongar students and positive perceptions of Noongar students in the school environment.

The social return for each dollar invested in the Narrogin-based program was calculated at \$18.58.³⁴⁷

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Economic analysis shows that investment in programs for at-risk youth deliver a very high social return.

Capacity building also resulted from CAN's commitment to employ local Noongar staff in its Narrogin office. CAN co-General Manager June Moorhouse spoke of a woman who began as a project participant, transitioned into a project officer role with CAN, moved to an officer position in the Narrogin office, and is currently a business administration trainee at a large oil and gas company.³⁴⁸

346 Ms Monica Kane, co-General Manager, CAN (Community Arts Network), *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p4.

347 Community Arts Network, *Summary Report Forecast Social Return on Investment Analysis: Strong Culture, Strong Community program*, report prepared by A. Hoskisson, Resourceful Communities, Community Arts Network, Perth, January 2016, pp3, 4.

348 Ms June Moorhouse, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p5.

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As well as inviting a community into a program in order to achieve positive outcomes, the Committee also found that some programs had achieved broader outcomes for society as a whole by reversing the process and connecting young people from marginalised groups to the mainstream community.

When WOWMA was established, for example, the founders saw a need to increase participants' sense of connection to New Zealand. Participants – many of whom are from migrant or refugees backgrounds – reported that it was an overwhelming success, with most saying that they identified with “Kiwi culture” since completing the program.

The wider New Zealand community has also benefitted: 95 per cent of participants have gone onto tertiary education and many of the young women that met with the Committee are in service-orientated professions, including nursing, law, and social work.³⁴⁹

4.4.4 Involvement of the family

Where necessary and appropriate, some program providers implemented a family-focused approach to generate long-term, sustained change in a young person's life. Programs focusing on youth offenders in particular favoured family involvement on the basis that returning a young person to a dysfunctional home environment significantly reduced their chances of sustained behavioural change.³⁵⁰

With the aim of reducing recidivism amongst the more prolific Aboriginal youth offenders in Banksia Hill Detention Centre, the Wirrpanda Foundation's Moorditj Ngoorndiak program employs mentors (including former elite Australian Football League (AFL) players) to work with young people and their families to re-engage with education, employment and the community.

The holistic approach has resulted in measurable success: 60 per cent of participants did not return to detention within six months of their release.³⁵¹

Building relationships with families was also particularly important for programs aimed at young people from CaLD backgrounds. Parents from migrant backgrounds rarely consider their child's participation in sport and the arts as a priority, especially with regard to their daughters. Some parents are also wary of entrusting their children to programs without knowing that their physical safety and cultural requirements will be adequately catered for (*see Chapter 2*).

349 Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, and participants, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

350 Acting Senior Sergeant Keith Olsen, District Coordinator, Youth Services, Counties Manukau Police, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Miss Natasha Laden, Senior Contract Officer, Wirrpanda Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p7.

351 Miss Natasha Laden, Senior Contract Officer, Wirrpanda Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, pp2,7.

Programs therefore spoke of the need to develop trusting relationships with families to provide assurance that they can be trusted with their children, to educate them on the benefits of extra-curricular activities and, eventually, to encourage them to permit their children's participation.³⁵² Christina Ward, Deputy Director of the Edmund Rice Centre, explained this process:

*You have to take it slowly and build a relationship with people. And generally they are very keen, particularly if you are talking about their children, to support their children, but often, for example, with things like camps, they will not let a child go on camp unless they know who you are and you are picking them up and they are convinced that their child is safe. So it is just about building a relationship.*³⁵³

Sports clubs adhering to good practice may employ multicultural liaison officers to facilitate dialogue between the club and the families.³⁵⁴

Developing these relationships can have profound ripple effects. The Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) suggested that family members might take on the role of club treasurer, thereby gaining financial management skills that could be used in other areas of their lives.³⁵⁵

St Mary's Netball Club in Dandenong encourages players' parents to volunteer in the canteen, which may decrease the isolation experienced by many CaLD families and increase their sense of belonging. For some women, it is also the first time that they have handled money and the club has observed the sense of empowerment that can result. Administration officer Christine Ware said: "We don't have paid staff in the canteen, they all volunteer. And that's a good way to rub shoulders over the hotdog boiler."³⁵⁶

352 Ms Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, pp5-6; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016.

353 Mrs Christina Ward, Deputy Director, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p5.

354 Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader, Sport in Society Program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

355 Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p5.

356 Mrs Christine Ware, Administration Officer, Dandenong and District Netball Association, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

4.5 Processes

4.5.1 Empowerment and capacity building

Empowerment is the process by which people achieve control over their lives. It requires one to gain skills such as the ability to reflect, analyse, communicate, control their emotions and make decisions; these skills are then employed to address oppressive elements in one's life.

As Dudgeon et al. (2012) note, empowerment is often associated with a sense of change or transformation – people who are disempowered can feel constantly buffeted

Like it or not, they're going to be our fathers, and they're going to be our grandfathers, and they're going to be the leaders ... We just want to help them to be the very best that they can be right now.

- Mana Winikerei,

Waka Taua Wellness Coordinator

by life, whereas empowered individuals know that they have choices in their decision-making and behaviour.³⁵⁷

Capacity building, or the strengthening of an individual's abilities or knowledge, is intertwined with the concept of empowerment. It is, in essence, the process of arming a person with the skills that create an empowered individual.

To some extent, participation in sport and culture can empower a person simply by pushing them beyond their assumed limits and exposing hitherto unused strengths. One WOWMA participant illustrated this process when she explained the impact of a four-day, 90-kilometre canoe trip on her resiliency:

*I've always been more of an academic person ... I've never felt physically strong or powerful. But even to this day every time I go through anything, I'm like "oh, this is nothing. I can do 90 kilometres in the Whanganui River, I can handle this" ... If I can do that, I can do anything.*³⁵⁸

However, the Committee observed that those organisations employing sport and culture as a "hook" or incentive (see section 4.2.2) tended to have established pathways aimed at youth empowerment. Some used one-to-one counselling to assist young people to identify the causal factors of their disempowerment and the

357 Dudgeon, P. et al., [*Hear our voices: Community Consultations for the Development of an Empowerment, Healing and Leadership Program for Aboriginal people living in the Kimberley, Western Australia: Final Research Report*](#), Australian Government, March 2012, p80.

358 Sarah, Youth Leader, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

mechanisms necessary for change, including goal setting, reflection and empathy.³⁵⁹ However, structured, leadership-focused pathways within the sport or culture programs were the most common method of empowering participants.³⁶⁰

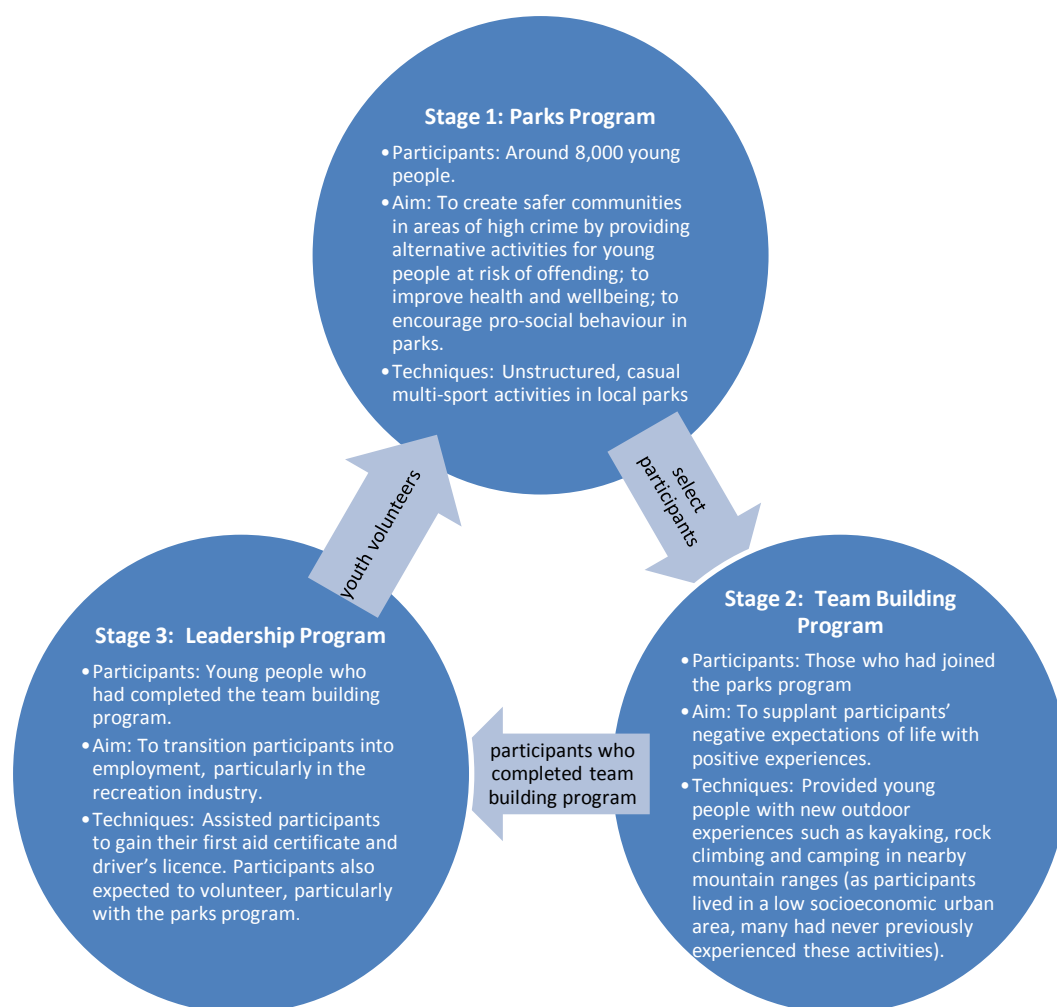


Figure 4.1: An example of the empowerment process used by many programs and modelled here using information provided by AMP'd, which ran in Manukau, New Zealand from 2009-2012. Information from: AMP'd evaluation reports, April 2010 – March 2012.

³⁵⁹ Sergeant Rob Woodley, General Manager, Genesis Youth Trust, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Amber Rose, former participant, Artful Dodgers Studios, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

³⁶⁰ Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016; Ms A.S. Danzeisen, Lead Coordinator, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016; Mr Peter Caccioppoli, Senior Activation Advisor, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Ms Anita Coy-Macken, Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Auckland Council, *Briefing*, 2 June 2016; Mr Tony Lajpold, CoachForce Development Officer, Upper Central Zone Rugby League, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

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These pathways proceeded in stages with new experiences, skills (i.e. accredited learning)³⁶¹ and responsibilities introduced at each stage. Pathways were invariably cyclical: by the final stage, young people were either volunteering or employed with the program, imparting their newly-acquired knowledge and skills to incoming participants (*see the Figure 4.1 for an example of this process*).

4.5.2 Education

In Chapter 1, engagement in school and education was identified as a protective factor contributing to one's resilience. How education is addressed in programs targeting at-risk youth is, therefore, worthy of examination.

Several organisations that contributed to the Inquiry have run their programs through primary and/or high schools in WA, including CAN, the Wirrpanda Foundation, the Department of Culture and the Arts (the former Artist-in-Residence Grants Program), Communicare, and the Clontarf Foundation. Co-location of programs and schools allow facilitators to build relationships with youth over an extended period of time and engage them in education *before* they drop out.³⁶²

Aligning programs with primary or secondary schools leads to increased engagement in education, according to information provided by organisations. They reported that their sport or arts programs increased attendance, retention and engagement, particularly in schools with a high Aboriginal student population.³⁶³

Even programs without direct links to schools tend to increase youth engagement with education. Dr Wright said that around 94 per cent of young people who participate in identity work and identity projects (what he called "find your passion" projects) are subsequently engaged in work or education; only 65 per cent of young people who do not participate in identity projects are similarly engaged in work or education.³⁶⁴

Several people consulted by the Committee re-engaged with education after participating in at-risk youth programs, even though the programs in which they were

361 Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

362 Dr Dave Kelman, Artistic Director, Western Edge Youth Arts, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016; Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016; Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, p3.

363 Department of Culture and the Arts, [*2010-2013 Artist-in-Residence Grants Program in Western Australia: Evaluation Report*](#), report prepared by D. Bennett and V. Caulfield, Curtin University, Department of Culture and the Arts, Perth, 2015, p9; Community Arts Network, *Summary Report Forecast Social Return on Investment Analysis: Strong Culture, Strong Community program*, report prepared by A. Hoskisson, Resourceful Communities, Community Arts Network, Perth, January 2016, p3; Clontarf Foundation and Skilled Group, *Impact of the Clontarf Academies*, report prepared by ACIL Allen Consulting, Melbourne, November 2014, pp14-15; Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016, pp7, 8.

364 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p10. See also Deluca, S., S. Clampet-Lundquist and K. Edin, *Coming of Age in the Other America*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2016, pp67, 90.

involved did not offer direct pathways into education. Poutapu, who was on the edge of gang affiliation when he joined the Waka Taua Wellness Program, subsequently completed two undergraduate degrees and a post-graduate diploma (see *Case study 4.5*). Amber Rose, who was homeless at 18 years old, is completing her degree and has gone on to guest lecture at a prominent Australian art and design university (see *Case study 4.1*).

Case Study 4.5: Poutapu Winikerei, past Waka Taua Wellness participant

When Poutapu was 19 years old, he was the epitome of an “at-risk youth”. He lived a transient life, his increasing drug use had led to a serious, drug-induced incident, and he was moving towards gang affiliation.

Unlike other at-risk youth, however, Poutapu had uncles, Mana Winikerei and Haami Winikerei, with considerable experience helping young people turn their lives around. As the coordinators of the Waka Taua Wellness Program, which uses traditional waka (canoe) training to help males aged 13 to 20 years to address their problems with violence, mental health issues and/or alcohol and drug use, Mana and Haami recognised the trouble that Poutapu was in and brought him onto the program.

For two years, Poutapu took part in Waka Taua as a participant, learning the traditional Māori concepts that underpinned the program and how the program functioned on a day-to-day basis. He then joined the Waka Taua team as a staff member and, for around two or three years, taught other young men the same values and knowledge that he had gained.

No doubt inspired by what he saw, Poutapu enrolled in tertiary education, gaining degrees in mental health and Māori studies. He has since gone on to complete a post-graduate diploma in education and is now a secondary school teacher.

In many ways, his life has come full circle. In his current position, he often sees young men who need to “get out of town and into the program” and regularly refers them to the Waka Taua Wellness Program.

Reflecting on how the program contributed to his growth, Poutapu attributed it to its grounding in Māori knowledge, values and world view. He used a whakataukī (proverbial saying) to explain:

“E hoki ki tō maunga, kia purea tō hinengaro e ngā hau e whā o Tāwhirimātea.”³⁶⁵ ... This whakataukī encapsulates all that has been spoken, about finding your foundation, your identity. On the program, that’s what I found: my identity, a fuller sense of pride, especially going down the river, seeing the mountains, seeing the areas where people walked, learning the haka ...”³⁶⁶

365 Return to your mountain (place of belonging, where your people come from), and be cleansed by the four winds of Tāwhirimātea (the god of weather).

366 Mr Poutapu Winikerei, past participant, Waka Taua Wellness Program, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

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Their journeys align with existing research, which suggests that addressing the risk factors affecting young people's lives enables them to focus on education.³⁶⁷

4.5.3 Employment pathways

A common theme to emerge from the Inquiry was the symbiotic relationship between programs and participants: programs assist youth to enhance their capacity and resilience, which some participants then reinvest into the programs by volunteering or working in leadership roles. Both programs and young people benefit significantly from this relationship.

Mixit, CAN, Artful Dodgers Studio, Western Edge Youth Arts, Dig Deep, WOWMA, Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre and Library, Connect2Sport, AFL Victoria, the Edmund Rice Centre and Communicare identified at least one former participant – and often several more – who had returned to their programs as employees or volunteers. This is a relatively common practice, according to Dr Wright: Youth “want to, having been through the experience, basically give back”.³⁶⁸

Despite their use of sport and cultural activities to work with at-risk youth, few programs explicitly set out to develop professional artists or sportspeople. Studies from the United States validate programs' reluctance to direct youth down these pathways, finding that myths around the attainability of elite sporting careers have been counter-productive for some disadvantaged youth. As Dr Spaaij pointed out, why would students go to school or work if they thought they could be the next LeBron James?³⁶⁹

Nevertheless, the arts, cultural and creative sector and sport and recreation industry are significant areas of employment. According to the Department of Culture and the Arts, as at 2006, the arts, cultural and creative sector employed more than 42,000 people. In 2011, 'Arts and Recreation Services' in WA was the third highest employment category for Aboriginal people.³⁷⁰ It is possible young people can find work using the skills they gained in sport and culture programs in these industries (see *Case studies 4.1 and 4.3*).

Of the organisations that met with the Committee, only AFL Victoria appeared to offer careers at the elite level as a genuine possibility. The stated objective of its Multicultural Program is to assist migrant and refugee communities to access football, with the sport regarded as a way to promote inclusion within the wider Australian

367 See Education and Health Standing Committee (38th Parliament), [*A child who is healthy, attends school, and is able to read will have better educational outcomes*](#), Report No. 18, Parliament of Western Australia, Perth, November 2012.

368 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p5.

369 Dr Ramón Spaaij, research program leader for Sport in Society program, Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

370 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, pp4, 5.

community. Yet there was still a sense that boosting the profile of Australian football was the underlying purpose of the program, more so than inclusion of the multicultural community.

In contrast to a sports program for CaLD youth in New Zealand, which responded to participants' sporting interests when developing projects, AFL Victoria only works through the medium of Australian football. AFL Victoria Multicultural Development Officer trainee Majok Ngong said that part of his role involves persuading youth to switch sporting codes.³⁷¹

While this does not undermine the valuable work that AFL Victoria is doing through its Multicultural Program (Mr Ngong said that his sense of belonging increased when he switched from soccer to football),³⁷² Australian research has concluded that the business rationale that underpins such programs tends to be detrimental to equality outcomes in sport.³⁷³

4.5.4 Collaboration with other services

In line with the conclusion that sport or culture does not, by and of itself, build resilience, evidence presented to the Committee indicated sport and culture-based programs needed to link to other service providers to enhance youth resilience.

YACWA and ACHWA submitted that “relatable youth workers” should be embedded in sport-based programs “to teach life skills, culture and focus on the underlying (often complex) needs of young people in order to achieve outcomes for resilience building”.³⁷⁴ Colin Walker, Director of Policy, Planning and Research at the Department of Culture and the Arts, agreed that a “wraparound” approach was needed to address some of the issues facing youth and society more broadly.³⁷⁵

Programs run by larger organisations, such as Communicare or the Jesuit Social Services, have complementary services within the same organisation to which they can refer participants.³⁷⁶ However, smaller, similarly successful organisations have also

371 Mr Majok Ngong, Multicultural Development Officer trainee, AFL Victoria, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

372 *ibid.*

373 Spaaij, R. et al., 'A Fair Game for All? How Community Sports Clubs in Australia Deal With Diversity', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2014.

374 Submission No. 7 from YACWA and AHCWA, 29 June 2016, p2.

375 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p4.

376 Mrs Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p8; Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

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developed relationships with services that can provide additional support to participants at the higher end of the spectrum of need.³⁷⁷

Collaboration also allows organisations to develop programs that they would otherwise be unable to provide due to their limited capacity. Ms Ward told the Committee that the Edmund Rice Centre was partnering with Sudbury House (a community house and care and development centre, which provides a range of community services) and Aboriginal resource centre WADJAK Northside Aboriginal Community Group to seek a grant for an Aboriginal arts program.

*We decided to do it because we could see that it was good. Everyone wanted it but they did not have the capacity ... If we can get this grant and get the money, it means we have got a coordinator for three days a week and we have got sustainable programs or projects running in each of those centres. So partnerships are important, too.*³⁷⁸

Enhanced collaboration also provides effective service provision and the reduction of duplication and fragmentation (see Chapter 3).

4.5.5 Identity enhancement or development

A strong sense of identity is not only a protective factor but a fundamental characteristic of resiliency (see Chapter 1).

Sport and culture can aid the creation of a positive identity. Michael Ungar, one of the foremost experts on resilience and director of the Resilience Research Centre, argues that young people often choose the most powerful identities available to them, which sometimes results in the adoption of troubling identities such as “delinquent”.³⁷⁹

But participation in sport and cultural activities can offer young people with alternative identities; they receive praise from their peers, families and associated adults, providing them with “socially desirable” identities (i.e. sportsperson or artist).³⁸⁰

Dr Wright summarised the inter-play between the arts and/or sport, identity and resilience in the following way:

377 Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, Briefing, 4 June 2016; Mr Wiremu Mato, Kaihoutu – Manager, He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makarau, Briefing, 2 June 2016.

378 Mrs Christina Ward, Deputy Director, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

379 Ungar, M., *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2004, pp134-135; Ungar, M. [Report of the 2014 Thinker in Residence: Resilience](#), Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, Subiaco, May 2014, p22.

380 Ungar, M., [Report of the 2014 Thinker in Residence: Resilience](#), Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, Subiaco, May 2014, p22; Ungar, M., [‘Summer Camps Make Kids Resilient’](#), 5 February 2012.

*What this work does ... is develop what is called an identity project. ... People find something that they care about and that they are interested in. It builds a bridge and helps them both as a buffer for difficult situations and provides a way to move beyond them. The arts can do that in very powerful ways And it is not just the arts, but this is the particular interest that I have. It works with teaching these young people arts skills and arts processes, it gives them responsibility—so it moves towards developing something. It develops in a social setting, so it builds connections and teaches perseverance. If you have something ... that is going to be put out in public and people are going to see you doing this work, it encourages people to persevere forward and it provides a range of alternative pathways towards the world of work or education.*³⁸¹

The Committee found that a common characteristic of successful youth programs was the inclusion of activities that enable youth to connect to their cultures and, in doing so, develop a stronger sense of self-identity:

- AFL Victoria said that some of the “most powerful” work that it undertakes, in partnership with Reach, involves discussions with its Diversity Squads about personal and cultural identity.³⁸²
- Upper Central Zone Rugby League, a non-profit organisation that seeks to develop rugby league in four New Zealand districts, uses a resilience framework to guide its engagement with rugby league players. The zone encourages players to learn about their own cultures because “they need to understand that their heritage is important and that’s the basis of who they are.”³⁸³
- All participants in Ngā Rangatahi Toa are encouraged to investigate who they are, where they come from, and what they consider to be important in their lives.³⁸⁴
- CAN co-General Manager June Moorhouse said that its projects are about “expression of self and identity and developing cultural knowledge and artistic skills”.³⁸⁵ Co-General Manager Monica Kane elaborated: “It is about a shared

381 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, p3.

382 Mr Xavier Moloney, Diversity Manager, AFL Victoria, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

383 Mr Tony Lajpold, CoachForce Development Officer, Upper Central Zone Rugby League, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

384 Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016.

385 Ms June Moorhouse, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p1.

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identity, and that might be for a culture, for a community, for a family or collectively. It is around self-esteem and self-worth and a sense of belonging.”³⁸⁶

The connection between culture, identity and resilience was particularly emphasised in relation to Aboriginal youth. Although one program consulted suggested that the

Those projects that are culturally based for Aboriginal communities are the ones that give the strongest outcomes regardless of whether they are designed to have that purpose or not.

- Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, department of Culture and the Arts

cultural disconnection experienced by many Aboriginal youth was secondary to other markers of social disadvantage (i.e. low educational achievement),³⁸⁷ the majority who provided evidence indicated that the two forms of risk factors not be separated in this way.

The Department of Culture and the Arts referred to a growing body of work that had found a link between the “absence of Aboriginal cultural strength and community dysfunction”.³⁸⁸

Shaun Wyn-Jones, Policy Officer with the Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA), identified strong cultural identities as “integral” to building resilience for both at-risk Aboriginal youth and Aboriginal youth more generally.³⁸⁹ And the Commissioner for Children and Young People said that past consultations with 1,200 Aboriginal children and young people had identified the positive role that their traditional culture had played in supporting their identities.³⁹⁰ (*See Appendix 7 for culturally-based program models*).

It should be noted, however, that activities seeking to enhance young people’s cultural identities do not always require strict adherence to traditional cultural practices. Dr Wright used the example of a protective behaviours program in Wangkatjungka, which connected young women to successful older artists who generated income for their community through the sale of their work of country. Under their supervision, the young women used traditional styles and forms as a foundation, then started integrating contemporary and international influences.³⁹¹

386 Ms Monica Kane, co-General Manager, CAN, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p6.

387 Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

388 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p4.

389 Mr Shaun Wyn-Jones, Policy Officer, AHCWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p10.

390 Submission No. 3 from Commissioner for Children and Young People, 23 May 2016, p3.

391 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, pp6, 9.

However, groups are often unable to access funding to support programs and services to connect Elders and young people.³⁹²

The Department of Culture and the Arts submitted that culturally-based programs received inadequate funding from federal and state governments, despite such

programs consistently having the strongest outcomes.³⁹³ According to statistics provided by the department, in 2012-13 only \$36.4 million – or 0.74 per cent of the combined total federal and state government expenditure in Aboriginal services in WA – was directed towards Aboriginal cultural activity.³⁹⁴

In 2016, the Department of Culture and the Arts in partnership with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, prepared a discussion paper on

Government expenditure on Aboriginal culture and the arts. It recommended that the Government

develop a culture investment strategy in partnership with Aboriginal leaders, whereby cultural activities shown to improve wellbeing in Aboriginal communities receives increased investment in areas of high social dysfunction. It would potentially contribute to the Regional Services Reform Program, which targets the delivery of housing, education, employment, and human services for Aboriginal people in regional and remote WA and will be completed within two years.³⁹⁵

Given the evidence outlined above, the Committee agrees with the Department of Culture and the Arts that more funding should be directed towards culturally-owned and culturally-based programs. The Committee considers that evaluation of programs should include assessments of how successfully programs instil a sense of cultural belonging in participants.

Interestingly, evidence from New Zealand suggested that non-Indigenous youth also benefit from learning about Indigenous culture. Several WOWMA participants, most of whom are from migrant or refugee backgrounds, told the Committee that they felt an increased sense of belonging to New Zealand after participating in activities that

Learning about our ways, that is important to know so I can be who I am. Tjukurrpa [Dreaming] and lore is my sign. I want my goordi [spirit] to be happy. – 16-year-old girl

392 Mr Shaun Wyn-Jones, Policy Officer, AHCWA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p10.

393 Mr Colin Walker, Director, Policy, Planning and Research, Department of Culture and the Arts, *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p3; Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, pp4, 5.

394 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p5.

395 Department of Culture and the Arts and Department of Aboriginal Affairs, *Investing in Aboriginal Culture: The role of culture in gaining more effective outcomes from WA State Government services*, discussion paper, Department of Culture and the Arts, Perth, May 2016 in Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, pp39-50.

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included learning about the Māori history of local sites, visiting important historic places, staying in Māori meeting houses, and participating in sports in which Māori are strongly represented (i.e. waka ama, a version of outrigger canoeing).³⁹⁶

Case Study 4.6: Radiya Ali, WOWMA Youth Coordinator

Growing up as the child of refugees in Hamilton, New Zealand, Radiya was caught between two worlds. At home, her parents clung to the belief that they would eventually return to their country, which created a sense of dislocation in their daughter. At school, she wasn't able to participate in some of the activities that other New Zealanders took for granted. Overnight camping trips were impossible, partly because of religious requirements and partly because her parents, with their past experiences of conflict, didn't always feel that it was safe for her to go out without a chaperone.

Her alienation from the wider New Zealand community wasn't helped by the treatment that she received from strangers on the street. With her hijab, she was a visible minority and on several occasions was told to "go back where you came from".

She wasn't "grounded", felt completely disengaged and became a self-confessed "mischief child". She eventually dropped out of school and saw few positive outcomes for her future.

The Women's Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association (WOWMA) changed her life. She met other young women who empathised with her dislocation. She took part in activities that were previously closed to her: overnight camps, rock climbing, abseiling, horseback riding and kayaking. She learned about Māori history and culture, which increased her connection to New Zealand. She began to call herself a Kiwi.

Secure in the knowledge that she'd be accompanied by WOWMA co-founder Aliya Danzeisen (who is widely respected in the Muslim community), Radiya's parents began letting her go out at night-time. As time went on, however, they no longer required Aliya to be with her; not only did their trust in their daughter increase as a result of her experiences, but their trust in the New Zealand community also grew.

Radiya came in contact with older Muslimah (Muslim women) who worked in professions such as medicine and education through WOWMA. She saw them successfully balancing their dual identities of New Zealander and Muslimah and "life was good for them".

Due to these experiences, Radiya returned to education. She trained as a social worker and is now giving back to her country. In explaining her journey, she states:

We weren't grounded ... psychologically, you need to have a place, you need to come to a place and be grounded. We weren't. I didn't have it. At all. .. And now we're thinking of buying houses and staying here and making it easier for others to come to New Zealand and to tell them "yeah, it is safe to be in New Zealand and call it home."³⁹⁷

396 Youth coordinators, leaders, and participants, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

397 Ms Radiya Ali, Youth Coordinator, WOWMA, *Briefing*, 5 June 2016.

4.5.6 Evaluation and assessment

It is a well-established practice to measure the effectiveness of organisations and services using key performance indicators (KPIs).³⁹⁸ However, as discussed in section 3.4.2 (Demonstrating outcomes), youth programs can rarely capture their successes using quantitative measures, nor report annually on dramatic changes in the lives of participants due to their complexity of needs.

Ideally, evaluation would be conducted by the government departments that fund sport and culture programs for young people. Each evaluation would be rigorous and designed to capture the complex social outcomes that result from youth participation.

Qualitative measures as well as quantitative measures are part of rigorous evaluation. To demonstrate to funding agencies the impact of its programs on participants' lives, Jesuit Social Services developed a framework based on its underlying philosophy and values, and development models put forward in research. The framework consists of five key areas that the studios aim to develop in their participants:

- Value themselves and others
- Affirm their goals and aspirations
- Linked into supports that they need
- Using skills and capacities
- Enhancing civic participation

As Jesuit Social Services Chief Executive Officer Julie Edwards said, when youth have achieved in all of these areas, they are flourishing – which is the overarching aim of youth programs.³⁹⁹

4.6 Concluding comments

There is no precise, “one size fits all” approach when it comes to working with at-risk youth. Just because a particular model works in one community does not mean that it can be applied, without adaptation, to another community. Similarly, each young person who participates in a sport or culture program is unique, with his or her own individual strengths and experiences. They cannot be expected to “buy into” sport or culture programs that do not take into account their interests, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, or their particular – often complex – needs.

Organisations that engage at-risk youth and successfully build their resilience recognise the need for flexibility and adaptability in their programs. The Committee also

398 See Community Development and Justice Standing Committee (39th Parliament), [Are we there yet? How WA Police determines whether traffic law enforcement is effective](#), Report No. 8, Parliament of Western Australia, Perth, June 2015.

399 Ms Julie Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, Jesuit Social Services, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

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recognised additional characteristics employed by successful programs in relation to their methods of engagement, environments, workforce, relationships with key stakeholders, and processes used to increase the protective factors in young peoples' lives.

Finding 21

Sport and culture-based programs that successfully assist at-risk youth to build resilience and enhance engagement:

- Use art or sport as a “hook” or incentive for young people to engage in the program;
- Include young people and target communities in the development of programs to develop culturally-relevant and effective solutions to challenges facing at-risk youth;
- Ensure that programs are accessible to young people in terms of location and hours of service provision;
- Develop and maintain welcoming and supportive environments, which includes some degree of mentoring and staff to whom at-risk youth can relate;
- Ensure programs are adaptable in order to respond more effectively to youth interests and youth needs;
- Provide a reliable, long-term and ongoing service for young people;
- Involve the families of at-risk youth;
- Empower young people by offering leadership-focused and/or employment pathways;
- Collaborate with other services to reduce duplication and increase the support received by young people;
- Focus on building or enhancing the identities of young people, particularly their cultural identities.

Chapter 5

In conclusion

With someone who has participated in community events, it is well documented that they are less likely to get involved in antisocial behaviour. So investing in arts, culture, sports and recreation, which governments do, is exactly that; it is an investment.

– Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation

CHAPTER One outlined some of the benefits of participation in sport and arts generally and by at-risk youth, as reported in the literature. Throughout this Inquiry, the Committee has heard and seen for itself the benefits that can be realised.

Aiden, a participant of Artful Dodgers Studios in Melbourne, said that the day he met a “proper musician” at the studios changed his life. And Amber Rose, another participant, went from being homeless to studying visual arts and working in the digital arts industry.

Some described finding a sense of community and others talked about their club or group as being a second home.⁴⁰⁰

Refugee youth in Western Edge Youth Arts’ (WEYA) programs spoke of having found “the magic key”. There was talk of community dialogue and social cohesion in Geelong, where WEYA had been working with African youth.⁴⁰¹

There are also cost-benefits. Dr Wright said that it was estimated that a young person requiring support from childhood to adulthood cost governments, agencies and organisations up to \$1 million. Hence, there were potential savings for every young person involved in identity work who had the chance to change their life trajectory.⁴⁰²

400 Participants, Dig Deep, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016; Participants, MPHS Studio, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Ms Penny Collins, President, St Mary’s Netball Club, Dandenong, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

401 Dr Dave Kelman, Artistic Director, Western Edge Youth Arts, *Briefing*, 1 June 2016.

402 Dr Peter Wright, Associate Professor, Arts and Education, Murdoch University, *Transcript of Evidence*, 11 May 2016, pp7-8.

Chapter 5

The evaluation of CAN's Noongar Pop Culture program in Narrogin also demonstrated the long-term value of engaging with youth through art, estimating a social return on investment of \$18 for every dollar spent.⁴⁰³

But investment in youth implies prevention; an investment is an action made ahead of time that will pay dividends later. It was well-recognised by the Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) and by the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA):

*Investment in at-risk youth needs to be made – and it is better that it is done as early as possible so that youth are diverted from negative pathways, than to spend the money on keeping offenders in juvenile detention. A reduced focus on the positive benefits and engagement power of sport and recreation opportunities will likely increase the costs for the police, and the corrective services sector.*⁴⁰⁴

YACWA chief executive officer Ross Wortham said YACWA and the youth industry sector had done a lot of work on understanding the cost-benefit analysis of intervening early and engaging young people who are at risk of committing crime.

*... it is almost common sense that if you intervene early and get a young person involved in positive activities that you can help them to avoid entering the justice system of courts et cetera, but it extrapolates further from there. You may go through court, be engaged with the police and end up in detention, but on exiting detention there are significant rates of homelessness, homelessness support services and poor health et cetera.*⁴⁰⁵

The Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA) also believes that addressing the social determinants that lead to young people having contact with the justice system, rather than actually placing them in detention, "is quite evident".⁴⁰⁶

Despite this, preventative or engagement programs do not seem to attract the same level of funding as intervention programs, accessible to youth once they have entered the juvenile justice system.⁴⁰⁷ This is no doubt due in part to the difficulty of proving

403 Community Arts Network, *Summary Report Forecast Social Return on Investment Analysis: Strong Culture, Strong Community program*, report prepared by A. Hoskisson, Resourceful Communities, Community Arts Network, Perth, January 2016, p4.

404 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p7.

405 Mr Ross Wortham, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p9.

406 Mr Shaun Wyn-Jones, Policy Officer, Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p9.

407 The cost of keeping a juvenile in detention for a year at Western Australia's Banksia Hill Detention Centre is \$316,000, according to the Minister for Corrective Services Joe Francis. – Hansard, Legislative Assembly, 5 April 2016, p2072b-2073a.

the worth of such programs. How do you measure the fact that something may not occur?

The arbitrary nature of quantitative measurement of outcomes often favoured by agencies was nicely captured by Amber Rose, who pointed out the folly of using employment as a measure of a program's success. She explained that she could be working in a fish and chip shop and addicted to crystal methamphetamine but still be considered "fine" because she had a job.⁴⁰⁸

The other factor that was consistently raised throughout the Inquiry was that sport and arts programs for at-risk youth work much better if they do not operate in isolation.

The need for social support scaffolding to be constructed around such programs – or, alternatively, for sports and arts programs to be added to existing structures – was emphasised by a range of organisations and individuals.

To do so often means working across government departments which cater for the various needs of young people, and it was navigating this terrain that organisations found particularly frustrating. Where funding is linked to more than one department, meeting the priorities of each can be challenging.

The engagement of those 'on the fringe' so that they feel they have a place and a stake in the community appears to be a much more cost-effective method to building resilience than attempting to rehabilitate them after they are gravely disengaged
– Department of Sport and Recreation

It was for this reason – and also the unreliability of government funding – that a couple of organisations in Auckland preferred not to rely on government funding at all, depending instead on corporate and philanthropic sponsorship.⁴⁰⁹

The Department of Culture and the Arts' submission suggested that in moving forward –

it is imperative that targeted strategies be developed across government, in partnership with private sector stakeholders, and with children and young people themselves, to address the

⁴⁰⁸ Amber Rose, former participant, Artful Dodgers Studios, *Briefing*, 31 May 2016.

⁴⁰⁹ Ms Sarah Longbottom, Founder and Executive Director, Ngā Rangatahi Toa, *Briefing*, 3 June 2016; Ms Wendy Preston, Creative Producer and Director, Mixit, *Briefing*, 4 June 2016.

Chapter 5

*sustainability, consistency, scope, longevity and levels of financial investment of existing and future activities.*⁴¹⁰

This is not so different from what has already been laid out in the Youth Strategic Framework (*discussed in section 3.3.2*), which suggested a “coordinated approach”, “targeted youth services to support at-risk young people” and “involvement by all young people”.⁴¹¹

Whether the Department of Local Government and Communities, which has responsibility for the framework, is still committed to driving this type of collaboration is unclear. The Department for Child Protection and Family Support At-Risk Youth Strategy also alludes to taking a leading role in coordinating activities and initiatives across different agencies.

Until an agency truly takes on the practical responsibility of coordinating services and funding for at-risk youth, this group may be destined to remain on the fringes of society, costing more than it should.



MS M.M. QUIRK, MLA
CHAIR

410 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, p5.

411 Department of Local Government and Communities, ‘[Youth Strategic Framework](#)’, electronic copy, Government of Western Australia, Perth, 8 January 2016.

Appendix One

Inquiry Terms of Reference

The Inquiry will examine:

1. What works
2. Gaps in service delivery
3. Differences in metropolitan and regional access to programs
4. Challenges related to being Indigenous, female or from a culturally and linguistically diverse community

Appendix Two

Committee's functions and powers

The functions of the Committee are to review and report to the Assembly on: -

- a) the outcomes and administration of the departments within the Committee's portfolio responsibilities;
- b) annual reports of government departments laid on the Table of the House;
- c) the adequacy of legislation and regulations within its jurisdiction; and
- d) any matters referred to it by the Assembly including a bill, motion, petition, vote or expenditure, other financial matter, report or paper.

At the commencement of each Parliament and as often thereafter as the Speaker considers necessary, the Speaker will determine and table a schedule showing the portfolio responsibilities for each committee. Annual reports of government departments and authorities tabled in the Assembly will stand referred to the relevant committee for any inquiry the committee may make.

Whenever a committee receives or determines for itself fresh or amended terms of reference, the committee will forward them to each standing and select committee of the Assembly and Joint Committee of the Assembly and Council. The Speaker will announce them to the Assembly at the next opportunity and arrange for them to be placed on the notice boards of the Assembly.

Appendix Three

Submissions received

Name	Name	Position	Organisation
1	Mr Terry Boland	Program Director	Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy) (RMLA)
2	Mr Ron Alexander	Director General	Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR)
3	Mr Colin Pettit	Commissioner for Children and Young People	Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia (CCYP)
4	Ms Jennifer Mathews	Director General	Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC)
5	Mr Wes Morris	Coordinator	Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC)
6	Mr Colin Walker	Director, Policy Planning and Research	Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA)
7	Mr Ross Wortham	Chief Executive Officer	Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA)
	Mr Des Martin	Chief Executive Officer	Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA)

Appendix Four

Hearings

Date	Name	Position	Organisation
11 May 2016	Dr Peter Wright	Associate Professor of Arts, Education and Research Methods	Murdoch University
	Mr Ron Alexander	Director General	Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR)
	Mr Graham Brimage	Director of Strategic Policy and Regional Services	
15 June 2016	Mrs Christina Ward	Deputy Director	Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka
	Mr Joe Moniodis	Youth Pathways Coordinator	Communicare
	Mrs Brittany Lance	Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services	
	Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch	Get Active Project Officer	
22 June 2016	Mr John Gillespie	Chief Executive Officer	Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC)
	Mr Gordon Musulin	Field Support Manager	
	Mr Duane Bell	Assistant Commissioner	WA Police
	Mr Colin Walker	Director, Policy, Planning and Research	Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA)
29 June 2016	Mr Ross Wortham	Chief Executive Officer	Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA)
	Mr Shaun Wyn-Jones	Policy Officer	Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA)
	Ms June Moorhouse	Co-General Manager	Community Arts Network (CAN)
	Ms Monica Kane	Co-General Manager	
	Miss Natasha Laden	Senior Contract Officer	Wirrpanda Foundation
	Mr Troy Cook	Health and Leadership Manager	

Briefings

Date	Name	Position	Organisation
18 May 2016	Mr Gerard Neesham	Chief Executive Officer and Board Director	Clontarf Foundation
	Mr Shane Kiely	General Manager, Partnerships and Communication	
	Mr Craig Brierty	Chief Operations Officer	
	Ms Stephanie Syme	Chief Financial Officer	
	Clontarf Academy students		
	Clontarf Academy staff		
31 May 2016 Melbourne	Ms Julie Edwards	Chief Executive Officer	Jesuit Social Services
	Ms Marianna Codognotto	Arts and Culture Coordinator	
	Amber Rose	Former participant	Artful Dodgers Studios
	Aiden	Participant	
	Ms Charlotte Hilder	Creative Producer, Youth Outreach	Art Centre Melbourne, Dig Deep
	Ms Mary Quinsacara	Mentor	Dig Deep
	Participants		
1 June 2016 Melbourne	Mr Gerard Veltre	Artistic Director	Phunktional
	Dr Ramón Spaaij	Research Program Leader (Sport in Society)	Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University
	Dr Dave Kelman	Artistic Director	
	Ms Sally Farr	General Manager	Western Edge Youth Arts
	Mr Cameron McLeod	General Manager, Community Engagement	The Huddle
	Mr Xavier Moloney	Diversity Manager	Australian Football League (AFL) Victoria
	Mr Majok Ngong	Multicultural Development Officer Trainee	

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	Mr Marlyn Staunton	Member	Neville Jetta Squad, the All Nations Squad, and the World Team
	Mr Tot Jok	Member	
	Mr Peter Dye	Operations and Development Assistant	Dandenong Stingrays Football Club
	Mr David Rodan	Multicultural Engagement Coordinator	AFL Victoria
	Ms Penny Collins	President	St Mary's Netball Club
	Ms Paula Smith	President	Dandenong and District Netball Association
	Mrs Christine Ware	Administration Officer	
	Ms Tayla Pallas	One Netball Coordinator	Netball Victoria
2 June 2016 Auckland, New Zealand	Mr Wiremu Mato	Kaihautu – Manager	He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makaurau
	Ms Anita Coy-Macken	Provision team leader, Parks, Sport and Recreation	Auckland Council
	Mr Peter Caccioppoli	Senior Activation Advisor	Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre
3 June 2016 Auckland, New Zealand	A/Snr Sgt Keith Olsen	District Coordinator, Youth Services	Counties Manukau District Police
	Sgt Rob Woodley	General Manager	Genesis Youth Trust
	Mr Peter Caccioppoli	Senior Activation Advisor	Te Matariki Clendon Community Centre
	Ms Dawn Upu	Centre Manager	
	Mr Teina Rima	Youth Coordinator	Ngā Rangatahi Toa
	Ms Sarah Longbottom	Founder and Executive Director	
	Mr Todd Williams	Youth Mentor	
	Yvonne	Participant	
	Mr Clarence Lomiwes	Producer	MPHS Studio – High Tech Youth Network
	Gabriel	Participant	
	Charles	Participant	
	Participants		
4 June 2016 Auckland, New Zealand	Ms Wendy Preston	Creative Producer and Director	Mixit
	Ms Rina Patel	Project Manager	
	Participants		

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5 June 2016 Tokoroa and Hamilton, New Zealand	Mr Tony Lajpold	CoachForce Development Officer	Upper Central Zone Rugby League
	Mr Brent Jones	Development Officer, Coastlines and Bay of Plenty	
	Ms Mel Bennett	Operations Manager	
	Ms Vanessa Eparaima	Chairperson	Raukawa Settlement Trust and Raukawa Charitable Trust
	Ms Kataraina Hodge	Deputy Chair	Raukawa Charitable Trust
	Mr Nigel Te Hiko	Kākano Whakatupu Group Manager	
	Mr Mana Winikerei	Waka Taua Wellness Program Coordinator	
	Mr Haami Winikerei	Waka Taua Wellness Program Coordinator	
	Mr Poutapu Winikerei	Former Waka Taua participant	
	Ms Karina Elkington		Waikato District Health Board
	Sgt Brian Nicholas	Iwi Liaison Officer	New Zealand Police
	Ms A.S. "Aliya" Danzeisen	Lead Coordinator	Women's Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association (WOWMA)
	Ms Radiya Ali	Youth Coordinator	
	Salma	Youth Coordinator	
	Afreen	Youth Leader	
	Mehria	Youth Leader	
	Sarah	Youth Leader	
	Ansal	Youth Participant	
	Fatuma	Youth Participant	

Appendix Five

Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AFL	Australian Football League
AHCWA	Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia
AiR	Artist-in-Residence
ALG	Arts Leadership Group
ASDO	Aboriginal Sport Development Officer
ASeTTS	Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors
ATOM	Australian Teachers of Media
ATSIPEP	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project
CaLD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CAN	Community Arts Network
CCYP	Commissioner for Children and Young People
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLMR	Centre for Labour Market Research
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
DADAA	Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts
DCA	Department of Culture and the Arts
DCPFS	Department for Child Protection and Family Support
DCS	Department of Corrective Services
DIGS	Drop in Girls Space
DLGC	Department of Local Government and Communities
DSR	Department of Sport and Recreation
FNTS	From Nothing To Something [Movement]
IASKA	International Art Space Kellerberrin
IRSAD	Index of Relative Socioeconomic Advantage and Disadvantage
KALACC	Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LEAD	Learn Explore Aspire Develop
LIFE	Living Is For Everyone
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy

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NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NWS	Noongar Wellbeing and Sports
OMI	Office of Multicultural Interests
PCYC	Police and Community Youth Centres/ Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres
PICA	Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RMLA	Role Models and Leaders Australia
SD6	Strategic Directions 6
SEE	South-East Engagement [Project]
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SPARC	Sport and Recreation New Zealand
SPIN	Sport Inclusion Network
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WA	Western Australia
WEYA	Western Edge Youth Arts
WOWMA	Women's Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association
YACWA	Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia
YCIO	Youth Crime Intervention Officer
YIC	Youth Involvement Council
YPP	[South East Corridor] Youth Partnership Project

Appendix Six

Organisations which received funding through the Department of Culture and the Arts' Organisations Investment Program

1. Country Arts WA
2. Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (PICA)
3. Art on the Move
4. Artrage Inc
5. Artsource: The Artists Foundation of WA
6. Australian Dance Council – Ausdance WA
7. AWESOME Arts Australia
8. Barking Gecko Theatre Company
9. Community Arts Network WA
10. DADAA (Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts)
11. FORM
12. Fremantle Arts Centre
13. Fremantle Press
14. Goolarri Media Enterprises Pty Ltd
15. International Art Space Kellerberrin (IASKA)
16. Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC)
17. Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation
18. Marrugeku Inc
19. Musica Viva Australia
20. Performing Arts Centre Society (The Blue Room)
21. Propel Youth Arts WA

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22. Spare Parts Puppet Theatre
23. STRUT Dance Inc
24. SymbioticA
25. Tura New Music
26. WA Youth Theatre Company
27. West Australian Music Industry Association
28. West Australian Youth Jazz Orchestra
29. Western Australian Youth Orchestras
30. Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company
31. Co3
32. Lost and Found Opera Inc
33. Perth Centre for Photography
34. pvi collective
35. The Last Great Hunt

Appendix Seven

Selected sports, arts and cultural programs/projects for at-risk youth in Western Australia

Sport and recreation

KidSport provides eligible children aged five to 18 who are unable to afford club fees with up to \$200 towards joining a sporting or recreation club. The vouchers are administered by the relevant local government on behalf of clubs which have registered to participate in the program. Twenty-eight metropolitan and 102 regional local governments are involved.

Since its inception in 2011 to mid-March 2016, the program has given out more than 90,000 vouchers to 54,000 children, representing over \$14.5 million of funding. One-third of kids receiving vouchers are Aboriginal, from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds or have a disability. Around 62 per cent of kids receiving vouchers had not been registered in a club before.⁴¹²

North West Metro Inclusion Project, run by the Edmund Rice Centre and servicing the cities of Stirling and Wanneroo and Joondalup, is a combination of a local parks program, which offers different sports in different parks every weekday from 4pm to 6pm, and a pathways program, which helps to transition participants into mainstream sporting clubs. It also includes a leadership component.

Several teams have emerged from the program, including the Edmund Rice Eagles (a basketball team), the Edmund Rice Lions (a boys' Australian Rules football team), and the Butler Falcons (a girls' Australian Rules football team consisting entirely of African girls).

The Butler Falcons is a good example of how the transition program (or pathways program) works, with efforts to forge relationships with two other mainstream clubs – the Joondalup Falcons women's team and Brighton Seahawks junior football team – paying off.

... we work together with the club to make sure that that transition happens. You have a couple of pioneering kids who go first. They might

412 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p2; Department of Sport and Recreation, [Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, 2015.

Appendix Seven

*try going down there. They build a little name for themselves or whatever. And then other kids will follow into that.*⁴¹³

At least two Lions players have progressed to WA Football League clubs: David Madut to Subiaco and Agid Gardoud to East Perth.⁴¹⁴

Edmund Rice Centre also started up a Friday night soccer team (run by volunteers) after they noticed a bunch of 20 or so young men were coming to watch the girls train at Butler. Without the team as a diversion, Youth Programs Coordinator Joe Moniodis said the boys “would be running amok at the community centre”.⁴¹⁵

Edmund Rice also recently launched Common Goal, a soccer program established at the request of Muslim community Elders and the WA Police Muslim Community Advisory Group who wanted a program to connect police with Muslim youth.

A soccer academy was set up next to Mirrabooka Mosque with the mosque forming the hub of the academy but the academy remaining open to everybody – Aboriginal, CaLD and white youth as well as Muslim youth.

*... people can feel at home going in and out of the mosque and having the mosque there supporting the team. The WA Police local police teams just engage with the kids, have a kick around and so on...*⁴¹⁶

Communicare Get Active Inclusion Project (or its predecessor, Communicare Active Together) was originally specifically for CaLD communities, and they still make up about three-quarters of clients. Communicare’s Settlement Services division (funded by the Department of Social Services), which provides support for recently arrived refugees, works closely with the Get Active program.

In addition to using the Department of Sport and Recreation’s (DSR) KidSport program to increase participation, the Get Active program helps families find and access suitable sport and recreation activities, supports clubs and associations to develop inclusive strategies and acts as the conduit between sports bodies and members of the community.

A leadership program, Get Active Youth Connect, also links young people to leadership opportunities in sport and recreation.

413 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p3.

414 West Australian Football Commission, ‘[Harmony Cup to unite WA football community](#)’, 26 September 2014.

415 Mr Joe Moniodis, Youth Programs Coordinator, Edmund Rice Centre, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p9.

416 *ibid*, pp2-3.

Cultural Services Acting Coordinator Brittany Lance said it was important to engage with the families and understand where they had come from. Being from a CaLD or refugee background brought additional barriers to participation requiring extra support, and clubs needed to be aware and understand where they were from so that they could provide an inclusive environment.

Building resilience required “making sure that young people feel a part of the team, that their culture is accepted, that they get to make decisions, that they have got leadership opportunities” as well as a positive club environment, such as no tolerance for racism.⁴¹⁷

In the lead-up to Ramadan for example, the Get Active team sent an information sheet to clubs to remind them of what Ramadan is and alert them to the possibility that children may be a little less energetic but still wanted to participate.⁴¹⁸

They also remind clubs that inclusion is a priority area and that CaLD community members could in fact boost their club’s numbers.

The Beckenham Angels all-female soccer team is an example of a club that has embraced this approach and actively promotes the fact that it allows girls to wear hijabs and long-sleeved tops or pants, in recognition of the large number of Muslim girls in the community who want to play soccer.⁴¹⁹

Communicare has also recently completed an Active Schools 12-month pilot program with the Thornlie and Kewdale Australian Islamic Colleges, which saw 100 students participate in swimming lessons for the first time. Thirty-five per cent of the high school girls at the Thornlie campus had never set foot in a pool and were scared of the water, according to Get Active Project Officer Lauren Reid-Dornbusch.⁴²⁰

The program also ran after-school sessions of seven different sports, involving at least 190 individual students, and an interschool carnival with the Thornlie and, Kewdale Australian Islamic Colleges and Cannington Community College.⁴²¹

The Clontarf Foundation opened its first football academy in Bentley in 2000, catering for 25 boys. It now operates academies in 68 schools across Australia, involving around 4200 boys. Almost 15,000 boys have been through the program since inception.

417 Mrs Brittany Lance, Acting Coordinator, Cultural Services, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p3.

418 Ms Lauren Reid-Dornbusch, Get Active Project Officer, Communicare, *Transcript of Evidence*, 15 June 2016, p7.

419 *ibid.*

420 *ibid.*, p6.

421 *ibid.*, p8.

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The football academies are established in partnership with local schools. In WA, there are programs in eight metropolitan schools and in 12 regional schools. Clontarf staff mentor and counsel students on a range of behavioural and lifestyle issues while the school caters for their educational needs.

One of Clontarf's measures of success is the year 12 completion rate, which is much higher for Clontarf boys (60-70%) than for other Aboriginal boys. Statistics from the 2011 census showed that only 26 per cent of Aboriginal males Australia-wide had completed year 12.⁴²²

Clontarf chief executive officer and co-founder Gerard Neesham said that year 12 attainment was a useful goal, given that the majority of people in jails had not completed year 12.

He said Clontarf graduates were also very employable. Between the ages of 18 and 64, Clontarf males are 12 to 18 per cent more likely to be employed than non-Clontarf males.⁴²³

Non-Clontarf males also offended at a rate approximately six times higher than Clontarf males by the age of 24.⁴²⁴

*Police noted that when Indigenous boys are involved in crime, it is very seldom a Clontarf boy. When it is, the local police will often call the Clontarf staff to come and tell the boy to 'pull his head in'. The staff often know when boys are having trouble, and will intervene early to prevent it escalating.*⁴²⁵

Clontarf chief operations officer Craig Brierty said that the program was about much more than football, but football was used as the carrot to get the boys to attend school. Boys did not need to be good at sport to join the program.⁴²⁶

Mr Neesham said that the program's success was due in large part to the role played by Clontarf staff, who were neither teachers nor parents but a "non-judgemental third party". This third party role was often played by a boss when teenagers started part-time jobs. But many Aboriginal kids did not have this opportunity, with less than 1 per cent in part-time employment compared to 86 per cent of non-Aboriginal kids.⁴²⁷

422 Clontarf Foundation and Skilled Group, *Impact of the Clontarf Academies*, report prepared by ACIL Allen Consulting, Melbourne, November 2014, p4.

423 *ibid.*, p14.

424 *ibid.*, p22.

425 *ibid.*, p23.

426 Mr Craig Brierty, Chief Operations Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

427 Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

Clontarf staff worked closely with teachers and principals and were the strongest link between the school and students' families, according to Mr Neesham, building a high level of trust and respect.⁴²⁸

Funding for the Foundation's programs is received in roughly equal parts from the Federal government, State/Territory governments and the private sector.

Role Models and Leaders Australia (RMLA) Girls' Academies support Indigenous girls aged 12-18 by providing supportive programs that focus on attendance and engagement in schooling. Apart from sports training and competitions, activities focus on mentoring and role model support, work placement and readiness, leadership, teamwork, health and wellbeing and cultural awareness.

Breakfast and lunch programs encourage student attendance and ensure all students have healthy meals. Induction camps push the girls out of their comfort zone and encourage them to work as a team. Building confidence and overcoming issues of "shame" is a key aim of the program.

Reflecting their motto – "Develop a girl: change a community" – RMLA believes Aboriginal women play a pivotal role in Australian Aboriginal families and communities, yet their needs are often overlooked.

The Federal Government has committed to funding an expansion of the program to 12 academies across 15 school sites by late 2016.⁴²⁹

The Wirrpanda Foundation seeks to improve the quality of life for Indigenous youth by promoting strong, Indigenous role models and healthy life choices. It has run programs in metropolitan and regional WA, Victoria, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland.

Programs include:

- *Troy Cook's Health and Leadership Program*, developed by former professional footballer Troy Cook. The program, which aims to assist at-risk kids (including non-Aboriginal kids) build a healthy and active lifestyle, is delivered through schools in Mandurah (Greenfields Primary School, Dudley Park Primary School and John Tonkin College) and Warnbro (Warnbro Community High School) and is funded by the Department of Health.

Mr Cook said that the only thing a lot of the kids wanted was to be a footy player, so as an ex-Australian Football League (AFL) player he had some buy-in. However, football was only a small part of what the program was about.

428 Mr Gerard Neesham, Chief Executive Officer, Clontarf Foundation, *Briefing*, 18 May 2016.

429 Submission No. 1 from Role Models and Leaders Australia (Girls Academy), 12 May 2016.

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*It is all about the leadership and encouraging young kids to be the next leaders in their community, being engaged in an organisation or a sporting or recreational organisation once they are away from school, to help their development, getting to mix with people that they probably would not do. I think sport and recreation is a good way to do that.*⁴³⁰

- *Deadly Brotha Boyz*, a health and education aspirational program for disengaged Aboriginal boys (8-18 years) in the Great Southern region. Deadly Brotha Boyz provides after-school activities (including Australian football, athletics, basketball and boxing) for two hours per week. A typical session includes fitness and exercise, a snack, and an opportunity to talk to mentors and get help with homework. Before leaving for the afternoon, participants may play a basketball game.⁴³¹ The program has been run as a partnership between Kwinana's Gilmore College and WA Police, who both refer youth to the program.

*[We] try to help these young kids realise what some of the consequences of their actions are ... [if] they get involved in drugs and alcohol or get into a situation that could potentially put them at risk of ending up in some of those institutions.*⁴³²

- *Deadly Sista Girlz*, the equivalent program for girls, which focuses on building self-esteem and confidence. It emphasises cultural activities with the aim of increasing girls' pride in their identity. At present it is run at Gilmore College in Kwinana, Medina Primary School, Lynwood Senior High School, Northam Senior High School and St Mary's College in Broome.
- *Moorditj Ngoorndiak*, an intensive mentoring scheme for boys (12-19 years) in contact with the youth justice system, launched in 2015. It aims to re-engage the youth in education, employment and their community. The scheme, which was extended to the Banksia Hill Detention Centre, has been funded until 2018. Mentors, who are often current or former sportspeople, are matched with participants and work with them and their families for an extended period. Sporting activities are often used to engage the young people. The program also organises regular "Back to Culture Camps" for young people in both regional and metropolitan areas.

430 Mr Troy Cook, Health and Leadership Manager, Wirrpanda Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p3.

431 Canion, P., '[Deadly Brotha Boyz](#)', 28 May 2015; Future2, '[Deadly Brotha Boys Get Fit](#)'.

432 Mr Troy Cook, Health and Leadership Manager, Wirrpanda Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 29 June 2016, p2.

Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sports (NWS) was formed in 2007 and was formerly known as Nyoongar Sports Association. NWS programs are delivered by Aboriginal staff who understand the complexities of Aboriginal cultural norms.

The program aims to include culturally based activities such as traditional dance, art or sport to engender cultural learning, pride and higher levels of engagement.⁴³³ There is also a focus on health, school attendance, higher education and life skills in an effort to reduce anti-social behaviour.

NWS has links with more than 60 partners and stakeholders who help to deliver programs and maximise opportunities for Aboriginal people residing in Nyoongar country. It receives substantial Federal Government funding through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

In 2014-15, NWS delivered 495 sessions to 6708 participants, of which 70 per cent were Aboriginal.

Activities for youth include:

- *Street Corner Champion Beatball*, a version of basketball played on a half court with three players on each team. Competitions have been set up in Mirrabooka, Rockingham/Kwinana, Manjimup, Moora and Northam. About two-thirds of the 461 participants in 2014-15 were Aboriginal.
- *Regional School Holiday Program*, which has been running for eight years and is now offered in 17 towns in the Wheatbelt and the South West.
- *Young Aboriginal Girls Group*, an exercise and health program for girls and their mothers co-funded by Communities for Children Mirrabooka.⁴³⁴

Ignite Basketball is a free community initiative that uses Saturday night basketball sessions at Armadale Arena to engage and develop young people who are disadvantaged. It caters for all skill levels.

A 45-minute mandatory workshop is part of each session. Young men and women can develop leadership skills, gain formal qualifications and work with positive role models through the program. Links with surrounding established clubs playing in competitive leagues allows for further individual development. It received \$150,000 three-year funding from the Department of Sport and Recreation.⁴³⁵

433 Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sports, [Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sports, Maylands, [2015], p3.

434 Nyoongar Wellbeing and Sports, [‘About us’](#), 2016.

435 Submission No. 2 from Department of Sport and Recreation, 16 May 2016, p4; City of Armadale, [‘Ignite Basketball’](#), 2016.

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Similar programs are run by the Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC) in Hilton (Streetball) and by Lifting Horizons in Midland, Fremantle/Cockburn and Mandurah (Night Hoops).

Balga Detached Youth Work Project is a non-profit, community-based organisation supporting at-risk young people (mainly Aboriginal) in Balga, Girrawheen, Mirrabooka and surrounding areas. It was established in 1978 and merged with the national charity Whitelion in 2015.

The group's Mobile Youth and Family Education Support Service is the foundation program, providing individualised case planning and group activities that promote engagement, up-skilling and retention of participants. These activities include sport and recreation as well as informal education and life skills development.⁴³⁶

Its Active Connections program, which uses physical recreation to target young Aboriginal males (aged 13 to 17) who are personally, socially and educationally disengaged, received \$5000 from the Department of Sport and Recreation in 2014-15.⁴³⁷

1ARoo – boxing program for disengaged youth is a program for 20 participants (aged 14 to 18) from the Wanneroo area who were identified as at risk of homelessness. They meet once a week with a boxing coach and local police officers at the Wanneroo Amateur Boxing Club, where they train and then have a healthy dinner together.

The program is run by MercyCare Reconnect in partnership with WA Police, the City of Wanneroo and the DSR. It was initially funded by a grant from the DSR.⁴³⁸

Fair Game provides recycled sporting equipment and fitness and education sessions to build social cohesion and improve mental well-being. While it doesn't target youth specifically, it targets under-serviced communities, having begun in Indigenous communities in the Pilbara.

Fair Game accepts sporting equipment and sports shoes of all kinds, but favourites include basketballs, AFL footballs and football boots. Volunteers run various sports-based activities in the communities to promote fitness, team work and coordination.

The Game On! program has been developed and delivered in partnership with a number of organisations including the DSR. Among its aims:

436 Whitelion 'Balga', 2016.

437 Department of Sport and Recreation, [Annual Report 2014/2015](#), Government of Western Australia, Leederville, 2015, p89.

438 Laschon, Eliza, [Boxing program sees disengaged youth in the ring with police to change behaviour](#), ABC News, 7 March 2016.

- to ensure that geographical isolation is not a barrier to accessing a healthy lifestyle;
- to build cultural awareness and understanding and foster relationships between young Australians of diverse backgrounds;
- to build the capacity of communities to make healthy choices.⁴³⁹

Recreation and culture

Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC) deliver two broad youth services: development (intervention) programs and recreational activities.

Programs vary between centres, and what was provided was often dictated by finances and demand, according to field support manager Gordon Musulin.

*... when you are talking to a young fella that has come off the streets and has a dysfunctional family, he has not been to school for ages and all the rest of it, and you ask him, "What would you like to do?", quite often it is just a game of basketball or a game of footy; that is all they are really interested in.*⁴⁴⁰

Thus, recreational programs which provide a range of structured team sports and leisure activities are much more common, along with life skills programs and "safe sanctuaries" programs, which essentially provide an after school and/or weekend drop-in space where young people can engage in a range of activities that encourage creativity and teamwork and also have access to youth workers.⁴⁴¹

Recreational camps at Mornington (near Wokalup) also provide a range of outdoor activities including canoeing, high ropes and abseiling.

Programs of interest:

- Drop in Girls Space (DIGS) in Carnarvon is aimed at young girls considered highly at-risk, including those that are disengaged from school and/or known to local police or Juvenile Justice Teams. It provides them with the opportunity to participate in creative and physical activities after school to build self-confidence and life skills. Key activities include cybersafety, deportment and etiquette, dancing and food and nutrition.⁴⁴²

439 Fair Game, '[Our Programs](#)', 2015.

440 Mr Gordon Musulin, Field Support Manager, Federation of Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (PCYC), *Transcript of Evidence*, 22 June 2016, p14.

441 PCYC, [Police and Community Youth Centres Annual Report 2014/2015](#), PCYC, Perth, 2015, p16.

442 *ibid.*

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- Streetball, a sport and active recreation program based on basketball, is delivered on Saturday nights during school term in the cities of Fremantle and Cockburn. It includes a focus on educational workshops and youth development components across training for youth aged 10 to 17 from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The Outreach Bus sees youth workers deliver a mobile after-school service in a different designated area every Monday to Friday during school term. The specially fitted out bus provides room for young people to play Playstation and board games and chat with youth workers. They can also take part in team sports such as football and basketball, and BMX and scooter riding.⁴⁴³

See also *Case Study 3.1: Stepping Stones*, in the main body of the report.

Youth Involvement Council (YIC) (Hedland) runs the YIC Youth Centre and various programs for youth. The Youth Centre is a drop-in centre for young people aged 10-17 who can take part in cooking, gardening, pool, table tennis, games, arts, crafts, music, sports, excursions, camps and other activities.

YIC youth workers supervise youth and work with them to develop their skills and confidence.

There are two separate programs for boys and girls: Brotherhood, an awareness program for boys aged 10-17 years, uses fishing, camps, swimming, movies, basketball, self-esteem and leadership activities to engage teenagers; Butterflies is the equivalent program for girls but is not really sports-based.

The program is funded by the Department for Child Protection and Family Services and the Department of Corrective Services.⁴⁴⁴

YMCA WA has three focus areas: early education, youth participation and health and wellness. Youth and community services include mentoring for young people aged 7 to 20 years and counselling.

From the multi-purpose facility YMCA HQ in Leederville, YMCA WA also offers art and music events alongside youth support.

YMCA programs of interest have included:

- YTime combines case management support and social and recreation activities to assist at-risk young people aged 10 to 25 years to remain “healthy, engaged

443 PCYC, [Police and Community Youth Centres Annual Report 2014/2015](#), PCYC, Perth, 2015, p19.

444 Youth Involvement Council, [‘YIC Youth Centre’](#), 2014.

and supported". The program is currently delivered in Langford, Newman, Serpentine Jarrahdale and Armadale.⁴⁴⁵

- Active Girls is an after-school pilot program funded by DSR that aims to engage at least 200 girls (years 8-10) in the City of Swan. By improving the girls' physical activity levels and attitudes, the program aims to initiate long-term behavioural change. Participants will be engaged in program planning and management.⁴⁴⁶
- The Southern Wheatbelt Sport and Recreation Project is a whole-of-community project that seeks to connect young people with their communities by increasing youth participation in sport and recreation. Participants are from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in Narrogin, Wagin, Brookton and Pingelly.⁴⁴⁷

YMCA WA also manages 11 sport and recreation centres, which may run locally-based programs for at-risk young people. The Port Hedland Leisure Centre, for example, have run the Swim for Life program since 2008, which offers lifeguarding as an employment pathway for disengaged Aboriginal young people.⁴⁴⁸

LEAD (Learn Explore Aspire Develop) is a leadership program for young people aged 12 to 18 who live in Kalgoorlie-Boulder. The LEAD program aims to build young people's skills and confidence, empowering them to become advocates for community change.

The program includes an urban art workshop, talks from young Goldfields leaders, physical games and challenges and teambuilding games and activities which aim to equip young people with increased confidence and problem solving abilities.⁴⁴⁹

Camp Kulin, run by the Shire of Kulin, was established in 2013 and provides Scholarship Camps for children who have been affected by childhood trauma. Places at the camp are funded by sponsors and children must be referred. Referrals come from Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors (ASeTTS), WA Police, Department for Child Protection and Family Support, Department of Corrective Services, Disability Services Commission, Rural Community Support Service, Central AgCare, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services, youth workers, case workers and schools.⁴⁵⁰

A Shared Future is a capacity building program which will work with young people and communities to reduce economic, social and cultural isolation, and provide the

445 YMCA WA, ['YTime Outreach Service'](#).

446 YMCA WA, ['Active Girls'](#).

447 YMCA WA, ['Southern Wheatbelt Sport and Recreation Project'](#).

448 Town of Port Hedland, ['Swim for Life Program.'](#)

449 City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, ['LEAD Youth Leadership Program'](#), [2015].

450 Camp Kulin and Kulin Shire Council, ['Scholarship Camps'](#), 2014.

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knowledge and skills to counter extremist influences. It is being run by Relationships Australia with a three-year grant from the Office of Multicultural Interests. This program is part of the Multicultural Partnerships Program which will provide \$810,000 over three years to Relationships Australia and also Communicare (for a capacity building program for migrants) and the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (for a capacity building program for African communities).⁴⁵¹

Arts and culture

The Yiriman Project is an intergenerational "on-Country" cultural program developed by Aboriginal Elders from four Kimberley language groups in 2000, following concerns about young people in their communities. It is auspiced by the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) and based at Fitzroy Crossing.

Yiriman takes groups of young people, Elders and other members of the community on trips to country which can last from a couple of days to a couple of weeks. With three or four generations coming together, culture is gradually and respectfully transmitted. Old practices are often combined with newer ways of doing things, helping to maintain or heal the link between people, family and country.

While some trips include long periods of walking, some involve travelling to a designated place and setting up camp to carry out wild harvest work and others focus on filming the stories of senior people. Some trips are aimed at young men, others at young women.⁴⁵²

A 2013 evaluation of Yiriman found a correlation between young people's involvement in Yiriman and many positive outcomes for individuals, including transitioning from involvement in Yiriman trips to participation in Ranger teams.⁴⁵³

Yiriman projects have been used to assist in suicide prevention and juvenile justice diversion.

Many, if not most of those young people who are included in these case studies are also at risk of alcohol and substance abuse, mental health damage and suicide. As the case studies demonstrate, many of the young people are taking up leadership roles in their communities as parents, Yiriman mentors, rangers and cultural custodians. When

451 Submission No. 4 from Department of Local Government and Communities, 23 May 2016, p5; Office of Multicultural Interests, '[Multicultural Partnerships Program 2015-2018](#)', Department of Local Government and Communities, last updated 1 June 2016.

452 Palmer, D., *"We know they healthy cos they on country with old people": demonstrating the value of the Yiriman Project, 2010-2013*, Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, Fitzroy Crossing, 2013, p22.

453 *ibid.*, p75.

*one considers the limited opportunities that exist for young people this becomes all the more significant.*⁴⁵⁴

Part of Yiriman's success has also been attributed to the central role of singing, music, art and performance, given the importance of music in Aboriginal history and tradition and the importance of contemporary music forms to young people.⁴⁵⁵

FNTS Movement aims to support and empower young Western Australians from all backgrounds and ethnicities to express themselves through drama, dance, music, digital media and helping other members of the community.

FNTS, which stands for "From Nothing to Something", runs Collective Action, a drama program supported by the Department of Local Government and Communities and the WA AIDS Council which uses drama to equip young people with the skills to handle conflict, pressure and expectations.

Young people are encouraged to think of a real life challenge they have faced or may face, and use role play as an opportunity to implement strategies to resolve the conflict. Collective Action will run for 12 months and will work with high school students living in the metropolitan area.

FNTS was founded by Burundian Rachdar Abubakar Giraneza, otherwise known as G-Marl Jamal. Rachdar started out in the arts scene as an organiser of free "dance battle" hip hop events. The events brought different young people together who shared a common interest (arts) and helped increase support networks and encourage group involvement in the community to reduce at-risk behaviour.

From 2013, Rachdar focused heavily on building FNTS by mentoring younger artists and involving others in youth arts events. He facilitated a music program for young people, including some on the verge of becoming homeless.⁴⁵⁶

Home is Where My Heart Is is a photography mentoring project for homeless youth run by the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA).

Emerging photographers work with young people who have experienced homelessness in WA to explore the concept of "home" through photography. An exhibition of the resulting images is held as part of Homelessness Prevention Week in August each year.

454 Palmer, D., "We know they healthy cos they on country with old people": demonstrating the value of the Yiriman Project, 2010-2013, Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, Fitzroy Crossing, 2013, pp75-76.

455 *ibid.*, p99.

456 Western Australian AIDS Council, '[Youth drama project aims to develop life skills of future generations](#)', 27 April 2016.

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The images offer insight into the lives of young people who experience homelessness in WA and act as a catalyst for widespread community education and discussion about the issues.⁴⁵⁷

Yirra Yaakin is a well-established Aboriginal performing arts organisation which has won awards for its theatre, governance and partnerships. It creates works for all ages, including young audiences, and also runs Culture 2.0 | Respect Yourself Respect Your Culture, a free workshop program for schools and communities. Young people are invited to explore questions relating to culture of all kinds.

After a successful pilot program in 2013, Yirra Yaakin toured the program to the Goldfields, Port Hedland, Karratha and the South West. This year the program is touring the Kimberley.

In partnership with Woodside, Yirra Yaakin also runs a training initiative called Next Step which gives Aboriginal creative artists and art workers the opportunity to enter the performing arts industry. It also runs an Indigenous Cultural Leadership Initiative, *All Our Futures*, which artistic director Kyle Morrison says addresses the need for more Indigenous artists in leadership roles in the arts industry. It recently ran a crowd-funding campaign to raise funds to support trainees Ian Wilkes and Shakara Walley in a 12-month professional development program.⁴⁵⁸

Rural Rhythms workshops, run by CAN (Community Arts Network), aim to empower young people in regional WA to find ways of re-telling traditional cultural stories through hip hop music and dance.

Professional dancers, musicians and local Noongar leaders taught young people skills in hip hop dance, emcee writing and performing, lyric writing and Australian hip hop culture.

In April, a three-day hip hop camp in Kellerberrin brought together local hip hop group Static Crew (see below) and the Midland-based Beat Walkers in rap writing and recording workshops. The camp included didgeridoo and bushcraft sessions and an “on country” tour of sites of cultural and heritage significance around Kellerberrin.⁴⁵⁹

457 Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia, [‘Home is Where My Heart is’](#).

458 Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, [‘Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company’](#).

459 Community Arts Network, *2015 Annual Report*, Community Arts Network WA Ltd, Perth, 2016, p14.

Static Crew and Connie Yarran

Connie recently won a Young Achiever Award (the 2016 AustralianSuper Career Kickstart Award) in recognition of her work and leadership in setting up two all-Aboriginal hip hop dance programs in Kellerberrin. The first group, Static Crew, was set up as an after school activity for older kids but when their younger siblings turned up looking for something to do, Lil Sparks was established. The group has performed for WA Day, NAIDOC Week and other events. CAN employed Connie as a youth arts officer after they saw her work. CAN's CEO Jo Metcalf said Connie was an exceptional young role model who had been supported to gain a Certificate 4 in Dance Instruction. Connie said she never imagined that her "small idea" could make such a huge impact on her and the kids' lives.⁴⁶⁰

Open Access Youth Art Studio for at-risk youth was initiated in 2006 by local artist Sue Codee under a mentorship with Sally Marsden, who started the Artful Dodgers Studio in Melbourne.

The Open Access Youth Art Studio provides a safe, secure environment for young people, including those disadvantaged and marginalised, who have an interest in the arts or youth culture.

The program is staffed by qualified youth workers who can provide youth related information and referrals to support and other youth services. Community artists are also employed to run music, multimedia, painting and urban art sessions.

A pick-up service is available for North Albany Senior High School students and all studio participants who reside within the Albany town site can also be dropped home.

The studio provides free healthy food and all activities and art supplies are provided free of charge.

Open Access operates two afternoons a week (3.30pm to 6pm) during the school term.⁴⁶¹

Artist-in-Residence (AiR) Grants Program was funded by the Australia Council for the Arts, the Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA) and the Department of Education to provide 68 WA schools with an artist-in-residence between 2010 and 2015.

⁴⁶⁰ CAN (Community Arts Network), '[Connie dances her way to success](#)', 2 June 2016.

⁴⁶¹ Albany Youth Support Association, '[Open Access Youth Art Studio](#)'.

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The program has been defunded following the transfer of funds from the Australia Council to the Ministry for the Arts in the 2015 Federal Budget.

The only current project (concluding in December 2016) is at Banksia Hill Detention Centre School, where artists from AbMusic and Musica Viva are working with Aboriginal young people at the centre. The project will culminate in a concert by the students, AbMusic tutors and guest artists from Musica Viva.

The program also provides students with the opportunity to obtain some subject units towards a Certificate II in Music.⁴⁶²

462 Submission No. 6 from Department of Culture and the Arts, 28 June 2016, pp8-9, 29.

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