

YUWKES!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE YOUTH AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.

Spur of the moment

Leading youth educator Streetwize Communications (formerly Streetwize Comics) recently visited Victoria as part of a national research project on young people and car theft. The aim of the project is to raise awareness amongst young people and youth workers about car theft, and to discourage young people from becoming involved in this activity.



In 1997, Streetwize published *Spur of the Moment*, a national comic looking at the serious legal consequences of car theft. Over 70,000 copies of the comic have been distributed throughout schools and youth networks around Australia.

Due to the success and popularity of the comic, Streetwize has been funded by the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council and NRMA Insurance Ltd to develop a larger information campaign on car theft. The campaign will include:

- A reprint and redistribution of the Spur of the Moment comic
- The development of a 30-second animated commercial to be shown in schools, and as a community service announcement on television networks, public screens and cinemas.
- The development of an Educators' Kit aimed at teachers, youth workers, juvenile justice staff, social workers and anyone working with young people who might be at risk of being involved in car theft.

Streetwize Communications was set up in 1984 to communicate about social issues in an accessible, entertaining and relevant format. To ensure that its resources are respected and widely used by young people and those who work with young people, the Streetwize team conduct extensive research with these groups.

For the Spur of the Moment project, Streetwize conducted research in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, with both young people and those who work with young people.

Spur of the Moment animated commercial

Streetwize conducted focus groups with over 150 young people, from a range of backgrounds, some of whom had been or were involved in car theft, and aged mainly between 14 and 16. The aim of

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Growing Victoria Together

by Paula Grogan

The State Government recently launched a policy framework, Growing Victoria Together, which outlines the Government's broad vision for the next ten years. This article gives a brief outline of the framework and looks at what it means for young people and those working with young people.

Providing decent and responsible Government. Getting the basics rights. Leading the way to a better Victoria with education and lifelong learning as the key. These are the goals the State Government has set for itself over the next ten years and Growing Victoria Together details how it intends to achieve these.

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About YACVIC

The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. (YACVic) is the peak body and leading policy advocate on young people's issues in Victoria. YACVic's vision is for a Victorian Community that values and provides opportunity, participation, justice and equity for all young people.

The main function of YACVic is to make representations to government and serve as an advocate for the interests of young people, workers with young people and organisations that provide direct services to young people. YACVic's resources are primarily directed towards policy analysis and development through consultation with its constituency. YACVic also resources the information needs of its members through regular updates and by facilitating networking within and beyond the Victorian youth sector.

YACVic is governed by a volunteer Board and managed by a paid secretariat. The Council's core funding comes from the Victorian Government's Office for Youth.

Vision statement

Our vision is for a Victorian Community that values and provides opportunity, participation, justice and equity for all young people.

YACVic actively works towards this vision as the peak body and leading policy advocate on young people's issues in Victoria.

Yikes!

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Copy deadline

Contributions to Yikes! are welcome. Deadline for contributions to the March edition of YIKES! is 18:02:02. Contact us on (03) 9612 8999 if you would like to contribute.

Inserts & Advertising

If you wish to include an insert or advert in Yikes please contact the YACVic Communications Officer on (03) 9612 8999 or email info@yacvic.org.au.

news in brief

Commonwealth Government news

The Youth Affairs component of the former Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) has moved to the Family and Community Services (FaCS) portfolio under Minister Larry Anthony. Programs and events which have moved to FaCS include JPET, Green Corps, National Youth Week, National Youth Media Awards, National Youth Roundtable and the Australian Forum of Youth Organisations. The only Indigenous components to transfer across to FaCS are the National Indigenous Youth Leadership Group and First Australians Business (FAB).

Source: Youth Field Xpress email newsletter December 2001

The Enterprise and Career Education Programme

The Department of Education, Science and Training is seeking submissions from suitable organisations to undertake an action research project to assist up to 200 Project Schools to run and document innovative approaches to, and best practice in, Enterprise Education in primary and secondary schools. The project is being undertaken as part of the Enterprise and Career Education Programme. Further information on the programme is available in the Enterprise and Career Education Programme Guidelines at <http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/guidelines/EnterpriseEducation/index.htm> Applications close Wednesday 30 January 2002.

It is anticipated that the project will begin in February 2002. School-based research will take place during 2002 and 2003 and the project will conclude by April 2004. Details in full at <http://www.dest.gov.au/tenders/December/rft1951/rft1951.htm>

Source: Youth.comm. 21/12/01

Bullying and Violence in the Workplace

The Victorian WorkCover Authority has issued the proposed Code of Practice for the Prevention of Bullying and Violence in the Workplace. This is available for public review and comment. The proposed Code provides practical guidance on how to eliminate or reduce the risk to employees' health and safety from workplace bullying and occupational violence. Copies of the proposed code may be obtained by calling 03 9641 1333 or it can be viewed on WorkCover's website www.workcover.vic.gov.au. Written submissions close 4 March 2002.

Source: Victorian WorkCover Authority.

CREATE Foundation Report Card 2001

CREATE Foundation, the representative body of 20,000 children and young people in state care in Australia, has issued its annual 'Report Card' examining the status of children and young people in care around Australia for 2001. The only report of its kind in Australia, it compares levels of expenditure and outcomes for each State and Territory for the last financial year against 13 key indicators of safety and well being.

Ms Jan Owen, CREATE Foundation's national director said the results show that 'no State or Territory is doing enough to protect the safety and well being of children and young people in their care. If the Report Card is a measure of acceptable performance then sadly in many areas we are failing'.

The purpose of the report card is to 'set a benchmark for government agencies and to improve the quality of care and services for this special group of 20,000 Australian children and young people' who 'should not have to wait for inquiries and Royal Commissions to expose the lack of resources and acceptable standards of care', Ms Owen said. Copies of the Create Report Card 2001 are available from the foundation's web site at <http://www.create.org.au>

Source: Create Foundation media release 19/12/01 and Youth.comm email list 21/12/01

Street life - funding for small business

Applications are open for funding from the Street Life program for 2001 to 2003.

This program makes funds available to support neighbourhood business groups and networks, and to encourage the development and then implementation of innovative small business growth and revitalisation activities.

A series of workshops will be held in mid to late January to provide interested organisations with information about the Street Life program.

The closing date for applications is February 8 2002. Forms from the program may be obtained from the website:

<http://www.businessaccess.vic.gov.au/streetlife> or by calling the Victorian Business Line on 132215.

Source: Media release from the Minister for Small Business 03/12/01

State Government response to cannabis and alcohol abuse by young Victorians

One in five callers to the Victorian Governments 24-hour drug Helpline is aged under 18 and almost 50% of callers are aged under 25. According to the state government the drug Helpline has identified cannabis as the major Victorian drug issue - prompting the Bracks Government to resume the advertising campaign over the summer holidays. Health Minister John Thwaites said an analysis of the campaign found cannabis-related calls were five times more prevalent than heroin-related calls, which represented 11% of callers, followed by ecstasy (8%).

"The cannabis figures vindicate the Government's decision to initiate a realistic media advertising campaign featuring cannabis, ecstasy and heroin and the effects these drugs can have on a young person's life. . . for a young person to identify with the ads and then dial for help is very encouraging. So far hundreds of people have been linked to treatment and are getting their lives back on track."

There will be an emphasis on radio and outdoor advertising to reach young Victorians at youth specific activities who may want more information about the damage caused by illicit drugs. The 24-hour Helpline is run by trained drug counsellors who provide information, support and referral to drug treatment services state-wide.

The confidential Helpline - 1800 888 236 - has been averaging between 50 and 400 calls each week since mid-July.

Help is available on a confidential basis 24 hours a day by calling 1800 888 236 or accessing the campaign website at www.drugs.vic.gov.au. The website also carries information about drugs, counselling services, treatment and support, and what is available in Victoria.

Source: Media release from the Minister for Health 17/12/2001

Peace Education - your contributions wanted

The Youth Branch of the Global Campaign for Peace Education are collecting examples of peace education activities that can be performed by young people outside of the school/university setting.

Please send your responses to: Olivia Martin, Youth Programme Coordinator The Hague Appeal for Peace email: olivia@ipb.org

To find out more about the Global Campaign for Peace Education, the HAP Youth Network (and other areas of work with regards to youth involvement in the GCPE, e.g. the Advocacy section) and the Hague Appeal for Peace, visit the website <http://youth.haguepeace.org>

Source: Youth Australia email list 21/12/01

Young women's right to party safely

The Centre Against Sexual Assault has continued it's campaign for young women's right to party safely with the launch of a free post card that was distributed to a range of venues and cafes across Melbourne and the rest of the state over the holiday period.

The Right to Party Safely Project's key message is that: "It's never okay to be made to do something against your will, no matter how much you've had to drink or what you are wearing."

Minister for Women's Affairs Cheryl Garbutt who launched the postcard said research by the Australian Bureau of Statistics has shown that young women were much more likely to be the subject of violence than older women, with 19 per cent of women aged 18-24 experiencing an incident of physical or sexual violence in the previous 12 months. Other figures showed that nine out of 10 victims did not report the incident to police.

"The post card is a great idea and a great way of spreading the message that young women have a right to party in safety, without fear of threats or physical or sexual assault," Ms Garbutt said.

The post card lists a "Bill of Partying Rights" for young women that includes positive statements about choice and reinforces that sex without consent is a crime. The message also includes information about CASA House and provides all-hours contact phone numbers for the service. Manager of CASA House, Marg D'Arcy said she is concerned that increased reports of sexual assault on young women often after leaving parties appear to be associated with the holiday season.

Source: Media release from the Minister for Women's Affairs 14/12/01

Study of homeless young people in Melbourne

A long term study called *Project i* aims to track the path of newly homeless young people aged between 12 and 20 over three years.

It is a collaborative project between the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (La Trobe University) and the Center for Community Health (UCLA). The project is interested in finding out how young people's pathways into and out of homelessness are affected by service delivery. They have already conducted almost 400 interviews and are trying to interview as many homeless young people in Melbourne as possible.

For more information see their website: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/projecti/>

Source: InfoXchange youth news <http://www.infoxchange.net.au> 19/12/2001

Child Employment Review

A review of child employment laws has been initiated by the State Government to encourage community discussion about the best way to protect young people under 15 from the risks associated with employment. This is the first review of child employment laws for 30 years. A discussion paper, *Children at Work*, has been released which can be obtained at www.irv.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 22 15. Written submissions are close 15 February 2002. Source: Industrial Relations Victoria.

Victorian Youth Round table report now available

The 5th Victorian Youth Round table was held at Devenish in June 2001. The Youth Round Table focussed on Designing Accessible Youth Services. Young people's views from the day have been collated into a report which can be accessed on the Office for Youth website www.youth.vic.gov.au.

DCI Australia input into the HREOC Immigration Detention Inquiry

A working party has been set up in Melbourne for the purpose of generating submissions to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention (see www.hreoc.gov.au/human_rights/children_detention/index.html). The closing date for submissions to the Inquiry is 15 March 2002. Barbara Rogalla is representing DCI-Australia on the working party which first met on 12 December 2001. The following sub groups were formed:

- Health and Disabilities;
- Psychological and Social Wellbeing;
- Education and Culture;
- Legal;
- Primary Evidence Gathering; and
- Media Strategies.

Barbara is in the Media group but would welcome input from members and friends of DCI-Australia on any of the subgroup areas.

Please contact Barbara directly by email: barbR@bigpond.com

STOP PRESS: Student and youth radio gets a full time licence!

After a 14-month wait SYN-FM was awarded a Melbourne-wide full-time community broadcasting licence on Wednesday 19th December. At last, a full-time community broadcasting licence for young people in Melbourne! SYN FM will be back on air soon. Their new frequency will be 90.7 FM.

If you are interested in running a show contact the station on (03) 9925 2414 or see their website <http://www.syn.org.au>

Established in 1980 as an initiative of the State Government through the Ministry of the Arts, St Martins is an incorporated not-for-profit youth arts organisation. Located on the site of the old St Martins theatre in South Yarra, the centre strives to empower young people within the performing arts by initiating hands on projects, creative opportunities and exposure to artists and artistic practices of the highest calibre.

EMPOWERING young people in the performing



St Martins Youth Arts Centre caters for young people aged five to twenty-five years old through a season of workshops, master classes, performances and forums as well as providing mentoring programmes, a scholarship programme & general advice about anything theatrical.

St Martins has been an entry point to the industry for many current theatre practitioners, both on & off the stage. Past students include Lano & Woodley, Noah Taylor, Catherine McClements & Gina Riley.

The St Martins Performance Scholarship, an initiative introduced in 1997, remains one of the most successful and popular programmes the Company operates. In 2001 over a hundred young people between the ages of 15 and 25 auditioned for forty places in the programme.

Applicants are judged not on 'talent' but rather potential and commitment. The Performance Scholarship is fiercely non-elitist, culturally diverse, and aims to satisfy its students rather than mould them into a product. As with all St Martins projects, the tutors for this programme are professional theatre workers with a broad skills base who are able to bring their enthusiasm and passion to their work with the students.

The scholarship programme consists of six hours of training per week for three terms. The training is held in two different locations (South Yarra & North Melbourne) to increase access to the programme. The students receive core tuition in Movement, Voice and Text as well as specialised classes which have in the past included Improvisation, Mask, Butoh and Performance Making. Their final term is spent in rehearsals for a Season of New International Works.

The 2002 St Martins Performance Ensemble/Scholarship auditions again on the 16 & 17 February.

All you wanted to know about St. Martin's Performance Ensemble/Scholarship Program

by Bianca Murphy

For all of you aspiring performers out there thinking about auditioning for the 2002 Scholarship Performance Program, I say go for it!

Hi, I'm Bianca and I've nearly completed this year's scholarship program. For those of you who are perhaps only just learning about the program right here, right now, read on:

The first process of the program was the audition. We presented a one minute monologue to Brett Adam, the Artistic Director, and our fellow auditionees. Next, the auditionees were split into two groups for voice audition and movement auditions. The voice audition was a matter of listening to your teacher and focussing on instructions he/she gave you. No singing was involved, it's all about breathing exercises, poise, diction, projection. (For example, one exercise could be lying on your back drawing a sound from the depths of your stomach and forcing it out to a projection point.) The movement audition wasn't about dancing, although my group was asked to follow some simple dance steps to music and to work through stretching techniques.

If you're successful, you and around 40 others will begin a year of Saturday morning classes for two terms (with holidays in between). We had one class for text, one for voice and one for movement rotating over the weeks. As a group we put on a showing of work in progress at the end of Term 2. Term 3 require us to audition for 'Season of New Australian Work', which plays written by St Martins' writers. We rehearsed and will perform in December.

arts



The actual class itself started with warm up stretching, which can get quite difficult if you're not usually a stretching sort. There was bit of acrobatic work, then we worked towards a showing of work in progress at the end of Term 2.

In class you'll make good friends. Everybody works professionally and this creates a fantastic environment for you to explore your creative self.

I've found that since being in the Scholarship Program, my opportunities have expanded, for example, performing in the Fringe Festival, writing for young playwrights, participating in the Mentorship program by assisting Brett Adam direct Colosseum with many other off shoots of things to see and do.

The Scholarship is an extremely helpful way into the big wide world of performing arts. I only wish it went for longer, it will be missed by me and many other graduates I'm sure. That's all for now from me, the decision is over to you. Good Luck!

The Season of New Australian Work ran from Dec 12 - Dec 15. Bianca received a special award at the end of the Scholarship for her outstanding commitment to St Martins during the year.



Here's some nuts and bolts info about the Centre from St Martins General Manager Emma Bailey.

Auditions

To find out about auditions for St Martin's productions or programmes, including the Scholarship, contact the office on 9252 0755.

Forums

Each St Martins performance season has a "Meet the Cast & Creators" night. A 6.30pm performance is followed by a session where audience members can find out about the creation of the piece.

Workshops

St Martins run a number of workshops throughout the year in South Yarra and North Melbourne for young people of various ages.

Membership

Membership is \$30 per year and entitles you to a regular newsletter, discounted workshops and tickets to St Martins productions.

Website

Check out the St Martins website at <http://www.stmartinsyouth.com.au> You can view online profiles, download enrolment forms, check out what's on and what's coming up. You can also join their email list.

Winter workshops

After the success of the Winter Workshop Program in 2001 St Martins are running week long intensive classes resulting in studio showings working with some great tutors. They will run between July 1 and July 12.

MAC

The Members' Advisory Committee is an integral part of St Martins. The committee meets regularly and is consulted about all issues affecting the company and members.

Schools and community workshops

St Martins can come to your school or community group. We regularly send tutors and technical staff to schools and communities to run workshops in various areas of theatre production. We can also host tutorials at our venue to practically investigate the workings of a fully functional theatre. Workshops are conducted by industry professionals and are tailored to meet the specific requirements of your group. For more information contact the office.

Mentorships

Established in 2000 the Mentorship programme matches St Martins members with professional artists working on our productions. You can work as assistant to your chosen artist. For further details of this great opportunity please contact the office.

Venue for hire

St Martins has a number of venues for hire for performance, rehearsals, exhibitions and functions.

Crisp

This year sees the introduction of Crisp; a new initiative for St Martins. Throughout the year Crisp will showcase the talents of young playwrights, actors and directors in a series of readings of new work by St Martins members.

Volunteer Programme

Register as a volunteer. Come in, have lots of fun. The opportunities and experience are invaluable phone 9252 0755.

Contact details

St Martins Youth Arts Centre
28 St Martins Lane
South Yarra VIC 3141

Phone: 03 9867 2477, Fax: 03 9866 273

Email: info@stmartinsyouth.com.au

Website: <http://www.stmartinsyouth.com.au>

Growing Victoria Together

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Clear principles underpin the framework including innovation, sustainability, partnership, communication, rights, community building, early intervention, participation and diversity. We welcome the promotion of these principles as they accord with YACVic's philosophy and they reflect the principles that we have argued should underpin the Youth Strategy. As Growing Victoria Together will set the tone for policy decisions across government, it is expected that these principles will shape decisions for young people too.

Several themes are reiterated throughout the document. The framework re-affirms the importance of the triple bottom line. That is, integrating social, environmental and economic objectives in policies, programs and practices as all three elements contribute to the well-being of communities. For example, environmental sustainability is vital to achieve economic and social growth. A healthy Murray River, free from salination problems, would provide better irrigation for farming and assist the growth of local agricultural industries. In turn, a thriving agricultural industry would stimulate the growth of local communities by providing employment opportunities and contributing to the local economy.

The framework also emphasises partnership. The Government has made a commitment to an ongoing and open dialogue with the community. Engaging communities in policy development and implementation is seen as essential for building trust, accountability and common purpose. Importantly, involving key stakeholders in policy decisions is seen as vital if those stakeholders are to feel a sense of ownership over policy decisions. YACVic welcomes this opportunity for more young people to become involved in decision-making processes.

The framework celebrates diversity and promotes the rights of all Victorians. The Government has said it also aims to address inequality by improving services and people's access to those services.

The vision

By 2010, the Government hopes that Victoria is a state where:

- innovation leads to thriving industries generating high quality jobs;
- protecting the environment for future generations is built into everything we do;
- we have caring, safe communities in which opportunities are fairly shared;

The framework re-affirms the importance of the triple bottom line. That is, integrating social, environmental and economic objectives in policies, programs and practices as all three elements contribute to the well-being of communities.

- all Victorians have access to the highest quality health and education services all through their lives.

The priorities

The Government has identified key priority areas where it will focus its attention in order to achieve this vision. Following is a brief description of the areas and actions that have particular relevance for young people.

Valuing and investing in lifelong education

Priority actions

Improve participation and achievement in education and training.

Provide better links between schools, business and communities.

Expand opportunities for training and learning all through life.

Demonstrating progress

90 per cent of young people in Victoria will successfully complete Year 12 or its equivalent by 2010.

The percentage of young people 15-19 in rural and regional Victoria engaged in education and training will rise by 6 per cent by 2005.

The proportion of Victorians learning new skills will increase.

High quality, accessible health and community services

Priority actions

Build, improve and integrate hospitals and community health services.

Reduce drug abuse and harm.

Tackle health issues linked to inequality including mental and dental health.

Demonstrating progress

Waiting times and levels of confidence in health and community services will improve.

Health and education outcomes for young children will improve.

Waiting times for drug treatment will decrease as will deaths from drugs, including tobacco and alcohol.

Sound financial management

Priority actions

Invest in long term social and physical infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, roads, public transport and waste management.

Safe streets, homes and workplaces

Priority actions

Continue to increase police numbers until we have 800 extra police in the front line against crime.

Develop new and expanded crime prevention programs.

Reduce family violence.

Improve road and workplace safety.

Demonstrating progress

Violent crime and fear of violent crime will be reduced.

Road accidents and deaths will be reduced by 20 per cent over the next five years.

Growing and linking all of Victoria

Priority actions

Build faster, better, more accessible transport and communication links.

Connect more Victorians to the Internet and other new technologies.

Demonstrating progress

Rail travel times will be reduced to Ballarat, Geelong, Bendigo and the Latrobe Valley.

Travel in Melbourne taken on public transport will increase from 9 per cent to 20 per cent by the year 2020.

Promoting sustainable development

Priority actions

Increase recycling and effective waste management and increase the development and use of renewable energy sources.

Improve the productivity and sustainability of natural resource industries such as fisheries, farming, forestry and mining.

Facilitate the planting of more trees.

More jobs and thriving, innovative industries across Victoria

Priority actions

Promote the creation and use of new ideas and technologies to attract investment and employment in new and existing industries.

Promote growth in information and communications, biotechnology, professional services, design, advanced manufacturing and environmental management.

Demonstrating progress

There will be more and better jobs across Victoria.

The proportion of Victorians learning new skills will increase.

Building cohesive communities and reducing inequalities

Priority actions

Support new community building initiatives and develop partnerships with local government around local communities' needs.

Enhance community participation and engagement in cultural activities.

Encourage employers, workers and families to better balance their work and family responsibilities and their ability to participate in community life.

Reduce unemployment and rejuvenate those areas worst affected by social and economic disadvantage.

Expand the supply of secure, affordable and appropriate public housing.

Demonstrating progress

The extent and diversity of participation in community, cultural and recreational organisations will increase.

In a crisis there will be more people Victorians can turn to for support.

Inequalities in health, education and well-being between communities will be reduced.

Protecting the environment

Priority actions

Improve the health of our rivers and waterways and take effective action to reduce salinity.

Encourage increased use of public transport.

Demonstrating progress

The quality of air and drinking water will improve.

The health of Victoria's catchments, rivers and bays will improve.

There will be a real reduction in the environmental and economic impact of salinity by 2015.

Promoting rights and respecting diversity

Priority actions

Improve awareness of rights and promote equal opportunity.

Improve access to courts, legal aid, victim support and alternative dispute resolution procedures.

Increase racial and religious tolerance.

Promote reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Victorians and move to redress the dispossession of Aboriginal land and culture.

Improve access to services for culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians.

Increase the diversity of representation on decision-making boards and in local government.

Demonstrating progress

The proportion of Victorians aware of their legal and civil rights will increase.

More Victorians from all backgrounds will have the opportunity to have a say on issues which matter to them.

Government that listens and leads

Priority actions

Provide strong, clear vision and direction with regular reports on progress.

Make Government more democratic, open and inclusive through better access to decision-making processes including holding numerous Community Cabinets each year.

Strengthen the capacity of the public sector to deliver high quality, responsive, accessible and efficient services.

Demonstrating progress

More Victorians will be consulted on issues which matter to them.

There will be regular reports on progress in improving the quality of life for all Victorians and their communities.

What's in it for young people?


Growing Victoria Together provides an opportunity to examine existing policies and practices and to consider what can be done to improve young people's lives in light of the principles and priorities outlined in the framework.

For example, Growing Victoria Together re-emphasises the importance of a joined-up approach and makes a commitment to improving consultation mechanisms and access to decision-making processes. This provides a great opportunity for young people to get involved in the decisions that affect them. Current mechanisms in the government, private and community sectors could be evaluated to determine how young people are being involved and how this could be made more effective. The document explicitly provides for an increase in the diversity of representation on decision-making boards and in local government for example. Let's start by increasing the presence of young people on these boards! Similarly, the commitment to partnerships should strengthen the Government's relationship with people working with young people to ensure they are also effectively engaged in policy processes.

The document recognises that there needs to be new ways of tackling isolation particularly where poverty or a lack of opportunities and services provide additional barriers. This may be particularly relevant for young people in rural and regional Victoria. The Government has made a commitment to ensuring that services are widely available. One key priority is improving infrastructure across the state. As we know, transport, or the lack of it, is an ongoing concern for young people and may prevent access to education, training, employment and health services. This document provides the impetus to put transport at the top of the Government's agenda.

These are just two ways in which Growing Victoria Together can help to improve the lives of young people in Victoria. As all government strategies should now reflect the principles of Growing Victoria Together, it is expected that the Victorian Youth Strategy will detail how these principles will be implemented. For now, we welcome the opportunity to work with the Government to develop an innovative, democratic, sustainable and caring Victoria for all young people.

For more information see <http://www.growingvictoria.vic.gov.au>



One boy, who disclosed that he was involved in stealing cars, said that the one thing that put him off was being caught as an accomplice. Also he had a close call with hitting an innocent pedestrian. He said he didn't think of the consequences until it was too late – until after the event.

Spur of the moment

young people and car theft

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these focus groups was to get their feedback and comments on the proposed animation.

“The key to our success has always been the involvement of young people throughout the development of every resource,” says Liz Skeleton, General Manager of Streetwize. “It’s important that everything down to the clothes that a character wears and the words that they use are familiar to young people.”

In the case of the car theft animation, young people involved in the focus groups in Victoria were able to give feedback on every aspect of the animation from what type of music should be played in the background (anything with a “fat beat”) to what characters should look like (fashionable, with piercings and wearing brand name clothes) to what the animation should be called (“body Splat” and “The Steal of the Century” among them).

Some of the other questions that the young people involved in the research were asked included:

Is the story realistic?

“[yes, because] that’s what really happens when you are with friends in a stolen car.”

What are the main messages?

“don’t steal cars because it will put you and others in danger.”

What do you think are the consequences of car theft?

One boy, who disclosed that he was involved in stealing cars, said that the one thing that put him off was being caught as an accomplice. Also he had a close call with hitting an innocent pedestrian. He said he didn't think of the

consequences until it was too late – until after the event.

Overall the feedback from young people has resulted in the following changes to the initial concept:

The original 30 second animation has been extended to 45 seconds as the young people involved wanted to see a more detailed account of the consequences of car theft.

- Peer pressure will be demonstrated more clearly as a factor that may lead to involvement in car theft
- The accident in the animation will be more graphic
- A passenger will also receive punishment as an accomplice
- The script now includes more slang and swear words!

Streetwize would like to thank all the young people and youth workers involved in the Victoria research groups conducted at the following organisations: Salvation Army in Brunswick, Frontyard Youth Law drop-in Service in Melbourne, Boroondara Youth Service in Melbourne and Hand Brake Turn in Dandenong.

Spur of the Moment Educators’ Kit

Streetwize spoke with youth and car theft experts including workers who deal with young people and motor vehicle theft, general and indigenous youth workers, police, youth justice workers, lawyers and academics.

The aim of this research was to find out what educators already knew, need to know and would like to know in relation to car theft and young people. The final Educators Kit will include the

comic and animation on CD, as well as statistics on car theft, information about the issues surrounding car theft that educators need to address and understand, activity and discussion suggestions and contacts for further information.

The Spur of the Moment campaign will be launched in February. If you work with young people, ensure you receive your free copy of the Educators’ Kit by joining the Streetwize mailing list:

Phone 02 9319 0220

Fax 02 9319 5553

Email stwize@streetwize.com.au

About Streetwize Communications

Since 1984, Streetwize Communications has distributed over six million publications throughout Australia and overseas on social issues including health, the law, Indigenous issues, family violence, discrimination, gambling, employment and education. For a complete list of Streetwize resources visit www.streetwize.com.au.

A not-for-profit organisation, Streetwize receives no core funding and relies on project specific funding. Projects the team are currently working on include:

- A series of postcards for young women on sexual harassment and relationships
- A research project on young refugees
- A comic for young men in rural areas on depression

If you would like further information on any of these projects, or have another project or issue you would like Streetwize to work on, please contact Streetwize by phone 02 9319 0220 or email stwize@streetwize.com.au.

What about tax, if you're getting a job?

When you start a new job one of the first things you'll be asked to do is to fill in a Tax file number declaration form. This form asks for your tax file number, name and address, date of birth, residency status and whether you wish to claim the tax free threshold.

A few tips on filling-in this form.

The tax free threshold should be claimed from your main source of income - if you have two or more jobs put down this new job if it's the one that pays you the most. This works out best for you because the first \$6000 an Australian resident earns is tax free. If you don't put a cross in the box to claim the tax free threshold, you will be taxed from the first dollar you earn. **You must not claim the tax free threshold from two employers at the same time.** If you want to claim the tax free threshold with your second employer, you should fill in another Tax file number declaration form with your first employer.

You definitely need to include your **tax file number** on the form. If you don't, your new employer will deduct the maximum rate of tax from your pay. This is currently 47 cents in the dollar plus the Medicare Levy. An employer cannot refuse to employ you or pay you if you don't have, or do not wish to quote, your tax file number. You have 28 days from when you start your job to give them your tax file number.

If you don't have a tax file number it's best to apply well in advance because it takes 28 days to get one. You might be able to get your tax file number through your school. **Many schools help their secondary students apply for a tax file number.** All you need to do is complete the application and give it to your teacher. You're going to need one in the future and this takes the hassle out of getting one at the last minute. Check with your school to see if they provide this service.

Of course you can also apply for a tax file number using a form you get from the Tax Office and providing the appropriate proof of identity.

What happens next?

Once you've completed the Tax file number declaration form your employer will automatically take tax out of your pay and send it to the Tax Office.



In July every year your employer will give you a **payment summary**. The payment summary lists all the income you earned and the tax you paid through the year. You will need to use these details when you fill in your income tax return. **You have from 1 July to the end of October to lodge your tax return.**

You can do your return and lodge it through the Internet using e-tax which is available from the Tax Office website at www.ato.gov.au. You can also use **TaxPack** a tax agent, or take advantage of **Tax Help** if your income is under \$30,000. As part of Tax Help the Tax Office trains volunteers in the community to help taxpayers on low incomes fill in their tax returns. Call the Tax Office on 13 2861 from July to October if you would like to use Tax Help.

Tax help for young business people

Taking the big step of setting up your own business can be daunting, but it helps if you understand the obligations that come with running a business.

Taxation is one issue that every business operator needs to understand. To help young business operators with taxation, the Tax Office conducts free Bizstart seminars. The seminars are tailored specifically for people new to business and are designed to explain your rights and obligations in simple terms.

Bizstart seminars cover the basics of tax including:

- income tax and deductions;
- record keeping;
- GST;
- activity statements;
- pay as you go; and
- superannuation.

For details about Bizstart seminars in your local area, contact the Tax Office on (03) 9275 4244 (or e-mail vichizstart@ato.gov.au). Please mention you read about Bizstart seminars in Yikes.

The Tax Office encourages YACVic member organisations to promote Bizstart seminars to its members or clients. Phone the Tax Office on (03) 9275 4865 for details.

a solutions summit for young people and workers
with young people in rural and regional victoria

REVERSING youthaffairs COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC. the DRIFT

EVERYONE AGREES THAT SERVICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN COUNTRY VICTORIA ARE LIMITED, BUT WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS?

This summit is about presenting your solutions to other people from across the state. It's an opportunity to explore and showcase the most appropriate ways in which to service rural areas in the long term. It's a chance for young people, workers with young people and local community builders to get together and share solutions for reversing the drift.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN MAKING A PRESENTATION CLOSE 1st FEBRUARY

Expressions of interest are invited for solution based presentations and workshops. Recommendations from these sessions will be presented at a conference plenary and will contribute to ongoing policy action of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic). Everyone is invited to submit an expression of interest so if you are involved in a successful project that you think other people would like to find out about fill out the form on the YACVic website www.yacvic.org.au (or give us a call and we'll send you one) and send it to YACVic by **Friday 1st February 2002**.

Thursday 9 May to Friday 10 May 2002
Shepparton Civic Centre, Shepparton Victoria, Australia

Are you doing your bit to keep YOUNG PEOPLE

on the agenda in Victoria?

Make sure your YACVic membership has been renewed! Membership runs from July to June each financial year. Fill out the membership form inside.

YACVIC POLICY FORUM

Give & Take:

the income security system and young people

Learn how the Federal Government's plan for changes to the social security system, *Australians Working Together* will impact on young people and their access to income support.

This forum will provide an opportunity to explore different options to make the system more accessible and responsive to young people.

When: 9:30am - 2pm, Thursday 14 February

Where: **Mayors Room**, Brunswick Town Hall, 233 Sydney Road, Brunswick

RSVP: (03) 9612 8999 by 11 February



YACVic presents...

bringing in the bacon!

a philanthropy and funding forum

Need some cash for your project or organisation or just wanna find out about non-government funding sources? Then look no further! Come along to this forum and listen to representatives from major philanthropic bodies explain who they are and what they fund.

Featuring: Foundation for Young Australians, Lance Reichstein Foundation the Myer Foundation, the Jack Brockhoff Foundation and more...

When: Thursday 7 February, 3-5pm

Where: YACVic, Level 6, 1 Elizabeth St (cnr Flinders St) Melbourne

RSVP: (03) 9612 8999 by 4 February (places will be limited)