

YUKES!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE YOUTH AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.

Give and take: young people and the income security system

By Janet Jukes

Access to adequate income is a right, enshrined in the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Young people need an income to participate in education, employment, recreation and social opportunities and to pay for basics like rent and food.

But too often, YACVic hears of concerns about young people not having access to an adequate income and the negative consequences flowing from this. For example, we know that the level of Youth Allowance is inadequate. We also know that poverty is a major reason for dropping out of education and training yet education and training is the key pathway back to employment. It's a vicious cycle.

When considering income support, we also need to look at the bigger picture. Youth unemployment remains high despite economic growth and significant numbers of young people fail to make the transition between education and employment. For those who do undertake further study many typically work part or full time just to live.

YACVic recently held a forum called *Give and Take*. We chose this title to capture the principle of mutual obligation which underpins the Government's income security system. Mutual Obligation means that:

- Income support is means tested
- Claimants are required to be available for full-time work
- They must be actively seeking work and prepared to accept any suitable job offer
- Mandatory sanctions apply

Over the last year we have become very concerned about the increasing number of breaches incurred by young people. Given the low rates of unemployment benefits young people receive, the affect of breaches is significant. The reduced income may lead to greater reliance on charities and greater dependence on crime to survive. Anecdotal evidence indicates that rent is often the first casualty of breaches which places young people at risk of homelessness and this leads to others forms of disconnection.

Significant numbers of young people fail to make the transition between education and employment.

We are also concerned about the perceived lack of support for individuals who are moving through the system. Access for disadvantaged young people is a particular problem. We want to see a system that takes into account the diverse needs of young people. They are not an homogenous group.

Finally, the impact on the family is another area of concern. Our government policies have resulted in 20-24 year olds that are more likely to be dependent on their family for longer due to a lack of income security.

YACVic recently hosted forum called *Give and Take* which provided an opportunity for young people and workers with young people to hear about how *Australians Working Together* - the Federal Governments plan for changes to the social security system - will impact on young people and their access to income support. **See page 6 for more info.**

The forum also explored different options to make the system more accessible and responsive to young people. A full report of the *Give and Take* forum is available on the YACVic website <http://www.yacvic.org.au>

If young people don't have a family upon which they can be dependent, and need to rely on the Government's social security then we know that they are likely to live below the poverty line as previous ACOSS research has shown.

Assumptions that young people can rely on their families for support, or that they require less income than other individuals simply because they are young, should not continue to underpin income support arrangements for young people.

These are just some of the issue we need to consider!

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VICTORIA'S LEADING POLICY ADVOCATE ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S ISSUES

news in brief

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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Contributions

Contributions to Yikes! are welcome. Please note our copy deadlines on the back page.

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

Reversing the drift update

Reversing the Drift is a solutions summit for young people and workers with young people in rural and regional Victoria. The summit will be held in Shepparton, Victoria on **May 9 and 10** and is presented by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. with support from VicHealth, the Goulburn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network and the Goulburn Regional Youth Committee.

Expressions of interest to make a presentation have now closed. We have received over 50 proposals for presentations that will look at how projects and services throughout Victoria are working to explore community identity, celebrate diversity, enhance social connectedness, promote community capacity building and foster rural renewal. Presentations range from arts and theatre based approaches, to pathways planning and rural industry initiatives.

Findings from research about the needs of regional and rural services; issues faced by same sex attracted young people; and young people's use of knives and bladed weapons will also be profiled, along with *Bringing in the Bacon II* a special session on philanthropy and funding sources for community organisations and projects in country Victoria.

Registrations are now open, forms can be downloaded from the YACVic website or by contacting us on (03) 9612 8999. In recognition of resource constraints often facing young people in rural and regional areas a limited number of free places will be reserved for young people. YACVic does however encourage organisations to assist young people with registration, travel and/or accommodation costs. It is important that we work together to ensure that the voices of young people from across Victoria are heard!

You can also help spread the word by **promoting the summit** to your local networks in your newsletter or on your website. Info on how to promote the summit can be found on the website <http://www.yacvic.org.au/reversing> or by calling the YACVic office.

Inquiry into the Inhalation of Volatile Substances - YACVic's submission to the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee is now available

The inhalation of volatile substances is of particular concern to YACVic given that young people between early and late adolescence are the group most likely to engage in volatile substance inhalation. Our submission draws on information from discussions with our members and other key stakeholders and from previous research in related areas. The submission can be downloaded from the YACVic website <http://www.yacvic.org.au> or by calling us on (03) 9612 8999.

Victorian Homelessness Strategy final report: Directions for Change

The VHS Final Report Directions for Change is now available. Structured around five strategic objectives the report provides the Victorian Government's blueprint for tackling homelessness. The report outlines a 15-point Action Plan that identifies initiatives that will impact on and reduce homelessness, and 16 long-term initiatives to develop a program of longer-term change to the ways in which we address homelessness

Source: Department of Human Services website <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/vhs/>.

Copies of the report may be downloaded from this site.

Indigenous arts award

Entries are invited from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists for the 19th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award. First Prize is \$40,000 plus \$16,000 worth of other prizes.

Closing Date is Monday, April 15, 2002.

For preselection forms and information contact:
NATSIAA Co-ordinator
MAGNT GPO Box 4646 Darwin NT 0801
Tel: (08) 8999 8228 Fax: (08)8999 8289
Email: natsiaa@nt.gov.au

Human Rights And Equal Opportunity Commission. Inquiry into children in detention centres

Last year there were 1,103 children held in Australian immigration detention centres, out of a total of 8,401 people overall. The National Inquiry is open to submissions from any organisation or individual. HREOC has stated that they particularly encourage submissions from young people. If you have any views on this issue the National Inquiry is an excellent way to have them heard!

Responses don't have to contain facts or figures or be legalistic but can be based on looking at some of the areas covered in the terms of reference (eg education, health) and responding based on your own attitudes towards what these services mean to young people and how these services can best be provided to young people who arrive as asylum seekers or refugees or to those in immigration detention. If you would prefer to express yourself creatively you can do your submission as a drawing, poem or story.

If you don't want to make your own individual submission the United Nations Youth Association (UNYA) is collecting short statements from young people to include in their submission.

UNYA believes that young people are well placed to empathise with the needs and wishes of children and other young people, even in situations vastly different to our own. It is young peoples right to contribute to a debate concerning their welfare and treatment in Australia.

The deadline for submissions to HREOC is 3 May 2002. Before writing your submission you should check the terms of reference for the inquiry which are available on the HREOC website http://www.hreoc.gov.au/human_rights/children_detention/index.html. There are also a number of background papers and a guideline for writing submissions available on this site.

If you would like to include comments in the UNYA submission you need to get them in by 20 April 2002. If you have any questions or would like to forward a statement to UNYA please contact May Miller-Dawkins, Human Rights Coordinator, United Nations Youth Association. Email: humanrights@unya.asn.au, fax: (02) 9954 0671 or mobile: 0414 820 662.

Source: United Nations Youth Association

For more information about UNYA see their website: <http://www.unya.asn.au>

Testimony: refugees

What: Public events based around the telling of stories, both good and bad, relating to the refugee

experience. These stories would come from refugees, children of refugees and people whose lives have intersected with refugees. They would be told by these people as well as "story tellers" interested in the issue who will relay messages and tales from people who do not wish to speak publicly themselves, due to the legal ramifications or simply because it is too personal and emotional for them to tell themselves. The "story tellers" will predominantly be young people, under 30 years old. The process will be filmed and digitally sound recorded for use in the future.

Why: Predominantly to prompt Australians to think about refugees in different ways by not just "preaching to the converted" but rather by communicating to the audience the many different realities of refugee experience from their conflicts at home to flight, detention and settlement. The aim is to engage the audience in stories, both bad and good, that are personal, emotional and political. Secondly, to give young people, both refugees and non-refugee alike, a chance to participate meaningfully in public discussions surrounding the issue of refugees.

Where and When: These events will take place on Friday April 26.

Current venues include Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane but UNYA want to extend the event to as many areas as possible. They will all be held free in public spaces.

Who is involved: Initiated by the United Nations Youth Association, the events are a part of Australia's activities for the Global Youth Service Day, being steered in Australia by Oxfam Community Aid Abroad. Organisers come from organisations including UNYA, Taking IT Global and Actors for Refugees.

For more information contact May Miller-Dawkins, Human Rights Coordinator, United Nations Youth Association. Email: humanrights@unya.asn.au, fax: (02) 9954 0671 or mobile: 0414 820 662

Source: United Nations Youth Association

Association of Children's Welfare Agencies conference call for papers

What Works?! Evidence-based practice in child and family services. Sydney 2-4 September 2002, Swiss Grand Hotel, Bondi

The Association of Children's Welfare Agencies is pleased to invite proposals for papers, workshop and poster presentations for their 2002 conference from young people, experienced practitioners, managers of services, researchers and policy makers, educators and academics, from government and non-government services, consumers and community groups.

Proposals are invited from the full spectrum of child, youth and family support services.

Streamed sessions will be held on:

- out of home care
- Indigenous children and families
- children with disabilities
- child protection
- the education for vulnerable children and young people

Contact: Conference organiser Sharyn Low for briefing and submission forms:

Ph: (02) 4572 3079

Fax: (02) 4572 3972

Web site: <http://www.mob.com.au>

Email: mailto:sharyn@mob.com.au

Source: youth.comm 02/02/02

National Youth Commitment Website

During 1999 a collaborative partnership involving education, employment, training providers, government and community agencies evolved in the City of Whittlesea, Victoria. Since then 10 other regions across Australia, working with ECEF and DSF, have created unique partnerships to implement National Youth Commitment projects.

The key goals of a national Youth Commitment are to provide access for all young people with particular support for early school leavers or those facing other disadvantages to obtain Year 12 or its equivalent, or obtain a full time job which is linked to education/training.

To find out more about the National Youth Commitment, share in the Regions' stories, contact those involved, access practical information and resources or join the Youth Commitment Online Community please visit this new website at <http://www.dsf.org.au/nyc>

Young grant makers

Are you interested in youth issues in your community?

The Foundation for Young Australians is a national organisation committed to assisting young Australians aged 12-25 years.

The Foundation is looking for Young People aged approximately 17-23 to participate in the Victorian Committee as youth grant makers. You will be part of a new national initiative that enables young people to be the decision makers about funding to support issues that affect them and the wider community.

The applications will be available in March so keep your eye out on the FYA website <http://www.youngaustralians.org.au> or email: fya@youngaustralians.org

Philanthropy generally refers to grants of money given by foundations to not-for-profit organisations to fund programs or projects for the public good. Philanthropic foundations often have a set of criteria which they use to select what kinds of organisations, programs or projects they will fund and generally have one or two funding rounds per year.



Bringing in the bacon

Information from YACVic's funding and philanthropy forum

On February 7, 2002 YACVic held a forum called Bringing in the Bacon which aimed to provide the youth sector with information about who some of the major philanthropic bodies in Victoria are and what they fund. The following article is a summary of the information provided at the forum. Speakers at the forum were:

- Christa Momot, Executive Officer, Lance Reichstein Charitable Fund
- Jane McCaffrey, Project Officer Myer Foundation
- Mary Woolridge, Chief Executive Officer, The Foundation for Young Australians
- Kem Mayberry, Chief Executive Officer, The Jack Brockhoff Foundation

Remember it's best to make contact with the funding body before submitting an application.

Lance Reichstein Foundation

About the foundation

The Lance Reichstein Charitable Foundation was established in 1970 when Lance Reichstein was still living. For the first 9 years, the benefactor and trustees disbursed relatively modest amounts of money as they learned about social and community projects, and the nature of philanthropy.

Since its establishment, the Foundation has seen a new view of philanthropy gain currency. A core tenet of this new philanthropy is the view that funding should favour those projects which encourage empowerment of people and discourage dependency, and which have the capacity to effect structural changes to benefit people whose choices are limited by social, physical and political disadvantage.

Aims of the Foundation are:

- To enable people in disadvantaged situations to take responsibility and control of the factors which effect their lives
- To build on the strengths and contributions of a wide range of groups and communities in society
- To promote activities which emphasise participation, community-based management and accountability to the people for whom the organisation operates
- To encourage more effective and accountable use of community resources
- To promote the co-ordination, sound planning and integration of social needs which relate to the changing economic and political context of our time
- To encourage positive responses to social needs which relate to the changing economic and political context of our time

What they fund

The Foundation is committed to the development of progressive philanthropy in Australia.

Grantmaking is guided by the belief that support for community groups and community development can promote social change by assisting people to take greater responsibility both for their own well-being and for the critical social issues currently facing our society.

The Foundation will only fund community organisations which are based in Victoria, and are non-profit. Evidence of income tax exempt status and incorporation is required. Grants are not made to private individuals, state and federal

government bodies or political parties. Priority is given to community organisations which operate on a limited funding base, and which share the aims of the Reichstein Foundation. Generally speaking, organisations are eligible to receive one grant within 12 months. Grants are provided for projects and activities which are consistent with philosophy of the Foundation.

What they do not fund

- capital and building works
- vehicles
- equipment
- travel
- research
- conferences
- book
- film and video
- general fundraising
- religious or political activities, or to extend the corpus of another Foundation

Generally speaking, activities which are normally the primary responsibility of the applicant organisation will not be funded.

Grants available

The Reichstein Foundation currently offers grants of up to \$15,000 distributed twice each year for projects which are consistent with the aims and philosophy of the Foundation. The next grant deadline is: July 26 for a decision on October 22.

Contact details

2nd Floor 172 Flinders Street Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: (03) 9650 4400 Fax: (03) 9650 7501
Email: info@reichstein.org.au
Website: <http://www.reichstien.org.au>

The Myer Foundation

About the foundation

The Myer Foundation was set up and initially endowed by Sidney Myer's sons, Kenneth Myer and Baillieu Myer. It is now supported by three generations of Myer family member and represents the broader, continuing, family commitment to philanthropy.

The five main focus areas of the Myer Foundation are:

- Water & Environment
- Beyond Australia
- Arts & Humanities
- Social Justice
- Philanthropy in Australia.

Each focus area has its own committee of management with family members and experts. Common to all of these focus areas is the family's commitment to innovation and making a difference. Over 30 family members are involved with the Myer Foundation, along with experts from all sectors who assist on the Boards. A full time secretariat is involved in the grant making research and administration of funds.

What they fund (specific to the youth sector)

As a more just and equitable society is the purpose of its mission, the Foundation will provide support to those initiatives that explore ways young people can make an impact on the problems of school refusal, homelessness, self-harm, addiction and suicide. The foundation is also committed to programs that involve young people in philanthropy and empowers them to be a part of social change.

A successful youth focused submission would include:

- Youth involvement in all aspects of the program, including presence on the board
- Demonstrated awareness of current practice in the field
- Inter agency collaboration
- Marketing and communications.
- Long term sustainability
- Innovative & wacky ideas that might not normally attract funding

What they do not fund

- Building works, and capital expenditure, including equipment
- Commercial film making
- Formal education
- 'For-profit' bodies and activities
- Individuals
- Medical research
- Organisations based outside Australia
- Personal travel
- Private scholarships and bursaries
- Private schools
- Public appeals and fundraising drives

- Retrospective funding
- Work that is better funded by government, or by corporate sponsorship
- Applications for funding before acquittal of previous grant

A snapshot of some projects funded:

Youth Employment Initiative: In conjunction with the Foundation for Young Australians, one million dollars has funded six programs that have made very real differences in local communities. For example a disused train sitting in the station at Port Pirrie S.A, has become "On the Rails", a commercially viable top quality restaurant staffed by young trainees from diverse disadvantaged backgrounds. This success, and the success of the other programs has leveraged another half million from the Percy Baxter Charitable Trust.

Youth Transitions Homelessness Model: One million dollars has gone towards a unique model housing project for young people near the Melbourne Central Business District. This model will offer housing and a range of support and training services for young people with a variety of special needs and has been developed in collaboration with the City of Melbourne, Salvation Army, and variety of other agencies.

Australian Computer Clubhouse: In conjunction with the Fitzroy Learning Network, the Myer Foundation established the first Australian Computer Clubhouse, based on an international program that teaches programming language to disadvantaged children. Industry mentors teach participants about robotics, how to use digital cameras and imaging work.

Grants available

The Arts and Humanities:

13 June for beginning August meeting

12 September for beginning November meeting

Beyond Australia:

10 April for beginning June meeting

17 July for mid September meeting

Social Justice:

28 May for end July meeting

3 September for end October meeting

Water and the Environment:

30 April for end June meeting

30 July for end September meeting

Philanthropy in Australia:

29 March for beginning May meeting

28 June for beginning August meeting

11 October for end November meeting

Contact details

Level 44, 55 Collins Street

Melbourne, Victoria, 3000

Telephone: (03) 9207 3040

Facsimile: (03) 9207 3070

Website: <http://www.myerfoundation.org.au>

Foundation for Young Australians

About the Foundation

The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) is a non-profit organisation committed to supporting and empowering young Australians aged 12 to 25.

FYA invests in excess of \$3 million each year into providing opportunities for young people, with particular focus on supporting disadvantaged young people, developing leadership potential and encouraging excellence. At least 20% of total funding is committed to programs that benefit Indigenous young people.

The Foundation's vision is: 'To create positive opportunities and outcomes for Australia's young people, by leading the development of innovative strategies that enable them to reach their potential and participate fully in society'.

What they fund

Specific target areas of FYA are:

- Benefiting young people aged between 12 and 25
- Creating opportunities for young people to participate
- Extending early support for young people to achieve their full potential

They also play a role as seed-funder through

- Supporting innovative initiatives
- Co-funding initiatives in partnership
- Building the capacity of grant recipients and the sector

FYA staff are available to assist initiatives post funding to help ensure their long-term sustainability. Using knowledge gained from working with organisations, FYA develops tools for the broader youth sector to enhance capacity building.

To be eligible for funding from FYA the project or organisation must support 12-25 year olds and involve them in any planning, design &/or implementation; reflect FYA themes; have community support and deliver outcomes.

Importantly FYA encourages youth participation that enables young people to take action; develops knowledge, skill networks and leadership capacity; and exciting and creative.

Before applying for funding applicants should consider whether the funding is a new initiative; if they can secure co-funding; and if they have a plan to achieve and measure outcomes.

Youth Grantmakers: FYA is currently selecting 6 or 7 people aged between 17 and 23 in each state to become youth grant makers. They will be calling for all for applications in March.

Continued on page 7...

Last year at budget time the Federal Government released a package of social security initiatives, *Australians Working Together*, which will introduce changes to the way our social security systems works and which will have a substantial impact on young people. Many of the initiatives contained in the package start rolling out this year so it's important to keep an eye on what's happening.

Australians Working Together

At YACVic's Give and Take forum in February Scott McNaughton from Family and Community Services (FACS) gave a run down on the parts of the *Australians Working Together* that impact upon young people. Below is some information from Scott's presentation highlighting the key points of the package. *This information has been provided by FACS.*

The need for change

- The need for a more responsive system
- Government worked with community to develop a plan to tackle these problems

Aims

- Reduce jobless families and households
- Increase proportion of working age who are self reliant
- Build stronger communities with greater opportunities

Key features

- Aims to ensure workforce aged stay actively engaged
- Personal support and advice
- Balance assistance, incentives and obligations
- Safety net retained and enhanced
- A substantial investment of \$1.7 billion
- A first step

Key features of implementation

- Partnership with non-government organisations
- Whole of Government approach
 - within the Commonwealth
 - Commonwealth/State/Territory/Local

A new role for Centrelink

- The gateway to the new system
- Investment of more than \$450 million, with 850 new Personal Advisers
- Personal focus - tailored assistance
- Greater focus on participation, not handouts

Timing Overview

Staggered approach to implementation.

- Employment services and Personal Support Programme from July 2002
- Working Credit, Mature Age Workers assistance and Helping Parents Return to Work - September 2002
- Mentoring Market Place - July 2002
- Transition to Independent Living Allowance - March 2003

Getting people the right help

Personal Support Programme

- Starts July 2002
- Help people on payments with severe or multiple non-vocational obstacles to employment
- Will help people on payments who have problems such as homelessness, drug or alcohol addiction, mental illness or domestic violence
- Will help people stabilise their lives and get more involved in and contribute to their community
- More places and increased level of funding
- Advertisements for tenders went into national papers from 6 February. Application close on 2 April

- Request of submission can be downloaded at <http://www.together.gov.au>
- Information sessions are being held across the country - Victorian sites and dates still be finalised (will be later this month - check website)

Literacy and Numeracy Training Supplement

- Starts September 2002
- \$20.80 fortnightly supplement
- Help with costs like travel to courses
- Approved literacy and numeracy training - additional 3,600 places
- \$20 million over four years

Help to participate

Working Credit

- Starts September 2002
- Provides financial incentives for full-time, part-time or casual work
- \$506 million over four years - most expensive part of package

How it might work...

- Jenny receives unemployment payment and has not worked for 42 weeks
- Accumulating \$48 per fortnight Jenny has reached the Working Credit maximum of \$1000
- Jenny encouraged by the Working Credit, accepts casual work packing fruit for a fortnight and earns \$500 pre-tax
- Before Working Credit Jenny's unemployment payment would have been reduced from \$357.80 to \$67.20

A snapshot of some projects funded

Hand Brake Turn Program: The Hand Brake Turn program (HBT) began in 1994 and provides practical training, personal support and pathways to further training and employment for young people aged 15 to 20 who are unemployed and disadvantaged in some further way. It attempts to break the unemployment cycle while preventing young people from entering, or continuing to participate in, the Juvenile Justice system.

HBT provides young people with a venue, trained staff and access to materials to learn how to build, maintain and safely use motor vehicles. HBT programs run in Dandenong, Geelong and Parramatta. Peter Brock heads a committee looking at a National replication strategy.

Byte Information Technology Programs: National IT program in recognition of the increasing role of technology in education and lifelong learning-funds eight projects- fully funded by The Lucent Technologies Foundation in partnership with The International Youth Foundation. The FYA has formed a partnership with The International Youth Foundation and The Lucent Technologies Foundation to conduct the Australian component of this global program.

An example of a program funded through Byte is Y.O.U.T.H (Youth Open Understanding Technology House), a joint project with CAAMA (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association) and the Gap Youth Centre Aboriginal Corporation. The program trains young Aboriginal people in IT and then through CAAMA's radio station gives them practical training/work experience through their development of a radio program.

Indigenous Leaders' Forum: The Indigenous Future Leaders' Forum was held for the first time in 2000 to provide an arena in which potential young leaders from the Indigenous community could explore some of the key issues facing their communities and the country.

Grants available

Responsive grants: This is a submission-driven grants program for non-profit organisations and individuals with two funding rounds per year providing one or two year grants with average size of \$15,000. The selection of responsive grants is made by young people through majority membership of state and territory based committees. Next call for applications is in June/July.

National Initiatives: The Foundation has a strategic grants program which provides funding for innovative projects through a national process, usually over a multi-year period. Applications for these grants can be made at any time throughout the year.

Contact details

The Foundation for Young Australians
GPO Box 239E
Melbourne, VIC 3001
Phone: (03) 9670 5436
Fax: (03) 9609 3246
Website: <http://www.youngaustralians.org>

Jack Brockhoff Foundation

About the Foundation

Established in 1979 by Victorian businessman and entrepreneur Sir Jack Brockhoff, this foundation is a public charitable fund with the primary object of supporting organisations caring for disadvantaged children. The Foundation was established with an endowment of \$5 million from Jack's personal funds.

Contact details

Jack Brockhoff Foundation
Suite 9/ 1012 Doncaster Rd
Doncaster East 3109
Ph (03) 9842 0667

For more info

There are a variety of other philanthropic organisations that will fund youth related organisations and projects. *Philanthropy Australia* - the national membership organisation for grant-making trusts and foundations - publishes the *Australian Directory of Philanthropy* and has a comprehensive list of funding bodies and their contact details. The following information has been taken from their website -

<http://www.philanthropy.org.au>.

Pro Bono Australia

<http://www.probonoaustralia.com.au>

Pro Bono Australia offers a directory of not-for-profit organisations seeking funding, a free electronic newsletter containing items of interest for the sector, and listings of events and jobs in the sector.

The Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal

<http://www.frrr.org.au/>

The Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) is a special initiative of the Sidney Myer Centenary Celebration in partnership with the Federal Minister for Transport and Regional Services and corporate Australia. FRRR aims to take a leadership role in assisting regional, rural and remote communities to respond to social, cultural and economic change.

GrantsLink

<http://www.grantslink.gov.au/>

GrantsLink is a source of information for Commonwealth Government grants. The site allows you to search or browse for Commonwealth grants and also offers general information on preparing grant applications.

- With Working Credit Jenny receives her full unemployment benefit, keeps her \$500 in earnings, and still has a Working Credit balance to draw on

Helping people find jobs

- Changes to Employment Services - \$324m over 4 years
- 30,000 extra job search training places
- 16,500 extra WID places
- 35,000 community work places
- Training Credits of up to \$800 for eligible job seekers (around 64,500 customers expected to be eligible)

Support for Indigenous People

- Support for CDEP participants to get jobs.
- Community Participation Agreements and capacity building
- Centrelink remote area servicing strategy
- Increased education and training assistance
- Introduction of Indigenous Employment Centres

Information and Feedback

Australians Working Together
Department Family & Community Services
PO Box 7788
Canberra ACT 2610

Web site: <http://www.together.gov.au>
Infoline: 1800 050 020

People with a hearing or speech impairment can call the telephone typewriter (TTY): 1800 055 001

For information in other languages call: 131 450

Review of Representing Children And Young People – A Lawyers Practice Guide By Lani Blackman

304 pages including index. Victorian Law Foundation 2002. ISBN 1 876045 19 1

Moira Rayner

The hardest part of child advocacy is getting the ego out of the way. Lawyers who act for children have to balance their client's instructions with their own natural, grown-up and professional desire to help make the 'right' decisions – those that seem most likely to end up well for the child, and which are approved of by the experts, the professionals, the court officials and the welfare workers. It is comforting to advocate a well-received position.

But that isn't what advocacy is. Advocacy is about using power, to get what the advocate wants and needs and has a right to. Child advocacy is about making sure that children have a voice, which culturally and politically they are denied. Child advocacy is also about as low in the food chain as a lawyer can go. Children's lawyers do not earn six figure salaries, get appointed to company boards, or Orders of Australia. Theirs is a high and lonely destiny.

Lani Blackman's book, released in November 2001, developed from the Victorian Law Foundation's guidelines for child advocacy. It is an impressive and timely addition to the literature on child representation in Australia. Fifteen years ago advocates for children in the Family Court were as likely to dub themselves 'expert' in child welfare matters as the courts were to discount their client's submissions in favour of recommendations in Family Reports. Now, the language of children's rights is less unfamiliar, and child representation is specifically recognised as at least a legitimate responsibility of Commonwealth-funded legal aid bodies, even though the federal Attorney General has remained unresponsive to the recommendations of the ALRC/HREOC report, *Seen and Heard: Priority for Children in the Legal Process*.

In the last few years the Family Court has bitten the bullet and required training and accreditation of children's separate representatives. I put together the first training scheme for Australian lawyers representing children in Western Australia, in 1987, and I welcome the growing body of professionalism. But it is still not enough. Children's rights are still not the 'ordinary' discourse in the court-room or case conference.

How to reflect and respect the rights of and our responsibilities to the young child are the

significant issue for all advocates representing children. Blackman starts out her book on a solid base that was not possible when I began my advocacy for children 30 years ago: the Commonwealth's moral, legal, procedural and internationally guaranteed responsibility to protect children's rights, after ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990. Article 12 of UNCRC requires that we respect children's right to be heard in decisions that directly affect them. As Blackman says, even in cases where lawyers are directed to act in the best interests of the child rather than on instruction, the lawyer should still aim to communicate with and facilitate the participation of the child or young person' (p11).

'Best interests' representation in the Family Court seems to be uniquely Australian. 'Best interests' is, more often than not, a pious hope about an outcome which masks our taking control and imposing our opinions. That, again, is not what lawyers are meant to do. Blackman grasps the nut of the problem: if a child can communicate - and very young children, even with disabilities and special needs, can and do – they must be involved in decision-making. This isn't easy for many professionals to grasp. It's not what we are taught. It enables us to differentiate among clients according to perceptions of wisdom. One lawyer, acting as a separate representative, recently saw nothing wrong with continuing to 'represent' an 11 year old in defending Family Court proceedings after the lawyer had – against the child's express wishes – asked the court to order police to apprehend and forcibly deliver the child client for unwelcome contact with a non-residential parent. Even if the child's 'best interests' required such draconian intervention, it is hard to see how any child could do other than regard the courts and the law and 'their representative' as a vast instrument of oppression.

Part 1 of Blackman's book deals with this key element, the lawyer-client relationship. The first 98 pages are practical. They get down to the nitty gritty, not only why it is necessary for lawyers to communicate with their clients – for children are clients, and entitled to all the elements of that relationship – but how to do it. Lawyers for children must be able to communicate with – which means listening, with respect, to – clients of all ages, and it is only a part of that process to be able to assess their capacity to instruct. If they have that capacity, Blackman says, lawyers are under a professional duty to act on those instructions. May more solicitors hear that view, and be held accountable if they ignore it.

Part 2 deals with case management issues – again, very practical, reminding child advocates

that their vulnerable clients don't understand how systems work or who does what: they need guides, and lawyers for children need to be better-informed and more deeply engaged than adults' representatives. Child advocates have more complex responsibilities than simple advice giving and representation in court settings. Here, the drama of the court room is placed in its proper, subordinate setting: within power systems, in which children don't have anywhere to stand, and bureaucratic and organisational frameworks and the alien formality of decision-making forums such as courts. Children need to participate in all of them, and the child's advocate needs to know how to make it happen, and have the courage to do it. Blackman also addresses the hardest part of all, after hearings: ending the relationship that the child and the lawyer should have developed. It is often close, and hard. Part 3 deals with specific jurisdictions – crime, family, care and protection and administrative and civil – again, with an emphasis on the practicalities and a strong human rights focus.

If lawyers are to do a good job, not just in acting for children, they have to respect their clients and form relationships based on trust and good communication. This takes work. When the client is a child, the lawyer must understand the nature of the circumstances in which they exercise their power; the child's experience of power in relationships, and what children can and can't do, to manage them, but advocates can.

The best part of this valuable book is its premise. Children are people too, and they are citizens now, worthy of dignity and moral equality. Lawyers for children need to be brave because their interventions will be inconvenient and come out of entrenched disadvantage. It is still novel in many parts of Australia to assert that a child's view must be given as much weight as an expert's opinion, and that their experience of life is as important and more vivid than adults'. Most adults with power over children have conflicts of interest: a good children's advocate will not have to think twice about putting their own preferences second. A good child advocate will seek to persuade a decision-maker that respecting every child's human right to control and change their own circumstances is a key factor in resilience-building in children, that human rights and resilience are directly linked.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is not a pious principle to be honoured in the breach. Respect for its principles is a fundamental component of the rule of law.

A great book. Everyone dealing with children should read it.



Together We Do Better, is a VicHealth campaign which aims to get people thinking and talking about the personal and social benefits of belonging to a community, and of being accepted, respected and included. It's also about encouraging people to think and talk with friends, workmates and family about the issues raised in the campaign. The fact that too many of us, and in particular too many young people face lives of alienation, isolation, discrimination and bullying is of huge concern.

Top level therapists in action



Loneliness is a real danger.

Keeping someone on the outer is bad for every body. It can cause a slide into doubt and fear and open the way to all sorts of illnesses and addictions. So a grin and a chance to join in, is powerful stuff. In fact everyday kindness is so good for us, it can literally save our life.

Together we do better



www.togetherwedobetter.vic.gov.au



Together We Do Better

One of the campaign posters - *Loneliness is a real danger*, highlights the costs for everyone, and in particular young people, of social exclusion and the benefits – health and otherwise – of simple acts of welcome.

Having a group of close friends is great, but having friends and opportunities to meet people and interact with others can be good for our health too.

VicHealth's *Together We Do Better* campaign is about reaffirming their value in society. In the long term it's about our health. Being isolated and lonely is not good for our health.

It's a fact, we do better, we are happier and healthier both mentally and physically if we feel connected to others—if we have our mates, our family and others around us; if we feel respected, valued and included as part of a community.

Why? Because for all of us, **loneliness is a real danger**. Keeping people 'on the outer' is bad for everybody.

We are witnessing widespread concern about our young people and increases in problem behaviours such as substance misuse, bullying, homelessness, violence and suicide. Research from the Centre for Adolescent Health reinforces that connection within one's community, family, peer group, school or workplace can protect against these problem behaviours.¹

On the other hand, having strong social relationships - with mates, family and people that know you well - can have a positive effect on our mental health and wellbeing - *Together We Do Better*

It's about starting small. It might only take simple things - like a grin, a wave or the chance to join in. It's simple but powerful stuff.

Good mental health is for everyone and it affects us all. We all need to invest time and energy in our own mental health, just as we need to do for our physical health. Most of us want to belong and be part of something, whether it's our local street, community club or workplace. And there are endless possibilities for doing this. Getting involved in a band is a good example of this - coming together because people have something in common—a love of music. Hanging out, practicing, creating, laughing, performing, and then sharing that music with others. Believe it or not, this can all have a positive impact on our health.

And there are many organisations - churches, sporting and recreation clubs, arts organisations, service clubs - that provide opportunities to participate, belong and be connected.

We can all help to promote mental health and wellbeing by hanging out and being there for the friends we know well and by reaching out to include others.

Yes it's quite true *Together We Can Do Better*.

<http://www.togetherwedobetter.vic.gov.au>

For more information contact Melissa Corkum, Public Relations Coordinator on 9667 1319 or 0413 838 662.

¹ Improving the Lives of Young Victorians: A Survey of Risk and Protective Factors, Centre for Adolescent Health, 1999.

Drugs and Alcohol Project for young deaf people - Vicdeaf

Young people are citizens of society, regardless of race, disability and class status; this includes young deaf people. Providing information about drugs and alcohol is an important life education tool for young deaf people who are already struggling with basic life issues. Communication barriers reduce the effectiveness of young deaf people's coping strategies and society has a responsibility to present information in an accessible way.

Information, nowadays, is mostly presented via television, radio, marketing materials, videos, booklets/brochures, et cetera. This poses TWO major problems for young deaf people – access and understanding. How can a deaf person understand the 'invisible spoken word'? How can a deaf person with fluent Auslan skills and/or limited English skills be 'attracted' to reading the meaningless written words? On top of this, there is zero exposure of positive deaf role models in this area nor is there equal access to lifeline services.

Recognising the potential problems that can arise from this, Vicdeaf established the first stage of the Drugs and Alcohol Project (a first in Australia) in 1999 to research and identify the gaps that can occur in giving misleading or insufficient information to young deaf people. The first stage of the project showed that there is a real need to address drug and alcohol issues within the deaf community and isolated young deaf people as well as educating hearing people working with young deaf people. Some workshops, in conjunction with other organisations, were run. Two resource booklets have also been produced: Drugs and Alcohol Information & Harm Minimisation.

The second stage of the project started in 2002 and will run for three years. The aim of this second stage is to conduct education and training/information workshops relating to primary and secondary interventions with target groups involving professionals, schools and existing/at risk drug users within metropolitan and rural areas. A range of public speaking engagements will also be organised.

The aim is that that through the second stage of the project young deaf people will receive appropriate information about these important issues. Providing information to service providers about how to work effectively with deaf people will also further enable young deaf people to get access to services in a more effective and culturally appropriate way.

To find out more about the project, contact Ross Onley-Zerkel (Project Worker) ronleyzerkel@vicdeaf.com.au or Kim Kavanagh (Youth Worker) on kkavanagh@vicdeaf.com.au. Faxes can be sent on (03) 9650 6843 to either Ross or Kim.

Frontyard, Moving Forward

For almost ten years, Frontyard Youth Services has been a one-stop shop for young homeless people and young people in need of support in Melbourne's central business district. That shop has just become bigger and better.

While the number of clients seeking support and referral at Frontyard remains about the same (estimated to be 8,000 a year), a new premises and expanded services mean Frontyard can respond in a more holistic way to the complex needs of homeless and disadvantaged young people aged between 12 and 25.

Previously located in Flinders Lane, Frontyard moved into the lower two levels of Melbourne Citymission's headquarters at 19 King Street on February 22. The \$250,000 refurbishment was made possible by a generous pledge from building developer Multiplex and the support of numerous subcontractors who donated free labour and materials.

Current services offered at Frontyard include Centrelink, Melbourne Citymission's Melbourne Youth Support Service (accommodation referral) and health care and counselling from Young People's Health Service. Legal advice and advocacy is available from Youthlaw and Melbourne Citymission's YouthNet offers computer and internet access.

A new service at Frontyard, Melbourne Citymission's Reconnect, is an early intervention program that aims to re-engage young people with their communities. Specifically targeted at young people who have just left home or are at risk of homelessness, the service works to re-establish links with family, education, training or work for all clients who access the CBD, some of whom have come from rural Victoria. Melbourne Citymission's Reconnect is staffed by a co-ordinator, family mediator and counsellor.

Though the services are independent they work in co-operation to meet the often complex needs of individual clients.

A new alliance between Melbourne Citymission, Melbourne City Council and the State Government has resulted in a substantial increase in on-going funding to enable the service to expand.

For more information contact
Nell Blythe
Manager
Frontyard 9614 3688

Services available at Frontyard:

- Melbourne Youth Support Service
- Young People's Health Service.
- Youthlaw
- YouthNet
- Reconnect

Chroming – Have your say

By Sandie De Wolfe, Chief Executive Officer,
Berry Street Victoria

Many of you will have seen that Berry Street Victoria was caught up in a media and political furore about chroming. We wanted to take this opportunity to share our position with you and to encourage you to make your views known to the Parliamentary Inquiry.

Firstly, Berry Street Victoria does not, and has never, operated 'sniffing rooms' in any of its residential or other facilities. These inflammatory remarks were made by others in the media and are absolutely without foundation.

Secondly, Berry Street Victoria does not condone or support the taking of drugs of any kind and our aim is to ensure that young people in our care either become, or remain, drug free.

Thirdly, about eighteen months ago Berry Street Victoria developed a comprehensive strategy to deal with substance misuse. This strategy was developed specifically for the young people and families with whom we work and based on extensive consultation with drug and alcohol experts, our staff and colleagues, the Department of Human Services and the Victoria Police. Our approach, 'Managing Client Substance Misuse', was written up as a Department of Human Services Best Practice Initiative Grant and was launched in May 2001. At the same time, we spoke on 3LO Radio about our work.

Fourthly, the "Herald Sun" did not attempt to contact us or provide us with any opportunity to comment on the article that appeared on 22 January 2002.

So where are we now? The media attention has at least highlighted the extent of the problem of chroming and the inhalation of other dangerous substances in the general community and for young people in residential care. Many different views have been expressed about:

- Limiting the availability of such substances (ie. supply reduction), eg. legislation banning sale to people under 18.
- Ways of eliminating the harm from potential inhalation (ie. harm reduction), eg. changing the chemical composition of aerosols like chrome.
- How to help young people make better choices about a substance free lifestyle (ie. demand reduction), eg. education programs.

There is no disagreement about the dangers of chroming or the serious health risks involved. There are, however, different views about the best ways of tackling this problem. It is now up to young people, their families and agencies to have their say about what they think will work best. The Inquiry has released a Discussion Paper, which is available on www.parliament.vic.gov.au/dpcp. We would encourage everyone to have their say.

YACVic welcomes your submissions to the calendar. Please email contributions to info@yacvic.org.au or phone us on (03) 9612 8999. Some of the events on this website have been sourced from the Australian Clearing House for Youth Studies calendar see <http://www.acys.utas.edu.au>

events and resources

Deadline for contributions to the next edition of yikes is 18:04:02

■ Women of Passion

Date: 7 March 2002

Time: 6:15 pm

An International Women's day celebration chaired by Lynne Haultian (ABC Radio) and featuring Joy Murphy (Wurundjeri Elder), Sonja Rutherford (Senior Citizen of the Year), Surma Hamid (Activist) and Ella Hooper (Singer/Songwriter "Killing Heidi"). Hosted by Women's Trust, Absolutely Women's Health, International Women's Development Agency and YWCA Victoria.

Where: Melbourne Town Hall, Swantson St Melbourne

For more info: Victorian Women's Trust
ph: 9642 0422

Email: women@vwt.org.au

■ Beyond Tolerance

Date: 12 March 2002 - 14 March 2002

Presented by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission this national conference on racism offers a timely opportunity to reflect upon where we in Australia need to direct our anti-racism efforts over the next decade and to begin consultations on a national plan of action to combat racism.

Due to overwhelming demand conference registrations have now closed, however conference papers will be made available on the website as they become available.

For more info: Contact the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

Email: beyondtolerance@humanrights.gov.au

Web: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au>

■ National Youth Roundtable

Date: 18 March 2002 - 21 March 2002

Web: <http://www.thesource.gov.au>

■ CWAV Practice/Policy Forum: Collaboration and community building

Date: 20 March 2002

Time: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Also featuring launch of CWAV collaboration report.

Where: Shell Theatre, Shell House, 1 Spring St (cnr Flinders St), Melbourne.

For more info: Ph 9614 1577

Email: admin@cwav.asn.au

Web: <http://www.cwav.asn.au>

■ Making a world of difference: Research linking innovation, internationalisation and new technologies, Melbourne

Date: 21 March 2002 - 22 March 2002

5th annual conference, Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association

Theme: Ways in which innovation, internationalisation and new technologies influence researchers and research communities, teachers and managers in training organisations, VET students, the interfaces between schools, VET and higher education and adult community education and educators.

Where: The Heath Function Centre, Caulfield, Victoria

For more info: Contact Fran Ferrier, Centre for the Economics of Education and Training, PO Box 6, Education Faculty, Monash University, Victoria 3800. Ph: (03) 9905 2808; fax: (03) 9905 9184

Email: fran.ferrier@education.monash.edu.au

Web: <http://www.avetra.org.au>

■ To Explore Different Methods of Engaging and Working with Children and Parents/Carers Affected by Family Violence

Date: 27 March 2002 - 28 March 2002

Organised by Parents Accepting Responsibility Kids are Safe (PARKAS)

For more info: Daniella Tarle Ph: (03) 9345 6011 or (03) 9345 6019

■ National Youth Week 2002

Date: 7 April 2002 - 14 April 2002

Web: www.youth.vic.gov.au

■ Holding it all together: 1st national conference for all involved in meeting the challenges for children and families where parents have a mental illness

Date: 21 April 2002 - 24 April 2002

Presented by the Bouverie Centre, Victoria's Family Institute, La Trobe University in conjunction with the Victorian Families and Mental Health Network. Themes include: direct work with children, young people and families; personal experience; service development; interagency collaboration; and research

Where: Carlton Crest Hotel, Melbourne

For more info: PR Conference Consultants, PO Box 502, Kilmore, Victoria 3764

Email: enquiry@prcc.com.au

Web:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/bouverie/hold2002>

■ Working Together: 5th WONCA World Conference on Rural Health, Melbourne

Date: 28 April 2002 - 5 May 2002

Organised by the Government of Victoria, through the Department of Human Services

Aim: To provide rural practitioners with the opportunity to share experiences, tackle challenging issues in rural health and develop recommendations for improving rural health around the world

Themes: Working Together; Communities, Professionals and Services; Rural and Remote Health

For more info: Ph 9417 0888

Email: ruralhealth@meetingplanners.com.au

Web: <http://www.ruralhealth2002.net/>

■ CWAV Practice/Policy Forum: Working with abused children

Date: 8 May 2002

Time: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Where: Shell Theatre, Shell House, 1 Spring St (cnr Flinders St), Melbourne

For more info: Ph 9614 1577

Email: admin@cwav.asn.au

Web: <http://www.cwav.asn.au>

■ Reversing the Drift - A solutions summit for young people and workers with young people in rural and regional Victoria.

Date: 9 - 10 May 2002

Presented by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. with support from VicHealth, the Goulburn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network and the Goulburn Regional Youth Committee

Where: Eastbank Centre, Shepparton

For more info: Contact YACVic on 9612 8999

Email: info@yacvic.org.au

Web: <http://www.yacvic.org.au/reversing>

■ 3rd international conference on drugs and young people

Date: 13 May 2002 - 15 May 2002

The conference will focus on youth drug policy and practice in:

>Prevention

>Education

>Treatment

>Law enforcement

>Legal and justice issues

Where: AJC Convention Centre, Randwick Sydney NSW

Email: events@adf.org.au

Web: <http://www.adf.org.au>