

the youth junction inc.
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November 2007 - October 2008
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"I was one of the first in the soccer tournament and I enjoy playing the game. After the soccer tournament I also had an interest in Visy Care Hub so I decided to join the activities like Hip-hop dance and driving. Visy Cares Hub has helped me a lot by supporting me with my school work. They provide computers which help me to catch up with my homework and assignments and to get my driving licence as well .I have enjoyed learning new experiences of hip-hop and I have realised my passion in dancing and I enjoyed meeting new people who are nice and friendly. I am thankful for the support, work and time they have put in to helping children and families and young people." Sandy 2008.

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Chairman's Address

The last twelve months has been a period of strong focus on building a comprehensive range of services to serve the needs of young people in the Western suburbs.

The Visy Cares Hub provides excellent resources, for the services located within the centre and local groups servicing the needs of young people.

In the forthcoming year we will continue our focus on service delivery.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the hardworking and inspiring staff who are responsible for delivery of services at the 'coal face'. In particular, our General Manager, Karen Hart, who has been at the centre of The Youth Junctions success and the Operations Coordinator, Jess Roberts, who does such a brilliant job in juggling the competing demands of her role.

Finally, as I have stepped down from the role of Chair and pass the baton to Marilyn Duncan, I wish to thank the Committee of Management for their tireless efforts and support and wish Marilyn every success in her new role as Chair.

General Managers Report

It has been a vibrant year at the Visy Cares Hub, now boasting a team of 58 professionals enjoying young person contacts, including face to face interaction, emails, telephone and outreach services in excess of 13,000 over the past twelve months.

When we launched in May 2007, we imagined our service provision would extend over the Western region, but our experience tells us that many young people will travel substantial distances, some as far as Dandenong, to participate in the activities and services, if they deem them appropriate or exciting for them or they simply want to stay connected with friends located in other parts of Melbourne.

This year we have made the most of internal partnerships available to us and have demonstrated through joined up working, the true value for young people, of a range of agencies being collocated under one roof. The raft of available youth services has allowed hundreds of young people in the West to receive a response, better tailored to their needs and much more encompassing.

Having been joined this year by the Sunshine Youth Legal Centre taking up the last remaining tenant space, completes our diverse collection of services covering all aspects of youth need and aspiration. While we continue to thrive internally, we are also supported by our external colleagues in the field. This year we have created partnerships with agencies to deliver programs where outcomes for young people are much better tailored and appropriate.

We have attracted both financial and pro bono support and guidance this year from businesses, philanthropy and our local Brimbank Council that has allowed us to deliver a robust youth provision in the West throughout 2007-2008.

None of this of course would be possible without a robust staff team and I would like to personally thank, in particular Jessie Roberts, who has worked tirelessly throughout the year. I wish to thank our Committee of Management for their guidance and our fantastic tenant agencies for their ongoing support and great team spirit. I also want to thank the young people who access the Visy Cares Hub and make it the vibrant and essential centre that makes us proud.

Our History

Having launched the Visy Cares Hub in May 2007, the organisation has continued to develop and expand. The Youth Junction Inc. managers of the Visy Cares Hub became an Incorporated Association in 1999 and the aspirations and dreams for the centre have become a reality n a day to day level.

The objectives for which the entity was established are as follows:

- A place where young people are empowered, to develop emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually so that they can contribute as active citizens in the community and wider world.
- Improving the conditions of life of young people in the interests of social welfare and justice.
- The advancement of opportunities for education, improved housing, study support, leadership, health and community capacity initiatives through youth provision.
- Combating the distress and effects of distress caused by the poverty and social exclusion of young people, in particular but not exclusively, through the provision of advice, information and support on matters relating to their health, personal and social education, wellbeing and welfare, thus enabling them to take up enhanced opportunities in their lives

The continued drive of those involved, to create a collocated youth centre of excellence, built on solid foundation and ensuring that dreams become a reality, allows us to move to the future with confidence, developing and expanding services for young people.

Our Future

Much work lies ahead, as young people continue to arrive into the West from other parts of the world. As the area continues to rate as one of the most disadvantaged in Australia, with an increase in unemployment, housing and health issues, there is a growing need to channel energies into building the capacity of the local community, particularly for young people. The Visy Cares Hub is at the frontline of responding to those needs and aim to tackle the social problems and celebrate the diversity to create a more harmonious community.

Through a range of creative, recreational and sporting programs we continue to enable young people to connect throughout the year in healthy pursuits. We will assess and refer young people to relevant and timely interventions that improve their life chances and choices in the fields of education, employment and health.

Youth Services and Programs during 2008

Western Melbourne headspace (WMh) is a specialist youth health service, focussing on mental health and substance use for young people aged 12-25 years. Servicing the areas of Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay, Brimbank and Wyndham, we focus on early identification and effective evidence based interventions. Since opening our Sunshine site in November 2007, we are now well and truly up and running with a range of different clinical and community capacity building members on board. Since launching the service, we have worked with over 470 young people and families in our clinical program and hundreds of others through our capacity building and awareness raising activities.

WMh services include General Practitioners, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and occupational therapists. We have an Access Team that provides assessment, brief Intervention and family therapy and a duty system so that young people who 'drop in' can be seen. Our Community Capacity Team supports WMh through awareness raising, education, training and development, connecting young people, families, services and the community.

Victoria University (VU) has had a very busy and successful year at the Hub. The majority of young people that access staff through either drop-in or appointments have required assistance working out their study/career path and access to educational options at VU and other institutions. For young people that have substantial barriers to their education and employment, the Hub has indeed been the ideal place to provide case management and individual support. By utilising the expertise of other workers in the building and by providing young people with referral options, literally a quick walk across the corridor, young people are provided with timely, effective and supported referrals if the need arises

The **Centre for Multicultural Youth** (CMY) is a community based organisation that advocates for the needs of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds. The Centre undertakes:

- Service delivery
- Policy advice
- Information provision and research
- Sector development
- Leadership and mentoring
- Training and community education.
- The **Reconnect Young Refugees Program** and the **Newly Arrived Youth Support Service** targets young people at risk of homelessness. It is a family focused early intervention approach, which aims to promote young people's connection with family, school, peers and community and reduce the risk of early home leaving and family breakdown.

As a snap shot, over the past 12 months CMY supported 123 young people and families from **16** different countries. Countries included; Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Iraq, China, Congo, Burundi, Liberia, Kenya, Philippines, Burma, Afghanistan, Egypt, Sierra Leone, and 'Africa'. Males represented 60% of service users and females represented 40% of service users.

The **Sunshine Youth Legal Centre**, a partnership of Community West Inc. Victoria University Law School and the Slater and Gordon Foundation has really gained momentum since we were welcomed to the Visy Cares Hub with an empowering speech given by Justice Frank Vincent, as he unveiled the plaque at the launch on the 9th September this year.

SYLC is both a community legal centre and a teaching clinic, exposing students to the operation of the law in a social context. This program has been a wonderful work experience opportunity for the first group of Victoria University students, while serving a role of great importance to the youth aged 16-25 years within the community. Clients are assisted with a variety of legal issues such traffic fines, wage recovery, intervention orders, motor vehicle accidents, infringement notices and mobile phone contracts.

As said by one of the students: *"The experience at the Sunshine Youth Legal Centre has drawn us to see how something that may seem simple and clear to people who have access to the law can be extremely daunting and worrisome to a young person facing a legal issue. It is really gratifying to be able to explain to a person that there are always options and help available. This experience has definitely been eye opening and invaluable."*

Visy Cares Hub Programs - Our SOCCER program funded through Sports Without Borders, originally established to meet an identified need for young African males to participate in a sport they love, has expanded now to incorporate all young males. The program attracts 60 young men every Friday, many of whom now utilise the other services and programs available to them at the Visy Cares Hub. We are helping them to connect not only with their friends who are also accessing Hub services but also to enjoy the benefits of youth services that on many levels were inaccessible to them through distance or lack of awareness. Other programs delivered throughout the year include BOLLYWOOD, LEADERSHIP sponsored by The Scanlon Foundation, THEATRE, HIP HOP and ART. We have also held three very successful events for Sunshine Showtime 2008, National Youth Week and International Youth Day.

Robert Stary and Associates is a criminal defence law firm which has practiced predominantly in the western suburbs for 13 years. Since the inception of the VISY CARES HUB, we have consolidated our position as a provider of criminal law services to the youth of the western suburbs and have increased our client base. We are one of the largest providers of legal aid in the western suburbs.

We have also established contacts with broader community groups and have benefited substantially from the availability of facilities within the Hub including Western Melbourne headspace, Sunshine Youth Housing and the YMCA.

We hope to continue working with those organisations and others within the Hub and also to continue to work closely with the Sunshine Youth Legal Service to provide support and assistance where it is required.

Brimbank Youth Services YMCA- (BYS YMCA) is provided in partnership by Brimbank City Council and YMCA Victoria. BYS YMCA provides a variety of generalist youth services and programs across the Brimbank LGA. Services and programs provided at the Visy Cares Hub in 2008 have included individual youth support counseling, and a weekly social support group for 12-15 year olds to develop their social competencies and support networks. The Safety @ Sunshine Station for Youth Crew have also met fortnightly at the Hub to build a stronger local community. Based from the VCH, the Brimbank & Moonee Valley *Big Brothers Big Sisters Program* has provided 25 successful mentor matches for young people. A Photography Exhibition held at Visy Cares Hub celebrated Brimbank's young people during National Youth Week 2008

Sunshine Youth Housing (SYH)

has just celebrated our first year of operations in the Visy Cares Hub and the young people who access our service are beginning to reap the rewards of having other youth services in such close proximity.

The last year has been one of adjustment and change for SYH, not only through moving into the Visy Cares Hub, but also in the broader Welfare Housing Sector. These challenges have brought about positive change and enhanced SYH services for young people.

Some of the goals for SYH during this period of change were to be; a housing reference point at the Hub and to provide a more holistic case management approach to young people utilising services within the Hub, thus capitalising on the strength of partnerships and collaboration – this we have truly accomplished.

Working Together

“The Visy Cares Hub workers are a relaxed group of people, yet still professional and they excel in their roles.” Marcella (VU Student) October 2008

This year a strong sense of ownership has created a culture between agencies that focuses on breaking down organisational barriers and agendas to develop and provide a more seamless service to young people. Some thoughts from staff highlight the progress we have made towards the achievement of this goal in 2008:

WMh - *“The collocation and range of services in the Visy Cares Hub has proved valuable in how young people access our service and the services we can offer to young people. We have frequently drawn on the resources of our fellow tenants in the Hub, as well as receiving a number of referrals from them. Being located in a youth specific environment allows young people to enter the building with some level of anonymity, an important factor to increase access to services, especially those in the mental health and substance use sectors.*

We look forward to our continued involvement with the community in 2009 and beyond, and are excited about what the future holds.”

CMY - *“The CMY NAYSS/Reconnect North West staff comprises of 3 workers. The move to the Visy Cares Hub in Sunshine has had a positive impact on staff – allowing staff to be co-located with other CMY staff for the benefit of our clients. “*

SYH - *“Linkages from SYH to internal Visy Cares Hub services have provided clients with a better seamless service, and assisted in clients achieving their objectives. Another integral part of SYH’s relocation to the Hub has created the opportunity for clients to participate in programs being facilitated at the Hub, including Art programs, Dance, Drama and Soccer tournaments. All combined, have strengthened SYH’s response to “at risk young people “in the community.”*

VU - *“The Hub has given us the ideal venue to develop and deliver community information events about education along with personal development programs and vocational preparation programs. It has also allowed us to implement programs in collaboration with other services in the building aimed at educating people from the wider community. We have met many wonderful young people from Sunshine and the surrounding suburbs, and we hope another year at the Visy Cares Hub is even more successful than the last”.*

Events 07-08

Sunshine Showtime, our multicultural family day took Sunshine by storm with an outdoor event attracting almost 200 people. The young people provided entertainment through dance, music and singing and our theatre group ‘I Like Pie!’ performed a drama raising awareness of youth transition issues. Thank you to **The Pratt Foundation** for providing 100 festive hampers for the young people and their families to enjoy.

Our first event of 2008 was held during **National Youth Week** and showcased the talents of young people who had participated in a range of workshops including art, theatre, soccer, leadership and dance. We extend our appreciation to the **Newsboys Foundation** and **The Pratt Foundation** for giving us the opportunity to make this a great success.

Our **International Youth Day** event on the 12th August attracted over 100 young people who participated in dance, music and song with presentations and prizes for our Soccer boys in the evening.

Finances - Legal and Administrative Information

Members of the Board:

Andrew Grech	Chair	Slater & Gordon	Resigned as Chair and appointed as Secretary 9/09/08
Dennis Galimberti	Public Officer	Kempsons Lawyers	Resigned as Public Officer 9/09/08
Marilyn Duncan	Secretary	Independent	Resigned as Secretary and appointed as Chair on 9/09/08
Ian Allen	Member	Visy Cares	
Stuart Bensley	Treasurer	Independent	
Robyn Broadbent	Member	Victoria University	
Leanne Spiteri	Member	Dominion Private Clients	Co-opted as Public Officer 9/09/08

Vacancy

The Directors who served during the period of November 2007 to October 2008, together with any changes, are listed above.

The way in which Directors are selected reflects the diversity of organisations that are stakeholders participating within The Youth Junction Inc and add to its success.

The Board is accountable for the overall management of The Youth Junction Inc. and have no beneficial interest in the entity and are not remunerated for the services they provide as Directors of The Youth Junction Inc.

Registered Office: Visy Cares Hub, 80B Harvester Rd, PO Box 5083, Sunshine, 3020.

Accountants: Leanne Spiteri – Dominion Private Clients

Bankers: Bendigo Bank, Barkly Street, Footscray

Solicitors: Kempsons Lawyers

ABN: 53 035 141 146

Status and Administration:

The Youth Junction Inc. is a registered Incorporated Association with Deductible Gift Recipient status and is governed by its Statement of Purposes and Statement of Rules.

Incorporated Association law and legislation appropriate to benevolent institutions require the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of The Youth Junction Inc. and of its financial position at the end of that period. In preparing the financial statement, the Directors follow best practice by:

- Selecting appropriate accounting policies and then applying them consistently
- Making judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Stating whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departure disclosed and explained in financial statements
- Preparing the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the entity will continue in operation

The Directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial situation of the entity and which

allows them to ensure that the financial statements conform with the Association Incorporation Act 1981. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the entity and therefore taking reasonable steps for prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

With Thanks to Our Supporters and Friends

- Bakers Delight
- Brimbank City Council
- Brimbank Community Grants
- Bunnings Warehouse
- Castello Hotel Management
- Citipower/ Powercor Australia
- Coles
- Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Department of Victorian Communities
- Distance Education
- Dominion Private Clients
- DOT Removable Storage Company
- FatFish Graphics
- Godfathers Pizza
- Greg Williams Print Management
- Keane Australia Group
- La Porchetta
- Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation
- McDonalds Family Restaurants
- McKay Foundation
- Microsoft Foundation
- New Age Furniture
- Newsboys Foundation
- Optus Foundation
- Regional Partnerships
- Safeway
- Salvation Army
- Scanlon Foundation
- Slater & Gordon Foundation
- Smorgon Family Foundation
- Speedy's Pizza
- Spinning Disc Entertainment
- Sports Without Borders
- Sunshine Foundation
- Sunshine Historical and District Society
- Sunshine Magistrates Court
- The Pratt Foundation
- VCOSS
- Victoria University
- Visy Cares
- Western Bulldogs Football Club