



Final Report

Interim Evaluation of Youth in Communities

FOR THE

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, HOUSING,
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

August 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR THE INTERIM EVALUATION OF YIC	11
The YIC and other programs in the NT	11
The YIC program logic	12
Interim Evaluation (2011) Terms of reference and key evaluation questions	15
Methodology for Interim Evaluation	16
This report.....	17
Acronyms used in the report.....	17
2. OVERVIEW OF THE YIC PROJECTS AND FUNDING – HOW MUCH HAS BEEN DONE?	19
Projects, providers and sites.....	19
Infrastructure projects	20
Youth diversion activities/projects	21
3. PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTCOMES	32
Progress towards outcomes for participants	32
Issues influencing achievement of outcomes for participants	36
Progress towards outcomes in strengthening the service delivery network.....	43
4. ISSUES IN PROGRAM DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT AFFECTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES	51
Program management issues.....	51
Program design	53
APPENDIX A	55
YIC Service Provider Survey Findings	56
ATTACHMENT A	67
YIC SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY	67
APPENDIX B	80

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and approach to the Interim Evaluation

Courage Partners (Courage) was engaged by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to conduct an evaluation of the Youth in Communities (YIC) program. The evaluation commenced in July 2010 and will end in June 2012. There are three stages to the evaluation:

1. Development of an Evaluation Framework (including a Program Logic) to guide the overall evaluation, which has been completed.
2. Conduct of an Interim Evaluation (data collection period from January – May 2011).
3. Conduct of a Final Evaluation to commence in August 2011 with a final report to be delivered by June 2012.

This report presents the findings of Stage 2, the Interim Evaluation.

The methodology for this stage comprised: site visits to several service provider projects; analysis of service provider performance reports submitted to FaHCSIA as part of contractual obligations; and an electronic based survey to services seeking their views on the implementation and progress of the YIC.

The site visits involved meeting and talking with YIC funded staff members as well as staff from other service providers at specific locations as well as observing the types of activities that were being implemented. While the Evaluation Framework proposed consulting with the young people participating in the activities and community members, this was not possible in this Interim Evaluation due to a requirement that an ethics approval be granted from the appropriate Northern Territory (NT) bodies prior to any consultations with youth participants. This approval has since been obtained and both YIC participants and community members will be consulted in Stage 3, the Final Evaluation.

The information presented in this report informs the two Terms of Reference (ToR):

1. Is YIC on track to achieve participant outcomes?
2. Is YIC on track to achieve youth service delivery network and infrastructure outcomes?

Progress towards outcomes

Communities involved in YIC are also involved in other initiatives under several of these Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership measures. Many of these communities are also involved in initiatives which are being delivered through other National Partnership Agreements. Some of these initiatives may be directed at the same target group as YIC. For the purposes of evaluation, where program components have similar or related outcomes and are focused on a similar target group, isolating the cause and effect of one program component on participants cannot readily be done. Throughout this Interim

Evaluation we have been mindful that where outcomes are attributed to YIC by services providers, there may well have been other similar or related programs also contributing to these outcomes.

Outcomes for participants

The outcomes for participants against which progress is assessed are those outcomes represented in the YIC program logic, namely

- Outcome 1: Participants and activities in YIC are appropriately targeted
- Outcome 2: Participants engage with the YIC workers and activities
- Outcome 3: YIC Participants' enhanced self esteem supports positive behaviours
- Outcome 4: YIC Participants develop skills and behaviours that promote well-being and support positive life choices
- Outcome 5: Improved life choices & outcomes for Indigenous young people at risk

From the survey of service providers, analysis of the performance reports and the accumulated information gathered during site visits there is good evidence to indicate that the YIC projects are making strong progress on the immediate outcomes for participants and beginning to make some progress on the intermediate outcomes. They are thus on track in delivering outcomes for youth participants by June 2012, to an extent consistent with the length of time that the YIC program will have been operating.

The survey asked respondents to indicate the degree of change in the young people participating in their YIC activity. Analysis of the surveys found that key areas of change where there was a major increase were in:

- engagement in YIC activities; and
- participation in community events.

and the areas of change where there was a minor increase were in:

- engaging constructively with peers;
- contributing to community wellbeing;
- self care (hygiene, personal safety, health, nutrition); and
- self esteem.

Most service providers saw a minor decrease in anti-social behaviour, engaging in alcohol and drug abuse as well as in volatile substance abuse and involvement with the justice system. However, a small number of providers saw a major decrease in antisocial behaviour, engaging in alcohol and drug use and involvement with the justice system and engaging in volatile substance abuse.

The survey also asked service providers to identify the main issues for YIC participants. These were school attendance, substance misuse, family support and safety and stability of accommodation. Other issues not so dominant

included young people with self-harming behaviour or suicidal ideation, and young people with other mental health or physical health issues.

Providers who have been operating in the community and in youth work for the longest period of time show steady results in minor improvements across almost all outcomes. Providers who have commenced more recently show minor and, from a zero base some major increases, in participation in the YIC program and in community events with more variable results in relation to other outcomes.

In summary, the results from the survey are positive and indicate that YIC projects as a group are making progress towards improved outcomes for YIC participants.

Comments from service providers in the survey and performance reports further illustrate the nature of the changes in behavior that are being seen amongst YIC participants. These are presented in more detail in the body of the report.

Outcomes for the service delivery system

The outcomes for the service delivery system against which progress is assessed are drawn from the YIC program logic and are:

- equipment and buildings are available for YIC
- youth workers and youth worker trainees are employed and trained
- community understands and supports YIC aims
- effective collaboration between youth workers and services
- capacity of youth services delivery network is strengthened

Equipment and buildings. All except one of the projects for the construction of facilities for youth program activities, accommodation for youth workers, and the provision of equipment to be used in youth program activities have been completed. As a result, the following infrastructure is now available to the youth services network in the Northern Territory:

- upgrades of youth centres, recreation halls and activity centre facilities at Angarugu, Lajamanu, Umbakumba, Galiwin'ku, Nauiyu (Daly River) and Gunbalunya; and
- upgraded accommodation for youth workers at Ramingining and new duplex accommodation for youth workers at Lajamanu.

Employment of youth workers. Outcomes for employment of youth workers and trainee youth workers are being achieved. However, the numbers of youth worker trainees are not quite as great as was intended. Initial difficulties were experienced in attracting suitably qualified staff, thus delaying the commencement of activities at some communities. This in turn has meant that the outcomes for participants are, at this stage, more focused on the immediate participant outcomes, such as engagement and participation in YIC and community activities. Nevertheless, now that the staffing is in place, the projects are on track to achieve intermediate participant outcomes over the next year of the YIC program.

Training of staff. The performance reports show that, of those providers which had staff on board as at December 2010, all had staff who had either commenced

training in Certificates II or III as appropriate, or were enrolled to commence in February 2011. Staff training outcomes have been affected by the initial difficulties in getting the projects fully staffed at all locations. Until there were youth workers appointed to a community location, there was no effective means of identifying, recruiting and supervising trainee youth workers from the community. As a result, the number of trainee workers so far recruited is slightly less than might have been intended. In addition, many of the trainee youth workers were not enrolled to start certificate training until February 2011. It is possible that not all these trainee youth workers will complete their certificate training before the currently planned end date for YIC of June 2012.

Collaboration. There are many examples of networking and collaboration occurring between YIC projects and other services in communities. This is considered a normal part of the delivery of the program and can create opportunities for youth workers to exchange information and ideas about their work. Examples of this networking and collaboration are:

- bringing youth workers together at one location from time to time;
- having regular phone calls between the service manager and the youth workers;
- youth workers directly contacting each other; and
- holding informal meetings with other services at particular locations.

Factors affecting achievement of outcomes

Some of the factors influencing the degree of success in achieving participant and youth service delivery network outcomes include:

- engagement with the community and youth in the community;
- elapsed time needed for program start up; and
- elapsed time needed to achieve behavioural outcomes.

Engagement with the community and youth in the community

At least half of the service providers found that their engagement with the community went smoothly. However several also found that they experienced some initial problems.

It is evident from service provider reports and from discussions during site visits that a service provider which is new to a community, engagement can be a slow process. Where a provider is well known in the community and has a history of good program delivery and good relationships, engagement with the community, young people and with other service providers can occur quickly. As such, the level of progress by services can vary and impact on what can be achieved in a 12 month, two year and three year horizon.

Almost all survey respondents noted that they sought direct input from young people in setting up their activities. Slightly less than half the service providers have a committee including community and youth members overseeing the implementation of the YIC project. Most of these committees have youth

members who provide a youth voice in the way that projects are run. There are several examples reported by service providers of the program being modified or substantially improved by taking account of the contribution and suggestions of the youth in the community.

Elapsed time needed to achieve behavioural outcomes

Many of the service providers have commented on the fact that the kinds of outcomes that YIC projects aim to build for participants take some time to achieve because:

- they involve behavioural change which is inevitably and almost universally slow create and reinforce;
- many of the young people have a range of serious problems to overcome;
- there may be underlying socio-economic causes or high levels of social dysfunction in the community that contribute to the behaviour of young people, and are not specifically targeted or addressed through YIC activities; and
- there continue to be few employment prospects within communities to create alternative long term secure futures for YIC participants. To achieve sustainable pathways to employment is very complex, hard to organize and needs considerable time to effect.

In this environment it is realistic to assume that it may take longer than the three years of funding available for YIC and for such changes in behaviour to be evident and sustained. It has been established through this Interim Evaluation that those service providers who had youth programs running before the YIC funding became available, or who were among the few to start early in 2010, have made better progress in terms of their engagement with communities and young people and having staff in place to run the YIC program.

Program management and design issues

Elapsed time needed for program set up

YIC provides funding for the triennium of 2009/10 – 2011/12 financial years. The program was announced and industry briefings provided in December 2009 with applications closing in mid January 2010. An assessment process followed this. Funding decisions were approved from March through to June 2010 and the majority of service providers received their funding agreements and funding was released between late March and the end of May 2010. By this time the first three quarters of the first financial year of the triennium had passed.

For any program that aims to achieve behavioural change outcomes, a reduction in the time available to work towards such outcomes can impact the potential to achieve them. Indeed, the analysis of information collected for this Interim Evaluation indicates that for new projects the immediate (nearest term) outcomes only are becoming evident now, and the program has just over a year remaining. However, the projects that continued from the Youth Alcohol Diversion Measure (YADM) and Integrated Youth Services Project (IYSP) programs, or those YIC

projects that started early in 2010 are showing steadier improvement across all outcomes than those projects that started in mid to late 2010.

Based on these findings, it is reasonable to assume that any measures which can minimize delays in funding decisions and funding distribution, or optimize continuity in service delivery, will positively impact the capacity of service providers to engage with communities, attract or retain staff and achieve program outcomes.

We know from other programs that when funding is not certain for the next financial year, that staff funded by the program begin to look for new jobs in January and February if the funding ends in June. This is a major threat to the continuity of YIC projects if the program is to continue into the next triennium.

Defining outcomes and indicators of success in plans and performance reports

It was found in this Interim Evaluation that few of the Activity Plans for projects include outcomes to be achieved and where they do, they are not common between the projects.

The evaluation of YADM and IYS identified the lack of a program logic as a factor contributing to not having common or good performance data about those programs.

The program logic developed for YIC as part of the Evaluation Framework has enabled the development of a common set of outcome indicators. The service provider survey collects perceptions regarding these indicators and progress of participant outcomes.

We recommend:

The development of an appropriate program logic for inclusion in any program guidelines. This will ensure performance indicators or signs of success for the program can inform the service providers planning and performance reporting. Consideration could be given to the further refinement of a common set of performance data for YIC providers.

YIC contributing to development of integrated youth services in the Northern Territory

It has been evident from the data collected so far in this evaluation that YIC is one of the component parts of youth service delivery in the NT. Many service providers indicated that they have funding for youth services from sources other than YIC and that some staff are only partially funded by YIC.

YIC will not achieve as much working in isolation as it could if a co-ordinated approach was taken. There is a great deal of research to support this view. A co-ordinated response to youth service delivery encourages a more effective use of resources and develops partnerships and common goals as well as having a greater impact on achieving positive outcomes.

To this end, the Senior Officers Group (SOG), with membership drawn from those Australian and NT Government agencies with an involvement in youth services, was set up for YIC. However, comments from the few long standing members of the SOG indicated that the SOG's operation had been largely confined to formal meetings. These meetings were described as being too infrequent, and provided little opportunity for more informal interaction to occur, with the effect that working relationships were not extensively supported.

The target age group

Almost all service providers are dealing with youth outside the target age group and that there is some inevitability about this.

We recommend that:

Consideration be given to the definition of target age groups and that Service providers should be asked to report on the age composition of their group and how that composition affects their program design.

This Interim Evaluation found that any age definitions could include two groups; those aged 5-15 and those aged 15-25, but with some flexibility for service providers around these definitions being necessary and practical. These groupings would recognise a current service gap and the role changes that occur in Indigenous communities as young people reach their middle teen years.

We suggest also that future program guidelines should note that limited resources in a project may necessitate targeting a particular age range within the target group of the program as a means of best targeting the available resources.

However, we also recommend that:

Within existing service provision, the current participant (target) groups remain unchanged, because of the importance of continuity of service delivery to individuals over time in achieving the behavioural outcomes sought from YIC.

Service delivery Model

Based on the information that is available to us, it appears that there are two broad types of models being used and these can be summarised as:

- a joined up model at various stages of implementation where the youth service is working in close collaboration with another service/s to enhance integration.
- capacity building in young people where youth participation and engagement models are used.

Many of the projects' performance reports indicate some aspects of the above models forming part of their projects, without necessarily articulating a clear service model or underpinning approach that might ensure clarity of objectives and help to steer the project and the staff effort over the three years. This may be a reflection of the fact that the Program Guidelines for YIC did not, at the outset of the program, indicate that articulation of a service model was important to the decision-making process on what would be funded.

We recommend that further information on service delivery models be clearly identified in any selection criteria and continued efforts be made to clarify requirements for service providers to articulate and base their service delivery on best practice and evidence based youth work delivery models.

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR THE INTERIM EVALUATION OF YIC

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) is committed to addressing the many disadvantages faced by Indigenous Australians. Funding of \$28.4 million has been provided for the Youth in Communities (YIC) program component under the Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement. The YIC program component targets young Indigenous people 10-20 years of age living in remote communities and is being implemented over the triennium 2009/10 – 2011/12.

The objectives of the YIC program component are to deliver a comprehensive youth strategy in the Northern Territory (NT) that:

- a) provides an effective diversion for young Indigenous people from at risk behaviours;
- b) improves life choices and outcomes for young Indigenous people, through engaging them in positive activities that promote pathways to better health and wellbeing, community capacity building and participation in school, work and social networks; and
- c) strengthens and improves the youth services infrastructure, both in the number of youth workers employed and the facilities available for providing youth services and activities.

Under this program component, twenty one agreements have been finalised with organisations to fund infrastructure, youth workers and diversionary activities, including sports demonstration projects, in remote communities across the NT. One agreement was also finalised to provide a professional development and mentoring service to YIC employed youth workers.

Courage Partners (Courage) has been engaged by FaHCSIA to conduct an evaluation project of the YIC program component.

The overall evaluation project commenced in July 2010, and will end in June 2012. The first stage, the development of an Evaluation Framework has been completed and has been guiding the conduct of the evaluation. This second stage, the Interim Evaluation commenced in late 2010 and the final report for this stage is to be completed by end August 2011.

The final evaluation will commence in August 2011 and will examine progress and achievements from June 2011 to April 2012 with a final report being completed by June 2012.

The YIC and other programs in the NT

The forerunner programs or measures for YIC were the Integrated Youth Services Project (IYSP) and the Youth Alcohol Diversion Measures (YADM). The IYSP was a \$7.97 million Australian Government initiative (through three government departments) to provide integrated youth services over a 3-year period to the four communities of Aputula (Finke), Imanpa, Mutitjulu and Kaltukatjara (Docker River). The initiative was aimed principally at providing alternative activities for

young people to combat petrol sniffing in Central Australia. The YADM was a \$9.5 million Australian Government initiative as part of the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER). It provided a range of diversionary activities directed at young people aged 12 to 18 years to address alcohol and substance abuse in remote Northern Territory Indigenous communities. The YIC continued some of the activities under these measures. The context for YIC and this evaluation is built on previous research on the delivery of youth services.

The YIC is one component of Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement, a continuation of the IYSP and the YAD (YAD was introduced under the NTER). Closing the Gap operates across all levels of government through several National Partnership Agreements. Closing the Gap in the NT National Partnership Agreement runs to 2012, operates in 73 prescribed communities and involves seven interrelated objectives which are:

- ensure the protection of women and children;
- reduce violence and improve family and community safety including through restrictions of alcohol and pornography, enhancing compliance and community education;
- improve the quality of education, increase school participation and employment outcomes;
- improve health and wellbeing, particularly that of children;
- promote positive behaviours among Indigenous youth; and
- promote personal responsibility.

Communities involved in YIC are also involved in other initiatives under several of these Closing the Gap measures. They are also involved in initiatives which are being delivered under other National Partnership Agreements. Some of these initiatives may be directed at the same target group as YIC. For the purposes of evaluation, where program components have similar or related outcomes and are focused on a similar target group, isolating the cause and effect of one program component on participants cannot readily be done. Throughout this Interim Evaluation we have been mindful that where outcomes are attributed to YIC by services providers, there may well have been other similar or related programs also contributing to these outcomes.

Since 2005, the National Illicit Drugs Strategy and the Petrol Sniffing Strategy have also been operating in the NT (and nationally) with some of their components directed to the same youth targeted by the YIC component.

The YIC program logic

A program logic, or as it is sometimes termed, an outcomes hierarchy, aims to make explicit how inputs and activities lead to intended outcomes, and how short term outcomes lead to longer term outcomes, with achievements at one level providing a foundation for the next level to be built upon. A program logic also helps to clarify how success might be measured. It is underpinned by a theory of

change, drawing on both experience and research, to set out how it is expected that the intended outcomes will be achieved.

A program logic for YIC was developed as part of the Evaluation Framework for the evaluation and has been accepted by service providers and stakeholders in FaHCSIA as accurately representing the YIC and what it aims to achieve. It also sets out the intended immediate, intermediate and long term outcomes for participants and for the service delivery network. The program logic is important to this Interim Evaluation and report because it keeps a focus on what the program intends to achieve in outcomes. It thus informs the questions that are to be answered by the evaluation.

The structure of the YIC program logic

As mentioned, the achievement of YIC outcomes will also be influenced by the range of services and program components operating simultaneously and in conjunction with YIC. For example, young people participating in YIC will also have access to services which assist with substance abuse and family relationships issues, and there will also be strategies in place to increase community safety.

Thus, on the left-hand side of the diagram, the main strategies of Closing the Gap acting in concert with YIC and contributing to intermediate outcomes are shown. At the top level of the diagram, in dark blue and orange, intermediate outcomes for Closing the Gap, into which YIC will directly feed, are shown.

The central part of the diagram shows at the lower levels the immediate outcomes from implementation of the program. This then builds in the longer-term to intermediate outcomes for individual participants in the YIC and for the communities which are hosting the YIC projects.

At the bottom of the program logic diagram, feeding into the outcomes, are examples of the youth diversionary strategies which YIC projects use in order to achieve the immediate and intermediate outcomes for individuals and for communities.

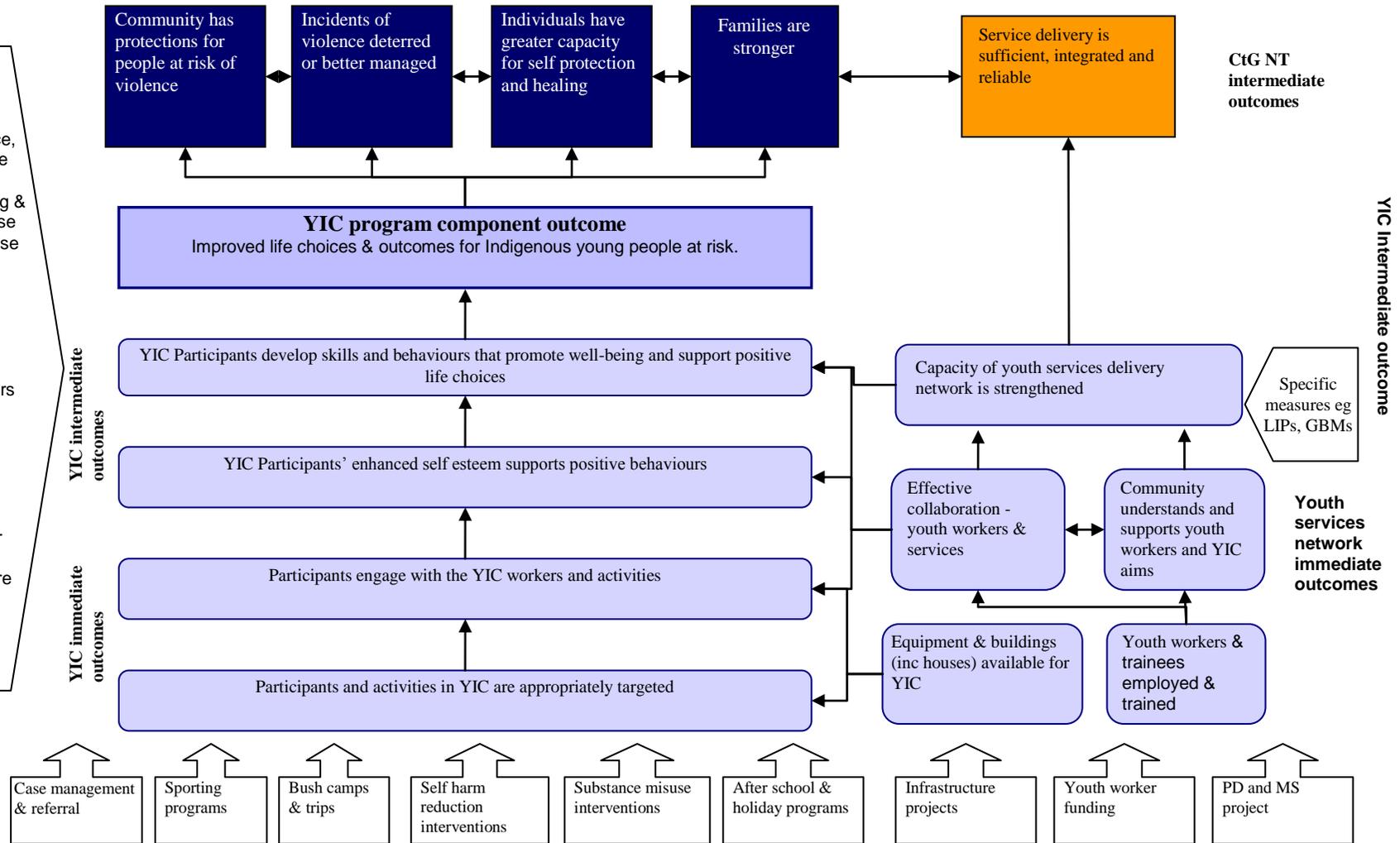
On the right-hand side of the program logic diagram there are a number of immediate outcomes relating to developing the youth services infrastructure in the NT, one of the explicit objectives of YIC in its establishment. Over time, these outcomes will contribute to the achievement of the intermediate outcomes of YIC.

Detailed explanations of each of the participant and service delivery system outcomes, and signs of success are provided in the Evaluation Framework and are not therefore reproduced here. The Program Logic developed for YIC is shown on the next page.

CtG in NT Creating safer communities outcomes - Program logic 3

CtG in NT related outcomes – Program logic 2

- Related Closing the Gap NT components**
- Additional police, upgraded police stations
 - Remote policing & substance abuse
 - Substance abuse & intelligence desk (NP)
 - Night patrols
 - Supporting Families
 - Child & Family Support Workers
 - Family Safety Plans
 - Alcohol & pornography restrictions
 - Safe houses
 - Alcohol & other drug services reproduced here



For the reporting periods to date for YIC there have been no common indicators against which all service providers were reporting, and instead, projects have been reporting against their own project objectives. As such, no common data set existed which the evaluation could readily use to assess participant outcomes being achieved by the program. We have developed a common set of indicators which draw on the program logic.

The outcomes in the program logic are behavioural outcomes, that is changes from “at risk” behaviours to more positive outcomes for participants. The signs of success (or indicators) for the participant outcomes therefore provide a set of (behavioural) indicators which could be applied commonly across all the projects to give us some indication of the progress being made by the program as a whole.

These signs of success or indicators of the outcomes for participants from the YIC program logic which we have used in this Interim Evaluation and will continue to use for the Final Evaluation are:

- reduced involvement of YIC participants in violence;
- reduced incidence of arrests or detention of YIC participants for criminal activities;
- reduced outbreaks of sniffing amongst the YIC participant group;
- reduced suicides of young people participating in YIC in a (given) period;
- reduced incidents of self-harming amongst YIC participants;
- reduced antisocial behaviour amongst participants e.g. damage to property, abusive or aggressive behaviour to other members of the community;
- reduced substance abuse amongst YIC participants; and
- increased use of daily routines by YIC participants which support their well-being (eg. organising own time, attending school, helping with household chores, managing personal hygiene and general health).

Interim Evaluation (2011) Terms of reference and key evaluation questions

Questions for the Interim Evaluation were developed as part of the Evaluation Framework, taking account of the program logic just described and these are listed below.

ToR 1: Is YIC on track to achieve participant outcomes?

1.1 How much has been done?

- 1.1.a. What projects with what service models make up the YIC?
- 1.1.b. To what extent have these services been established and are operating?

1.2 How well is it being done?

- 1.2.a. Is progress being made towards YIC immediate outcomes?
- 1.2.b. Have the participant’s self-esteem, skills and behaviours changed in positive ways since the start of the YIC project?

- 1.2.c. Are there aspects of program design or management that are affecting achievement of participant outcomes?
- 1.2.d. How are the projects assessing what impact they are having on outcomes for the young people?

ToR 2: Is YIC on track to achieve youth service delivery network and infrastructure outcomes?

2.1 How much has been done?

- 2.1.a. What projects with what characteristics make up the YIC?
- 2.1.b. To what extent have these services been established and are operating?

2.2 How well has it been done?

- 2.2.a. Are the projects on track to achieve their objectives?
- 2.2.b. What are the main issues for youth worker staffing and training?
- 2.2.c. How has collaboration between youth workers been developed?
- 2.2.d. What role has the community played in the progress of the project to date?
- 2.2.e. Are there aspects of program design or management that are affecting achievement of network and infrastructure outcomes?

Methodology for Interim Evaluation

The methodology for the Interim Evaluation, as set down in the Evaluation Framework, comprised desk top analysis of service provider performance reports, an electronic survey completed by service providers and site visits to several service provider projects to meet with staff and participants. However, one of FaHCSIA's requirements for the evaluation was that an ethics approval be granted through the two respective bodies for the Northern Territory: the Central Australian Human Research Ethics Committee (CAHREC) and the Human Research Ethics Committee of the NT Department of Health & Families and Menzies School of Health Research (HREC). These bodies meet only periodically and while approval was obtained from CAHREC, it was not obtained from the HREC in time to allow us to meet with young people or members of the communities¹. Site visits were therefore restricted to three service providers and interviews at these visits were confined to service provider staff and staff of other organisations working in the communities.

The process for the Interim Evaluation included the following steps:

- reviewing Activity Plans provided by service providers to FaHCSIA at the start of the program to guide their operations in 2010;
- reviewing performance reports provided by service providers to FaHCISA for the period April to June 2010 and July to December 2010;
- designing, piloting and revising a survey of those service providers delivering activities to youth participants to collect data on the outcomes from the program to date;

¹ All ethics approval requirements have since been finalized so that in the Final Evaluation interviews will be conducted with YIC participants, their families and some community members.

- interviews with members of the Senior Officers Group and NT and Australian Government agencies with an interest in the YIC and its contribution to youth services in the Northern Territory;
- attending a service provider recall meeting;
- interviews with program staff of three service providers, Red Cross NT, YMCA Top End and NPY Women’s Council;
- site visits to conduct interviews with service providers staff of the above service providers at Imanpa, (NPY Women’s Council) and Palmerston and Belyuen (YMCA Top End);
- telephone interviews with Government Business Managers (GBMs) and other service providers in the sites visited;
- telephone interviews with other service providers to validate information gathered (whereby the contact details of these were provided to Courage by YIC funded services); and
- discussions with FaHCSIA staff involved in the day to day program management of the YIC.

This report

This report contains the following sections:

- an overview of the program overall which addresses evaluation question 1.1 and 2.1 “How much has been done?”
- progress towards outcomes, addressing evaluation questions 1.2a-b and 2.2a-d on progress towards outcomes for both participants and for the services delivery network; and
- issues in program design and management affecting progress towards and achievement of outcomes.

A detailed report regarding the findings from the service provider survey is provided at [Appendix A](#) to this report.

Acronyms used in the report

The following acronyms for service providers are used in diagrams throughout this report.

Acronym	Service provider
AFLNT	Australian Football League, Northern Territory
AMSANT	AMSANT Inc / Malabam Health Board Aboriginal Corporation
ARCNT	Australian Red Cross Northern Territory
ASC	Australian Sports Commission
E Arnhem SC	East Arnhem Shire Council

Acronym	Service provider
GEBIEAC	Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island Enterprises Aboriginal Corporation
Julalikari	Julalikari Aboriginal Council
Laynhapuy	Laynhapuy Homelands Association Inc
MacDonnell SC	MacDonnell Shire Council
NPYWC	Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council
Roper Gulf SC	Roper Gulf Shire Council
Vic Daly	Victoria Daly Shire Council
W Arnhem SC	West Arnhem Shire Council
WYDAC	Walpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation
YMCA Katherine	Young Men's Christian Association, Katherine
YMCA Top End	Young Men's Christian Association, Tope End

2. OVERVIEW OF THE YIC PROJECTS AND FUNDING – HOW MUCH HAS BEEN DONE?

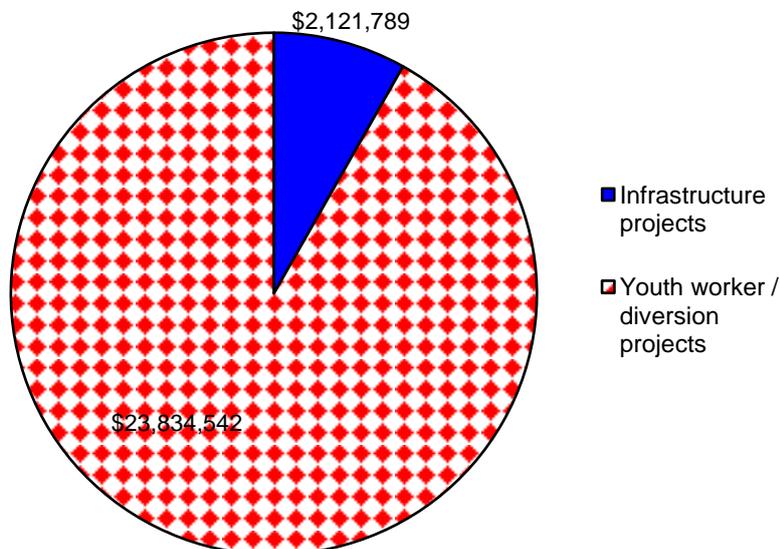
This section deals with the program overall and addresses evaluation question 1.1 and 2.1 “How much has been done?” in all projects both directed to participant outcomes and to service delivery network.

Projects, providers and sites

FaHCSIA has entered into 16 funding agreements with service providers to deliver a range of youth services. FaHCSIA also entered into 5 funding agreements for the provision of infrastructure. YIC funded activities are occurring in 36 communities throughout the NT.

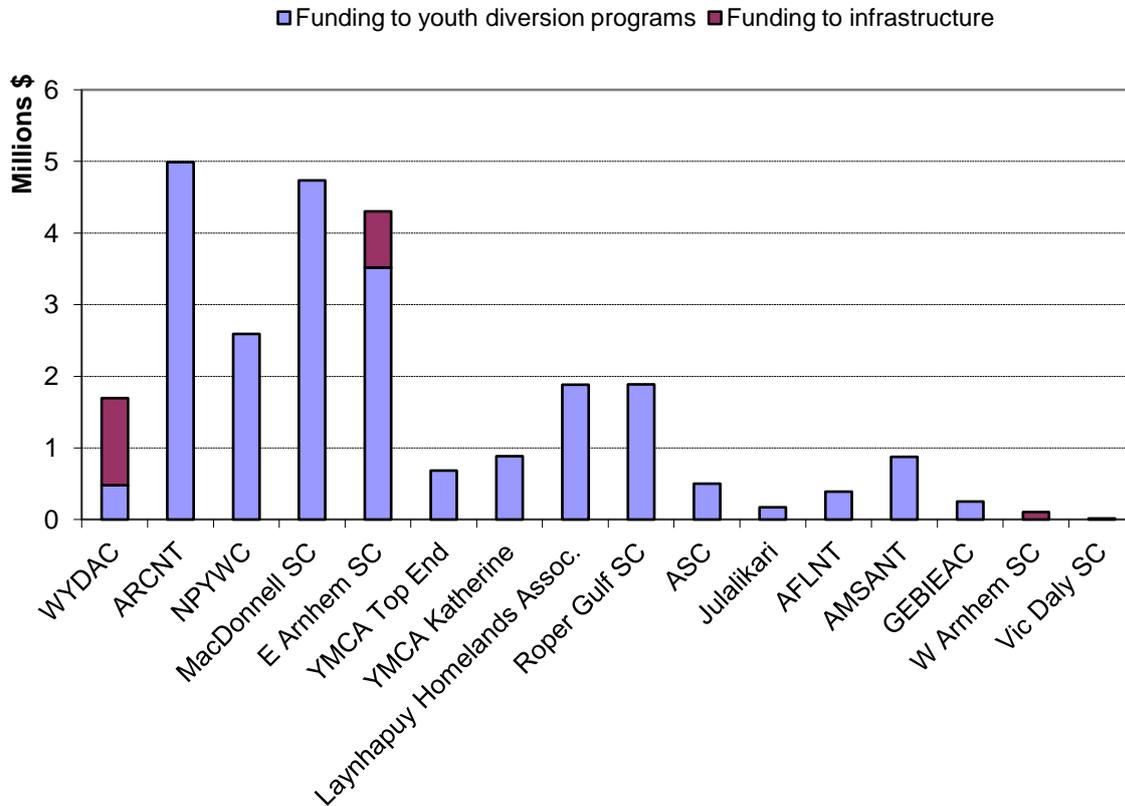
A total of \$25.95m has been allocated to service providers and projects for the three financial years 2009/10 to 2011/12. The total funding to youth service delivery projects is divided between infrastructure projects and youth worker / youth diversion projects as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Allocation of funds for 3 years of program to infrastructure projects and youth diversion projects



The funding allocated to each of the service providers in infrastructure and youth worker / youth diversion projects is shown below.

Figure 2: Funding allocated to each service provider

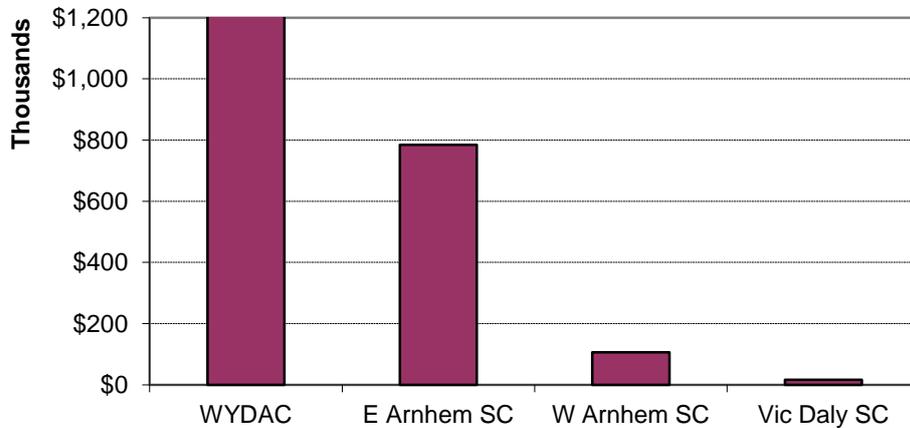


Note – two funding agreements with East Arnhem Shire Council were for capital works.

Infrastructure projects

Due to delays in the release of funding for infrastructure projects, not all of these projects were completed within the 2009/10 financial year and arrangements were made to carry funds over to 2010/11 financial year so that the projects could be completed. Figure 3 shows how the funds were allocated between providers.

Figure 3: Funding for infrastructure projects by service provider



All except one of the infrastructure projects are now completed.

Projects included upgrades to recreation halls and sports facilities such as concrete slabs and roofing, providing shaded areas, fencing, installing or upgrading toilet facilities, installing kitchen and barbeque facilities and lighting for night sports.

The biggest single infrastructure project was at the Walpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) and saw the construction of duplex accommodation for youth workers at Lajamanu. This was the only project that focused on accommodation for youth workers.

Some projects were also funded to purchase sporting equipment and equipment for the recreation activities.

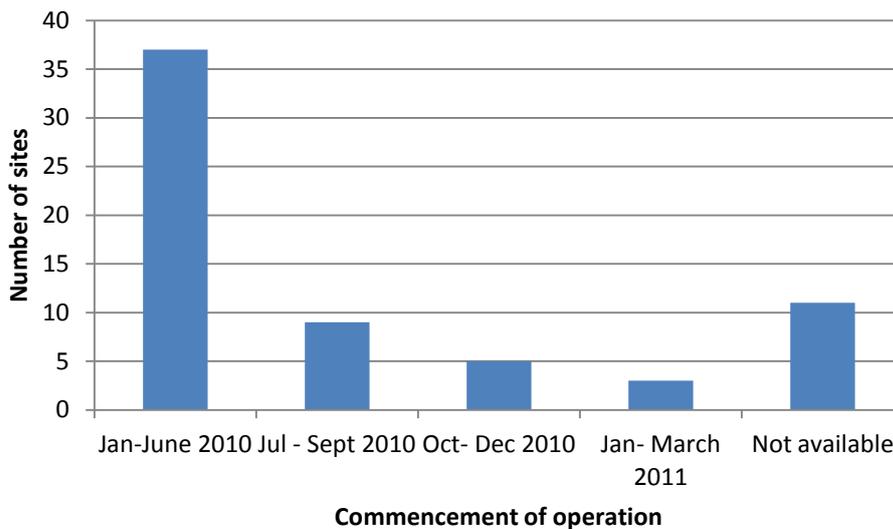
Youth worker / Youth diversion activities / projects

Courage Partners understand that there have been delays in service delivery and the employment of youth workers at Maningrida by the Malabam Health Board Aboriginal Corporation (auspiced by AMSANT Incorporated). FaHCSIA has advised that these delays are being addressed, and the project is due to commence service delivery by July 2011. Therefore, for the purposes for the following sections of the report, AMSANT is not included in the results being reported.

Length of time projects have been running

YIC began operating at slightly more than half of the communities in the first half of 2010, generally around April to May when funds were received. It should be noted that this includes the communities of the Laynhapuy Homelands, the communities serviced by WYDAC, an already well established youth services provider, and the communities serviced by MacDonnell Shire Council and Roper Gulf Shire Council, service providers already well known in their communities.

Figure 4: Commencement of operation of YIC at sites



Information about the start up times for those projects shown in the above figure as “not available” was not available from the project performance reports, from which the data for the figure was compiled.

The factors that contributed to some providers not making such an early start will be discussed in the next chapter under the sections of: progress towards outcomes, staffing issues, engagement and accessing appropriate accommodation and venues for youth diversion activities.

Service models

We are using the term ‘service model’ to refer to the underpinning philosophy or theory about the role or nature of interventions that the service will take in order to facilitate changes in behaviour.

We have used Activity Work Plans and Performance Reports, particularly those for the July to December 2010 period which sought information on service models, as the sources of information about what service providers consider to be the service models that they are using. We should note that because a service provider does not comment on a service model, it cannot be assumed that they do not have a clear model underpinning the design of their service. The limited site visits and discussions with service providers at the Service Provider Recall and the Evaluation Reference Group have given us some information about how services are conceptualizing their programs. When site visits can be made, they will be helpful in better understanding the models being used by at least those services visited.

Based on the information that is available to us, it appears that there are two broad types of models being used and these can be summarized as:

- a joined up model at various stages of implementation where the youth service is working in close collaboration with another service/s to enhance integration. For example, this model is operating:
 - at the YMCA Palmerston project in identifying potential YIC participants and involves a group of Northern Territory government departments

- coming together for this purpose and then meeting regularly throughout the project activities to monitor progress;
- with the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) which seeks to trial a best practice model for delivering sport focused diversion activities through improved whole of government co-ordination and a place based approach to service delivery.
 - capacity building in young people where youth participation and engagement models are being consciously and deliberately pursued by Roper Gulf Shire Council, Laynhapuy Homelands Association, WYDAC, Australian Red Cross NT (ARCNT), YMCA Katherine, YMCA Palmerston and to some degree by the NPY Women's Council. This approach includes some or all of the following elements:
 - putting considerable emphasis on involving the youth and the community in articulating needs and designing the program through processes such as community and youth profiling, youth surveys, formation of youth committees and using it or a community committee to continually guide the program;
 - providing safe spaces for young people to congregate and participate;
 - promoting young people in leadership and governance, especially those least likely to have such opportunities. This is used at Roper Gulf Shire Council and planned to be a significant part of the ARCNT program implementation;
 - using strengths based and creative models for example the Laynhapuy music program presented at the Service Provider Recall, and used by NPY Women's Council at Apatula (Finke) in a 10 day photography workshop as part of a holiday program;
 - encouraging youth engagement with the community where the young people are change makers in the community. While it may take some time to get to a point where this is possible, it provides a very authentic way of developing skills compared with the more artificial add-on life skills and self-esteem building activities where many of the projects necessarily start;
 - putting an emphasis on and effort into developing skills in the youth, at the first level of life skills to improve their health and wellbeing outcomes and subsequently strengthening participation in education and training for employment and in employment, particularly through the employment and training of youth worker trainees; and
 - undertaking some one-on-one case management - as appropriate, and consistent with resource capacity - to provide a holistic and integrated service to assist severely at risk youth to identify and overcome the issues and behaviours that have been putting them at risk.

Many of the projects' performance reports indicate some aspects of the above models forming part of their project without necessarily articulating a clear service model or approach to steer the project and the staff effort over the three years. This may be a reflection of the fact that the Program Guidelines and Selection Criteria did not clearly articulate the definition of a service model and that this was important to the decision-making process regarding funding allocation. In addition the Program Guidelines specified that what would be funded was employment of youth workers, training of locally engaged Aboriginal people in youth work, diversionary activities in conjunction with employment of local youth

workers and upgrades of physical infrastructure and equipment. Many of the projects have cast their project descriptions and reporting in these terms.

In future, if the performance reporting is to require articulation of a service model, then ideally, the Program Guidelines should also reflect that this is an important aspect of service delivery.

Two of the providers, WYDAC and Roper Gulf Shire Council, have a very clear and strong focus on directing their efforts towards opening education and training pathways and developing skills that will lead to employment outcomes for the youth participants. This is reflected in many aspects of their approaches with regard to choice, nature or focus of activities. It is interesting that both of these providers have been very active in the youth development sphere for a good many years prior to the commencement of YIC.

Youth diversion activities being undertaken as part of the YIC projects

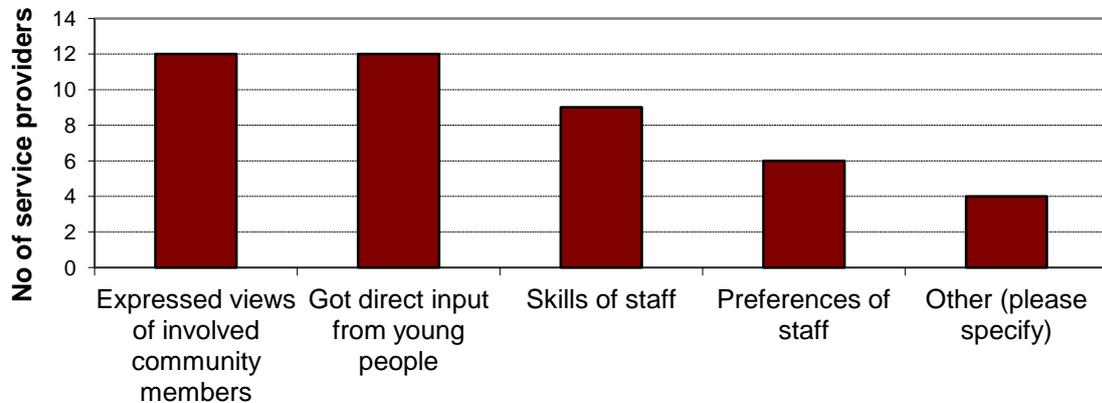
The information presented here on the kinds of activities which are being undertaken as part of YIC projects has been drawn from Activity Work Plans and Performance Reports up to December 2010. The following have also added to our understanding of the components that are making up the YIC programs/projects that are operating:

- visits to staff at NPY Women's Council,
- visits to staff at YMCA Top End
- visits to staff at ARCNT in Darwin,
- telephone interviews with some other service providers in the communities in which the above organisations have YIC programs, and
- relevant Government Business Managers (GBMs).

Activities run in YIC projects

The service provider survey asked a question specifically about what services took into account in deciding what activities they would run at any community. Almost all respondents noted that they sought direct input from young people in setting up their activities.

Figure 5: Factors taken into account in selecting activities



For each service provider, the activities being undertaken are particular in their exact nature and their combination. However there are some common types of activities across providers and sites/communities in which they are operating. The broad types of activities are:

- recreation or youth centre based activities;
- sporting activities to promote stamina, confidence, teamwork, and leadership;
- arts and craft activities;
- nutrition, cooking and healthy eating programs;
- culture and bush trips;
- activities directed to strengthening education participation and pathways to employment;
- gender specific activities/programs;
- individual case management, which may occur through some of the above activities; and
- school holiday programs.

These are described in more detail below.

Recreation or youth centre based activities

These are generally run outside school hours and into the evening, 3-5 times per week for around three hours. They aim to provide a safe place for young people to go and interact with others in activities such as playing music, playing games, learning simple cooking or food preparation skills, participating in craft or art activity or in some cases, find a quiet place to do some homework. Some providers deliberately involve the youth participants in organizing as well as participating in these activities. The mix of activities within this broad group appears to vary between sites, not least because the young people in many cases have some say in what they think is most needed or preferred.

Sporting activities to promote stamina, confidence, teamwork, and leadership

There are many instances of football, basketball, soccer, volleyball and swimming activities. In some instances a competition or training sessions are organized, and in others it is one-off games rather than a series of competitive matches. Some providers deliberately involve the youth participants in organizing as well as participating in these activities.

The AFL NT project at Wadeye and Galiwin'ku is a football focused project but some of its strategies are related to other types of activities, for example improving school attendance, where young people have to attend school in order to participate in the football clinics. There is also some focus in both communities on obtaining employment outcomes through recruiting and mentoring trainees by the Regional Development Manager. Leadership skills are developed through a partnership with the Essendon Football Club (Melbourne) which provides coaching development for the local Wadeye coaches. At Galiwin'ku the coaching development is done through the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (Batchelor). Another employment focused element at Wadeye is participation in the Defence Jobs Carnival. At Galiwin'ku there is also a health and nutrition dimension delivered through running Healthy Lifestyle Carnivals for Indigenous children aged 9-13 years old.

Arts and craft activities

Arts and crafts activities are most commonly held weekly for 2-3 hours, with one notable exception where at Ramingining in an East Arnhem Shire Council (EASC) project a dance group meets daily. This group has been formed by young men who initially participated in a concentrated anger management program for 8 weeks resulting in the formation of the dance group. They practice every afternoon (after school) at the youth centre and perform at the fortnightly discos as well as at other community events and graduation ceremonies at the school.

Another example of an arts related activity is at Papunya (MacDonnell Shire Council) where opportunities to celebrate stories are a part of their program. One such example is where the young people are learning the *Thriller* dance through the screening of instructional YouTube clips while simultaneously adding their own particular Papunya character. Their performance was filmed, edited and shared with the families by the young people.

At three of the Laynhapuy Homelands' screen printing and art workshops have been run as one-off events. One homeland community has continued this activity on their own with resources that have been supplied by the YIC project.

At Lajamanu (WYDAC) in the July to December 2010 period a number of media projects were undertaken. The first was three weeks of video training which resulted in the young people producing six videos. The second workshop, run by PAW Media, the locally created and owned media organisation, consisted of a further two weeks of film and media training. In addition a number of music videos were created during two weeks of music workshops with Incite Youth Arts musicians. Since these workshops, media skills development has become a key part of the daily youth program activity for example:

- using live feed projections at the discos;
- all age groups using the still camera and filming activities at the youth centre so that the young people gain confidence in front of the camera;
- playing recorded footage at movie nights and in the youth centre;

- filming on bush trips;
- placing photo and video projects onto the youth centre computers;
- creating photo-boards weekly; and
- displaying highlights from the previous week's activities caught on camera on the community notice board.

Nutrition, cooking and healthy eating

Nutrition, cooking and healthy eating activities are generally held weekly for 2 to 3 hours per session. Examples of such activities are at Galiwin'ku (EASC) where a group cooking session is held on a weekly basis at the local college and is attended by youths considered to be at risk. The activity involves hygiene skills, meal preparation and socialization skills and is aimed at teaching cooking that can be transferred to preparing meals at home with food available from the local store. Because only a limited number of young people can have access to the equipment at any one session, the youth participating in each session rotate, so that everybody gets a chance to participate over time. A similar activity has been conducted at Docker River (NPYWC), again on a rotating basis.

Culture and bush trips

Most providers involved in these cultural activities and bush trips report that they are very popular with the young people and that elder and community member involvement is common. One provider tries to run such activities every three weeks while another tries to have them once per week. Most have bush trips as irregular activities because they involve considerable organisation and preparation and they need to be scheduled and not to conflict with education or work commitments of elders or community members.

Few details of the bush trips are provided in the performance reports but one example is Julalikari's program at Elliot. This involved making weekly visits to the local lake where elders would tell the youth the history of the place and the dream-time stories.

A common theme in reports on these activities is that the numbers of young people who can participate is in part governed by the seating capacity of vehicles available. Demand for places almost always exceeds what can be made available.

Activities directed to strengthening education participation and pathways to employment

Activities directed to supporting participation in school education can be seen at Imanpa and Docker River (NPYWC). Youth workers work with the school in preparing breakfast for the students, providing assistance with reading and sport sessions and sharing the organising and supervision for bush trips or expeditions to the swimming pool (in Imanpa's case some hours drive from Imanpa).

At Palmerston, the YMCA Top End is running a concentrated program in literacy and numeracy with the school.

WYDAC and Roper Gulf Shire Youth Services are more focused on employment and training and pathways to employment.

Roper Gulf Shire Youth Services have commenced training and work experience programs in each of the communities in which the YIC is running. Programs include construction, vocational preparation, horticulture, textiles, and community services. They also work in with the Roper Gulf Shire CDEP so that training can lead to some employment and work experience opportunities. The program is targeted to youth in the ages 15 to 16 years old who are current participants in, or eligible for, CDEP. Numbers participating in this program have been capped as a strategy for ensuring that a solid group of youth who can support each other is developed. The program is run in the three communities serviced by Roper Gulf Shire Youth Services for five days a week between 8am and 12 noon.

The WYDAC program, to which YIC contributes some staff positions, has a very strong focus on pathways to employment. The service model involves a first level of activities of a youth diversionary nature which seek to engage and interest Warlpiri youth in positive, healthy, productive and fun activities. This is done as a foundation for the broader youth development Jaru Pirrjirdi Project at the second level of the model. These youth development activities of Level 2 seek to create more normal and positive future pathways for Warlpiri youth. Whereas the first level diversionary activities are open to all from age 5 to 25, the second level is targeted to young people over the age of 16. Within the youth development level there are three streams of activity:

- giving young people opportunities to support the youth workers as trainees to work with the younger youth / peers in the provision of activities such as: running a disco and undertaking tasks such as ordering the food, cleaning the disco, preparing the computer or the BBQ or kitchen, cooking the BBQ, selling food and drinks, playing the music, running the dance competition, filming the disco and making sure the event is running safely and smoothly. From this, they learn and develop skills in how to order food from a supplier, creating and maintaining rules to ensure a safe event, selecting and downloading songs from the Internet, and how to handle money in the selling of food and drink. Other work skills they develop are about establishing rules for an activity, being punctual, planning and organizing, maintaining program equipment, defusing conflict situations between youth participants in the activities, liaising with families, and explaining youth activities or an opinion.
- media training, which was described under arts activities.
- other workshops and training opportunities.

Gender specific activities or programs

The activities undertaken as part of gender specific groups for example of a boys' group or a girls' group, vary between providers. At Imanpa, for example, the girls' group involves cooking and hair and beauty activities from which participants developed some understanding of safe food handling and nutrition, personal hygiene and some computer skills. Through working in a small team the participants also develop some skills in communication and conflict resolution. The girls' group provides a means for the youth workers to move into some case management with some of the participants. Imanpa also had a Boys' Group undertaking similar computer, nutrition and personal hygiene activities.

At Galiwin'ku (EASC), a gender specific activity involved a two day workshop on jewellery making.

At Ramingining (EASC) an anger management program was held for young men and this was facilitated through the use of a mixture of hip hop and krump dance routines. This was an eight week workshop held every day from 3pm - 5pm. As mentioned earlier, the youth

subsequently decided, following this program, to form their own dance group and they practise every day after school hours.

Roper Gulf Shire runs boys' bush camps at each of Ngukurr, Numbulwar and Beswick, and a young women's camp has been run at Ngukurr.

Individual case management

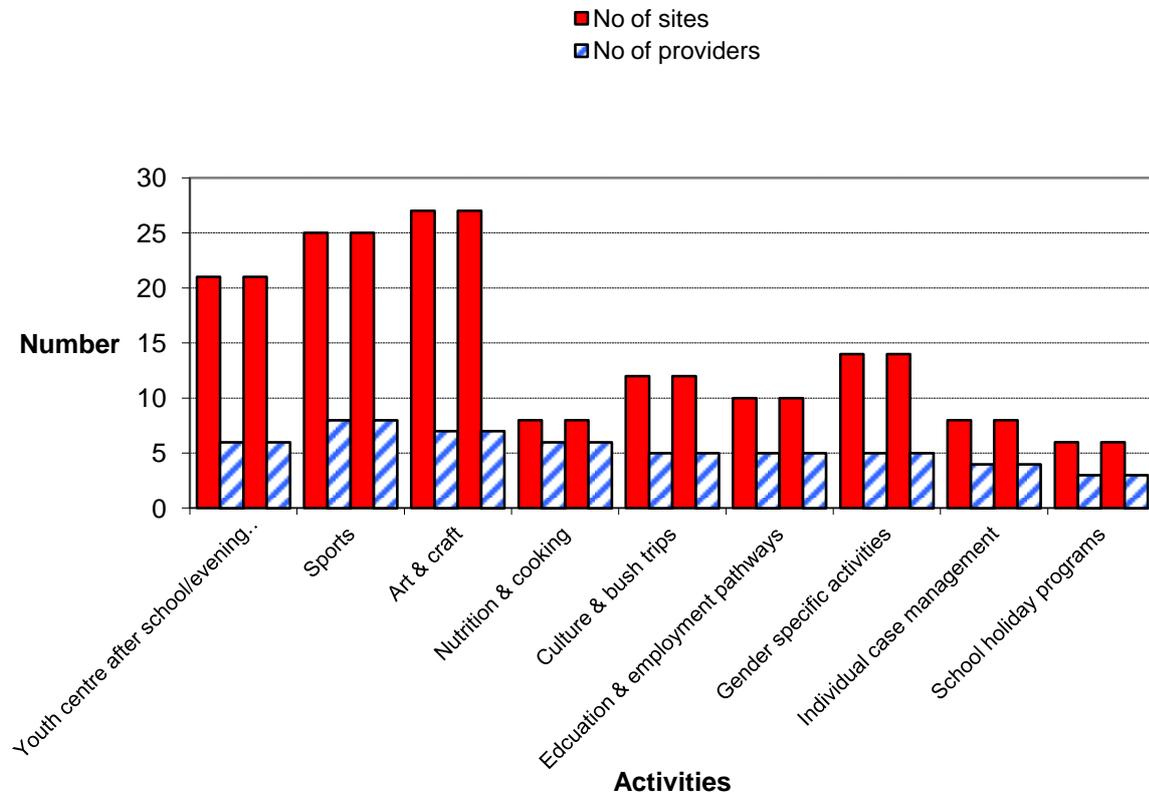
Several providers are undertaking individual case management, although this is generally not an activity separate from all of those already discussed but rather an aspect of the approach being taken with a small target group within the larger youth participant group. The providers which use a case management approach for some of their youth participants are NPYWC, (particularly at Imanpa and Docker River) Roper Gulf Shire, YMCA Katherine, and EASC at Galiwin'ku.

School holiday programs

Activities in the school holiday programs are generally similar to those undertaken throughout the rest of the year, although the hours are sometimes altered to ensure that there is something for the young people to do when school is closed. Some service providers indicate that their school holiday programs draw on funds additional to those of YIC. At Imanpa, service providers other than for YIC emphasized how important school holiday programs are for keeping at risk youth occupied and effectively diverted from at risk behaviours.

The graph below shows number of providers and the number of sites at which the various types or categories of activities are occurring.

Figure 6: Number of sites and providers offering types of activities



Almost all providers at all sites are using two youth workers or a youth worker and a trainee youth worker to plan, prepare and run all types of activities.

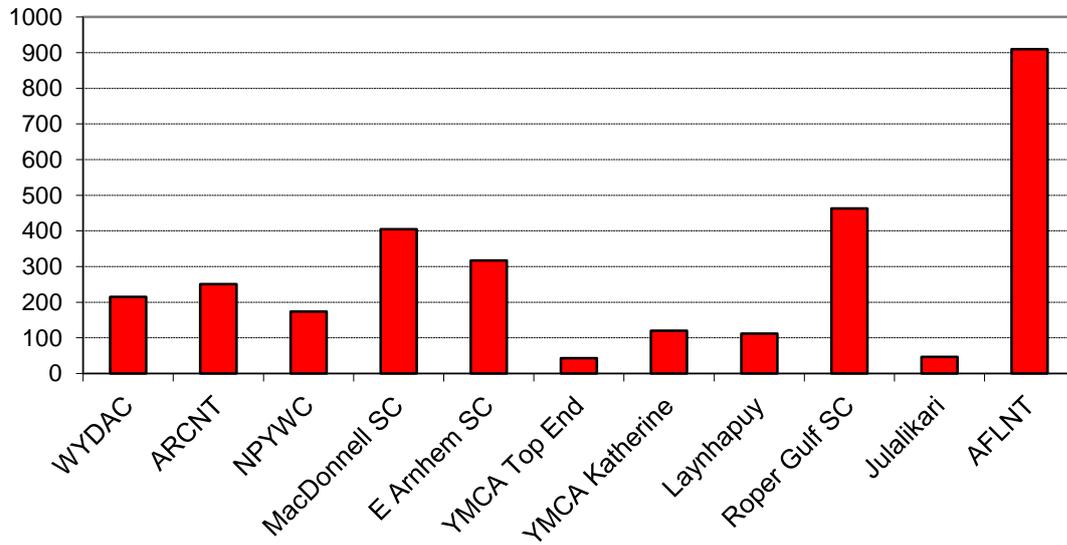
The numbers of participants vary greatly between sites and activities and it is difficult to draw any conclusions from the data in performance reports about participant numbers in the various activities.

Participation

Performance reporting indicates that at December 2010 there were just over 3000 young people participating in YIC activities in the NT. This figure may include double counting of some participants attending more than one activity.

The total numbers being serviced by each provider across all their sites is shown in the figure below.

Figure 7: Number of YIC participants of each service provider



3. PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTCOMES

This section of the report addresses evaluation questions 1.2a-b, and 2.2a-d on progress towards outcomes for both participants and for the service delivery network, the issues affecting that progress and in particular the role of the community in progress to date, collaboration between workers and services and staffing and training issues. The program logic is used as the basis for referencing program outcomes.

Progress towards outcomes for participants

From both the survey of service providers and from performance reports and initial visits to service providers we can see that improved outcomes for participants are beginning to be evident.

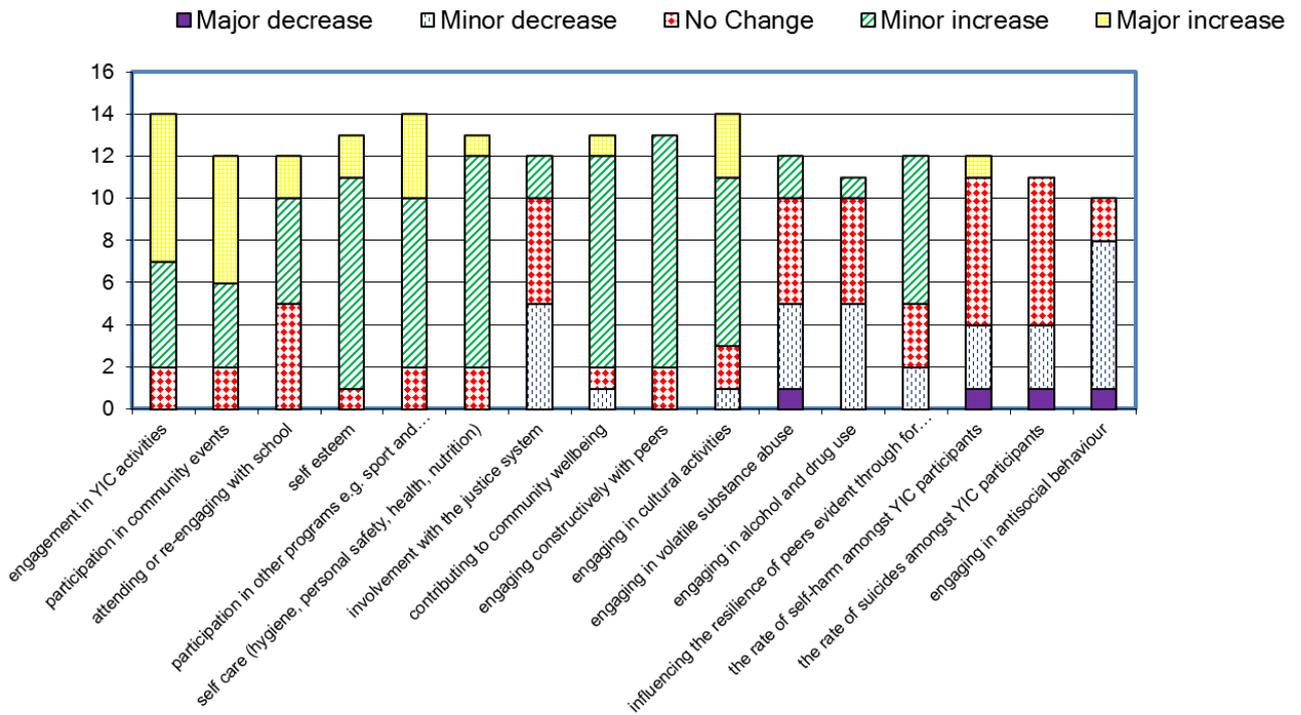
The survey of service providers gathered information about the characteristics of the participants. The main issues that were dominant for both groups were school attendance, substance misuse, family support and safety and stability of accommodation. Other issues not so dominant included self-harming or suicide, mental health and physical health.

The survey also asked for service providers' perceptions of whether and to what extent the well-being of, and outcomes for the young people may be changing as a result of their participation in the YIC project activities. The questions to elicit perceptions were based around a set of outcomes indicators derived from the program logic of YIC, namely:

- Outcome 1: Participants and activities in YIC are appropriately targeted
- Outcome 2: Participants engage with the YIC workers and activities
- Outcome 3: YIC Participants' enhanced self esteem supports positive behaviours
- Outcome 4: YIC Participants develop skills and behaviours that promote well-being and support positive life choices
- Outcome 5: Improved life choices & outcomes for Indigenous young people at risk

The survey asked respondents to indicate the degree of improvement (increase / no change / decrease) in the young people participating in their YIC activity. The question put forward 16 'areas of change' where respondents could confirm if there had been a major increase, minor increase, no change, minor decrease or major decrease. Not all 'areas of change' were applicable to all respondents hence the variation of between 10 and 14 responses overall, as presented in the following graph.

Figure 8: Degree of improvement / change in YIC participants



The key areas of change where there was a major increase were in engagement in YIC activities (n=7) and participation in community events (n=6). The key areas of change where there was a minor increase were engaging constructively with peers (n=11), contributing to community wellbeing, self care (hygiene, personal safety, health, nutrition) and self esteem (all three factors n=10).

Just over half of survey respondents who answered the question relating to the rate of self-harm and suicides amongst YIC participants selected 'no change' for both factors (n=7). Just under half of service providers who responded to the statements about involvement with the justice system, attending or re-engaging with school, engaging in volatile substance abuse and engaging in alcohol and drug use recorded 'no change' (all four factors n=5). In relation to all these outcomes "no change" can be interpreted as a positive result as it means that there have been no outbreaks of sniffing or self harming.

Areas of change where there was a minor decrease in a behaviour included anti-social behaviour (n=8), engaging in alcohol and drug abuse as well as volatile substance abuse (n=7) and involvement with the justice system (n=6). Areas of changes where there was a major decrease in a behaviour included engaging in antisocial behaviour (n=7), engaging in alcohol and drug use and involvement with the justice system (both factors n=5) and engaging in volatile substance abuse (n=4).

Providers operating in the communities and in youth work for the longest period of time show steady results in minor improvements across almost all outcomes. Providers who have commenced more recently show minor and, from a zero base some major increases, in participation in the YIC program and in community events with more uneven results in relation to other outcomes.

Taken all together, these results from the survey are very positive and indicate that YIC projects as a group are making progress towards improved outcomes for YIC participants.

Comments in the survey response and in performance reports further illustrate the nature of the changes in behaviour being seen amongst YIC participants.

Examples of YIC participants increasing engagement with their community included:

- Roper Shire Indigenous Youth Workers engaging and encouraging the youth to participate in activities (see [Attachment A](#) for newspaper article).
- One service provider reporting that YIC youth helped pack relief packs for the people affected by the recent QLD floods.
- Some YIC youth participated in a community event for Clean Up Australia Day

An individual success exemplifies improved attendance or re-engaging with school as follows:

“A youth who at age 11 already has extensive criminal history, does not regularly attend school and whose family life is unacceptable with no family member willing to take responsibility for this youth. This youth has a minimum of 50 hours with the [...] program and since attending on a daily basis has received a school award for 100% attendance [over weeks] and has on several occasions made the choice to walk away from situation that this youth would normally participate in. This youth has developed a strong relationship with the Youth Workers on the Program and enjoys coming to the [Provider] each day to participate in activities and tell the staff of his successes during the day or week. This particular youth’s school attendance has increased [for the year] from 11% to a staggering 90% since commencing participation in the [...] program. The Youth, due to his attendance and successes in the [...] program had all criminal charges dropped during a recent court case on the proviso that he continue to attend the program on a daily basis.”

Another story tells of re-engagement with education and development of some skills through involvement in a YIC program after asking for some help.

“A 16 year old youth was approached by a youth worker after seeing him upset outside of Centrelink. The youth explained that his current situation was something he could no longer handle and he needed help. This young man had been kicked out of home and had not attended school on a regular basis for some two years. He accepted that the situation he was in was because of his own unacceptable behaviour however he has realised that every door he now tried to go through was closed and he was in need of support. This young man with the help of the youth workers has now re-enrolled in school and attends daily, he also attends the [...] program on a daily basis, helping staff with daily chores, participating in activities and enjoys cooking for other participants and staff. Since returning to school this youth has completed six assignments for the first time in 5 years and is extremely proud of his achievements. His literacy has improved as has his social skills and during the school holidays this youth will work as a casual junior lifeguard at the [...] Aquatic Centre.”

An illustration of YIC participants' involvement in other programs such as drug and alcohol programs or sporting and healthy living programs.:

"We have a number of youth now playing community team sports. We have some youth selected on their school Student Representative Council and [they] are stepping up as role models to other students."

Most service providers are seeing some improvement in participants' relationships and engagement with the community and with their youth peers.

"Community elders are seeing the value of youth input into community concerns, issues and future development."

A peer mentoring program as part of the YIC program has been beneficial for participants at one provider's project. The mentors are community volunteers between the ages of 16-25 and they must be engaged in full-time training, schooling or employment. The youth who are referred to the program, which runs for 6-8 weeks at a time, are in the 14-20 year age group. Both males and females participate in this program.

Cultural activities such as bush camps with elders taking the youth out for hunting and fishing are widely reported to be very popular with the youth and to be successful in building or rebuilding relationships between the youth and the elders and amongst the youth themselves. Participation in such events is keenly sought. Particular success in building peer relationships has been gender specific camps, and in addition these have been effective in assisting to cut the continuous drug or alcohol abuse.

Some providers are seeing some progress in reducing alcohol and drug use and most see a decrease in antisocial behaviours amongst the YIC participant group.

"As the youth become more aware of the damage and risk associated to drug use they are starting to make some better choices for themselves. They are also good at dobbing in youth who they believe have made some bad ones".

"...have identified and been informed through community feedback that there has been a decrease in visual alcohol/substance misuse/abuse within the community and I believe it is impacting with a feeling of a lot more safer environment within the broader community."

However there are some comments that indicate that this success can be dependent on other factors:

"The most important factor in diminishing volatile substance abuse remains cutting supply. When sniffable products are available to young people, they continue to experiment, as has been the case in [...]and [...] over the past twelve months"

There is good evidence in the survey results and the performance reports to indicate that the YIC projects are making strong progress on the immediate outcomes for participants and beginning to make some progress on the intermediate outcomes. They are thus on track to deliver immediate and intermediate outcomes for youth participants by June 2012, to an extent consistent with the length of time that the YIC program will have been operating.

“An overall view on the program we have found is that participation in the program has been outstanding with the youth having a great respect for the program and engaging with the activities of the program as a group. This is improving social skills immensely. We had a great outcome of the program at the end of the school term last year with all participants returning into mainstream education for 2011.”

Issues influencing achievement of outcomes for participants

Issues in program setup affecting achievement of outcomes

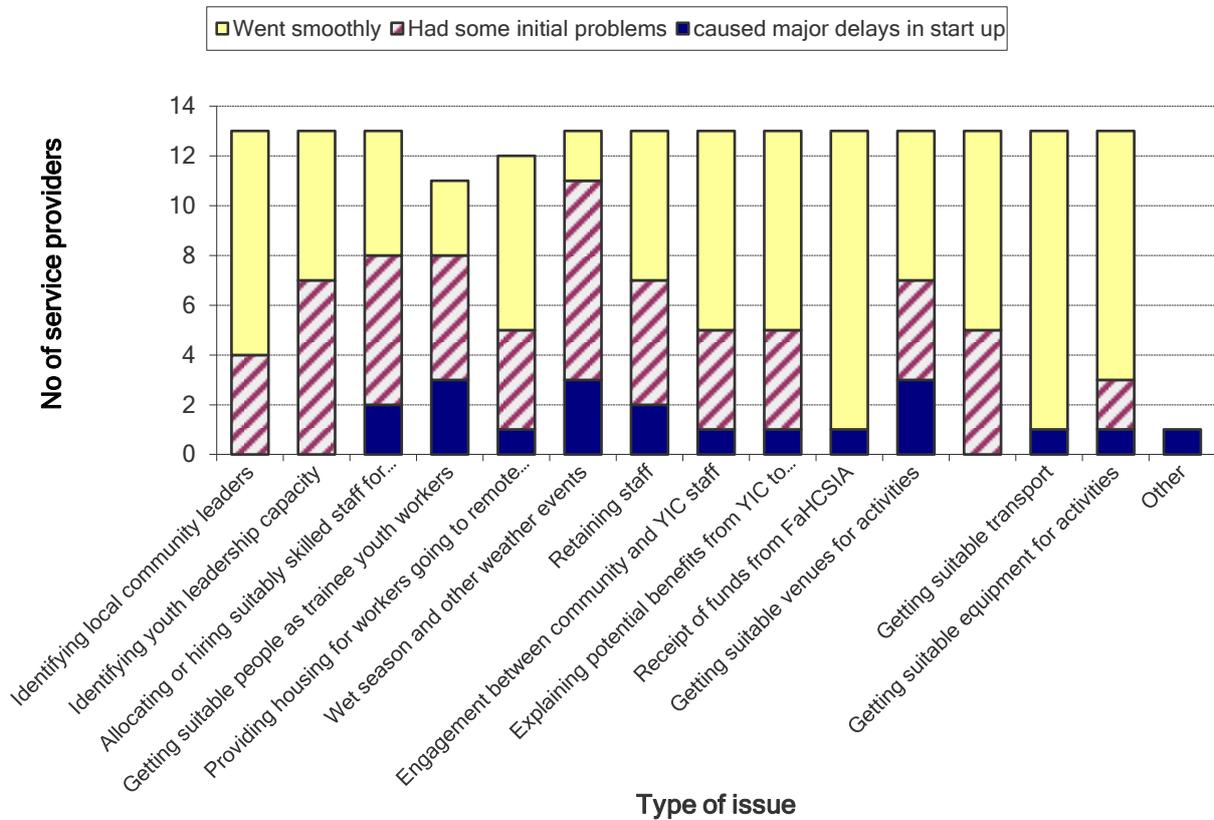
In the survey of service providers we asked what issues services had experienced so far in the implementation of the YIC in their organisation. The wet season was the factor that caused major delays or created some initial problems for most service providers. After that, the issues affecting the most service providers with either a major delays were getting suitable people as youth worker trainees in the local communities. Similarly getting suitable venues for activities caused major delays.

Some initial problems experienced included, again, the wet season and other weather events, identifying youth leadership capacity, allocating or hiring suitably skilled staff and again, attracting suitable people as trainee youth workers.

As we will show later in this section, most services were fully staffed for youth workers by December 2010, and most were still looking for local trainee workers. This is the situation at 18 months into the 3 year funding term.

The main issues that went smoothly for the majority of providers in the startup phase included receiving the funds from FaHCSIA securing transport, getting suitable equipment for activities, identifying local community leaders, engagement by YIC funded staff with existing service providers, explaining the potential benefits of the YIC program to the community, engagement between the community and YIC staff and retaining staff.

Figure 9: Issues experienced in implementation



More than a few services struggled initially with identifying local community leaders and youth leadership capacity in their communities. This is not surprising but more a reflection of the elapsed time it takes to properly establish a new program in a community.

Getting funds from FaHCSIA to providers went smoothly for all except one service provider, and generally services experienced few problems in getting equipment and transport to run the program.

Engagement with youth and community members

Service providers were asked to comment on their experience in implementation of some aspects of getting engagement, namely:

- identifying local community leaders;
- identifying youth leadership capacity;
- getting engagement between the community and the YIC funded staff;
- explaining the potential benefits of the program to the community; and
- getting engagement by YIC funded staff with existing service providers in the community.

More than half of the service providers found that their engagement with the community went smoothly. However several also found that they experienced some initial problems.

We know from interviews and discussions with YIC staff and other service providers that in setting up YIC some service providers engaged with those communities through staff visits (as they were based in other areas), staying for a few days or up to a week. On some occasions they might stay up to two weeks and then leave the community and not have further contact for several weeks. This had the effect of preventing relationships from developing, confusing people about what they were there to do and giving the impression of “another blow-in-blow-out service or government program”.

In some situations this temporary visiting approach arose from difficulties in getting accommodation for workers or office/hall space from which to operate. These issues are generally practical problems with relatively simple solutions. However, addressing these circumstances can take time and money. They can be difficult to manage in a three year funding program particularly when three quarters of the first year has elapsed before the funds reach the service provider.

This situation may point to a lack of place based planning on the part of both some providers and FaHCSIA. If such planning were done as part of the provider formulating the service proposal and FaHCSIA assessing proposals and awarding funds, it may have identified the lack of accommodation or venues for a youth program. It could have also provided a very useful basis for making decisions about the efficacy of the investment in such locations given the three-year life of the program.

Even without such practical impediments to getting a service established, engagement can be a difficult and slow process until relationships begin to form. It is evident from service provider reports and from discussions during visits to service providers that for a provider that is new to a community, engagement can be a slow process. Where a provider is already well known in the community and there is a history of good program delivery and good relationships, albeit not necessarily in youth services, engagement at the level of the community, with youth and with other service providers already in the community occurs sooner.

This is a factor that should be taken into account in setting expectations about what can be achieved in a 12 month, two year and three year horizon.

Half the service providers have a committee including community and youth members overseeing the implementation of the YIC project. Most of these committees have youth members and provide a youth voice in the way the project is run.

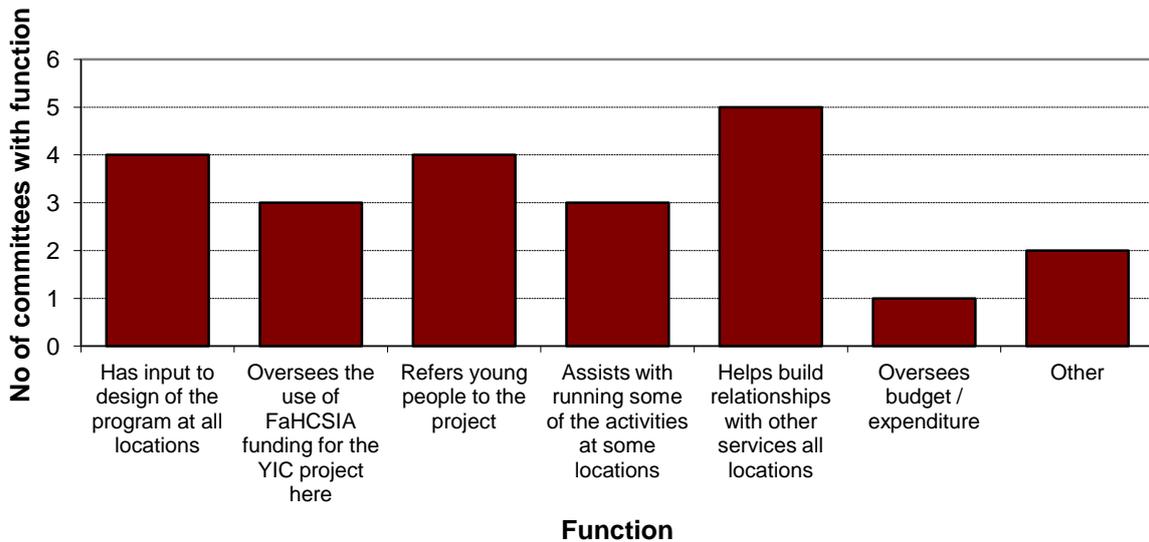
The service provider survey asked about the role played by the committees and the following diagram shows what functions the committees fulfill. Some projects, such as WYDAC's, have one committee which oversees the entire youth program including YIC. The membership of the committee also includes young people. The arrangements at YMCA Katherine and for the Anindiyakwa Youth Steering Committee at Groote Eylandt are similar. In the Laynhapuy Homelands there is a Youth Advisory Council which held its first meeting in November 2010 and meets approximately every two months. Its membership is approximately 17 people from six of the homelands. The youth workers trainees organize and attend these meetings.

By contrast, at Roper Gulf Shire, a “Youth Voice” Committee has been formed at each of the communities. These meet monthly and provide a forum where youth can discuss youth events, issues, training, education or employment within their community. The Committee elects a chair and deputy chair to run each meeting and minutes are also taken by a

committee member and distributed to all relevant people. This approach aids in skills development as well as information dissemination.

Of those services that had a committee, the roles fulfilled are presented in the following figure.

Figure 10: Functions of youth/community committees



The common function fulfilled across YIC projects committees is in assisting the building of relationships with other services at the various communities where the YIC projects are operating. Several of the committees play a role in referring young people for the YIC program and make input to the nature of the activities that make up the program.

There are several examples reported by service providers of the program being modified or substantially improved by taking account of the contribution and suggestions of the youth in the community.

The program at provider’s site provides an interesting example of how the voice of the youth has led to considerable modification of the program and strongly influenced its design. In commenting on the participant outcomes from the program the service made the following comment:

“We didn’t realise how big of a deal food would be for the youth we work with. After looking at some statistics such as where youth have done a break and enter and what they have stolen, we found a lot were stealing for essential items such as [from] school canteens for food. So we now have a breakfast program for the youth, we supply lunch at school for some youth and every afternoon we supply a meal for all youth.”

This provider reported that staff had found that the needs of the young people were quite different from what had been originally thought and planned for. They were finding that the youth were asking for:

- food – they were not getting breakfast or lunch during the day and in some cases were not having dinner either;

- clothing – many had only one or two sets of clothes and in some case no shoes at all so the program purchased some clothes and footwear for them so that they could be neat and tidy for school and for court showings;
- hygiene – youth were showing up each day looking for a shower and so the program is ensuring that there are toiletries available so that personal hygiene can be maintained;
- to be taken to a safe place to sleep – around 50% of the young people participating in the program have been homeless at some stage since October 2010. They are often unable to go home and have to be dropped at friends or relatives after the program finishes and these friends and relatives are sometimes reluctant to take on the youth. The youth have often spent the night or weekends wandering the streets or sleeping at the hot springs or in the grass;
- a place to do homework – family support for their school work and home work is non-existent and the home situation is too noisy for them to be able to concentrate on homework; and
- help with literacy and numeracy because they cannot handle the school work at the grade that they have been allowed to go into.

These elements have now been built into the provider's program and the participation is increasing and results in more positive behaviours are emerging.

Time needed to achieve behavioural outcomes

Many of the service providers have commented on the fact that the kinds of outcomes that YIC projects aim to get for participants take some time to achieve because:

- they involve behavioural change which is inevitably and almost universally slow to be sustained;
- many of the youth have multiple and deep problems to overcome;
- there may be underlying causes or contributing factors to the behaviour of young people, for example, broader dysfunctional family and community relationships;
- there continue to be few jobs or work prospects within the communities to create an alternative long term secure future for YIC participants, making pathways for mobility out of the community essential. This is a difficult transition for most people to make, and for Indigenous youth who start such a journey from extreme disadvantage, is often fraught with risk. For their families such transition or mobility is very difficult to accept. To achieve a pathway to employment is thus extremely complex, hard to organize and needs considerable time to effect.

In this environment it is realistic to assume that it may take longer than the three years of funding available for YIC and for such changes in behaviour to be evident and sustained.

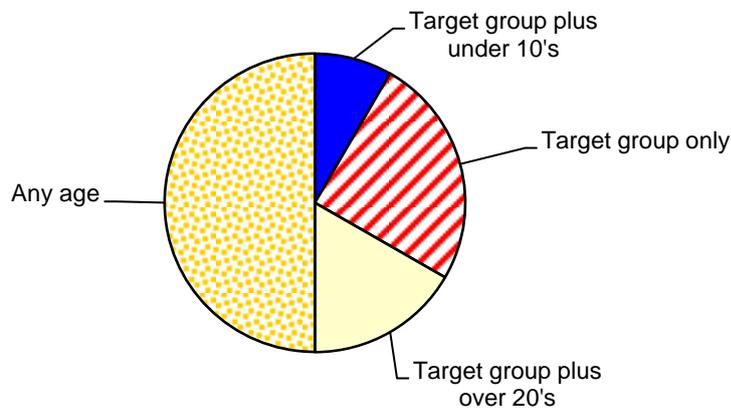
There is evidence in both the performance reports and in the service provider survey that the results do come with longer elapsed time. Those providers who had youth programs running before the YIC funding became available, or who were among the few to start early in 2010, made better progress in terms of engagement with community and youth and having staff running the YIC program, than those that started anew and at the end of the first or beginning of the second year of the YIC. They are also making more steady progress across the full set of participant outcomes including signs of minor progress against intermediate outcomes in the program logic.

The target age group

A number of service providers have raised with us the fact that it is not easy to confine participation to the target ages of 10-20 year olds. In practice youth in the target age range often bring their younger siblings to the youth centre and their participation then depends on their younger sibling also being able to stay at the youth centre. Similarly, if older youth attend an activity and are normally part of a social group amongst the youth, it is not desirable to exclude them from the activity.

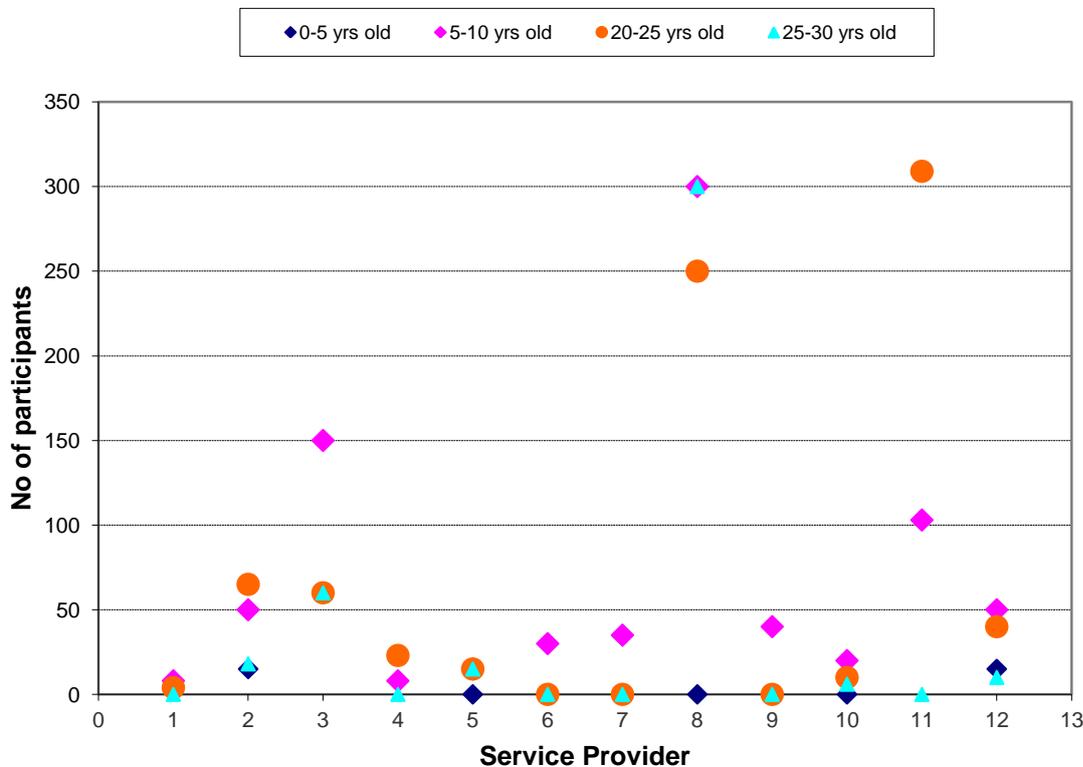
From performance reports data we can see that half of the providers are including young people of any age in their YIC activities. Of the 12 service providers who provided data on ages of participants, only three are confining services to their YIC target age range.

Figure 11: Age of participants being serviced by providers



The above figure is consistent with the responses to the service provider survey in which the majority of service providers said that they had regular and significant numbers of 5-10 year olds, 20-25 years olds and 25-30 year olds participating on a regular basis. The charts below, based on survey responses, give some indication of the scale of the participant numbers outside the target age group.

Figure 12: Numbers of participants outside target age group



Most providers have quite sizable numbers of participants in the 5-10 years old age group, and a few have quite large numbers in the 20-25 years old age group.

The approaches that services adopted in having participants outside the target age group included simply accepting them as part of the activity and also running additional activities specifically for the non-target ages. Also, services noted that they also work with other services to try to address the particular needs of the ages outside the target group.

Some of the difficulties that arise in servicing the 15-20 year old age group are that these youth may well have stopped attending school, particularly if they have gone through ceremony, and thus need some activity during school hours. But if this need is responded to, then a potential conflict with school attendance is created for the 10-15 year old youth who may find the youth activities more appealing than attending school.

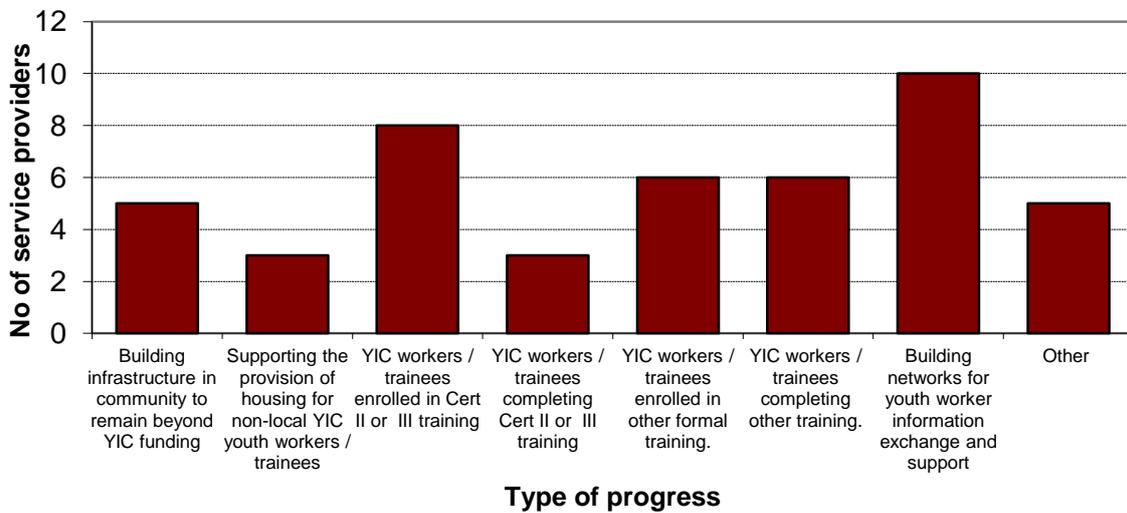
Service providers have indicated that there is something of a service gap for the under 10's and that including them in YIC activities then creates real difficulties in making activities suitable and relevant to youth of over 10 years. Their inclusion is also likely to weaken the focus of the program as a diversionary program for the most at risk youth.

It has been suggested that while the age range of 10-20 is common across Australia for youth programs, it may not be the most appropriate for Indigenous remote communities. The more natural grouping in this context may be an age range of 5-15 and another of 15-20 or 25, as much youth work changes in nature around the point of the middle teenage years. At this point, group dynamics change and case work becomes less family centred and more individual and peer centred, initiations and role changes in the community begin, and training and vocation should be taking over from schooling.

Progress towards outcomes in strengthening the service delivery network

The survey of service providers asked for their views about progress made towards outcomes to strengthen the youth services infrastructure in the Northern Territory. Most thought that they had already made progress towards building the networks for information exchange between youth workers and made good progress on enrolling staff in Certificate training, as the chart below illustrates.

Figure 13: Service provider views of progress towards service delivery network outcomes



Buildings and equipment infrastructure project outcomes

All except one of the funded infrastructure projects have already been completed. As a result, the following infrastructure is now available to the youth services network in the Northern Territory:

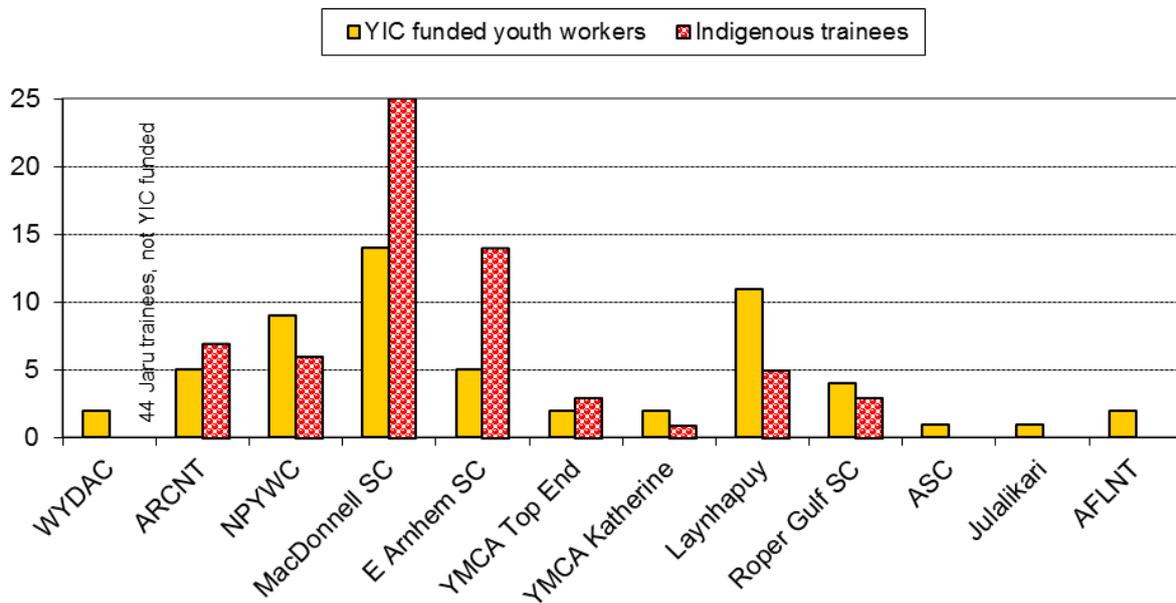
- Upgrades of youth centres, recreation halls and activity centre facilities at Angarugu, Lajamanu, Umbakumba, Galiwin'ku, Nauiyu (Daly River) and Gunbalunya; and
- Upgraded accommodation for youth workers at Ramingining and new duplex accommodation for youth workers at Lajamanu.

Most of the projects were implemented according to the planned timetable other than some delays beyond the control of the service providers caused by weather events.

Staffing outcomes

The chart below shows the numbers of youth workers and Indigenous trainee youth workers that each provider had at December 2010. We have not distinguished full time and part-time because it is the number of people who are trained or in training that show what capacity for the NT has been created through YIC. Whether they are full time or part-time is more a function of quantum of funding available from YIC or other sources than of capacity available.

Figure 14: YIC funded youth workers and Indigenous trainees

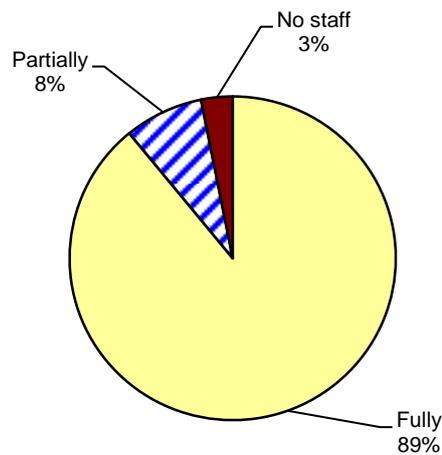


The number of positions represents a total of 58 youth workers and 64 trainees, 25 of whom are employed with one provider. It should be noted that one provider had 14 trainees at one community but has experienced very high turnover amongst these trainees. Most of the service providers employ many of the trainees on a part-time basis.

Generally speaking, the service providers were not in a position to recruit local Indigenous trainee youth workers until there were some youth workers already working at the community, so most trainees have not been employed for as long as the youth workers.

Despite some initial delays and difficulties in recruiting appropriate staff, as at December 2010, nine of the 12 service providers who have some YIC funding for staffing services were fully staffed and three were partially staffed for youth workers. Across all the sites, 89% were fully staffed as the pie chart below illustrates, and only 3 sites had no staff at all. A few sites have experienced turnover in staff since their initial recruitment.

Figure 15: Number of sites which are fully, partially or not youth worker staffed – December 2010



The “No staff” figure of 3% represents the delays in service delivery and the employment of youth workers at Maningrida by the Malabam Health Board Aboriginal Corporation (auspiced by AMSANT Incorporated).

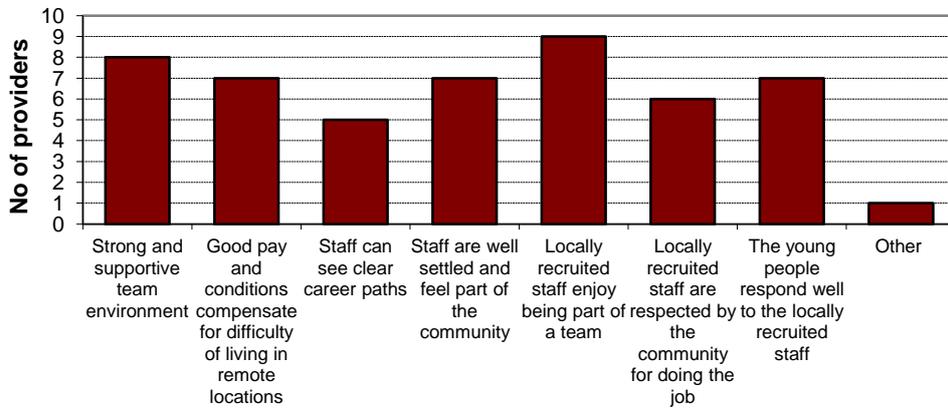
The numbers of local Indigenous trainees recruited is slightly less than was envisaged in the original activity plans for a number of providers.

Most service providers considered that they had been successful in recruiting trainee youth workers from the local community because people were looking for useful things to do or for jobs/work and because the benefits that would flow from YIC were clear to people in the community.

Only half of the service providers considered that they had been successful early on in recruiting youth workers from outside the communities. The most common reasons for their success were that they had a strong and supportive team ethic/culture. Among the reasons for not having success initially in recruiting staff from outside the communities were that people do not want to live in remote communities, professional isolation is a major deterrent, the work is known to be difficult and draining and there is a shortage of supply of qualified people.

Three-quarters of the service providers considered that they had been able to retain their youth workers and the two factors in this success which almost all service providers considered to be instrumental in this success were a strong and supportive team environment and that locally recruited trainee staff enjoyed being part of the youth work team.

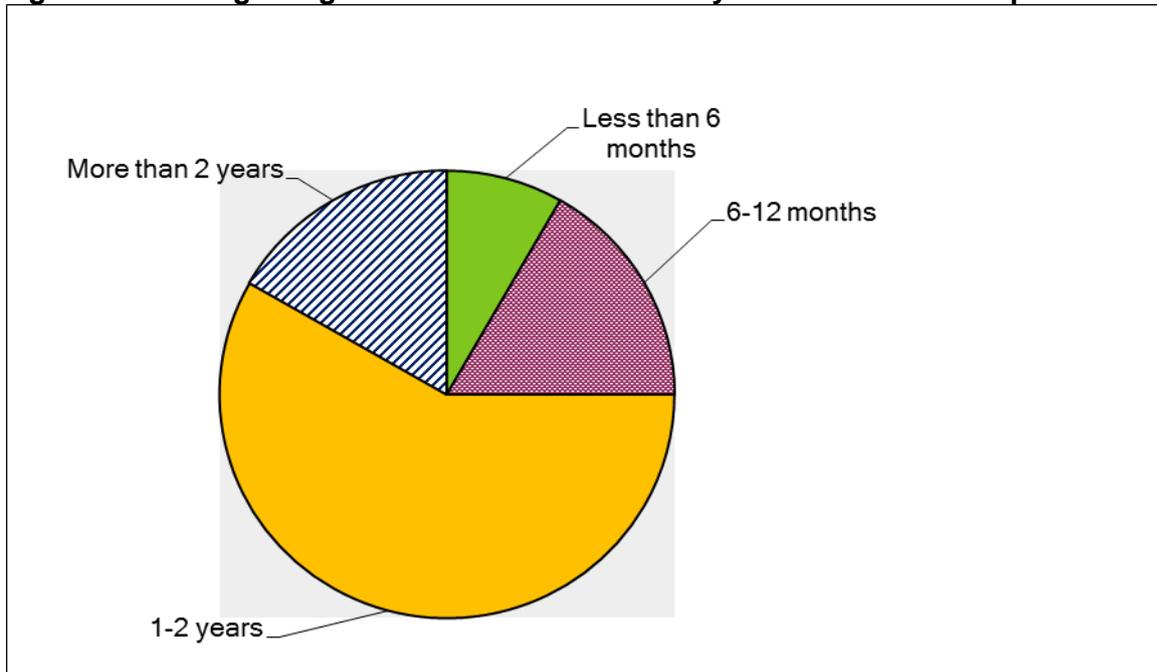
Figure 16: Factors contributing to retention of staff



Of those providers who had some difficulty in retaining staff, the contributing factors that were considered to be pertinent were professional isolation and the difficult and draining nature of the work leading to staff burnout.

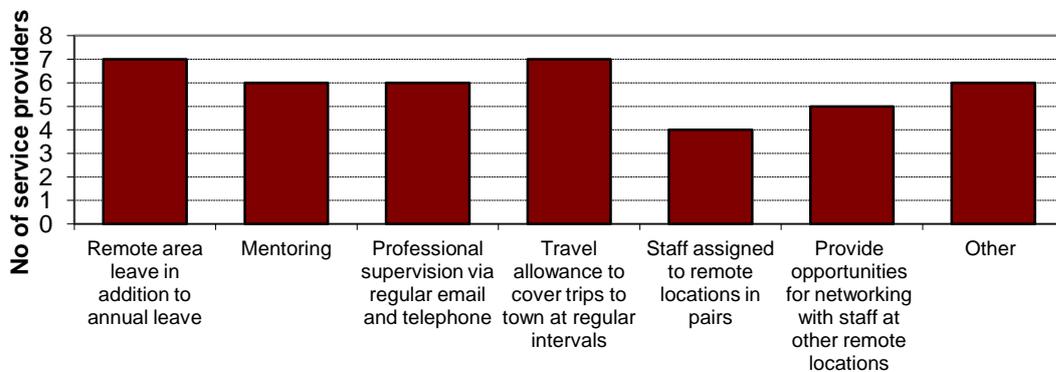
Most service providers expect that their staff will stay for between one and two years.

Figure 17: Average length of time staff remain in a youth worker/trainee position



Less than half of the service providers have an outreach worker who can provide support and back up to remote location staff. Where there are no outreach workers, service providers use other means of giving support to their staff in remote locations and these are illustrated in the chart below.

Figure 18: Methods of support for staff at remote locations where there is no outreach worker



Survey results indicate that only one service provider had an education worker whose primary responsibility is to support Indigenous young people to re-engage with schooling/education.

Youth worker training outcomes

From performance reports we can see that, of those providers which had staff on board as at December 2010, all had staff who had either commenced training in Certificates II or III as appropriate, or were enrolled to commence in February 2011. Some still had some trainees who were yet to sign on to the formal certificate training. Some providers had recruited staff who already held certificate IV qualifications.

Of those who had commenced training, one service provider has some staff who have completed training. Of these staff, all have stayed with the organisation since completion of training.

The service provider survey gathered information on internal training that is being provided to staff as a matter of routine staff development. Almost all providers recorded that they have child protection/regulatory obligations and first aid training for their staff. Most services recorded that they provide cultural awareness and 4WD training and just over half recorded that they provide cultural competency training for staff. One service stated that they provide alcohol and other drug and suicide awareness training and another stated that they provide self-reflection training.

For some providers, literacy issues have emerged as a barrier to proceeding successfully with training and as a consequence they are undertaking some training in spoken and written English as a pre-requisite to Certificate training. The lack of a reliable internet and IT service is also hampering efforts in some communities to undertake distance education.

Access to suitable training provision emerged as an issue during the second half of 2010 once staff and some trainees were on board. While service providers sought to make arrangements with known Certificate II and III providers in the Northern Territory, they found

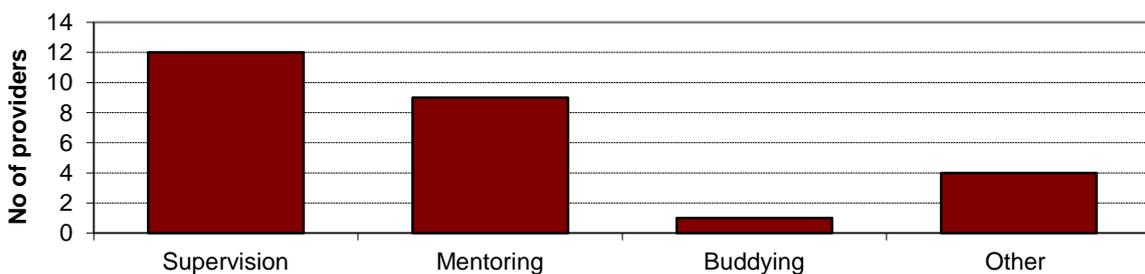
that these providers did not have well established arrangements for delivery to staff living and working in remote communities. Most have now sorted out some suitable arrangements but this has caused some delay in getting training underway.

For this reason and also because it took some service providers some time to be fully staffed with youth workers, and thus delayed their recruitment of trainee youth workers from the communities, there are several providers whose staff did not commence certificate training until February 2011. As many of the staff will be studying part-time and some may need also to fit in extra literacy tuition to enable them to complete their course, it is possible, and perhaps even likely, that some YIC staff will not complete their Certificate training before the funding for YIC ends in 2012. The future of the program beyond June 2012 will be critical to achievement of the training outcomes for the YIC program.

Support provided to youth workers

The most common method by which service providers provide support to their youth workers in their professional work is through professional supervision.

Figure 19: Support provided to youth workers in their work



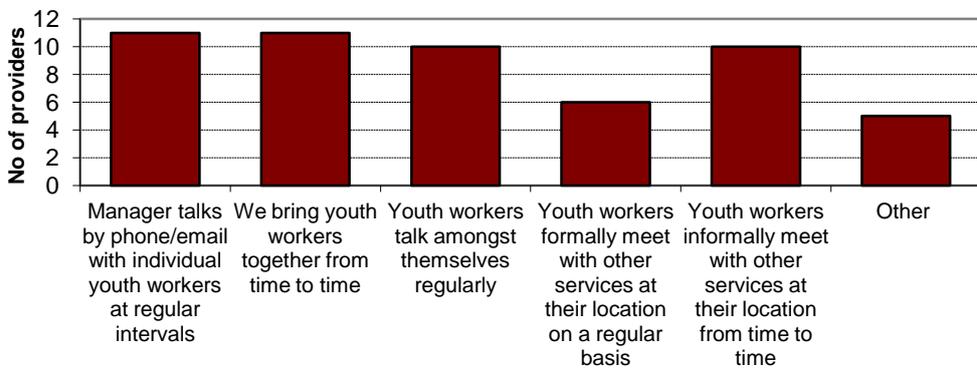
No service providers report using the Relationships Australia Professional Development and Mentoring project (PDMP). Relationships Australia South Australia, the service provider delivering the PDMP to YIC service providers, experienced a significant delay before the successful recruitment of a project worker. Courage Partners understands that the PDMP project worker commenced in January 2011 and is now available to provide one-on-one professional supervision to youth workers via telephone and online and is currently in the process of arranging a series of visits to YIC service providers.

Networking and Collaboration between youth workers and services

Service providers use a variety of means to create opportunities for youth workers to exchange information and ideas about their work. The most common methods are:

- to bring youth workers together at one location from time to time;
- to have regular phone calls between the service manager and the youth workers;
- direct contact from one youth worker to another; and
- hold informal meetings with other services at a particular location.

Figure 20: Means of networking amongst youth workers



One of the providers that has an outreach worker commented that the outreach coordinator can and does fulfill a useful role as a transmitter of ideas and information between youth workers at the several sites being serviced by that organisation.

There are several examples of collaboration between YIC services and other services as a normal part of the way the program is delivered. In the Laynhapuy Homelands the service provider collaborated with the Yirralka Rangers to hold a fish trap making camp for youth from across the homelands to come to one homeland. Roper Gulf Shire Youth Services has a formal case management agreement with the NT Police Youth Diversion Unit in their YIC communities. They also have a memorandum of understanding with the Council of Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services for educational sessions and training in community services. A further collaboration by Roper Gulf Shire is in the area of employment and training where they have strong partnerships with the local Job Service providers and the Shire CDEP to help foster pathways for the youth into jobs.

There are examples of collaboration between the Shire Council sport and recreation officers and the youth workers at some of the East Arnhem sites as well as at Daly River and Wadeye.

At several locations youth workers are working in with the school teachers, both primary and secondary, on literacy and reading, school holiday programs, breakfast and healthy eating programs, assisting youth with homework and providing after-school care for younger children.

Case management in the NPY Women's Council program involves joint case management and interagency co-ordination between youth workers and Alcohol and Other Drug Services Central Australia (ADSCA), Central Australian Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS), Department of Health & Families: Northern Territory Families & Communities (NTFC), NT Police, and the Child Abuse Taskforce, as well as internally with the NPY WC Disability, Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault, and Child Nutrition teams.

Collaboration does not always run smoothly however. One provider is having some difficulties in sorting out collaborative arrangements with the NT Education Department and has raised the need for a collective agreement between organisations who need to work together on the sharing of information without contravening privacy of individuals.

One service provider identified short term funding as a major constraint on developing truly collaborative relationships and practice. They expressed the view that short term funding contributes to turnover of personnel so that relationships are fractured soon after they begin to form. They also considered that the constant injection of funds into new "good ideas" projects means that people from funding agencies fly in and fly out, telling service providers how they should contribute to the latest good idea project, creating an obligation on the youth workers to put time and support into such flying visits, but that little of substance is left behind. This service provider is developing an "external stakeholders" document which will inform other organisations of the criteria that need to be met in order for collaboration to be considered.

4. ISSUES IN PROGRAM DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT AFFECTING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES

This section of the report addresses Evaluation Questions 1.2 c-d and 2.2 e on aspects of program design and management that are affecting achievement of objectives for participants and for the service delivery network and infrastructure.

Program management issues

Elapsed time for program start-up

YIC provides funding for the triennium of 2009/10 – 2011/12 financial years.

The program was announced and industry briefings provided in December 2009 with applications closing in mid January 2010. An assessment process followed and funding decisions were approved from March through to June 2010. The majority of service providers received their funding agreements and funds between late March and the end of May 2010. By this time the first three quarters of the first financial year of the triennium had passed.

For any program such as YIC which aims to achieve behavioural change outcomes, a reduction in the elapsed time available to work towards such outcomes may impact the potential of them being delivered within the timeframe of the program. Indeed the analysis of information collected for this Interim Evaluation indicates that the immediate (nearest term) outcomes only are evident, and the program has just over a year remaining. We have seen that the projects that continued from the YADM and IYS programs, albeit funded in the interim by the service providers themselves, or which started early in 2010 are showing steadier improvement across all outcomes than the projects that started in mid to late 2010.

These results, together with the findings on elapsed time to achieve outcomes, are reasons to consider that any measures which can minimize delays in funding decisions or optimize continuity in service delivery program will positively influence the capacity of service providers to engage with communities, attract or retain staff and achieve program outcomes.

We know from other programs that when funding is not certain for the next financial year, that staff funded by the program begin to look for new jobs in January and February if the funding ends in June. This is a major threat to the continuity of YIC projects if the program is to continue into the next triennium.

Quality of and uses for data in performance reports

The performance reports up to December 2010 have amassed a good deal of useful information about how projects are progressing and the nature of their activities, level of participation and levels of staffing. However they are more directed to gathering information about inputs than about outcomes for either the youth participants for the service delivery infrastructure. Service providers do sometimes provide some examples of outcomes in the section reporting on successes, but it is not guaranteed by the design of the report. Some of the instructions could be altered to make it clearer what kinds of information and comment would be helpful.

Defining outcomes and indicators of success in plans and performance reports

We have reviewed the activity plans/performance reports that were prepared by service providers at the start of the program setting out what they intended to do. There is provision in the template for service providers to identify outcomes. In practice few of the plans have outcomes and even where they do, they are not common between the projects.

Previous evaluations of Indigenous youth service provision has identified that the lack of a program logic is a factor contributing to not having common or good performance data about those programs. The program logic developed for YIC as part of the Evaluation Framework has enabled the development of a common set of outcome indicators. The service provider survey collects perceptions regarding these indicators and progress of participant outcomes.

We recommend:

The development of an appropriate Program logic for inclusion in any program guidelines. This will ensure performance indicators or signs of success for the program can inform the service providers planning and performance reporting. Consideration could be given to the further refinement of a common set of performance data for YIC providers.

Interagency coordination and development of integrated youth services in the Northern Territory

It has been evident from the data collected so far in this evaluation that YIC is but one of the component parts of youth service delivery in the Northern Territory. Many service providers indicated that they receive funding for youth services from other sources and that some staff are only partially funded by YIC.

YIC will not achieve as much working in isolation as it could if a co-ordinated approach was taken. There is a great deal of research to support this view. A co-ordinated approach to youth service delivery encourages a more effective use of resources and develops partnerships and common goals as well as having a greater impact on achieving positive outcomes. To this end, the Senior Officers Group, with membership drawn from those Australian and NT Government agencies with an involvement in youth services, was set up with the following terms of reference:

“A Senior Officer Group will advise on the development of the broad service principles, objectives, funding activities and outcomes to be delivered through the Youth in Communities Program during each year of operation. The Senior Officer Group may also be asked to assist with finalising any funding application processes and ensure that projects funded under this Program compliment and align with other Government funding initiatives in the Northern Territory.”

The Senior Officer Group (SOG) met several times in the first months during the set up of the YIC program and continued to meet during 2010. These meetings became more infrequent as the year progressed which impacted the breadth and depth of collaboration and relationship building. In turn, this created an impediment for the SOG in its attempt to work collaboratively and ensure that input from an array of government departments was articulated and appreciated. In attempting to hold interviews with SOG members for this evaluation it was found that nine of the 17 original members, including several of the FaCHSIA members, had either moved agency or job within their agency and were no longer involved in the SOG. A further member said that they had not been able to attend any meetings and so could not comment. Another said that they had attended only 2 or 3 meetings and so felt insufficiently across YIC to be able to comment. Nevertheless, some SOG members participated directly in funding assessment processes as they were part of a discrete assessment panel and feedback was sought from these members on completion of this process.

It is well established that program and service collaboration and co-operation, where it exists, works first and foremost because of relationships between people. This can, be through both formal structures – such as the SOG - and informal processes – such as national and state office staff developing one on one relationships in other agencies. However, collaborative and co-operative working relationships can be difficult to develop and maintain where personnel constantly change. Comments from the few long standing members of the SOG indicated that the SOG’s operation had been largely confined to formal meetings. These meetings were described as being too infrequent, and provided little opportunity for more informal interaction to occur, so that effective working relationships were not extensively supported.

For all of the above reasons, the SOG has not, so far, exerted the influence that was intended for it in ensuring that the YIC projects compliment and align with other government funding initiatives in the Northern Territory. As such, it is not currently well positioned to fulfill its role in relation to advising on the broad operation of the program in its final year. If this is to be reversed then it requires some urgent attention to do so.

Program design

The target age group

Discussion in the last chapter indicated that almost all service providers are dealing with youth outside the target age group and that there is some inevitability about this.

We recommend that:

Consideration be given to the definition of target age groups and that Service providers should be asked to report on the age composition of their group and how that composition affects their program design.

This Interim Evaluation found that any age definitions could include two groups; those aged 5-15 and those aged 15-25, but with some flexibility for service providers around these definitions being necessary and practical. These groupings would recognise the role changes that occur in Indigenous communities as young people reach their middle teen years.

We suggest also that future program guidelines should note that limited resources in a project may necessitate targeting a particular age range within the target group of the program as a means of best targeting the available resources.

However, we also recommend that:

Within existing service provision, the current participant (target) groups remain unchanged, because of the importance of continuity of service delivery to individuals over time in achieving the behavioural outcomes sought from YIC.

The importance of continuity in service provision for getting outcomes

Continuity in service provision, namely of provider, staff and activities well matched to individuals and groups at any location, has been identified repeatedly by service providers and by the results so far in this program as being vital to achieving any sustained success in intermediate and long term improved outcomes for the youth participants. We urge FaHCSIA to consider this in future decision-making about programs in youth service delivery.

APPENDIX A

FINDINGS FROM SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY

YIC Service Provider Survey Findings

A component of the Youth in Communities (YIC) evaluation included a survey of the service providers funded by FaHCSIA to deliver the program. The focus of the survey was to gather views from service providers on the implementation of their projects including recruitment and retention of staffing, access to training, information sharing and networking and outcomes for YIC participants.

The survey asked that the program manager with overall responsibility for the YIC program at each of the service's sites took responsibility for ensuring the survey was completed and returned. A copy of the survey is provided at [Attachment A](#).

Section One of the survey gathered information on each service's approach to service delivery and the length of time the service had been operational. It also gathered views on issues relating to recruitment and retention of staffing and access to appropriate training and information sharing and networking amongst youth workers.

Section Two gathered information on the outcomes for YIC participants. This was based on data that each service may have collected on commencement of their YIC activity up until March 2011. The survey contained a series of statements or questions where services were asked to record their perceptions against a scale showing the degree of change that occurred during that time. Services were also asked to give an indication of the reasons for their views on each question or statement and provide as much information as possible to support their perceptions.

A total of 16 services were funded under YIC. Of these, two services were funded for infrastructure projects. These did not require employment of staff, trainees and establishing activities for participants and therefore the survey was not applicable to them. One service was unable to respond and one service completed two separate surveys as they had different models of service delivery operating at different sites. In total, 14 surveys were received.

This report presents the findings from the survey. All information gathered through the survey and the report produced does not identify survey respondents. Survey findings have been aggregated and represent generalities across the program and may not necessarily apply to individual services' circumstances. Therefore, it is important to note that the findings are considered as an overall view of the progress and practice of the YIC program.

Findings from Section One

Section One sought views on service delivery approaches, activities, and start-up and implementation issues.

Questions 3 to 8 asked questions regarding the set up of services' YIC projects. When asked if they had a committee that was overseeing their YIC program activity operating in their entire area, seven respondents said "yes" and seven said "no".

If respondents answered "yes", they were also asked to identify the type of committee that was operating, for example, a management committee comprising various stakeholders or community members or perhaps a committee of young people themselves. The types of committees operating varied and included community member committees only, committees

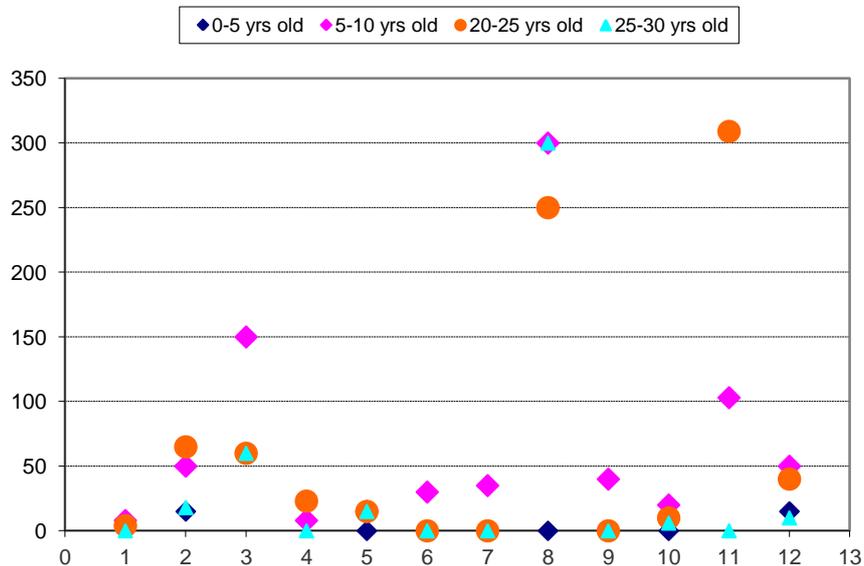
with a mix of both community members and young people and some with representatives from various government departments. One service noted that they had a board of directors.

One of the main functions that these committees undertake is helping to build relationships with other services. Other functions mentioned were: referring specific young people that could benefit from the YIC activity, advising on the development, implementation and evaluation of the activity, connecting with YIC staff and assisting with the running of activities. One committee oversees budget and expenditure of activities. Most services have at least monthly contact with their committees. Others have more frequent contact including weekly and even on a day-to-day basis.

Of the 13 survey respondents that answered Question 8 - "Did you have a youth program (s) in place when the opportunity to apply for YIC funding came about?" - eight services said yes.

Questions 9 and 10 of the survey sought information on target groups participating in YIC activities including if any services had young people outside the target group ages of 10-20 years old. The figure below shows the numbers of participants outside the target age group. The interesting point to note is that of the twelve survey respondents that answered the question on numbers of participants, all twelve provide services to age groups outside the YIC target group. In particular, five providers have under 20 participants in the 0-5 year age group and four providers have 50 or more participants in the 5-10 year age group and the 20-25 year age group. Two providers have more than 50 participants in the 25-30 year age group. This means that half the providers have more than 50 participants outside the YIC target age range.

Figure 1: Numbers of participants outside target group

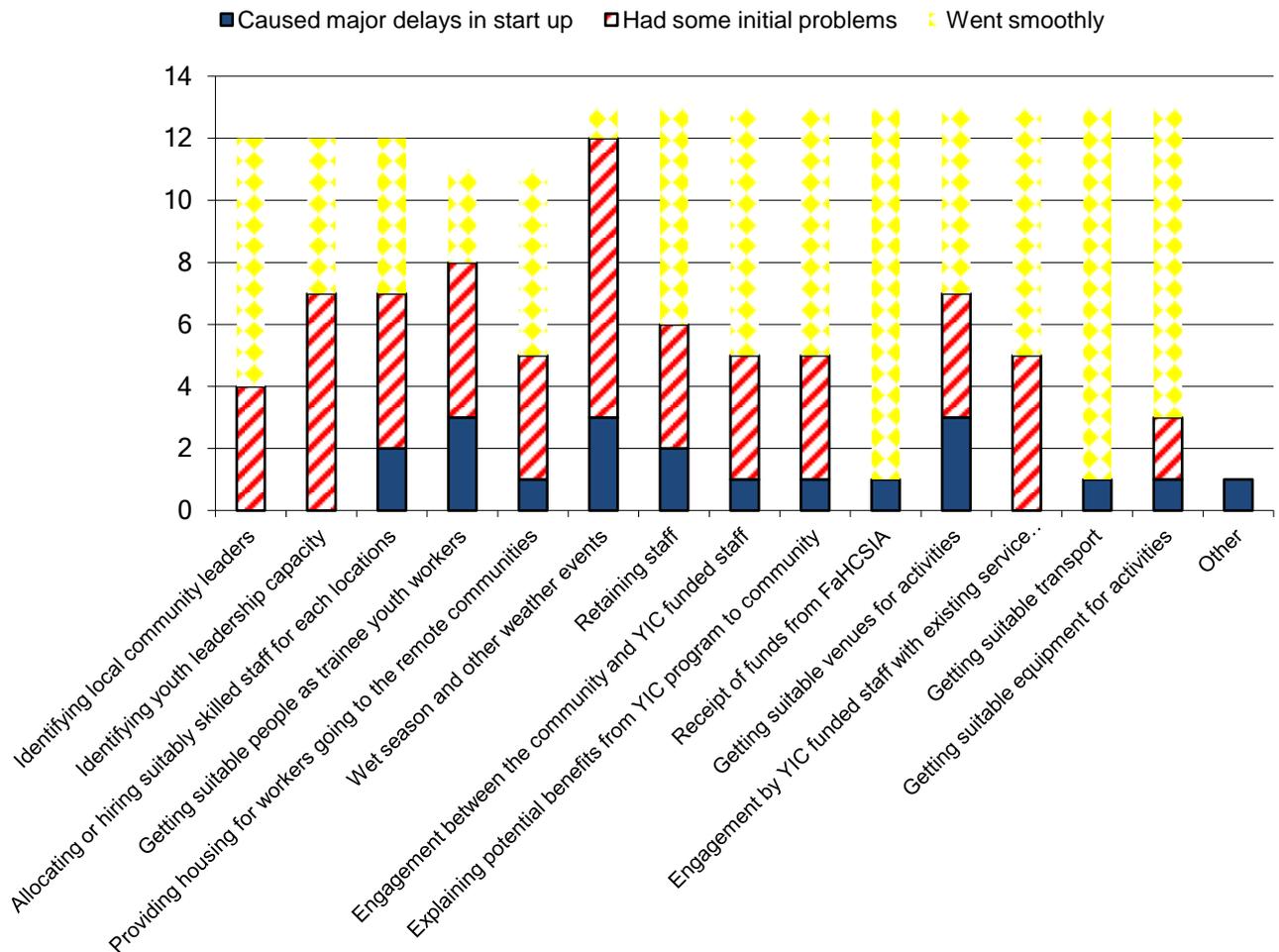


Question 10 asked respondents to identify how they deal with age groups outside the designated target age of 10-20 years that attend their YIC activity. Twelve services responded to this question, and all recorded that they simply accept them as part of the activity. Five respondents recorded that they run additional activities and that they also work with other services to meet needs. One respondent noted that they were concerned at having a younger age group attending their YIC activity and that this can deter the older

youth from participating as they don't want a "kids event". In addition, it was noted that there is often not enough staffing (funded by YIC) to manage the additional numbers.

Questions 11, 12 and 13 of the survey sought information on implementation issues. A list of issues / factors was provided in the survey and respondents were asked to identify whether these aspects of implementation went smoothly, had some initial problems or caused major delays in the start-up phase. The following figure presents a visual snapshot of responses followed by a summary analysis.

Figure 2: Issues experienced in implementation



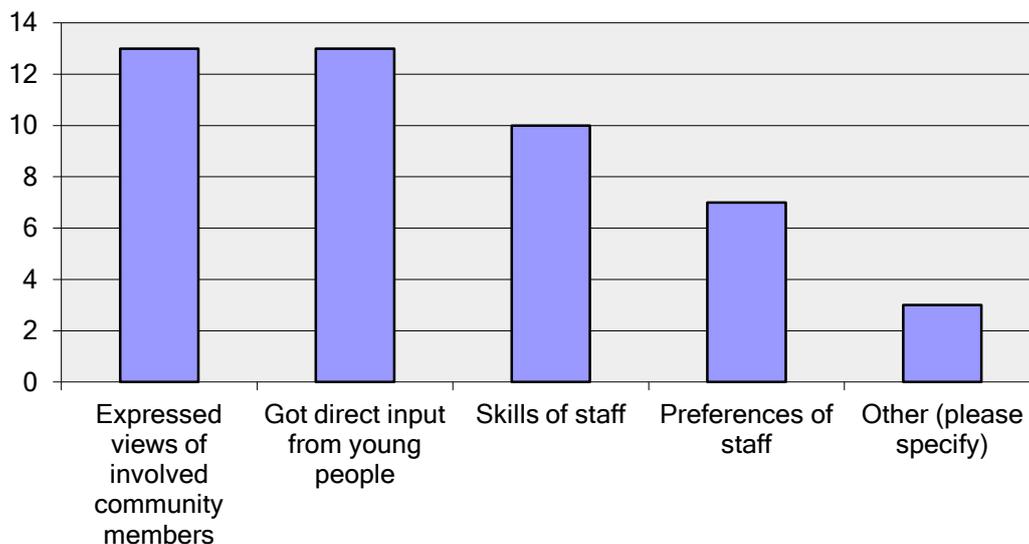
As shown in the above graph, the main types of issues that respondents experienced in the implementation of YIC projects that caused major delays in start-up included getting suitable people as trainee youth workers (n=3), wet season and other weather events (n=3) and getting suitable venues for activities (n=3). A further question asked respondents whether there were things that could have been done differently to avoid the delays. Most respondents that commented said no, as they have no control over the wet season and other weather events as well as the building of the infrastructure for venues. However, two respondents noted that they could have done things differently such as promoting what the youth program was about and its benefits, thereby obtaining greater community support.

The main issues that caused some initial problems (but not major delays) for services in the start-up phase were again the wet season and other weather events (n=9), identifying youth

leadership capacity (n=7), allocating or hiring suitably skilled staff (n=5) and getting suitable people as trainee youth workers (n=5). On a positive note, the main issues that went smoothly in the start-up phase included receiving the funds from FaHCSIA (n=12), securing transport (n=12), getting suitable equipment for activities (n=10), identifying local community leaders (n=8), engagement by YIC funded staff with existing service providers (n=8), explaining the potential benefits of the YIC program to the community (n=8), engagement between the community and YIC funded staff (n=8) and retaining staff (n=7). The main reasons cited as to why the implementation of the YIC activity went smoothly was that the organisation was already well established in the community, that the youth workers and trainees were well-known, that the organisation has a good rapport with the community and that good preparation and planning had been undertaken.

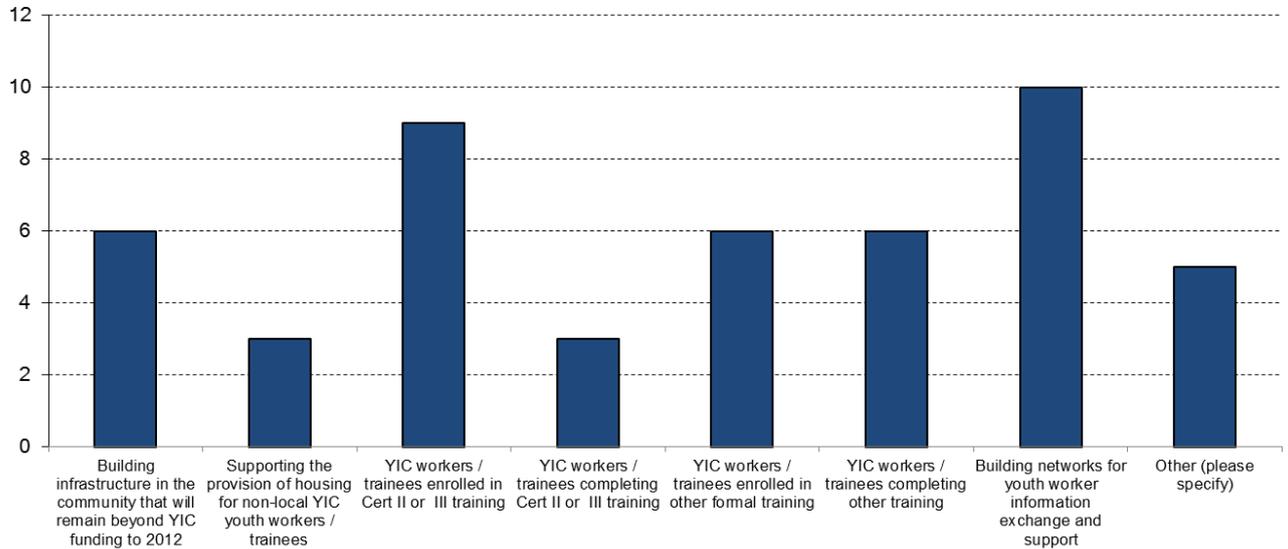
Question 14 asked a specific question on what services took into account in deciding what activities to do at any site. Respondents were given five options to choose from and they could tick any applicable options. The graph below shows almost all respondents (n=13) noted that they sought direct input from young people as well as seeking the views of the broader community involved in their activities. Other options selected included that they took into account the skills of the YIC staff (n=10).

Figure 3: What was taken into account when deciding what activities to do



Question 15 aimed to elicit information on progress towards service system outcomes. Respondents could tick any number of the seven outcomes listed in the survey. As the following graph shows, ten respondents recorded that they had made progress in developing networks for youth worker information exchange and support. Nine respondents recorded that they had YIC staff and trainees enrolled in Cert II or Cert III training. Of these nine, three services also had staff and trainees completing Cert II or Cert III training. Six respondents recorded that they had YIC staff and trainees enrolled in other training as well as completing other training.

Figure 4: Progress towards service system outcomes



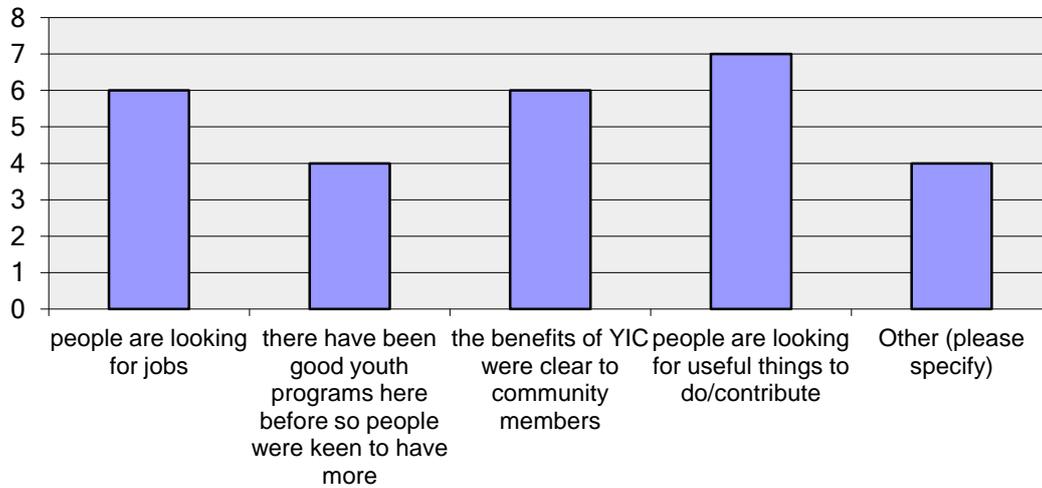
Questions 16 – 29 of the survey focused on staffing issues. The first couple of these questions related to back-up and support for staff in remote areas. Seven of the 13 respondents recorded that they did not have an outreach worker for this purpose. However, seven respondents recorded that they provide mentoring and remote area leave in addition to annual leave as well as travel allowance to cover trips to Darwin or Alice Springs at regular intervals.

A specific question was asked of survey respondents if their organisation had an education worker to support Indigenous young people re-engaging with schooling and education. Twelve of the fourteen respondents who answered this question said “no”. However, most of these recorded that they had access to education workers from other organisations.

Question 20 sought respondents’ views on their experience with regard to engaging staff to work on YIC projects. Ten of the thirteen respondents who answered this question agreed that they had been successful in attracting suitable staff from the community. In seeking reasons as to why services had been successful, the survey provided four options.

As shown in the graph below, the main reason chosen (n=8) was that “people are looking for useful things to do / contribute” followed by “the benefits of YIC were clear to community members” (n=6), “people are looking for jobs” (n=6) and “there have been good youth programs here before so people were keen to have more” (n=4).

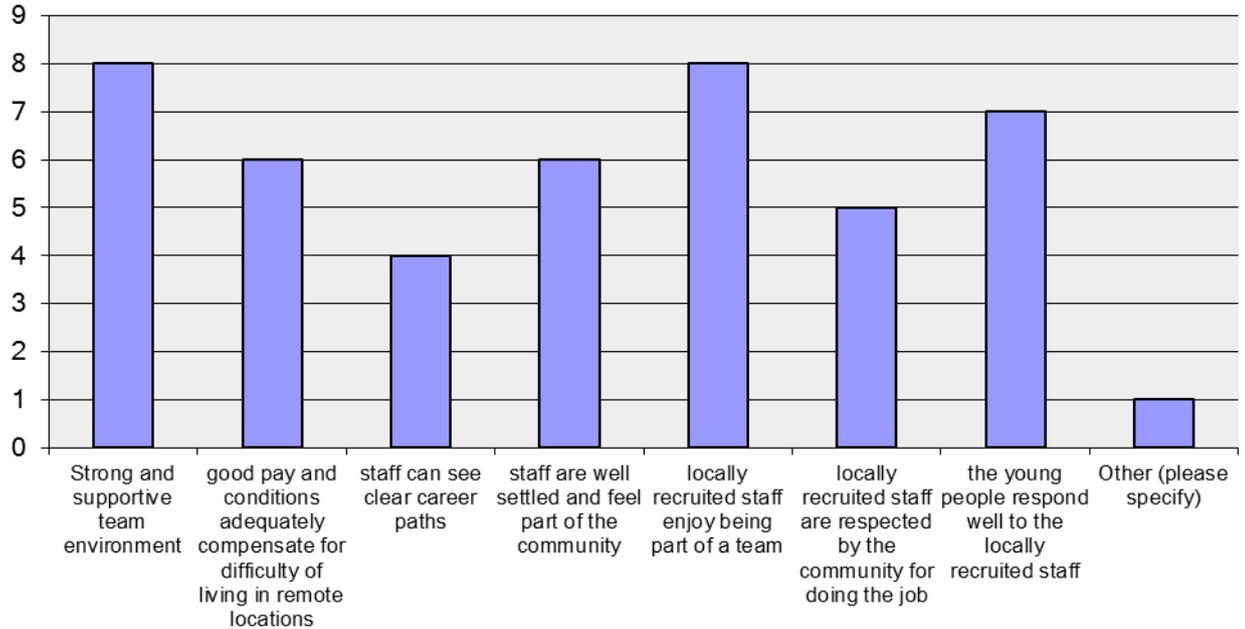
Figure 5: Reasons why services had been successful in engaging staff



Seven of the 12 respondents who answered Question 23 agreed that they were successful in attracting staff from outside the community. Four disagreed and two were not sure. Of the seven that agreed, six attributed their success to having a strong and supportive team ethic / culture and five recorded that their organisation can offer good career paths. However, those services that disagreed that they had been successful in attracting staff from outside the community identified the main reason as being that “people do not want to live in remote communities” and “professional isolation is a major deterrent”.

In a very positive result, ten survey respondents agreed that “we have been able to retain qualified staff”. As presented in the following graph, reasons for this were mainly that locally recruited staff enjoy being part of a team, that there was a strong and supportive team environment, that young people respond well to locally recruited staff, that there was good pay and conditions and that staff feel part of the community.

Figure 6: The reasons for success in retaining staff



When asked “what is the average time that staff stay in a YIC-funded youth worker or trainee position?”, seven of the 12 respondents recorded 1-2 years, two recorded each of 6-12 months and more than 2 years, and one recorded less than 6 months.

Questions 30 – 38 of the survey elicited information and views on staff training.

Seven services answered the question on “how many people commenced training in a Cert II or Cert III. Of these respondents, one selected Cert II and five selected Cert III. Three respondents chose “other” and mentioned suicide awareness, first aid and that some staff had already completed Cert IV training.

Four services answered the question “if staff have not commenced training, what were the reasons?” Three of the four respondents recorded that training providers were not available in their locations. One respondent recorded that some of their communities do not have internet access for distance education and one respondent noted that they did not have suitable assistance with literacy available to support trainees. This has obvious flow-on effects regarding the extent to which youth services and staffing infrastructure can develop and strengthen and also on the quality of outcomes by young people participating in the YIC.

The main training providers that services used for training purposes were Red Cross, Charles Darwin University and Apprenticeships Australia.

The survey asked respondents to indicate from a list of five options as to what internal training services are provided to their youth workers. Eleven respondents answered this question. Most respondents (n=10) recorded that they have child protection / regulatory obligations and first aid training for their staff. Other options recorded included 4WD training (n=8), cultural awareness (n=7) and cultural competency (n=6). One service stated that they

provide alcohol and other drug and suicide awareness training and one service stated that they provide self-reflection training.

Other staff training required in addition to internal training that was noted by respondents included restorative conferencing, quality management, suicide prevention, alcohol and other drug, drumbeat, fire-safety, bronze medallion and pool safety training.

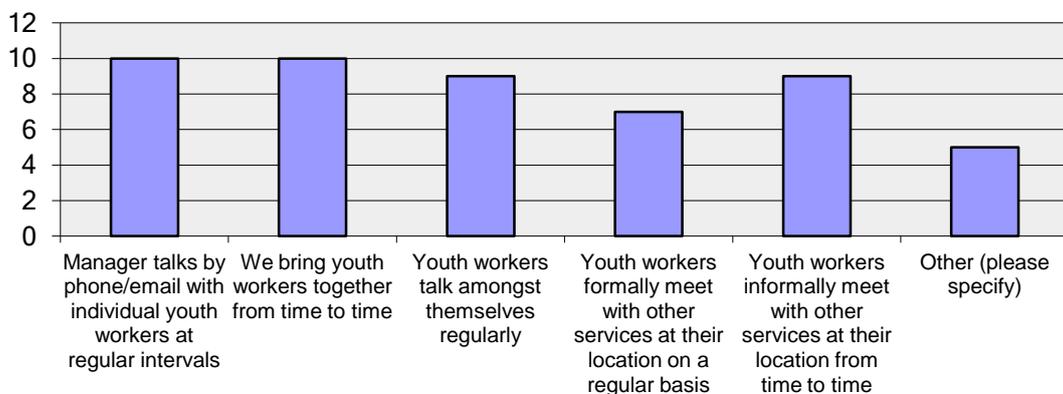
When asked “is there any other professional development training that would be valuable for staff?”, suggestions included more internal informal training, community specific cultural awareness, mental health, drug and alcohol and anything that relates specifically to youth work.

Supervision and mentoring were chosen by respondents as the two most preferred approaches used by services to support youth workers.

There were three questions in the survey that asked for information on volunteers. Most of the respondents (n=9) have volunteers in the running of YIC and they perform a variety of duties including assisting with busy times across a range of activities, helping with homework sessions and also how to eventually become a youth worker. Of the ten respondents that answered the question “do you have a policy that guides how volunteers are to be used in the project?”, six said “yes” and four said “no”.

To ascertain the extent of networking and sharing of information, the survey asked what types of opportunities were provided for youth workers to discuss their work. Respondents could choose one or more of five options. As presented in the graph below, of the 13 respondents who answered this question, 10 recorded that they bring youth workers together from time to time as well as managers having regular contact with each youth worker either by phone or email. Nine respondents recorded that youth workers informally meet with other services at their location from time to time and that youth workers talk amongst themselves regularly. The nature of youth worker or youth services reference / planning groups in communities was both formal and informal.

Figure 7: Approaches used to provide regular opportunities for youth workers to network and discuss their work



The final questions in Section One of the survey asked for feedback on any other factors outside their control that impact the effectiveness of their projects and suggestions for improvement of the YIC program. About one third of survey respondents agreed that there were some extraneous factors that impact effectiveness such as sorry business, weather constraints, geographical isolation and how the general community is functioning.

The main suggestions as to how the YIC program could be improved included better planning and coordination of youth service delivery across the various levels of government and particularly with the future of the FaHCSIA YIC program. Also, there could be more recognition of the local needs and culture of Indigenous communities and that any genuine effectiveness of the program is a long-term journey. For example, some of the highly engaged younger people have opportunities to achieve positive outcomes more so over a ten year period and not in the current three year funding cycle.

Findings from Section Two

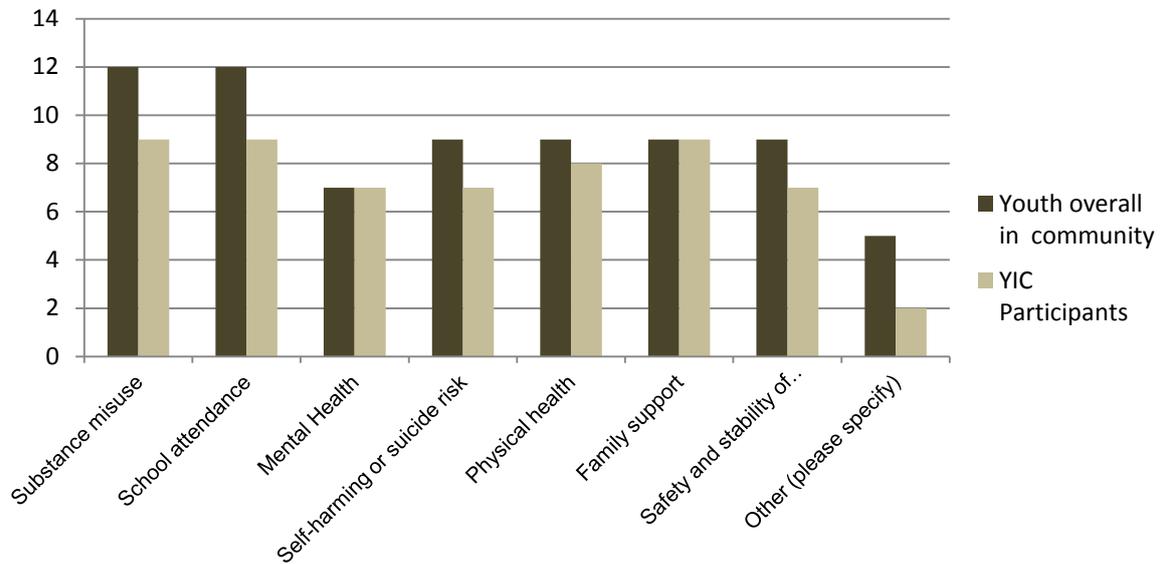
Section Two gathered information about the characteristics of the participants and service providers' perceptions of whether and to what extent the well-being of, and outcomes for the young people may be changing as a result of their participation in the YIC project activities. The questions were based around a set of outcomes indicators derived from the program logic of YIC comprising:

- Outcome 1: Participants and activities in YIC are appropriately targeted
- Outcome 2: Participants engage with the YIC workers and activities
- Outcome 3: YIC Participants' enhanced self esteem supports positive behaviours
- Outcome 4: YIC Participants develop skills and behaviours that promote well-being and support positive life choices
- Outcome 5: Improved life choices & outcomes for Indigenous young people at risk.

Responses to the question were based on data that each service may have collected from the start of each service's YIC activity to March 2011. The survey contained a series of statements or questions where services were asked to record their perceptions against a scale showing the degree of change that occurred during that time. Services were also asked to give an indication of the reasons for their views on each question or statement and provide as much information as possible to support their perceptions.

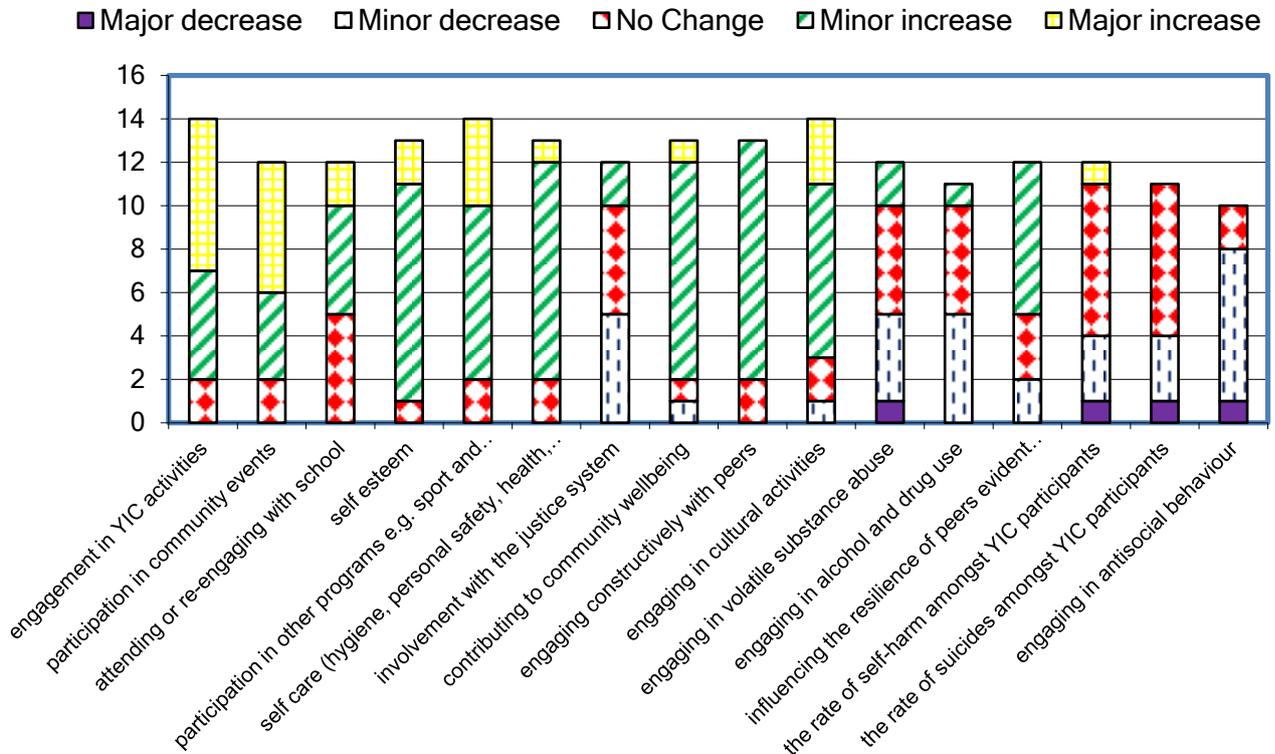
The first two questions asked respondents to indicate which issues were most dominant amongst: (i) youth in their community and (ii) YIC participants. Seven issues were listed and respondents could tick any that applied. The main issues that were dominant for both groups were school attendance, substance misuse, family support and physical health. Other issues not so dominant for both groups were mental health. The following graph presents these findings.

Figure 8: Most dominant issues for youth in community and YIC participants



The second part of Section Two asked survey respondents to indicate the degree of improvement (increase / no change / decrease) in the young people participating in their YIC activity. The question put forward 16 ‘areas of change’ where respondents could confirm if there had been a major increase, minor increase, no change, minor decrease or major decrease. Not all ‘areas of change’ were applicable to all respondents hence the variation of between 10 and 14 responses overall, as presented in the following graph.

Figure 9: Degree of change in YIC participants



The key areas of change where there was a major increase were in engagement in YIC activities (n=7) and participation in community events (n=6). The key areas of change where there was a minor increase were engaging constructively with peers (n=11), contributing to community wellbeing, self care (hygiene, personal safety, health, nutrition) and self esteem (all three factors n=10).

Just over half of survey respondents who answered this question selected 'no change' for the rate of self-harm and suicides amongst YIC participants (both factors n=7). Just under half of survey respondents who answered this question recorded 'no change' for involvement with the justice system, attending or re-engaging with school, engaging in volatile substance abuse and engaging in alcohol and drug use (all four factors n=5). In relation to these outcomes "no change" is a good result as it means that there have been no outbreaks of sniffing, self harming and the like.

Areas of change where there was a minor decrease in a behaviour included anti-social behaviour (n=8), engaging in alcohol and drug abuse as well as volatile substance abuse (n=7) and involvement with the justice system (n=6). Areas of changes where there was a major decrease in a behaviour included engaging in antisocial behaviour (n=7), engaging in alcohol and drug use and involvement with the justice system (both factors n=5) and engaging in volatile substance abuse (n=4).

Taken all together, these are very positive results and indicate that YIC projects as a group are making progress towards improved outcomes for YIC participants.

ATTACHMENT A

YIC SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY



SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY UNDER THE YOUTH IN COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

Courage Partners has been engaged by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to conduct an evaluation of the Youth in Communities (YIC) program under the Closing the Gap initiative in the Northern Territory.

A key element of the evaluation is gathering views from service providers on the implementation of the program through a survey. We are asking that the **program manager with overall responsibility for the YIC program at all of your sites / communities where you have YIC operating takes responsibility for getting the survey completed and returned to Courage Partners.**

The survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete and largely consist of multiple choice questions. Please fill in the survey electronically so it can be emailed back to us. It comprises two sections.

Section One gathers information on your approach to service delivery and the length of time the service has been operational, issues relating to recruitment and retention of staffing and access to appropriate training and information sharing and networking amongst youth workers.

Section Two gathers information on the outcomes for YIC participants. Based on data that you may have collected, we are looking at the period from the start of your YIC program to March 2011. The survey contains a series of statements or questions where you are asked to record your **perceptions** against a scale showing degree of change that has occurred. You are also asked to give an indication of the reasons for your view on each question or statement. Could you please provide as much information as possible to support your perceptions.

As discussed at the Service Provider Recall, you may consider that the responses for the second section of the survey on outcomes for YIC participants vary considerably between some of your sites/communities. Accordingly we have provided several copies of the Section Two table so that you can record perceptions for several sites/communities if you wish to. Or you may prefer to consider your participant group as a whole across all sites and respond just once on the first Section Two table.

Please note the following instructions to distribute, complete and return the survey.

1. Distribution

Program Managers are asked to make arrangements that suit your organisation for completion of the survey and for it to be returned completed to Karen.roberson@couragepartners.com.au by Friday 13 April 2011.

2. Action Steps to complete and return survey

Save the survey to your desktop

Complete the survey electronically in your own time

Once completed, save the document [name of organisation].doc (for example, NPYWC.doc).

Attach the completed survey to an email and return to

Karen.roberson@couragepartners.com.au by 15 April 2011.

3. Confidentiality

The reporting of information gathered through the survey and the report produced as a result of the evaluation will not identify survey respondents.

However, information about staff and training in Questions 29-37 will be shared on a confidential basis with the Personal Development and Mentoring Program of YIC being run by Relationships Australia Northern Territory. They will use the information to identify how professional development and mentoring can best be provided to YIC service providers.

If you have any queries about the survey and how to complete it or about using the documents and saving them please call either Karen Roberson or Helen Swan at Courage Partners on 02 6230 5560 or email Karen at the above address or Helen at Helen.Swan@couragepartners.com.au

Many thanks for your assistance with and contribution to the evaluation of YIC.

General Information

1. Name of **Service provider organisation**:

2. Locations at which the YIC project is operating:

Section One: Service Delivery

One of the objectives of the YIC program is to strengthen and improve the youth services infrastructure, both in the number of youth workers employed and the facilities available for providing services and activities. This section asks a number of questions related to this objective as well as about your approach to service delivery and YIC activities. It also covers issues you have experienced in start up and implementation.

Set up of the project

3. Do you have a committee which oversees the entire YIC project?

Yes

No

(if No, you do not need to answer Q4,5, 6 or 7 and go straight to Question 8).

4. If yes, what type of committee is it? (eg. management committee comprising various stakeholders, community members comprising local community, young people themselves)

(Insert comments here.)

5. Please briefly describe their role and how they operate.

(Insert comments here.)

6. What functions do they carry out? (tick any that apply)

Has input to design of the program at all locations

Oversees the use of FaHCSIA funding for the YIC project here

Refers young people to the project

Assists with running some of the activities at some locations

Helps build relationships with other services all locations

Oversees budget / expenditure

Other (insert comments here)

7. How frequent is your contact with the committee? (daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly)

Daily

Weekly

Fortnightly

Monthly

8. Did you have a youth program (s) in place when the opportunity to apply for YIC funding came about?

Yes

No

Target Group

9. If you have regular and significant numbers of young people outside the target group ages of 10-20 years old that have been participating in your YIC project, what age groups are they and approximately how many of each group are there? Tick any that apply. If this question doesn't apply please tick N/A.

- under 5 yrs old Number:
- 5-10 yrs old Number:
- 20-25 yrs old Number:
- 25-30 yrs old Number:
- N / A

10. If you have young people outside the target group wishing to attend YIC, how do you deal with this?

- accept that they tag along with their siblings / friends
- run extra activities for the extra age groups
- work with other services to provide for them (Insert comments here)
- other (Insert comments here)

Implementation issues

11. What types of issues have you experienced so far in implementation of the entire YIC project operating in your organisation? (tick any that apply)

	Went smoothly	Had some initial problems	Caused major delays in start up
Identifying local community leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying youth leadership capacity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocating or hiring suitably skilled staff for each locations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting suitable people as trainee youth workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing housing for workers going to the remote communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wet season and other weather events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retaining staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engagement between the community and YIC funded staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explaining potential benefits from YIC program to community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receipt of funds from FaHCSIA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting suitable venues for activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engagement by YIC funded staff with existing service providers in community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting suitable transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting suitable equipment for activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (insert comments here)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Of the things above you have marked as “went smoothly”, what were the reasons for your success? (Insert comments here)

13. For the things that you marked in Q11 as causing serious delays, in retrospect, were there things you could have done differently? (Insert comments here)

Activities / Composition of your program

14. What did you take into account in deciding what activities to do at any site?

- Expressed views of involved community members
- Got direct input from young people
- Skills of staff
- Preferences of staff
- Other (Insert comments here)

Strengthening youth services infrastructure in NT

15. Looking at your YIC project overall, do you consider that it has already made progress towards outcomes (tick any that apply)

- Building infrastructure in the community that will remain beyond YIC funding to 2012. If ticked please give examples:
- Supporting the provision of housing for non-local YIC youth workers / trainees
- YIC workers / trainees enrolled in Cert II or III training
- YIC workers / trainees completing Cert II or III training
- YIC workers / trainees enrolled in other formal training. If ticked please give examples:
- YIC workers / trainees completing other training. If ticked please give examples:
- Building networks for youth worker information exchange and support
- Other

Staffing issues

16. Does your organisation have an outreach worker who can provide staff in remote locations with some assistance, back-up and relief for leave, illness and the like?

- Yes No

17. If there is no outreach worker to provide relief and support, how does your organisation support staff in remote locations? (tick any that apply)?

- Remote area leave in addition to annual leave
- Mentoring
- Professional supervision via regular email and telephone
- Travel allowance to cover trips to town (Darwin/Alice Springs) at regular intervals
- Staff assigned to remote locations in pairs
- Arranging opportunities for networking with other remote location youth workers
- Other (Insert comment here)

18. Does your organisation have an Education Worker whose primary responsibility is to support Indigenous young people re-engaging with schooling/education?

- Yes No

19. If no, does your organisation have access to Education Workers from other organisations?

- Yes No

We are interested in obtaining your views with regard to your experience in engaging suitable staff. Could you please tick the appropriate box in relation to the statement posed.

20. We were successful in attracting suitable staff from the community (please comment if required)

- Agree (Go to Q21) Disagree (Go to Q22) Not sure (go to Q23)

21. If you agree with Q20, what were the main reasons

- people are looking for jobs
- there have been good youth programs here before so people were keen to have more
- the benefits of YIC were clear to community members
- people are looking for useful things to do/contribute
- Other (Insert comments here)

22. If you disagree with Q20, what were the reasons why? (Insert comments here)

23. We were successful in attracting staff from outside the community

- Agree (Go to Q24) Disagree (Go to Q25) Not sure (Go to Q26)

Please comment if required

24. If you agreed with Q 23, what were the main reasons for your success?

- We pay well above award
- We provide good housing for staff
- We pay extra benefits e.g. health insurance, return to city travel
- We have a strong and supportive team ethic/culture
- Our organisation can offer good career paths
- Other (Insert comments here)

25. If you disagreed with Q23, what are the main reasons why it is difficult to attract staff?

- Wages are low (pay at award only)
- People do not want to live in remote communities
- Professional isolation is a major deterrent
- The work is very difficult and draining
- Potential local workers do not have the literacy levels to support doing Cert III.
- Limited or no career paths
- Supply shortage of qualified people
- Other (Insert comments here)

26. We have been able to retain qualified staff

- Agree (Go to Q27) Disagree (Go to Q28) Not sure.

Please comment if required

27. If you agreed with Q26, what were the reasons for your success in retaining staff?

- Strong and supportive team environment
- good pay and conditions adequately compensate for difficulty of living in remote locations
- staff can see clear career paths
- staff are well settled and feel part of the community
- locally recruited staff enjoy being part of a team
- locally recruited staff are respected by the community for doing the job
- the young people respond well to the locally recruited staff
- Other (Insert comments here)

28. If you disagreed with Q26, what are the main reasons for not retaining staff? (tick any that apply)

- Professional isolation
- The work is very difficult and draining and staff burn out in a few months
- They go to better paid jobs
- Encountered difficulties in getting community support
- Reality of the job did not accord with their expectations
- Lack of a career path in remote locations
- Lack of appropriate housing for staff
- Other (insert comments here)

29. What is the average time that staff stay in a YIC-funded youth worker or trainee position? (approximately)

- Less than 6 months
- 6-12 months
- 1-2 years
- More than 2 years

Volunteers

39. Do you have volunteers involved in the running of YIC activities?

- Yes No

40. If yes, what kinds of things do they do? (eg. help out during busy holiday times, training, life skills)
(Insert comments here)

41. Do you have a policy that guides how volunteers are to be used in the project?

- Yes No

Networking amongst youth workers

42. Which of the following are used to provide regular opportunities for youth workers to discuss their work? (tick any that apply)

- Manager talks by phone/email with individual youth workers at regular intervals
 We bring youth workers together from time to time
 Youth workers talk amongst themselves regularly
 Youth workers formally meet with other services at their location on a regular basis
 Youth workers informally meet with other services at their location from time to time
 Other (please give examples)

43. What youth worker or youth service reference/planning groups exist in your communities or region?

(Insert comments here)

44. What suggestions would you like to make to improve FaHCSIA's program design and/or management?

(Insert comments here)

45. Are there factors (either positive or negative), other than those that you may already have mentioned earlier, outside the control of your program that impact on the effectiveness of your YIC project outcomes for service delivery / infrastructure or for the young people?

- Yes (Go to Q46) No (Go to Section 2)

46. If yes,

(Insert comments here)

Go to the next page for Section 2

Section 2: Participant Group and Outcomes (Copy 1)

As discussed at the Service Provider Recall, you may consider that the responses for this second section of the survey on outcomes for YIC participants vary considerably between some of your sites/communities. Accordingly we have provided several copies of this section so that you can record perceptions for several sites/communities if you wish to. Or you may prefer to consider your participant group as a whole across all sites and respond just once on the first Section Two table.

Location / community you are responding for (if you making one response only for your organisation, type in "ONE RESPONSE ONLY". If you are responding for several locations please insert the name of the relevant community in the line below

.....

The YIC program is intended to provide an effective diversion for young Indigenous people from at risk behaviours. The program aims to improve life choices and outcomes for young Indigenous people through engaging them in positive activities that promote pathways to better health and wellbeing, community capacity building and participation in school, work and social networks.

This section seeks to gather information about the characteristics of the participants and your perceptions about whether and how the wellbeing and outcomes for these young people may be improving as a result of their participation in your YIC program.

Participant characteristics

47. Which of the following are the most dominant issues amongst youth in your community? (number 1-8 where 1 is the most dominant):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substance misuse issues | <input type="checkbox"/> School attendance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-harming or suicide risk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical health | <input type="checkbox"/> Family support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety and stability of accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Insert comments here) |

48. Which of the following are the most dominant issues amongst YIC participants? (number 1-8 where 1 is the most dominant):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substance misuse issues | <input type="checkbox"/> School attendance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-harming or suicide risk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical health | <input type="checkbox"/> Family support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety and stability of accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Insert comments here) |

Q 49. Participant outcomes

This section seeks to gather information about your informed perceptions on whether and how the wellbeing and outcomes for these young people may be improving as a result of their participation in your YIC program. Whilst we are seeking your perceptions, we would expect that they would be informed by your observations and discussions with parents, the community, your own staff and other service providers (eg. police, health, education). Could you please tick the appropriate box that refers to the degree of change in YIC participants overall as a group in relation to the following.

Statement	Major increase	Minor increase	No Change	Minor decrease	Major decrease	Reasons for your view
1. engagement in YIC activities	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2. participation in community events	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. attending or re-engaging with school	<input type="checkbox"/>					
4. self esteem	<input type="checkbox"/>					
5. participation in other programs e.g. sport and recreation, leadership, drug and alcohol programs	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. self care (hygiene, personal safety, health, nutrition)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
7. Involvement with the justice system	<input type="checkbox"/>					
8. contributing to community wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>					
9. engaging constructively with peers	<input type="checkbox"/>					
10. engaging in cultural activities	<input type="checkbox"/>					

Statement	Major increase	Minor increase	No Change	Minor decrease	Major decrease	Reasons for your view
11. engaging in volatile substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>					
12. engaging in alcohol and drug use	<input type="checkbox"/>					
13. influencing the resilience of peers evident through for example, reducing the likelihood of volatile substance abuse and / or alcohol and drug abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>					
14. the rate of self-harm amongst YIC participants	<input type="checkbox"/>					
15. the rate of suicides amongst YIC participants	<input type="checkbox"/>					
16. engaging in antisocial behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>					
17. other, please list:						

Thank you for completing the survey!

49. Can we phone or email you if we have any queries about your survey response?

Yes No

Name:

Phone no.:

Email:

APPENDIX B

+ At risk youth enjoy the outdoors

YOUNG people from remote communities took part in a five-day camp at Edith Falls recently.

Roper Gulf Shire Youth Services hosted the camp which targeted 25 young people who are at risk of substance abuse.

The camp included educational sessions and diversionary activities such as swimming, bushwalking, cooking and canoeing.

The Council of Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services (CAAPS) provided morning educational sessions which informed the youth of the effects of substance misuse and how to say no to drugs.

On August 26 the camp program included a visit to Katherine Gorge to promote future employment pathways.

Local Indigenous Ranger, Allan Anderson ran an informative slideshow describing his role with Nitmiluk National Park. The youth were captivated by crocodile trapping and fire fighting.

An afternoon canoeing at Katherine Gorge with Nitmiluk Tours was enjoyed by all.

This activity promoted recreational activities as healthy alternatives to substance misuse. Team building with group swimming challenges proved highly successful. The youth participated actively and were great team players.

In partnership with the NT Police Youth Diversion Program, Youth Services is following up with case management in community delivered by the local Indigenous youth workers.



Some of the children who took part in the youth camp at Edith Falls enjoying water activities. Photo supplied.