

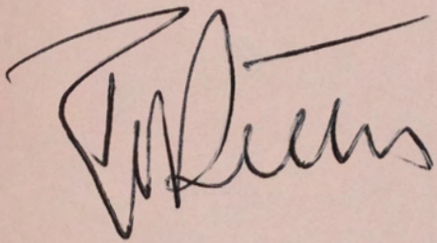
**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**CABINET DECISION**  
**No. 7572**

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Submission No: 6407

Title: **YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**

Cabinet approved the development of a new Youth Policy for the Northern Territory.



**R.A.SETTER**  
Secretary to Cabinet

1 December 1992

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

FOR CABINET

SUBMISSION No: .....6407.....

Title:

YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Minister

THE HONOURABLE DARYL MANZIE, MLA  
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Purpose:

TO APPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW YOUTH  
POLICY FOR THE NT

Relation to  
existing  
policy:

CABINET DECISION NO. 3334 17 JANUARY 1984

Timing/  
legislative  
priority:

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION NOVEMBER 1992 TO  
APRIL 1993. DRAFT POLICY TO BE SUBMITTED  
DURING MARCH 1993

Announcement  
of decision,  
tabling, etc:

AT MINISTER'S DISCRETION

Action re-  
quired before  
announcement:

NIL

Staffing  
implications,  
numbers and  
costs, etc:

1 x A06 (9 MONTHS \$37 995)  
\$20 000 PROMOTION AND TRAVEL COSTS

Total cost:

\$58 000 (within existing resources)

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

DEPARTMENT OF THE CHIEF MINISTER

**COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION:**

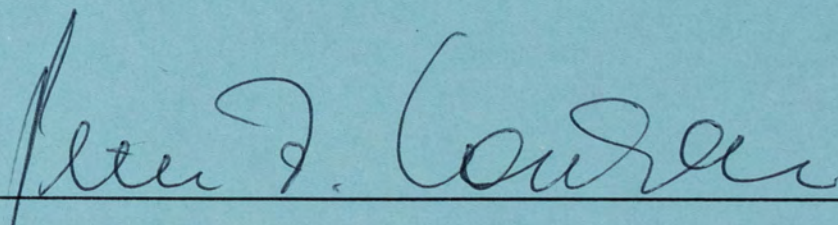
**TITLE:** YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

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**COMMENTS:**

The following Departments/Authorities support the submission -

Department of the Chief Minister  
Department of Law  
Department of Correctional Services  
Department of Education  
NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services



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**SIGNED:**

**DESIGNATION:** SECRETARY

**DATE:** 23 NOV 1992

**CONFIDENTIAL**

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: ..... YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY  
.....  
.....

COMMENTS:

The following Departments support the Submission:

- . ✓ Chief Minister
- . ✓ Correctional Services
- . ✓ Education
- . ✓ Law
- . ✓ NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services
- . Office of the Public Service Commissioner
- . Office of Sport, Recreation & Ethnic Affairs

SIGNED: 

DESIGNATION: SECRETARY

DATE: 16 NOVEMBER 1992 **CONFIDENTIAL**

Department/Authority: DEPARTMENT OF THE CHIEF MINISTER  
Library & Archives NT, NTRS 2575/P1, Volume 401A, Decision 7572

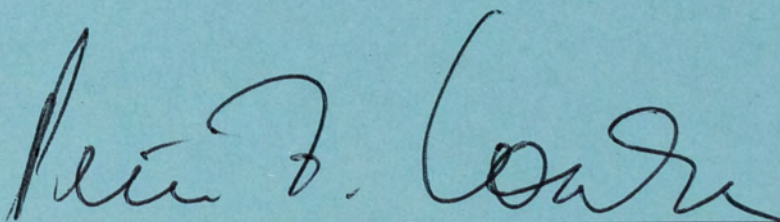
COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: **YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**

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COMMENTS:

The recommendation is supported



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*PJ*  
SIGNED: PETER CONRAN

DESIGNATION: SECRETARY

DATE: 12 OCT 1992

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Library & Archives NT, NTRS 2575/P1, Volume 401A, Decision 7572  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Department/Authority .....

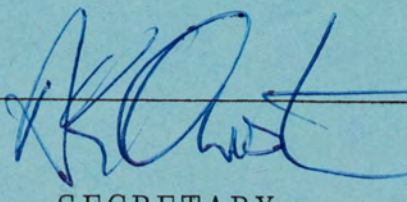
**COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.**

**TITLE:** YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY .....

**COMMENTS:**

The Department of Correctional Services supports  
the draft Cabinet Submission.

SIGNED:

 8/10/92

DESIGNATION: SECRETARY

DATE:

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**Department/Authority:** DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION NO:**

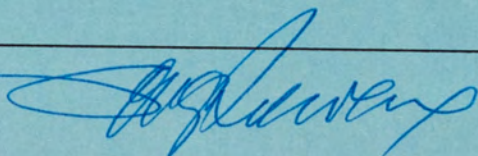
**TITLE:** YOUTH POLICY OF THE NT

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The Department of Education supports the submission and the terms of reference specified.

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**SIGNED:**



**DESIGNATION:** ACTING SECRETARY

**DATE:**

9/10/92

Department/Authority: LAW Library & Archives NT, NTRS 2575/P1, Volume 401A, Decision 7572

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION NO.

TITLE: YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

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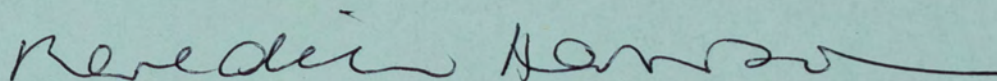
COMMENTS:

There appear to be no constitutional or legal barriers to the proposal.

The proposal does not raise any consumer implications.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The Submission does not appear to raise any additional resource implications at this point in time.



8 SIGNED: Meredith Harrison  
DESIGNATION: Secretary, Department of Law  
DATE: 6 October 1992



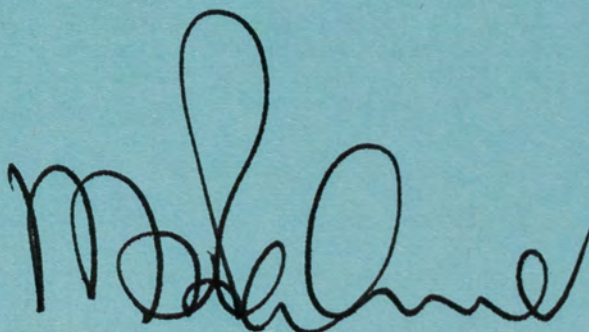
Department/Authority...NORTHERN..TERRITORY..POLICE,..FIRE..AND..EMERGENCY..SERVICES

**COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.**

**TITLE:** .....YOUTH..POLICY..OF..THE..NORTHERN..TERRITORY.....

**COMMENTS:**

The recommendation of the submission is supported.



SIGNED:

(M J PALMER)

DESIGNATION: COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

DATE: OCTOBER 1992

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

Library & Archives NT, NTRS 2575/P1, Volume 401A, Decision 7572

Department/Authority. OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

**COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION NO.**

TITLE: YOUTH POLICY

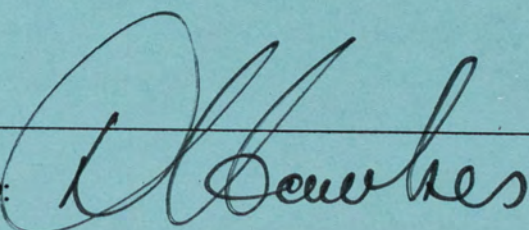
.....  
.....

**COMMENTS:**

This Office supports the recommendation contained in the submission.

Appropriate consultation should occur with the Office of the Public Service Commissioner and Employment and Training Branch of the Department of Education to cover areas of youth labour market programmes and training initiatives in the Policy.

SIGNED:



PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

DATE:

8/10/92

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Library & Archives NT, NTRS 2575/P1, Volume 401A, Decision 7572

Department/Authority Office of Sport, Recreation & Ethnic Affairs

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION NO.

TITLE: YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

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**COMMENTS:**

The Office supports the Submission.

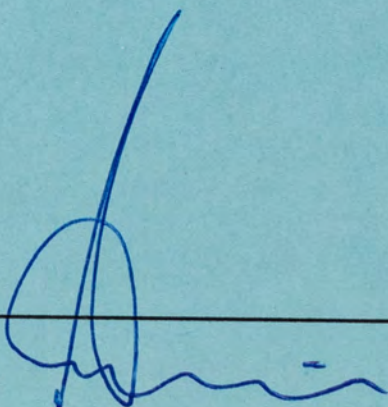
In regard to point 17, which refers to expertise and resources be applied by other departments to the policy development. The Office of Sport, Recreation and Ethnic Affairs can offer expertise, but not resources. This Office simply does not have the excess resources that can be shifted to another department so that it may fulfil its legislated responsibilities.

Participation as a member of the Youth Policy Working Party and, say, the distribution of information in the consultation process would be a significant contribution from this Office.

Time lines will need to be adjusted and it is suggested that a commencement date of November 1992 and to conclude in July 1993.

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SIGNED:



DESIGNATION: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DATE: 15 October 1992

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

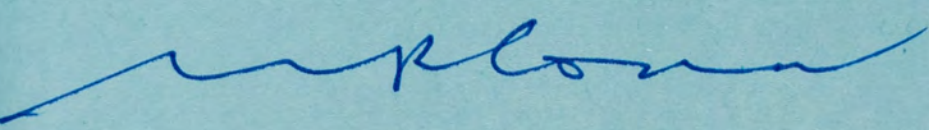
Department/Authority..... **NORTHERN TERRITORY TREASURY**  
Library & Archives NT, NTRS 2575/P1, Volume 401A, Decision 7572

**COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.**

**TITLE:** ..... **YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**.....

**COMMENTS:**

It is not at all clear how adoption of the proposed policy would do more than add, only a few weeks after finalisation of the 1992/93 Budget, another warm and concerned bureaucrat to a system which should already be addressing the problems highlighted.



SIGNED: N R CONN

DESIGNATION: UNDER TREASURER

DATE: 5 OCTOBER 1992

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Department/Authority..... DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND HOUSING .....

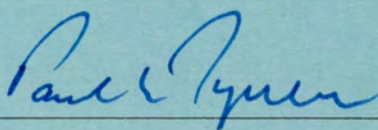
COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: ..... YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY .....

COMMENTS:

It is noted however that whilst the planning focus is "on ensuring the community's human resources will continue to be replenished and enhanced by the assimilation of healthy, well adjusted adults", there is in fact little emphasis on the importance of the family unit. Policy which is supportive of the family as the principal source of support and care for youth should be promoted.

Attachment A to the submission does not include shelter as a key issue affecting the well being of young people. Access to secure, appropriate and affordable housing is an issue becoming increasingly evident, particularly in the prevailing poor economic conditions. Any new policy should include the inclusion of shelter as a key issue for youth.



SIGNED: Paul Tyrrell

DESIGNATION: Secretary

DATE: 9/10/92

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RECOMMENDATION

1. Cabinet approve the development of a new Youth Policy for the Northern Territory.

BACKGROUND

2. Cabinet Decision No. 3334 of 17 January 1984 established the "Youth Policy of the Northern Territory" (ATTACHMENT A).
3. Government initiatives concerning youth affairs were announced prior to the last election. These included the creation of a Youth Policy Unit, the development of a monitoring system for youth programs, and the formation of a Youth Advisory Body (ATTACHMENT B).

CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES

4. The future health and well being of the community cannot be ensured without effective planning for the development of today's youth. This planning must focus on ensuring that the community's human resources will continue to be replenished and enhanced by the assimilation of healthy, well adjusted young adults. In particular, it should ensure that these young adults possess the knowledge, skills and commitment required to support and eventually lead our multicultural community through the first half of the 21st century.

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5. Failing to adequately address the developmental needs of youth will place the community at risk of losing much of its future potential. Also at risk is the community's overall level of health and well being. The need to divert future resources away from productive, growth related services, towards social and medical rehabilitative services, will depend largely on the values, beliefs and attitudes that are acquired by today's youth. The development of healthy, socially compatible life-styles is an essential prerequisite for social/racial harmony, economic progress, individual and community well being.
6. Overseas trends indicate that society cannot allow a substantial proportion of its population to exist outside of the mainstream. To do so risks major social upheaval and an excessive amount of gross national product being diverted to public safety, and social/medical rehabilitative services.
7. Employment and control over a minimal level of personal resources are essential requirements for membership in mainstream society. Youth must believe that these essentials are accessible to them or they will develop attitudes and behaviours which will eventually conflict with mainstream society. Individuals who believe they have little self worth and that they are unable to access the benefits society has to offer (goods and services, independence, career, family life), present as a

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significant threat to their own safety and well being and that of the community. It is easy to engage in high risk, antisocial activities when you believe you have "nothing to lose". Once these conditions develop, mainstream social controls, (i.e. peer pressure, threat to one's good reputation, career, assets), become less and less effective and increasing amounts of community resources are then required to contend with individuals who have no substantial investment in mainstream society.

8. Development of a new Youth Policy will offer an opportunity to address the challenges facing today's youth and clarify the roles and responsibilities of youth, families, the community and government.

Objectives to be accomplished by a new Youth Policy should include:

- (a) an acknowledgement of the unique contribution made by youth to the community and a declaration of the community's aspirations for youth;
- (b) recognition of the major challenges facing young Territorians, e.g. developing a healthy life-style, maintaining supportive social and interpersonal relationships, acquiring marketable skills, securing employment, obtaining independent accommodation;



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- (c) recognition of the nature and intensity of barriers which may hinder the success of young people in meeting these challenges;
  - (d) clarification of the roles and expectations of society, young people and families in relation to these barriers/challenges;
  - (e) encouragement of realistic expectations about the degree to which society can support young people and protect them from the harmful effects of social, cultural and economic problems;
  - (f) identification of goals for the provision of services and clarification of responsibility for individual departments and non-government organisations;
  - (g) identify the values and principles that should guide service providers in determining youth needs, prioritising the allocation of resources to meet these needs, and developing/delivering services, (e.g. access, equity, participation, multicultural).
9. A Youth Advisory Body should be established and utilised for the purpose of involving young people in the development of a new Northern Territory Youth Policy. Many young people will have difficulty articulating views. Public forums and calls for written submissions

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should not be the only means of participation in the review. A Youth Advisory Body would offer a practical alternate means of gaining input from young people.

OPTIONS

10. The options are:

**OPTION ONE** - Review existing policy and develop new Youth Policy as outlined at Attachment C. Extensive community consultation will be possible. It will ensure that input is encouraged from all interested parties, and includes the establishment of a Youth Advisory Body. Special consideration will be given to involving remote communities, and those who are not literate or experienced in articulating their views. A working party, chaired by the Department of Health and Community Services, has been established by the Coordination Committee's Standing Subcommittee on Public Safety and Social Development. This working party will coordinate the participation of all relevant departments in the development of a new Northern Territory Youth Policy. Option One is the preferred option.

**OPTION TWO** - Do not proceed with the development of new Youth Policy. This option is not recommended as the existing policy does not adequately address current youth issues.

PUBLIC IMPACT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11. It is anticipated that a Youth Policy Review will attract considerable interest from a wide variety of groups and individuals. The community's reaction will be positive, given that ample opportunity for involvement will be provided.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

12. Developing a new Youth Policy will require additional resources, including personnel.

13. Currently the Department of Health and Community Services has one position dedicated to Youth Affairs policy and coordination. This position already carries with it a range of responsibilities and full workload.

14. The cost for carrying out this process will depend upon the strategy developed by the working party and may involve the allocation of resources from a number of different departments. The Department of Health and Community Services will be providing nine months salary of an A06 project officer (\$38 000) and \$20 000 promotion and travel expenses.

REGULATORY IMPACT

15. Not applicable.

EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

16. Not applicable.

COMMONWEALTH STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

17. The principles and objectives of the Commonwealth's Australian Youth Policy are consistent with the existing Northern Territory Youth Policy. The Commonwealth's policy, which is currently being prepared for publication, will be considered in the development of a new Northern Territory Youth Policy.

18. A number of departments are currently involved in policy/program development which have implications for youth. It is an opportune time to coordinate and focus these developments into a coherent, complementary Youth Strategy. These developments include: Public Housing Policy for Young People; Juvenile Crime Workshops; Recreation Policy for Youth; Petrol Sniffing Policy and Programs.

CO-ORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

19. This Submission has been circulated to the Departments of Chief Minister, Correctional Services, Education, Lands and Housing, Law, NT Treasury, Police and the Offices of the Public Service Commissioner and Sport, Recreation and Ethnic Affairs. This submission is supported by the

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Youth Strategy working party established by the  
Coordination Committee's Standing Subcommittee on Public  
Safety and Social Development.

LEGISLATION

20. Not applicable.

PUBLICITY

21. A draft Ministerial Statement is at Attachment D, and a  
draft press release is at Attachment E.

TIMING

22. April 1993 is a suitable target for the conclusion of the  
policy development process, launch of new directions, and  
the completion of October 1990 election commitments. The  
International Year for the World's Indigenous Peo\_ will  
be held in 1993 and the Year of the Family in 1994.

*Daryl W. Manzie* 20/11

\_\_\_\_\_  
DARYL W. MANZIE / /1992

INTRODUCTION

In recognition of the importance of young people to our community, the Territory Government has adopted the following Youth Policy.

The policy was developed as the result of a careful process of consultation. That process is a dynamic one; consultation will continue so that the policy reflects the changing needs of Territory youth.

YOUTH POLICY

ISSUES

OF THE

NORTHERN TERRITORY

There are certain issues which affect the well-being of young people and which are related and which affect the well-being of young people.

These key issues include:

- education and vocational training
- employment
- income security
- health
- law
- transport and road safety
- leisure and arts, sport and recreation
- environment
- interpersonal relationships

These key issues are the responsibility of various community groups and government bodies, which must co-operate to identify changing needs, assess their implications and make recommendations about services.

\* In this paper, "youth" and "young people" refer to people in the 12 to 19 years age group.



YOUTH SPORT RECREATION  
& ETHNIC AFFAIRS DIVISION

## INTRODUCTION

In recognition of the importance of young people to our community, the Territory Government has adopted the following Youth Policy.

The policy was developed as the result of a careful process of consultation. That process is a dynamic one; consultation will continue so that the policy reflects the changing needs of Territory youth.

## ISSUES

There are certain key factors which are inter-related and which affect the well-being of young people.\*

These key issues include:

- education and vocational training
- employment
- income security
- health
- law
- transport and road safety
- leisure and arts, sport and recreation
- environment
- interpersonal relationships

These key issues are the responsibility of various community groups and government bodies, which must co-operate to identify changing needs, assess their implications and make recommendations about services.

\* In this paper, "youth" and "young people" mean people in the 12 to 25 years age group.

POLICY

The Government's policy is to adopt a co-ordinated approach to youth needs, and a long-term and flexible strategy to meet those needs.

The basic factors in the Government's policy are:

information - which must be accessible to youth  
consultation - youth must be consulted about their needs  
co-ordination - of youth oriented programs, both Government  
and community sponsored  
resources - must be adequate for needs of youth and the  
disadvantaged  
monitoring/evaluation - of youth programs to ensure they are  
effective.

OBJECTIVES

The Government's youth policy is intended to achieve:

- . an environment responsive to the needs, aspirations and cultural heritage of young Territorians
- . support for the family and for personal relationships with caring adults.
- . assistance for youth's participation in the community
- . availability of resources in key areas, as defined by young people
- . emphasis on disadvantaged youth in allocation of resources
- . equal opportunities in all aspects of life
- . development in youth of an individual and group identity.



IMPLEMENTATION

The policy will be implemented by:

- . co-ordination of all Government youth initiatives through the Minister
- . establishing and maintaining mechanisms for consultation, such as the Youth Forums and NT Youth Advisory Council. Particular emphasis will be placed on developing effective consultation with Aborigines on youth needs
- . sharing with community groups, responsibility for meeting youth needs (by consultation and by payment of grants-in-aid)
- . providing
  - educational opportunities
  - employment "
  - health and welfare services,
  - counselling and information services
  - preventative programs to deal with youth problems including crime and drug abuse
  - support for income security systems
  - sport and recreation facilities
  - funding for special projects
- . co-ordinating the provision of emergency accommodation services for young people
- . reviewing all legislation to determine its effects on youth

- reviewing all Government initiatives to determine their effect on youth
- giving special consideration to disadvantaged youth
- evaluating services provided to youth by community organisations
- ensuring that community organisations are acting in consultation with youth, before grants-in-aid are approved for youth services.

## PLAN FOR YOUTH

### SUMMARY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations are concentrated between 12 and 25 years, making these young people very important to the Territory's success. The Territory Government will ensure that these young people have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of youth services and activities, where necessary, young people in many different areas of endeavour, recreation and community activities.

To ensure that the needs and aspirations of young people are understood and met by government, a Youth Advisory Council, composed of people between the ages of 12 and 25 years, will be set up to provide advice to the responsible Minister and seek an exchange of ideas between the Territory, other States in Australia, Asian and Pacific countries and youth organisations in other parts of the world.

In order to ensure youth programs are not duplicated and resources are used to best effect a Youth Policy Unit is to be set up to play a co-ordinating role across the many agencies which conduct youth-related programs.

## YOUTH TODAY

### Under Country Liberal Government:

Youth leisure centres across the Territory, such as Tardis, Fire Escape, Y Joint, Centre Centre and Katherine YMCA have been funded.

Youth recreation organisations, such as the Scout, Guide and Surf Life Saving movements have been supported with professional and financial assistance to bring them to full State Branch status.

Territory junior sports teams and individuals have been given funds to help them develop

their potential through the Sport Travel Subsidy and Sports Scholarship schemes.

Funding has been provided for long term development school hockey programs.

A Youth Leadership Program and other initiatives have opened up new opportunities for young Aboriginal people to join sport and other recreation activities.

There has been continued strong support for young people to join in community recreation activities through Life, Be In It.

## YOUTH TOMORROW

### The next Country Liberal Government will:

Set up a Youth Advisory Council, of people between the ages of 12 and 25 years, to advise the Minister on youth programs and youth affairs and exchange views and ideas with other youth agencies and organisations within

Australia, among neighbouring countries and across the world.

Set up a Youth Policy Unit to plan and co-ordinate youth programs in co-operation with the responsible government agencies and community groups.



# Our Plans for a better Territory.

Country Liberal Government. Securing Your Future.

## PLAN FOR YOUTH

### SUMMARY

About a quarter of the population are people aged between 12 and 25 years, making these young people very important to the Territory's success tomorrow.

The Territory's Country Liberal Government is only too aware of the role that young people will play in the future and through a number of government agencies seeks to encourage, provide services and assist, where necessary, young people in many different areas of endeavour, recreation and community activities.

To ensure that the needs and aspirations of young people are understood and met by government, a Youth Advisory Council, composed of people between the ages of 12 and 25 years, will be set up to provide advice to the responsible Minister and seek an exchange of ideas between the Territory, other States in Australia, Asian and Pacific countries and youth organisations in other parts of the world.

In order to ensure youth programs are not duplicated and resources are used to best effect a Youth Policy Unit is to be set up to play a co-ordinating role across the many agencies which conduct youth-related programs.

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- Funding has been provided for long term development school highly programs.
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- Set up a Youth Policy Unit to plan and co-ordinate youth programs in co-operation with the responsible government agencies and community groups

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- Promote youth programs which are responsive to the needs of young people through community organisations.
- Provide funding for the salaries and training of youth workers, training of volunteers and youth facilities.
- Set up an accreditation scheme for Territory youth workers.
- Start new youth programs for early adolescents, recognising the lack of existing programs in this area and their special needs.
- Expand the current Rental Rebate Scheme to allow young single people sharing Housing Commission multi-bedroom accommodation to be eligible under the scheme.
- Set up a monitoring system for current and future youth programs with both government and community organisations to ensure quality and the achievement of goals.
- Provide direct and indirect financial support to Community Coaching to assist with coaching and refereeing standards for the 'Aussie Sports' program for the 13 to 18 year age group.

2. Establish a Youth Advisory Body to provide ongoing advice to the Minister.

3. Adopt a consistent approach to the development of a Youth Policy which:

- recognises that youth (12-25 years) are not a homogeneous group, they and their families originate from a variety of backgrounds and have different needs and aspirations;
- accepts youth as a period of transition from childhood dependence to adult independence;
- acknowledges the need for providing culturally relevant services to young Aboriginal people living in remote communities as well as urban centres; and
- values the views of young people.

4. Prepare a Policy Statement which includes:

- (a) an acknowledgment of the unique contribution made by youth to the community;
- (b) a declaration of aspirations for young people, including those of young people and the wider community;
- (c) recognition of the major challenges facing today's young Territorians e.g. developing a healthy life-style, maintaining supportive social and interpersonal relationships, acquiring marketable skills, securing employment, and obtaining independent accommodation, and recognition of challenges which can be predicted for the youth of tomorrow.

NORTHERN TERRITORY YOUTH POLICY  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1992/1993

(A) OBJECTIVES - YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT

1. Conduct an extensive community consultation which ensures the involvement of:
  - significant numbers of urban, rural and remote area Youth;
  - individuals and groups from all major Territory communities; and
  - relevant government and non-government organisations.
2. Establish a Youth Advisory Body to provide ongoing advice to the Minister.
3. Adopt a consistent approach to the development of a Youth Policy which:
  - recognises that youth (12-25 years) are not a homogeneous group, they and their families originate from a variety of backgrounds and have different needs and aspirations;
  - accepts youth as a period of transition from childhood dependence to adult independence;
  - acknowledges the need for providing culturally relevant services to young Aboriginal people living in remote communities as well as urban centres; and
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4. Prepare a Policy Statement which includes:
  - (a) an acknowledgement of the unique contribution made by youth to the community;
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  - (c) recognition of the major challenges facing today's young Territorians e.g. developing a healthy life-style, maintaining supportive social and interpersonal relationships, acquiring marketable skills, securing employment, and obtaining independent accommodation, and recognition of challenges which can be predicted for the youth of tomorrow;

-2-

- (d) recognition of the nature and intensity of barriers which may hinder the success of young people in meeting these challenges;
  - (e) clarification of the roles, rights and responsibilities of society, young people and families in relation to these barriers/challenges;
  - (f) encouragement of realistic expectations about the degree to which society can support young people and protect them from the harmful effects of social, cultural and economic problems;
  - (g) identification and clarification of goals and responsibility for the provision of services by individual departments and non-government organisations; and
  - (h) identification of the values and principles that should guide service providers in determining youth needs, prioritising the allocation of resources to meet these needs, and developing/delivering services (e.g. access, equity, participation, cultural relevance).
5. Audit existing programs/policy and recommend new strategies to address Youth Policy Goals. This should include a strategy for the future planning, monitoring, coordination and evaluation of youth programs.

**B. REVIEW PROCESS - YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

- 1. The Department of Health and Community Services to provide a full-time Project Officer (9 months, AO6) for providing support to the policy review process (August 1992).
- 2. The review of existing Youth Policy and development of a new Northern Territory Youth Policy to be coordinated by a working party established under the Coordination Committee's Standing Sub-committee on Public Safety and Social Development. The working party to be chaired by the Department of Health and Community Services.
- 3. A consultation strategy to be developed by the working party with due consideration given to the policy development objectives and the availability of resources from relevant departments. Strategy to be agreed upon and commenced by end of November 1992.

- DRAFT STATEMENT FOR LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
4. Results of the community consultation to be summarised and a draft Youth Policy to be submitted to Cabinet in March 1993.
  5. April 1993 Northern Territory Youth Policy to be adopted and Strategies/Programs to be identified which will address Youth Policy Goals. These Strategies/Programs, along with their resource implications, to be recommended to Government.
- MR SPEAKER, MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
- REVIEW OF YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

THE CURRENT YOUTH POLICY WAS DEVELOPED IN 1984, AND SINCE THEN MAJOR CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED WHICH IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE. THIS POLICY REVIEW WILL HELP GOVERNMENT DEVELOP NEW STRATEGIES TO ASSIST YOUNG PEOPLE MEET THE CHALLENGES THAT CONFRONT THEM TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE 1990s.

MR SPEAKER, YOUTH IS A PERIOD OF TRANSITION FROM CHILDHOOD DEPENDENCE TO ADULT INDEPENDENCE. DURING THIS TIME YOUNG PEOPLE FACE A WIDE RANGE OF CHALLENGES. SOME OF THESE INCLUDE ACQUIRING MARKETABLE SKILLS, SECURING EMPLOYMENT, OBTAINING INDEPENDENT ACCOMMODATION, AND MAINTAINING SUPPORTIVE SOCIAL/INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

MORE THAN A QUARTER OF THE TERRITORY'S POPULATION FITS INTO THE BROAD CATEGORY ACCEPTED AS "YOUTH". THIS GROUP INCLUDES ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS IN THE TWELVE TO TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGE GROUP. MR SPEAKER, IT IS RECOGNISED THAT THIS AGE GROUP MAKES A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE TERRITORY'S ONGOING PROGRESS. IT IS ALSO RECOGNISED THAT THIS SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY IS VITAL FOR THE TERRITORY'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT. THEIR POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED AND MAXIMISED.

SECURING EMPLOYMENT IS A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT CHALLENGE FACING YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY. HIGH LEVELS OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT ARE OF CONCERN NATIONALLY. THE BROADER EFFECTS OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT ARE LARGELY UNKNOWN. HOWEVER, IT CAN BE

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DARYL MANZIE, MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES ON A  
PROPOSAL TO REVIEW THE YOUTH POLICY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

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ANTICIPATED THAT YOUNG PEOPLE WILL HAVE SEVERELY LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP WORK RELATED SKILLS IF THEY ARE UNABLE TO ENTER THE WORKFORCE. THIS, MR SPEAKER, WILL MOST CERTAINLY HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON FUTURE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

THIS GOVERNMENT MUST ALSO CONSIDER THAT CRIME, HOMELESSNESS, AND PROBLEMS IN RELATION TO HEALTH AND WELFARE, MAY BE INCREASING AS A RESULT OF HIGH RATES OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT.

TRADITIONALLY YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT HAS BEEN ADDRESSED THROUGH THE PROVISION OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AIMED AT MAKING YOUNG PEOPLE MORE COMPETITIVE IN THE LABOUR MARKET. THE SITUATION NOW INDICATES THAT BROADER, MORE CREATIVE APPROACHES MUST BE APPLIED TO THE PROBLEM OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT.

IN THE MORE REMOTE AREAS OF THE TERRITORY A ZERO EMPLOYMENT RATE FOR YOUTH IS NOT UNCOMMON. YOUNG PEOPLE GROWING UP IN THESE LOCALITIES FACE A DIFFICULT TIME MAKING THE TRANSITION FROM CHILDHOOD DEPENDENCE TO PRODUCTIVE ADULT INDEPENDENCE. WITH RAPID CHANGES IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL CULTURE IT APPEARS THAT SOME YOUNG PEOPLE ARE "COPING" WITH CHANGE THROUGH ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE, AND IN PARTICULAR PETROL SNIFFING.

TWENTY-EIGHT PERCENT OF YOUNG TERRITORIANS ARE ABORIGINAL. THIS PERCENTAGE IS SIGNIFICANT. IT IS RECOGNISED THAT CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES MUST BE AVAILABLE FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH LIVING IN RURAL AND AS WELL AS URBAN COMMUNITIES.

IN ADDITION TO THIS, 1994 IS THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE HAS HAD A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON FAMILIES. FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES AND ASSOCIATED EMOTIONAL STRESS CAN RESULT IN FAMILIES BEING UNABLE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

MR SPEAKER, A REVIEW OF THE CURRENT YOUTH POLICY IS IN THE INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY GENERALLY, AND THE REVIEW WILL BE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO PARENTS, TEACHERS, SERVICE PROVIDERS, EMPLOYERS, VICTIMS OF JUVENILE CRIME, AND OF COURSE, YOUNG PEOPLE THEMSELVES. FOR THIS REASON THE REVIEW MUST PROVIDE SUFFICIENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION BY ALL TERRITORIANS. IT MUST ALSO RECOGNISE THAT MANY PEOPLE WITH INSIGHT INTO THIS AREA MAY NOT BE EXPERIENCED IN COMMUNICATING THEIR VIEWS AND SPECIAL EFFORTS MUST BE MADE TO INVOLVE THESE PEOPLE IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS.

THE REVIEW PROCESS WILL BE FACILITATED BY A WORKING PARTY OF THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE. THIS WORKING PARTY WILL DIRECTED BY A STANDING SUB-COMMITTEE HAVING SPECIAL EXPERTISE IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL AVAILABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT JOIN THE WORKING PARTY WILL BE CHAIRED BY MY DEPARTMENT AND IT WILL CONSIST OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL RELEVANT NORTHERN TERRITORY DEPARTMENTS. THESE REPRESENTATIVES WILL ACT AS RESOURCES FOR THE WORKING PARTY, AND BE CALLED ON TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC EXPERTISE IN RELATION TO EMPLOYMENT, SPORT AND RECREATION, HOUSING, EDUCATION, ARTS, WELFARE, HEALTH, JUVENILE JUSTICE, POLICE AND LEGAL ISSUES.

THE WORKING PARTY WILL ACTIVELY SEEK OUT THE EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE YOUTH FIELD. COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENTS AND ORGANISATIONS BASED IN OTHER STATES WILL ALSO BE CONSULTED. A STRATEGY WILL BE DEVELOPED FOR CONSULTING WITH AS MANY YOUNG TERRITORIANS AS POSSIBLE. A YOUTH ADVISORY BODY ANNOUNCED PRIOR TO THE LAST TERRITORY ELECTION WILL BE IMPLEMENTED. TO FURTHER INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE REVIEW PROCESS YOUTH FORUMS WILL BE HELD IN ALL MAJOR TERRITORY CENTRES.

MR SPEAKER, THE REVISED YOUTH POLICY WILL PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES FACING YOUNG TERRITORIANS. IT WILL IDENTIFY THE NATURE AND INTENSITY OF BARRIERS WHICH MAY HINDER THE SUCCESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN MEETING THESE CHALLENGES.

THE REVISED YOUTH POLICY WILL IDENTIFY REALISTIC GOALS FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO YOUNG PEOPLE. IT WILL CLARIFY THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD GUIDE SERVICE PROVIDERS IN DETERMINING YOUTH NEEDS, IN ALLOCATING RESOURCES TO MEET THESE NEEDS AND IN DEVELOPING OR DELIVERING SERVICES FOR YOUTH. PRINCIPLES SUCH AS EQUAL ACCESS, EQUITY, PARTICIPATION, AND CULTURAL RELEVANCE WILL BE MAIN FEATURES OF THIS NEW YOUTH POLICY.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT ALL AVAILABLE MEANS OF ASSISTING YOUNG PEOPLE ARE EXPLORED TO ENSURE THAT THE NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT IS RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY AND APPROPRIATELY TO THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY.

MR. SPEAKER, I BELIEVE THAT THE REVIEW PROCESS WILL GUARANTEE THAT POLICY DEVELOPMENTS ARE APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT IT WILL SECURE GENUINE BENEFITS FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF TODAY AND THE NORTHERN TERRITORY COMMUNITY OF TOMORROW.

**MEDIA RELEASE**

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, DARYL MANZIE, TODAY ANNOUNCED PLANS TO REVIEW THE NORTHERN TERRITORY'S YOUTH POLICY.

MR MANZIE SAID "THE CURRENT POLICY WAS DEVELOPED IN 1984, AND SINCE THEN MAJOR CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED WHICH IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE. THE POLICY REVIEW WILL HELP GOVERNMENT DEVELOP NEW STRATEGIES TO ASSIST YOUNG PEOPLE MEET THE CHALLENGES THAT CONFRONT THEM TODAY AND THROUGHOUT THE 1990s."

ALL NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT AND COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENTS PROVIDING SERVICES TO YOUNG PEOPLE WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE REVIEW, INCLUDING EDUCATION, HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, POLICE, CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, AND, SPORT, RECREATION AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS. THE EXPERTISE AND RESOURCES OF COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY WILL SOUGHT TO ASSIST WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW NORTHERN TERRITORY YOUTH POLICY.

MR MANZIE SAID, "THE REVIEW WILL FOCUS ON AN EXTENSIVE TERRITORY WIDE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION. A YOUTH ADVISORY BODY WILL BE FORMED AND YOUTH FORUMS HELD IN THE MAJOR REGIONAL CENTRES TO INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE REVIEW PROCESS". PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION WILL ALSO BE GIVEN TO CONSULTING WITH ABORIGINAL YOUTH AND TERRITORIANS LIVING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.

THE NEW POLICY WILL CONSIDER YOUTH (12-25 YEARS) AS A PERIOD OF TRANSITION FROM CHILDHOOD DEPENDENCE TO ADULT INDEPENDENCE. IT WILL ACKNOWLEDGE THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION MADE BY YOUNG PEOPLE TO THE TERRITORY'S ONGOING PROGRESS AND IT WILL RECOGNISE THAT YOUNG TERRITORIANS AND THEIR FAMILIES COME FROM A WIDE RANGE OF BACKGROUNDS AND THAT THEY HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS AND DIFFERENT ASPIRATIONS.

ACTION OFFICER:            THERESE SHEAHAN - 892726

PRESS SECRETARY:        MIKE DALE - 896468

Australian and New Zealand Youth Ministers' Council

A Discussion Paper October 1992

Australian Government Publishing Service  
Canberra

# Australian Youth Policy

## A Statement of Principles and Objectives

Australian and New Zealand Youth Ministers' Council

A Discussion Paper October 1992

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## BACKGROUND

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Local, State, Territory and Commonwealth Government agencies offer a wide range of programs and services which help young people to reach social and economic independence.

State, Territory and Commonwealth Youth Ministers and local government representatives recognise, however, the need for a holistic policy framework across various government agencies to successfully address the often complex and diverse needs of young people.

Consequently, at the May 1992 Youth Ministers' Council in Adelaide, South Australia, Ministers endorsed the draft "*Australian Youth Policy: A Statement of Principles and Objectives*", and agreed to the publication of the statement as a working document for community consultation and comment.



## PURPOSE

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The purpose of the *Australian Youth Policy, A Statement of Principles and Objectives*, is to establish a nationally agreed framework for Youth Ministers against which youth policy development and program and service delivery can be better coordinated across various agencies to comprehensively meet the needs of all young Australians. The statement also aims to encourage recognition of young people's role and place in the community.

This policy statement is intended to be reviewed annually at the Youth Ministers' Council. The publication and distribution of it is only the beginning of the process. It is intended that it will stimulate discussion on the full range of issues which affect young people. Consequently, this document should be seen as a working document which will form the basis of ongoing consultation with young people and those who work with them leading to the regular reviewing and revising of this statement by Youth Ministers.

Government agencies, community organisations and individuals are invited to comment on or provide additional input to the statement by 31 December 1992. This will ensure that comments can be brought to the attention of Youth Ministers at their next meeting in May 1993. Your responses should be addressed to:

The Australian Youth Policy  
c/- Commonwealth Youth Bureau  
GPO Box 9880  
Canberra ACT 2601  
Telephone: 06-2768460

## INTRODUCTION

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Youth Ministers believe that young people require a supportive and informative environment to move successfully from the dependence of childhood to the autonomy of adulthood. Society as a whole should value young people and encourage them to reach their full potential as individuals and as active citizens.

Youth Ministers recognise the current challenges facing young people such as unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment. They acknowledge the existing innovative responses and programs provided by Local, State, Territory and Commonwealth Governments and urge Governments to support a continuing policy focus on the needs of young people.

Youth Ministers recognise that a holistic approach is essential in working with young people to address their needs. The issues young people are dealing with are complex and diverse and should be considered as a whole rather than in isolation. They may include education, employment, training, health, accommodation, income support, literacy, recreation, information, transport, and personal identity and development, all of which must be viewed within the context of age, gender, cultural background, geographic location, family/support structures, class, physical and intellectual ability, and responsibility for dependents. These complexities are exacerbated by the sparse spread of population in many areas.

Youth Ministers acknowledge the United Nations definition of young people, which is those who are between 12 and 25 years of age inclusive.

## PRINCIPLES

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To support young people in reaching their full potential, the development and implementation of youth policy and programs should be based on the following principles:

### EQUITY

Recognition of the rights, and associated responsibilities, of all young people to equality of opportunity and equitable distribution of services and resources.

### PARTICIPATION

Recognition that young people are participants in society and as such have a role and responsibility in making decisions which affect their lives.

### ACCESS

Access to adequate and appropriate programs and services for all young people regardless of gender, geographic location, social, cultural or economic circumstances.

## NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

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Whilst recognising that improving the position of and opportunities for Australia's young people will require the cooperative effort of various portfolios within all levels of government and the non-government sector, Youth Ministers agree to progress the following national objectives:

### CONSULTATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

- 1) To increase dialogue with, and participation by, young people and those who work with them to identify issues and coordinate responses in order to meet the total needs of all young Australians.
- 2) To undertake consultation with relevant representative agencies such as the Australian Youth Policy and Action Coalition (AYPAC) and its constituents, and with State/Territory non-government youth representative bodies when developing policies and programs which impact on young people.
- 3) To ensure ongoing participation of young people in making decisions which affect their lives.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) To ensure that each level of Government - Local, State, Territory and Commonwealth - recognises its own responsibilities to provide assistance and opportunities for young people.

- 2) To develop and strengthen mechanisms for Local, State, Territory and Commonwealth coordination and cooperation which result in programs and services tailored to meet local and regional needs of young people.
- 3) To ensure that all levels of government work cooperatively with and support community organisations in the provision of programs and services for young people.

### ACCOMMODATION

- 1) To ensure that the accommodation needs of young people, particularly those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless are met.
- 2) To ensure the effective coordination of and linkages between accommodation services and other services including education and training, income support and health.

### ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

- 1) To ensure that all young people have opportunities to participate in mainstream activities outlined elsewhere in this policy statement. Where their circumstances inhibit this, there is a commitment to ensuring that specific policies and programs are established to enhance their capacity to do so.

- 2) To develop, where necessary, specific policies and programs to assist the participation of disadvantaged young people. These initiatives will take into account the distinct needs of:
- . young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
  - . young homeless people;
  - . young people with disabilities;
  - . young people who are geographically isolated;
  - . young people from non-English speaking backgrounds;
  - . young people disadvantaged by socio-economic circumstances;
  - . young women;
  - . young people in custodial care;
  - . long term unemployed young people; and
  - . young people who are physically, emotionally or sexually abused.

## EDUCATION

- 1) To ensure that the present and future educational needs of all young people are met equitably through the delivery of high quality and relevant educational opportunities.

- 2) To promote, through cooperative partnerships between educators and the community, the development of a range of options through government and non-government schools, community based education programs, and post secondary school provisions which increase educational opportunities and enable young people to reach their full potential.

## EMPLOYMENT

- 1) To increase employment opportunities for all young people by providing adequate and appropriate labour market programs and services.
- 2) To provide equity of opportunities for those less well positioned to succeed in the labour market by working to remove institutional and attitudinal barriers to the participation of disadvantaged groups.
- 3) To ensure that young people are aware of their rights and responsibilities as young workers.

## ENVIRONMENT

- 1) To provide young people with information, skills, resources and facilities which encourage their participation in creating, preserving, regenerating and sustaining the environment.

## HEALTH

- 1) To ensure that the social, economic and environmental factors impacting on the health of young people, including their mental health, are addressed by appropriate intersectoral policy development.
- 2) To assist young people to develop and maintain healthy lifestyles by ensuring that:
  - they are informed about health issues; and
  - have access to appropriate health services and advice.

## INCOME SUPPORT

- 1) To promote an adequate, equitable and accessible system of income support which is structured to maximise participation by all young people in employment, education or training, and particularly maximise the incentive to undertake further education or training or employment for young people who have left school early and/or are unemployed, homeless, or without the support of parents.

## INFORMATION

- 1) To promote comprehensive information strategies to inform young people and other members of the community of the available services and programs which address all issues impacting on young people in order to maximise effective participation.



## JUSTICE

- 1) To ensure that young people are protected from exploitation, abuse and discrimination.
- 2) To ensure that young people are aware of their legal rights and are treated justly if they come into contact with the criminal justice system.

## SPORTING, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL NEEDS

- 1) To ensure that young people are provided with opportunities to participate in sporting and recreational and cultural activities which assist in their development and encourage them to reach their full potential.

## TRANSPORT

- 1) To ensure that the specific needs of young people are considered when public transport systems are planned and delivered to ensure their access to education, training, employment, health, welfare, leisure, recreational and entertainment facilities.

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 1) To ensure access to adequate and appropriate post-compulsory education and training for all young people that will provide them with skills which lead to worthwhile and satisfying jobs.
  
- 2) To ensure that governments and the community work together to provide young people with further education and training that enables them to develop skills and knowledge required for employment, including key competencies such as:
  - . language and communication;
  
  - . mathematics;
  
  - . scientific and technological understanding;
  
  - . cultural understanding;
  
  - . problem solving; and
  
  - . personal and interpersonal characteristics.

Additionally, the following competency areas have been proposed for consideration by the Mayer Committee:

- . creativity (including the Arts);
  
- . family and household management; and
  
- . information technology.

- 3) To promote the effective integration of Australia's vocational education and training system with schools, universities and the labour market.
- 4) To encourage all sectors of the education and training system to work together to improve the skills and knowledge of young Australians by providing articulated on and off-the-job education and training opportunities.
- 5) To provide vocational education and training that is more relevant and responsive to the needs of young people, industry and the community.

This will include:

- . access to a range of different education and training pathways;
  - . development of nationally agreed core competencies;
  - . maximum recognition of skills and knowledge acquired in one education and training setting when an individual moves to another setting; and
  - . ensuring that all young people, particularly the disadvantaged, have equal access to education and training opportunities.
- 6) To create within a training environment, appropriate, equitable and effective programs that recognise the differing learning styles and needs of young people.

## WORKERS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

- 1) To support the development of a consistent and high quality system of education and training for workers with young people.
- 2) To support the development and recognition of national competency standards for workers with young people, leading towards the development of a national core curriculum for workers with young people which is recognised by the National Training Board. This will enhance current joint training initiatives and seek to ensure a consistently high standard of training, leading to better service delivery and quality outcomes for young people.