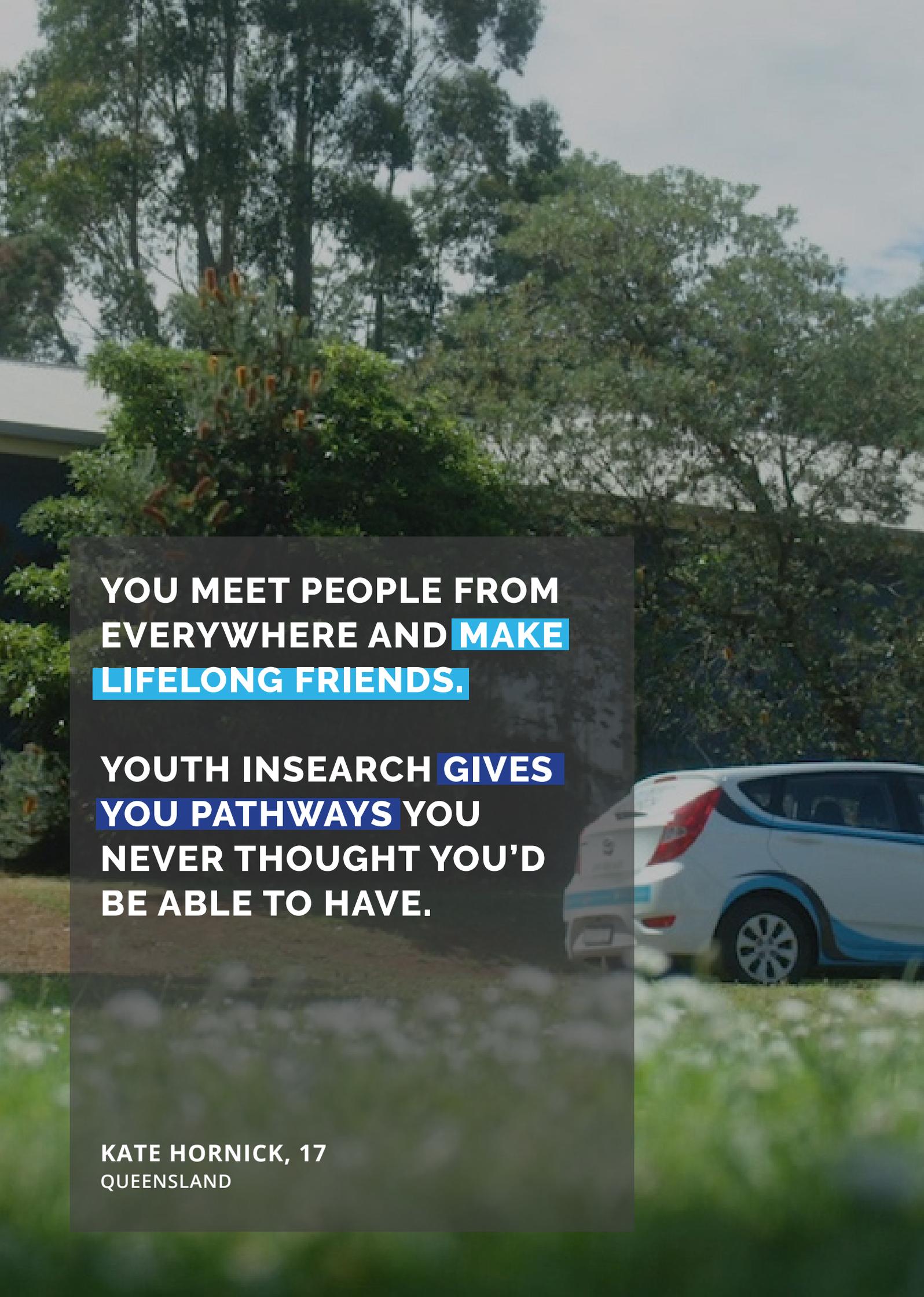




ANNUAL REPORT

2018



**YOU MEET PEOPLE FROM
EVERYWHERE AND **MAKE
LIFELONG FRIENDS.****

**YOUTH INSEARCH **GIVES
YOU PATHWAYS** YOU
NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D
BE ABLE TO HAVE.**

**KATE HORNICK, 17
QUEENSLAND**

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CEO MESSAGE



Garry Rothwell, Chair



Heath Ducker, CEO

HEATH DUCKER

Heath Ducker, CEO

Youth Insearch continued the rapid growth it has experienced since 2012, with a string of achievements this year.

This year saw Youth Insearch clock up over 240,000 volunteer hours, with over 1,200 weekend workshop participants, 1,500 support group sessions and 2,200 instances of support provided. One of our Youth Leaders, Aimee Caufield, was named Volunteer of the Year for New England, NSW.

The stories of the young people remain awe inspiring, and we are privileged to share these with you herein. Like Cassie, who had turned to drugs, self-harm and contemplated suicide. "Without Youth Insearch, I would be homeless or dead", she says.

As always, the young people arrived with significant challenges. 90% were committing crimes and 60% were suicidal. Yet, when given the opportunity, these young people take it with both hands. Of those committing crimes, our evaluations show 69% stopped crime. Thankfully, 77% reported no longer feeling suicidal, with all young people being followed up and supported on an ongoing basis. 75% report feeling loved, often for the first time in their lives.

This was all made possible by a solid fundraising performance, with donations of \$1.71 million raised, including the doubling of government and corporate funding. The generosity of

our donors and supporters continues to inspire us, many who return to support us year on year. All up revenues increased 11% to \$1.81 million.

Central was the completion of the Youth Insearch Strategic Plan for 2018-2021. Youth Insearch is committed to helping hundreds more young people in the years to come. This plan sets the framework for making this dream a reality. The plan includes 3 key goals, supported by 16 objectives, and 70 key initiatives. The development of the plan involved the Board, Executive, Volunteers and Staff. The result is a shared vision we all passionately believe in.

Our work refining the program continues, in 2018 engaging an external consulting firm to update our Program Logic, Theory of Change and Evaluation Process. In this regard, Youth Insearch is committed to best practice across its program, while retaining the authenticity of our work. To get there we brought together our volunteers, participants and staff in workshops over many months. In the end, we were proud to produce a framework that both anchors the program in the latest research and protects the integrity of what we do.

Partnerships are critical to our fundraising and program delivery efforts, and this year marked the development of some significant agreements. Amongst these is NSW Rugby League, that have

committed to yearly fundraising events, and the delivery of a joint program "Changing Rooms", which offers the Youth Insearch program to junior rugby league clubs across NSW.

We are constantly looking at ways to impact more young lives, and this year also presented the opportunity to deliver the Try, Test, Learn, Support for VET Students program for the Department of Social Services. The project is managed by Mission Australia, and Youth Insearch is contracted to deliver the program in the Tamworth, Gunnedah, Moree and Narrabri regions. The program provides intensive individual case support to young people at risk of not completing their studies, and complements our core program of weekend workshops, support groups and mentoring. The aim is to assist 100 young people through this project.

These are a selection of the achievements during the year, which was completed with an award as Finalist in the Western Sydney Awards for Business Excellence for 2018. This and the other achievements are only made possible by the collective work of our Board, Staff and Volunteers and we want to extend to them our deepest gratitude for another year of exceptional and inspiring work.



ABOUT US

Youth Insearch is an independent charitable organisation that runs one of the most successful youth intervention programs in Australia. Over 31,500 young people have participated in our programs nationwide.

HISTORY

Youth Insearch was founded in 1985 by a Youth Development Counsellor at the Riverstone Community Neighbourhood Centre in North West Sydney. He believed that individual counselling was slow and had little impact on the community as a whole. He met with the young people he was counselling to discuss what would be more effective. Together they wrote the Youth Insearch program.

The outcomes in Riverstone were outstanding and profiled by the late Andrew Olle in a radio interview with the founder on 2BL in 1987. Mr Olle then interviewed a local police commander who stated the Riverstone Police Station was closing half its operations because youth crime, delinquency and alcohol and drug use and dealing had hit an all-time low because of the program. This was the start of national media coverage and a rapid expansion of the program across Australia.

In the 1990's, Youth Insearch was established in the United Kingdom in partnership with the United Nations Child Development Fund and in New Zealand in partnership with a NZ police officer.

PURPOSE

To empower young people to take control of their lives and play a positive role in society.

PATRON

His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), Governor of New South Wales.

OBJECTIVES

- Reduce the incidence of crime, violence, drug & alcohol abuse, self-harm and suicide in young people
- Relieve the suffering and helplessness of young people affected by distressing issues
- Break the cycle of family breakdown by giving young people some of the skills essential to be a successful parent
- Teach young people the positive values of life
- Teach young people the value of education and increase education and employment

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The Youth Insearch program consists of two core components:

- Weekend Workshops
- Local Support - support groups & mentoring in the local community

Peer-to-peer support and leadership is an essential part of the program. All these elements combine to create significant change in the young people.

ACCOLADES

The success of Youth Insearch is recognised nationwide. Youth Insearch has featured extensively in the media. This includes 60 Minutes, A Current Affair, 7:30 Report, 4 Corners, Today and Sunday Night programs. Youth Insearch is the recipient of the Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Award, Sydney Morning Herald Youth Award and Promising Practice Profile from the Australian Institute of Family Studies. In August 2018, Youth Insearch was recognised as a Finalist in the Western Sydney Awards for Business Excellence.



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YEARS IN REVIEW

(1985~2017)

31,500

Number of Individual Participants

115

Number of Leaders Training Workshops

71,000

Number of Support Group Sessions

350

Support Adults Trained

820

Number of Weekend Workshops

950

Youth and Adult Leaders Trained

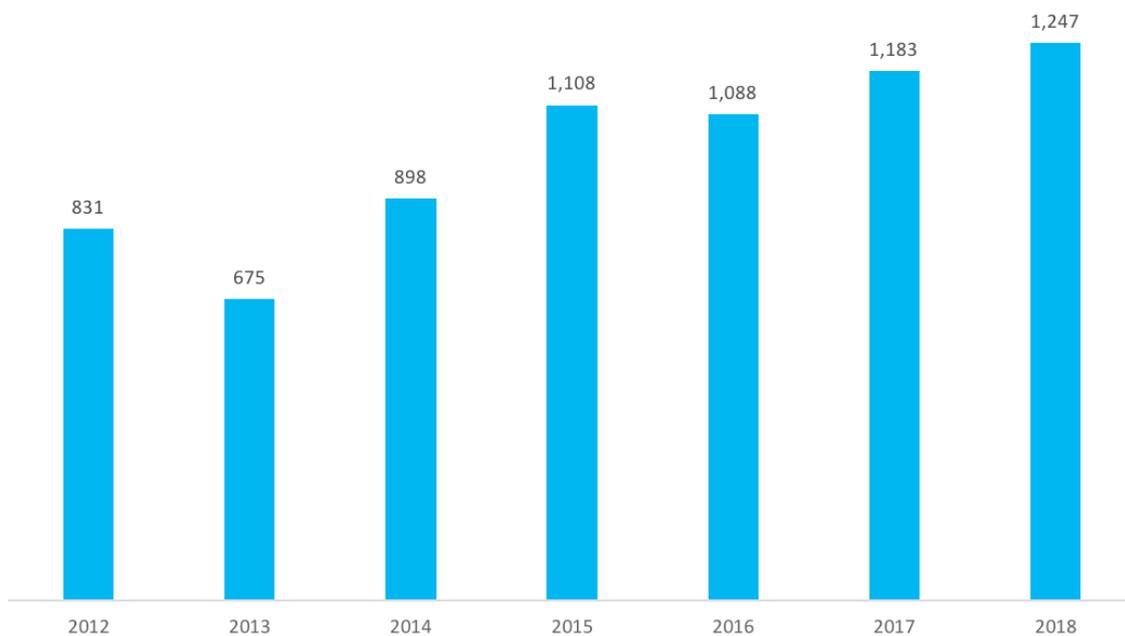


2018 SNAPSHOT

At a glance:	2018
Number of Volunteers (Youth Leaders, Adult Leaders, Support Adults)	201
Volunteer Hours (Youth Leaders, Adult Leaders, Support Adults)	242,406
Number of Weekend Workshops	21
Number of Support Locations (Support Groups/Mentoring)	45
Number of Support Group Sessions	1,560
Number of Participations	1,247
Instances of Support	2,227

TOTAL PROGRAM REGISTRATIONS

Total attendance at the program continued to increase in 2018, further evidencing the increasing reach and demand for the program.



WHO WE HELP

Youth Insearch is available to all young people aged 14-20. Youth Insearch brings young people from all walks of life together to help each other navigate life and reach their full potential. Many young people come to us when they are struggling to find a way forward.

This includes young people suffering from:

- family separation, conflict, neglect and domestic violence
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- grief and loss
- bullying
- low self-esteem

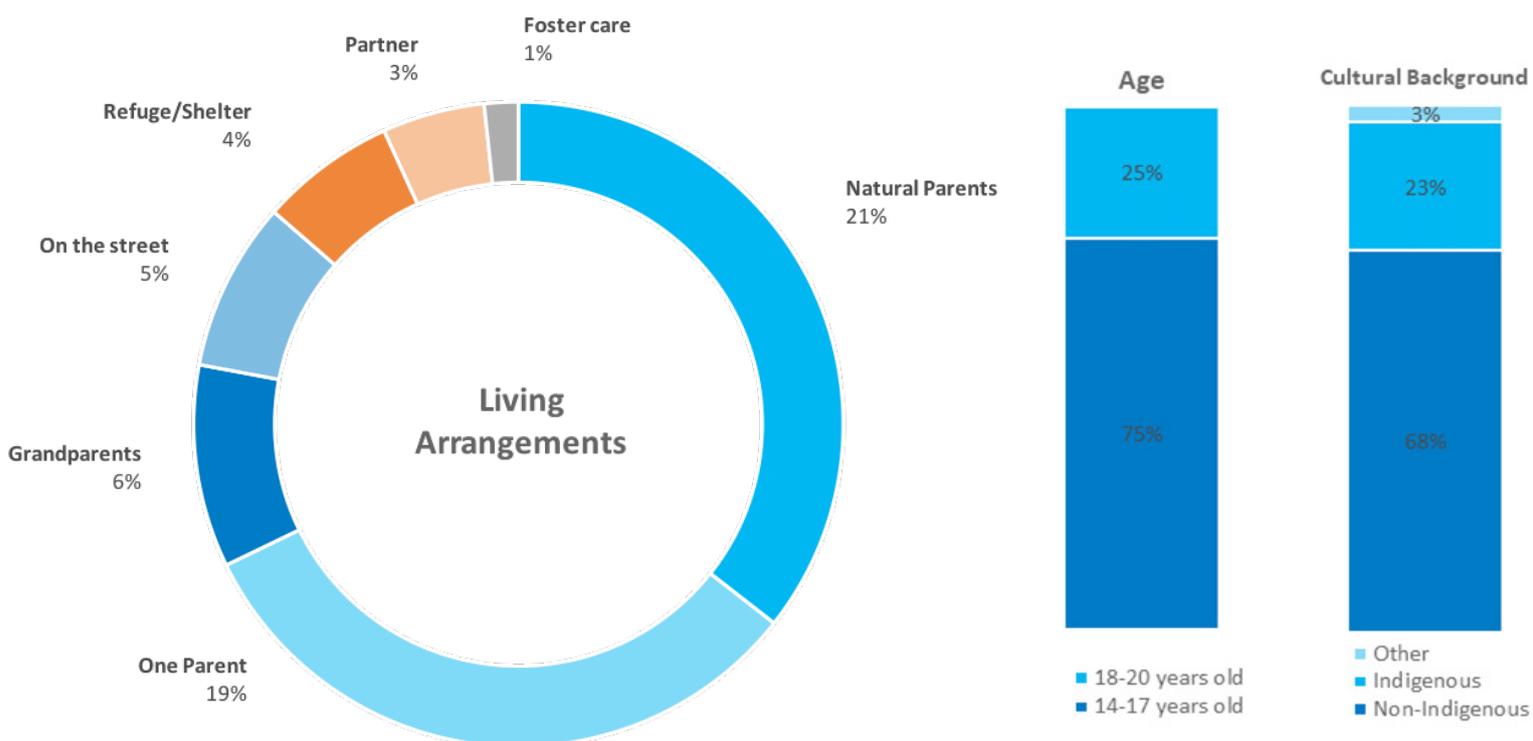
Young people referred often exhibit the following behaviours:

- suicidal thoughts
- suicide attempts and self-harm
- drug and alcohol abuse
- committing crimes
- violence towards others
- truancy from school
- lack motivation to participate in society
- uncooperative at home

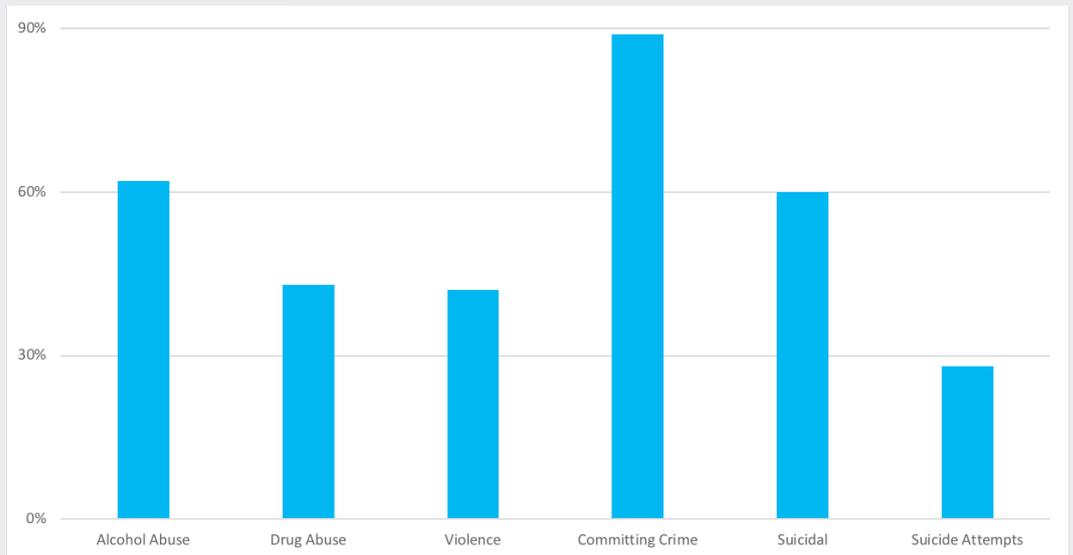
Youth Insearch is often successful for young people that have not taken to mainstream interventions.

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC

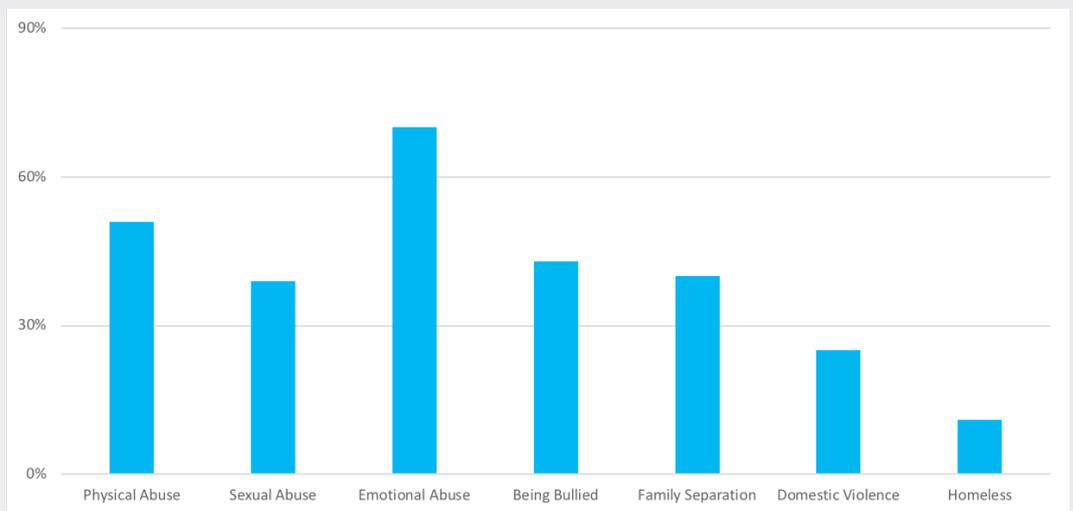
This year the program provided over 2,227 instances of support in our Weekend Workshops, Support Groups and support interactions. The following summarises the demographic of the young people assisted.



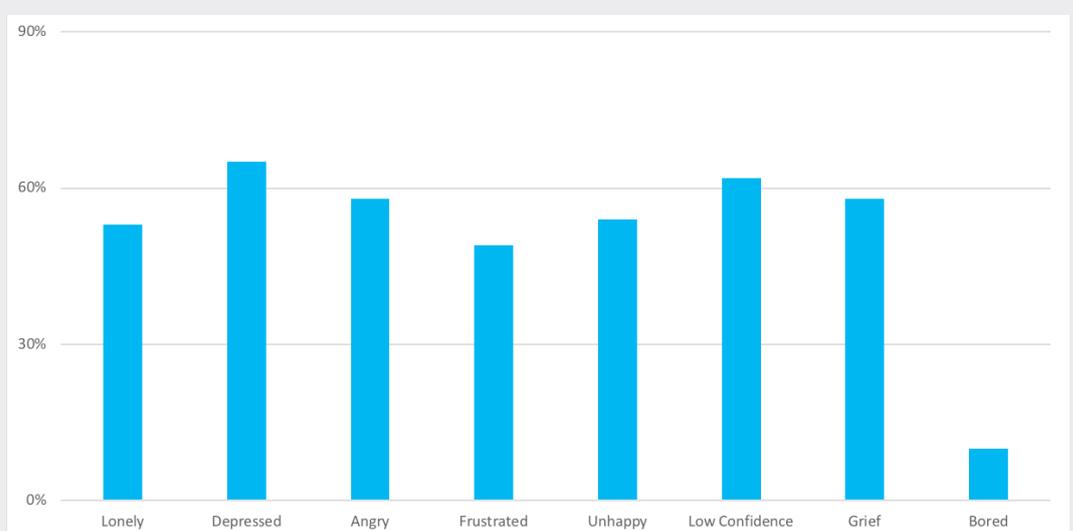
BEHAVIOURS



SITUATIONS



FEELINGS



Education



- Left school
- Still in school

A light grey silhouette of the map of Australia is positioned in the background of the page. The title 'WHERE WE HELP' is overlaid on the map, with a blue horizontal bar behind the text.

WHERE WE HELP

During FY2018, Youth Insearch operated in **109 communities** across NSW, QLD and VIC.

Weekend workshops continued to be delivered in central locations in Tamworth and Toukley in NSW, Rawson in VIC, and Bundaberg and Duckadang in QLD.

Support Groups operate in **45 of our local communities** on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Mentoring support is provided in all our operational areas.

REFERRAL AGENCIES

This year, **88% of referral services rated the Youth Insearch program to be effective** or very effective.

Young people are referred from a wide variety of agencies:

- Departments of Families, Community Services, Health
- Departments of Juvenile Justice, Police, Courts
- Youth Services, Community Centres
- Counsellors, Psychologists, Social Workers
- Schools, TAFE's, Job Agencies
- Youth Refuges, Shelters

QLD

Brisbane
Bundaberg
Caboolture
Chinchilla
Dalby
Gold Coast
Gympie
Hervey Bay
Ipswich
Kingaroy
Logan
Maryborough
Roma
Tara
Tin Can Bay
Toowoomba
Warwick

NSW

Armidale
Castle Hill
Coonabarabran
Coonamble
Gulgong
Gunnedah
Inverell
Narrabri
Newcastle
Port Macquarie
Raymond Terrace
Salamander Bay
Tamworth
Taree
Warrawong

VIC

Bairnsdale
Broadmeadows
Lakes Entrance
La Trobe Valley
Maffra
Melbourne
Morwell
Orbost
Rosedale
Sale
Shepparton
Sunshine
Wonthaggi

Cassandra Long

Participant

“Without Youth Insearch, I would be either homeless or dead”.



Cassie participated in her first Youth Insearch program when she was 16 years old.

Cassie was struggling with the effects of being bullied at school and the mental abuse endured when she was younger.

“I honestly didn’t have a future before Youth Insearch,” Cassie says.

Cassie had turned to drugs, alcohol, self-harming and was having suicidal thoughts.

Due to not attending school and the little effort she was putting in, Cassie was expelled and started to attend a literacy and numeracy course instead.

It was shortly after this that Cassie attended her first weekend workshop.

“I was extremely nervous, but everyone was so welcoming and heart-warming,” Cassie says.

Cassie realised she was caught in a repetitive cycle of bad decisions and choices she made to help deal with her issues and mental abuse she had gone through.

“Youth Insearch boosted my confidence and helped me realise I was worthy of a life.”

“I now know I can do whatever I put my mind to” and “I shape my own future, nobody else does.”

Cassie was inspired to become a Youth Insearch Leader, which she completed this year.

“The leadership training gave me the skills to prepare for my future including being able to communicate, making me more confident and self-loving.

Reflecting on her Youth Insearch journey, Cassie believes, “Without Youth Insearch, I would be either homeless or dead”.

“Instead, I’m enrolled in a Bachelor of Education degree at university and aim to become a high school teacher” and “my life-long goal is to lead a happy and healthy life while helping others to do the same.”



1 WEEKEND WORKSHOPS

Our weekend workshops are a 48-hour retreat commencing at 6pm on a Friday and concluding at 3pm on a Sunday. A typical workshop consists of an average of 50 young people, 8 support adults, and 17 youth and adult Leaders (including trainees).

Weekend workshops are made up of a number of program elements intended to create change for young people. These include group counselling sessions, fun events and 'hassle sessions' wherein young people share and work through difficulties they have experienced with family, abuse, grief and drugs and alcohol with their peers.

The workshops are administered by extensively trained Youth and Adult Leaders. Youth Leaders facilitate group work on general life skills. Adult Leaders facilitate the group "hassles sessions". Each workshop is overseen by a clinical psychologist.

Sessions conducted on the weekend include:

- Communication
- Self-Esteem
- Trust
- Entertainment
- Parent/adolescent, drugs & alcohol, sexual assault and grief hassles
- Relaxation

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Youth Insearch offers local support for the young people, ensuring each young person can embark on a program of change while remaining within their own home and school environment. This is comprised of the following elements.

POST-WORKSHOP ASSESSMENTS

The Community Coordinators immediately review the evaluation forms completed by the young people at the end of each weekend workshop to identify any issues that require immediate follow up and actions the help required.

WEEKLY SUPPORT GROUPS

Between the weekend workshops the young people attend weekly support groups in their local area. The support groups are held within a few days of each workshop and then at the same time and place each week. Support groups provide ongoing care for young people, who are encouraged to attend at least three group meetings between weekend workshops. Through support groups, young people have the opportunity to identify and discuss any issues from their most recent workshop, continue to discuss personal challenges and victories and form a positive peer support network in their area. They allow young people to develop a “program of change” to promote consistent growth and remain in contact with Youth Insearch staff and Support Adults, increasing the likelihood of ongoing positive outcomes in their daily lives. The groups are run by the Youth Leaders with the support of the Community Coordinator, Adult Leaders and Support Adults.

PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

Young people in the program from the same area form close friendships with each other as they have experienced the same issues and can relate to each other. They form a positive peer support network outside of the workshops and support groups. They assist each other each day in their local community to continue to make positive changes in their lives and withstand negative peer pressure. These networks include the Youth Leaders from the area who act as role models for the young people and offer advice and can refer difficult issues up to the Community Coordinator.

MENTORING SUPPORT

Throughout the program the young people are mentored by the Support Adults. This is usually the worker assigned by the referring service provider to support the young person in the program. The Community Coordinator works with the Support Adult to ensure the young person receives the support of the service for the issues being addressed with them in the program and referrals to specialist counselling for the young people as required.

Youth Insearch Volunteers Take Our Major Awards

Youth Insearch Youth Leader Aimee Caulfield Wins Young Volunteer of the Year and NSW Volunteer of the Year



This year, one of our Youth Leader's, Aimee Caulfield, was awarded the Armidale region's Young Volunteer of the Year and overall NSW Volunteer of the Year for the New England Region.

Aimee is truly an exceptional volunteer who provides countless hours each week and weekends to support and mentor young people who have experienced trauma or abuse. She trained as a Youth Leader for Youth Insearch before being selected as a Chair of Youth Insearch's State Program Council and a member of the National Program Council.

NSW Minister responsible for Volunteering, the Hon. Ray Williams, said the state's 2.1 million volunteers contributed more than \$5 billion to the NSW economy every year.

"Nominating local volunteers for an award or a certificate is a special way of saying thank you," Mr Williams said.

ClubsNSW CEO Anthony Ball said that volunteers were the backbone of registered clubs across NSW.

"ClubsNSW is very proud to support the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards and every one of the amazing volunteers recognised today," Mr Ball said.

"Volunteers also contribute so much more to our wider community, adding billions of dollars to the NSW economy each year."

Source: <https://www.volunteering.com.au/new-england-northern-inland-award-ceremony/>



Youth Insearch Support Adult and Trainee Adult Leader Jesse McLennan named the Chinchilla and District Local Citizen of the Year 2018

Youth Insearch Support Adult and Adult Leader in training Jesse McLennan took out the Chinchilla and District Local Citizen of the Year Award 2018. This was in large part due to her volunteer work with Youth Insearch to which she commits countless hours helping deliver the program and supporting the young people.



Kaysy Sutton

Participant



Throughout a challenging childhood complicated by alcoholism, illness and family disharmony, Kaysy says she always had positive role models in her teachers.

“Youth Insearch changed me from a moody teen with scattered direction to an adult chasing her dreams.”

Now working as a support teacher at a primary school in NSW, Kaysy is able to pass on some of that encouragement and compassion.

“I decided to pursue a career as a primary teacher because I wanted to help young people realise they are capable of reaching their goals,” she says.

Kaysy, who is tasked with giving extra attention to students who have been identified as needing additional literacy support outside of the classroom, has been teaching for two years.

She says Youth Insearch gave her the motivation she needed to pursue a career in education.

Kaysy first came into contact with Youth Insearch at age 15, a troubled teen dealing with a terminally ill younger brother and an alcoholic parent who was often absent from the home.

“From an early age, it became my responsibility to ensure my brother and I had food to eat and clean clothes to wear,” she says.

By age 16 she was homeless and living in a refuge.

With the support from Youth Insearch, Kaysy was able to repair relationships with her family and move in with her older sister until she had completed her HSC.

Profoundly changed by the program, Kaysy decided to become a volunteer leader to assist others who had experienced hardships.

“I wanted to help other young people make positive changes in their lives,” she says. “Being involved gave me a network of people I could rely on when I needed support. Through the leadership program, I developed my confidence to assert myself and gain skills in conflict resolution, team-building and speaking in front of large groups.”

She also gained the confidence to become a teacher.

“My mum always wanted me to become a teacher from early on in my childhood and despite her own troubles, she was always encouraging of this,” Kaysy says.

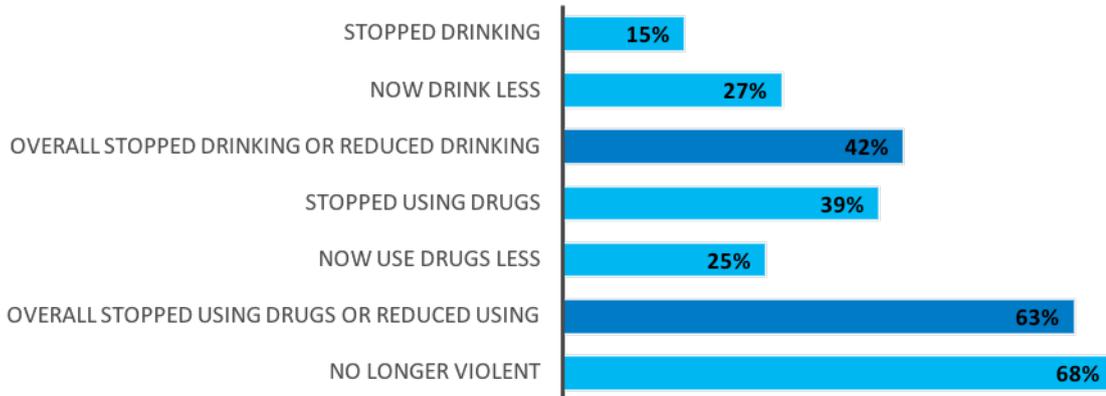
So far, she says teaching has been everything she could have hoped for. In addition to working with “fantastic” role models, Kaysy says the best part of teaching is the relationships built with the students.

“Giving children the tools they need to develop their knowledge and watching them grasp these concepts is the most rewarding part of the profession,” she says.

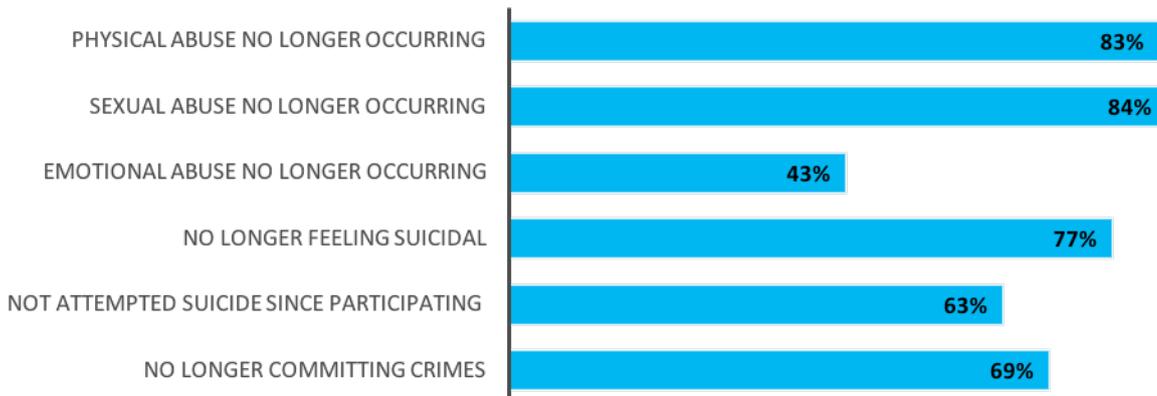
Courtesy of “The Age” The Age

HOW WE HELPED

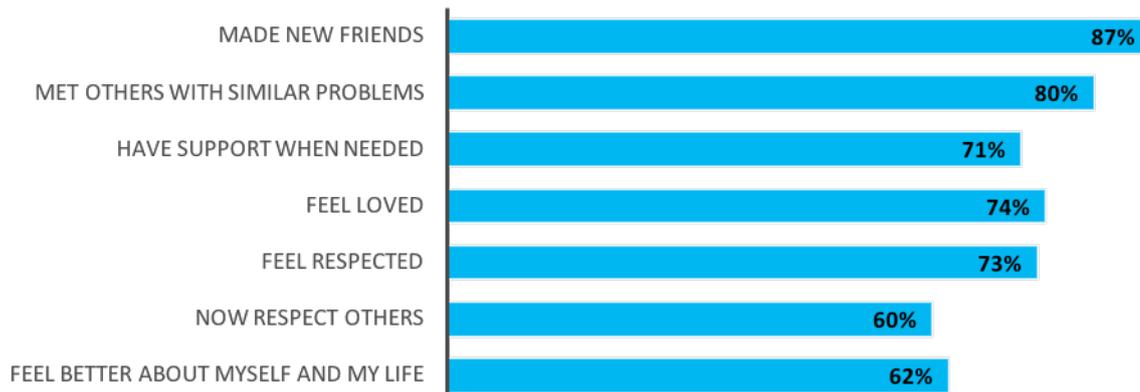
CHANGING BEHAVIOURS



LIVING SAFER



FEELING BETTER



IMPACT

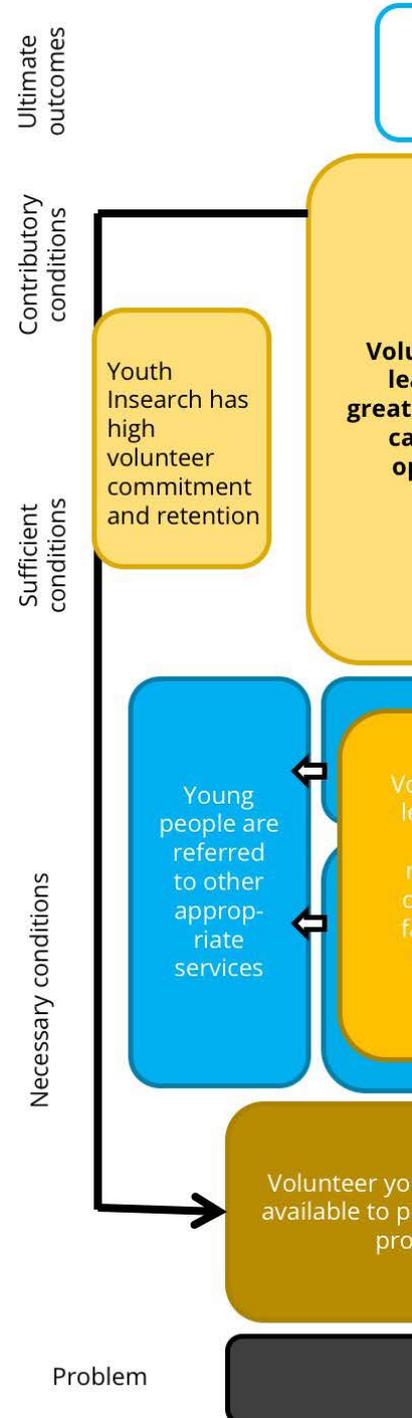
Youth Insearch had a significant impact in the lives of young people that participated in the program. These outcomes are expressed as a percentage of the young people that had these problems on intake.

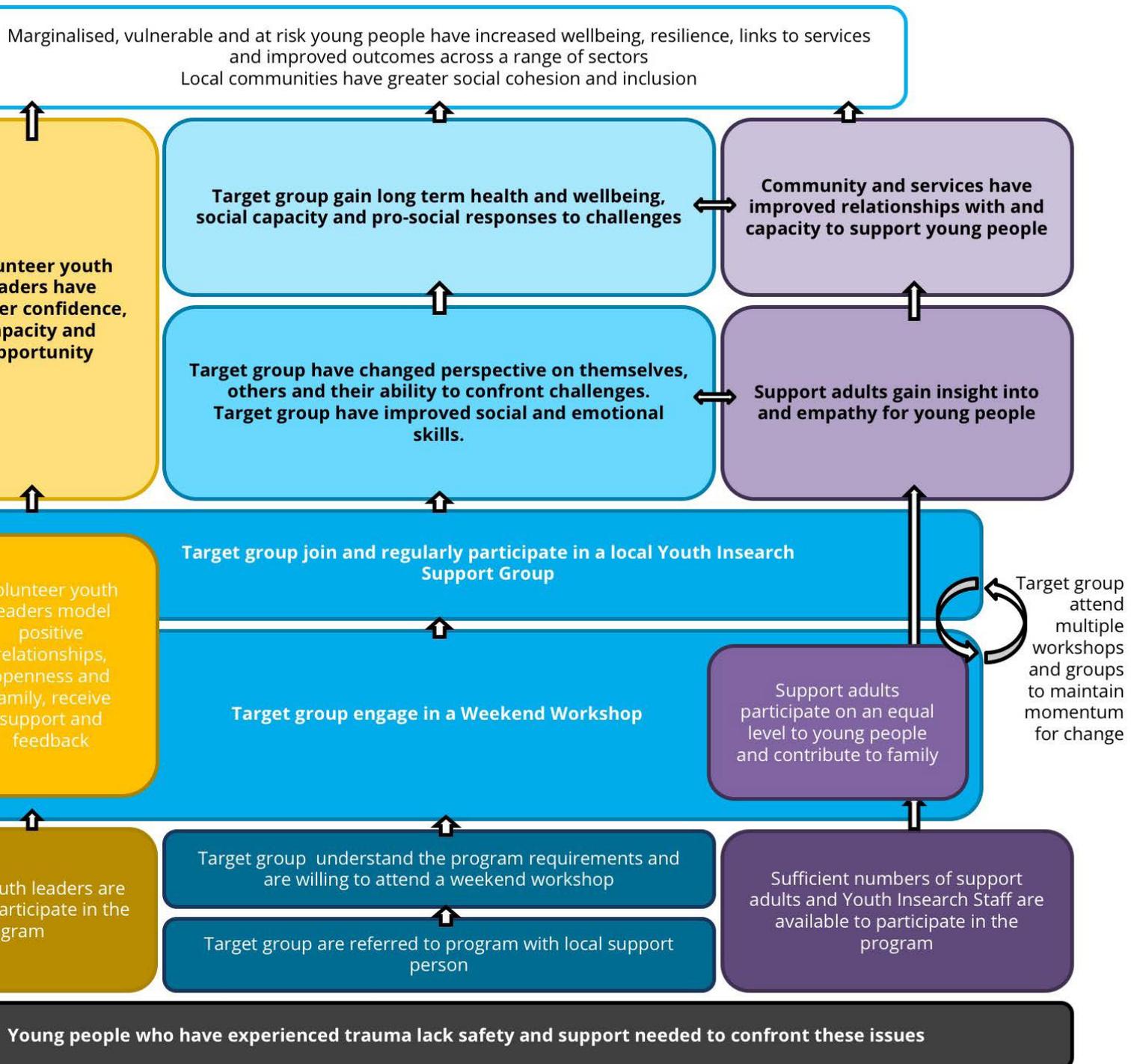


PROGRAM THEORY

During 2018, Youth Insearch completed a significant piece of work on developing an updated Program Logic, Theory of Change and Evaluation Process. This involved several workshops with staff and volunteers and participants over many months.

Youth Insearch worked with external consultants ARTD in establishing this framework. The staff and volunteer team have been trained on this new framework which guides the delivery of our program. Part of this work involved establishing a revised program logic and immediate outcomes to support the achievement of the program objectives specified at the beginning of this report. The revised program logic and outcomes is shown in the diagram (right).







Kathy Morrison

Referrer & Support Adult

I'm a psychologist, that has referred young people to Youth Insearch for around 28 years now. I have worked in the field of trauma and young people for over 30 years and have found Youth Insearch to be the single most successful program for helping young people adapt, find better coping mechanisms in their lives, and better options for themselves.

Through the Youth Insearch Weekend Workshops lots of kids have made huge changes in their lives and have come and unburdened secrets that they've kept for many years, that have impacted significantly on their behaviour which led them to being referred.

Youth Insearch has a unique model. It's a bottom up model, so it doesn't have adults doing things for young people – it has young people who have had experience with the same issues that bring participants to the program, being able to give back wisdom, guidance and support.

It's very driven by the young people – the young people make a lot of the decisions. I think this is one of the factors that has sustained this program over the 30-odd years it's been going – whereas other programs peter out once people leave, staff leave. The Youth Insearch program is driven by each generation of young people that comes, and the program has remained unchanged from the very early days.

I've worked with children from many different backgrounds, from juvenile justice and sexual assault, family trauma, family violence. For many years now, Youth Insearch has been the one program that provides young people with ongoing support for when they go back into their communities. They walk away with relationships that they trust, and that enable them to work on the issues they've chosen to work on.



The other thing that Youth Insearch does well is repairing attachment broken by trauma. Trauma impacts significantly on the attachment, which is integral to our being as human beings – we need to have survival – and attachment is the process that that occurs. Anything that impacts on that process early in life has a longitudinal impact on the lives of human beings.

By repairing this attachment process early in the child's lifespan, Youth Insearch gives the young people an opportunity to develop more functional relational templates. They can then go forward into their own lives and start having their own relationships that is not going to repeat what has been occurring to them through the generations, breaking the cycle of abuse.

I've seen this because of the length of time that I've been here. Young people who I have seen come to this program, because of significant behavioural issues in the community, for various reasons, have now taken from the program those very relational templates that they now put into their own relationships.

I have seen young people come through the program, as leaders particularly, and get married, get interrelationships, start raising their families, and some of them now are raising their own teenagers. And it just wouldn't have happened in such a secure and functional way had the Youth Insearch program not intervened for them at that very early age.

LEADERS TRAINING

The Youth Insearch program is delivered by extensively trained Youth & Adult Leaders who are held in high regard. The leader's graduation ceremony is conducted by the Governor of NSW at Government House each year. There is an alumnus of hundreds of Youth Insearch Leaders from over 30 years of operation.

LEADER SELECTION

Youth Insearch's leaders (both youth 14-25 and adult's over 25) are selected by the National Program Council. To become a Trainee Leader, applicants must have:

- attended 3 weekend workshops
- overcome the issues in their lives
- demonstrated leadership potential
- agreed to abide by the Youth Insearch Leaders Code of Ethics written as a guide to their lifestyle

TRAINING PROGRAM

Youth Insearch Leaders undergo an intensive 12-month training course consisting of:

- 2 separate week-long residential workshops
- 12 months of practical training and assessment in the Youth Insearch program

Youth Insearch is fortunate to have high level corporates and professional trainers donate their time to conduct this training for us. The training workshops include sessions on:

- Mind Mapping & Taking Notes
- Leadership & Team Building (Greg Meyer, Corporate Trainer)
- Motivation & Leadership (James Holbeck)
- Presentation Skills (Rogen Si, Corporate Training Company)
- Communication Skills (Benita Collings, Actress, NIDA Trainer)
- Resolving Difficult Situations at Youth Insearch Programs
- Conflict Resolution & Team Work (WorldGAMES, Corporate Training Company)
- Mental Health First Aid & Understanding Mental Illness (Kathy Morrison, Psychologist)
- Health, Nutrition & Exercise (James Wilkinson, Personal Trainer)
- Personal Presentation & Appearance
- Values, Beliefs, Breaking Free & Goal Setting (Alan Kuczynski, Corporate Trainer)
- Cultural Awareness
- Meditation & Relaxation Techniques (Rene Buhler, Buddhist Trainer, Expert Meditator)
- Youth Insearch Organisation Overview & Structure
- Youth Insearch Leaders Standards & Code of Ethics
- Youth Insearch Program & Theory
- Presenting & Preparing a Youth Insearch Session
- Leaders Roles in Youth Insearch



Special thanks to HeliFlite for gifting our Trainee Leaders with helicopter joy rides in week 2 of their training.

LEADER'S TRAINING 2018

The 2018 trainees began the 12-month leaders training course in April 2018. The residential training weeks were conducted on 9-13 July and 1-5 October 2018.

This year's Trainee Leaders are an amazing group of adults and young people who have participated in regular weekend workshops during the year. During the training, they were pushed to their limits, and stepped up to the challenge, proving they have what it takes to be a Youth Insearch Leader.

Both training weeks were full of challenges. Each Trainee went on a journey of self-discovery and worked hard to overcome their obstacles. Over the two weeks of training, the trainees showed immense team work and leadership skills while continuing their personal development and kicking their goals out of the park.

The second training week ended with a celebration dinner for guests, family and friends, which the trainees organised. By coordinating the evening, they were able to put into practice all the skills they had learnt during the training. The dinner culminated in a speech from each Trainee about their individual journey with Youth Insearch.

The skills learnt by the Trainees has equipped them to support the young people going through the program and teach them how to tackle the challenges life has given them and the belief that they can make their life what they want it to be. Congratulations to all the Trainees and a big thank you to the Accredited Leaders and Guest Presenters, who gave their time to train and mentor the trainees.

Nadia Allwood

Participant



Growing up in a home environment of drug, alcohol and domestic abuse, Nadia Allwood has experienced the devastating effects they can have on families.

Too scared to talk about what was going on, she frequently skipped school and began to self-harm; and wound up in the foster system.

Angry, depressed and suicidal, it only made life ever more of a challenge.

"I didn't know for two years why I was in foster care," she said.

"Life got really hard."

Nadia attended Youth Insearch.

"You find your you're not the only one going through the same thing," she said.

Even better, it gave her back something that had vanished through the years: "You can have your own voice."

Through practical one-on-one support and peer-group rehabilitation, Ms Allwood found a place she could talk about her trauma and reclaim her self-belief.

This not only led to better things, but she said it even saved her life.

"I ended up going back to school and finishing it," Ms Allwood said.

And while opening up about her life was daunting at first, she hoped others would not let it deter them from speaking. "Everyone that goes there has been through a rough situation has been supportive," she said.

Even her mentors had lived through similar situations.

"Drugs are everywhere in the area and I see it not only in adults but also young people, because it is either something they've grown up around or it's an escape to get away from whatever struggles they are going through," she said.

According to the Ice and the Outback report, 8.6 per cent of regional 18-24-year-olds and 12.2 per cent of rural 18-24-year-olds were long-term methamphetamine users.

In contrast, 8 per cent in cities were long-term users.

Ms Allwood had her own tips for those affected who were looking for help.

These include:

- find a support network;
- evaluate your life goals; and
- take small steps to reach them, it's not a race.

According to a Youth Insearch spokeswoman, last year 64 per cent of the Youth Insearch participants came to the program because they were abusing drugs and alcohol.

In one year, 54 per cent were successful in overcoming their issue, she said.

Youth Insearch is available to at-risk young people aged 14-20 years and is delivered through weekend workshops, support groups, peer support and leadership and individual care.

*Courtesy of Gympie Times
Support was 'life changing' choice for Gympie teen*

YOUTH REBUILDING
YOUNG LIVES
INSEARCH





"Becoming a Youth Insearch Leader means a lot to me. I get to help people through things that they might not have been able to get help with before. Being able to help people that way is one of the most amazing parts of my life. I can't even explain properly how much being able to do the things I do as a Leader means to me. Becoming a leader made me a better version of myself."

Graduate, Chiana Evans, 17

LEADERS GRADUATION 2018

The 2018 Leaders Graduation Ceremony was held at Government House, Sydney and hosted by the NSW Chief Justice, and Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Frederick Bathurst AC, QC.

The Ceremony was for the Trainee Leaders who completed Leaders' Training April 2017-April 2018.

It was held in celebration of the significant achievement of the Trainee Leaders in overcoming their pasts and successfully completing the Leaders Training Course.

The Trainee Leaders were each presented with an Accredited Leader's Badge, Certificate and shirt signifying their induction as Accredited Leaders.

All Youth Leaders have been through the program as participants and have come far on their personal journeys and taken back their lives. Adult Leaders are passionate and give not only their time but their hearts and skills to the program.

Both are positive role models for the young people - a shining light for those who need it.

Congratulation to the new Accredited Leaders!



Courtney McMullin-Seach

Participant

At the age of 4 I was placed into foster care. I joined my big brother where he already was at our grandparent's house in Gunnedah, NSW. Being with our grandparents was great but as I grew up our relationship strained. At age 12 I really went off the rails. Because of this the relationship with my Nan was strained and I was moved around to quite a few foster homes.

I was involved with a lot of people who were unhealthy and negative to be around. I became disrespectful to those who wanted to help me. I was horrible to my teachers, I was even worse at home, I did all I could to make everyone's life as bad as what mine was. I was so caught up in my emotions that I couldn't see all the people offering their hands to me. When I was 13 I went my first Youth Insearch program. The Courtney you see today is not the Courtney you would have seen then.

At my first program I was hostile towards everyone, I ignored people, I didn't participate. There was one thing I did do that weekend. I thought a lot. I thought about why I was rude, why I was nasty and why was I there? I hadn't realised just how much the workshop would connect to me. Not only was I connected to the people, I was also connected to the sessions.



I never thought I could cry and laugh so much in less than 48 hours!

Youth Insearch gave the strength and courage to deal with my challenges and bad behaviours. Neglect and rejection from my family and sexual abuse. I was Self-Harming and getting myself into all sorts of trouble.

Since that day 3 years ago I have attended many weekend workshops and I can tell there is much more to come. I now have a new outlook in life, I now focus on the positives. I love who I am, I love my life. I am doing well at High School and enjoy going. I am achieving high marks and my Teacher Nominated me for an Aboriginal Youth Award. My goal is to complete my Senior Education. I live with my Aunty and I have loving relationships and friendships around me with people who respect and care

for me. Earlier this year I had my debutante ball, I was so proud of myself. Thankfully, because of my Leadership Training, I knew my etiquette.

I think the things that I went through as a young child have shaped me to be the happy, determined and strong woman I am today. I will forever be thankful to everyone who has assisted me in my journey. Being a part of Youth Insearch has taught me to accept myself and who I am and accept my past and not let it define me. Through this program I have a new-found respect for not only myself but everyone around me. If I hadn't continued going to this program there is no way I would be where I am today.

A photograph of a woman on the left and a young person on the right, both smiling and looking at each other. They are holding a plant with green leaves and yellow flowers. The background is a bright, sunny outdoor setting with a blue sky and green grass. The text 'PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS' is overlaid in large white letters with a blue underline.

PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

Youth Insearch works closely with its community partners to successfully deliver the program in local areas. Below are examples of two of our partnerships and the successes achieved during the year.

WORKWAYS AUSTRALIA

In May 2018, Youth Insearch and Workways Australia executed a Memorandum of Understanding to enable Youth Insearch and Workways Australia's Gippsland Engaged Mentoring (GEM) Program to work collaboratively in identifying 'at-risk' young people in the Gippsland region in Victoria. The partnership will provide benefit to young people through participation in both the Youth Insearch and GEM programs.



GEM PROGRAM

The Gippsland Engaged Mentoring (GEM) Program currently operates in Orbost, Lakes Entrance, Bairnsdale, and Swifts Creek, and seeks to support young people through mentoring. The program supports young people through two distinct streams.

1. supporting young people at risk of disengaging from the education system (aged 12-24); and
2. supporting young people at risk of connection to, or who have already had connection with, the Criminal Justice System (aged 10 – 24)

The GEM Program trains experienced adult volunteer mentors to work with these young people for one hour a week for a minimum of six months through one-on-one and/or group mentoring activities, with the following objectives.

- Increase school retention/attendance rates
- Foster community connectedness for young people and mentors
- Increase the self-esteem of young people
- Create positive relationships
- Contribute to improved relationships with peers and family
- Contribute to an increase in effective communication skills
- Reduce feelings of isolation, and support a sense of belonging
- Support the social and emotional development of young people
- Contribute to increased resilience
- Reduce involvement in risky behaviour
- Assist in developing new skills

The GEM Program entered into this partnership with Youth Insearch to deliver support to young people across the Gippsland region. Together we train volunteers, refer young people between programs, and work to limit the risk of duplicating our services. All mentors in the GEM Program undergo rigorous training and checks, with the opportunity to participate in ongoing professional development.

Youth Insearch has committed to meet with and brief young people referred from the GEM Program and collaborate with GEM staff to facilitate the completion of Referral Forms, Mentee Assessment Intake Forms and Parent Permission Forms.

Workways has committed to collaborating with Youth Insearch in assessing the young people and streaming them into one of the two mentoring programs. They will also be facilitating relevant Youth Insearch support group meetings with the support of Youth Insearch following weekend programs.

The ultimate purpose for both Youth Insearch and the GEM Program's is to support young people, and Youth Insearch is appreciative of the opportunity to work with Workways Australia to deliver this support.



Gippsland Engaged
MENTORING

JOBLINK PLUS - NEW ENGLAND, NSW

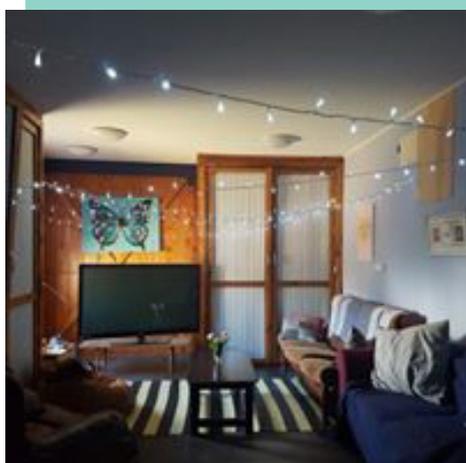
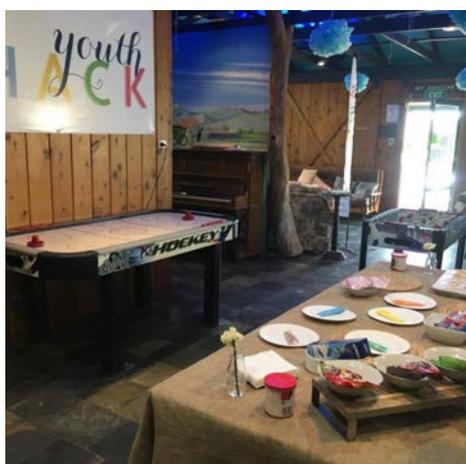
Joblink Plus have been a major contributor to Youth Insearch in recent years, and their generosity has grown in 2018. Joblink Plus have committed to providing substantial ongoing financial contributions and continue to offer support to our organisation in many other capacities.

Joblink Plus pride themselves on being a community focused organisation and strive to be the people that are #makingitpossible – and they certainly are making things possible for Youth Insearch staff and participants.

One of the generous actions Joblink Plus have taken is to offer Youth Insearch staff access to their offices, training rooms, and office facilities. Youth Insearch now have a shared desk space on a permanent basis in the Tamworth region.

Joblink Plus also continue to provide their bus fleet to assist participants travelling to weekend workshops and have made it possible for local Leaders to represent Youth Insearch and promote our program interstate.

Youth Insearch work closely with Joblink Plus Youth Program staff as they see the benefits firsthand through their clients' participation in the Youth Insearch program. This is a partnership that flourishes because of shared values and a genuine desire from both organisations to help create opportunity and change to empower young people to rebuild their lives.



NARRIBRI YOUTH SHACK, NSW

In June 2018, the partnership between Youth Insearch and the Narrabri Youth Shack was celebrated. The Youth Shack has been driven by local youth advocate and Youth Insearch Case Manager Anna Dugdale and a team of volunteers in Narrabri for the last 3 years open to young people 12-18 years of age, 2 days a week.

Thanks to the support of the Narrabri Shire Council, Youth Insearch and the Youth Shack have been able to come together and open the Shack 5 days a week to create a safe place for our local kids to hang out every afternoon from 3-7pm.



NSW RUGBY LEAGUE Launch of Partnership

A partnership between the New South Wales Rugby League (NSWRL) and Youth Insearch was launched at a special fundraising event at Le Montage, Lilyfield.

The cocktail function, held on Wednesday 8 August 2018, promoted the partnership which will see Youth Insearch helping deliver the NSWRL's innovative "Changing Rooms" program.

The program was launched this season to help educate and support youth, aged 14-20 from the grassroots Rugby League community, to deal with life challenges off the field.

Youth Insearch Patron, His Excellency, Mr David Hurley AC, the Governor of NSW, and Penrith Panthers General Manager and former NSW Origin coach, Phil Gould AM, were among special guests at the function as money was raised to sponsor at-risk youth, allowing them to take part in the Youth Insearch program.

NSWRL Chief Executive David Trodden said the Youth Insearch partnership and program was the next stage in supporting and expanding on the work already being carried out by the NSWRL's True Blue Paul Langmack since the NSWRL Changing Rooms program was launched in June.

"We are really proud to partner with an organisation like Youth Insearch which has empowered more than 30,000 at-risk youths to take control of their lives over the past 30 years," Trodden said.

"With all of our Junior Rugby League clubs and participants being part of the NSWRL community, it's our responsibility as the governing body to provide assistance on and off the field," Langmack said.

"We all feel supported in the Rugby League circle but once we leave the change rooms and enter back into life's demands, some of us feel vulnerable and isolated."

Youth Insearch CEO Heath Ducker said the initiative will help to bridge the gap for young people. "The Changing Rooms program will change young people's lives," Ducker said.

"Some of these young people may not have anyone to talk to about their issues and feel alone in their struggles."

"NSW Rugby League and Youth Insearch will help the young players to face their issues and equip them with the skills to overcome them."



Changing Rooms Program

The Changing Rooms program is a partnership between NSW Rugby League and Youth Insearch. The program offers an opportunity for young people in the sporting community to access a support service to assist in breaking down barriers.

Young people may need support with issues at home, in the community or in their sporting environment associated with drugs and alcohol, family breakdown, social pressures, bullying and self-harm.

The support is provided through support groups held within their own teams in the changing rooms after training, where these young people are most likely to feel comfortable and safe to talk.

The Changing Rooms Program strives to positively impact participants in the following ways.

- Higher self-esteem by building trust and rapport with each other.
- Reduction in criminal activity by acknowledging that certain behaviours are impacting negatively in all areas of life.

- Reduced feelings of suicide ideation by having new pathways to access services and assistance.
- Improve relationships by looking at how these relationships are nurtured

Changing Rooms is due to begin in the NSW Rugby League pre-season in early February 2019. Support groups will be offered as regularly as the clubs require.

Changing Rooms will initially roll out in the Western Sydney area in participating clubs, those being St Mary's, Quaker's Hill and Doonside Rugby League Clubs.

THE YOUTH INSEARCH SUPPORTING VET STUDENTS (SVS) PROJECT IN NSW

Youth Insearch Expands its Services



Anna Dugdale and Hayley Braunton connecting with the Moree community promoting the SVS Program.

Youth Insearch was provided the opportunity to deliver a pilot program that aims to support young people who are completing a Vocational Education and Training course. The project provides intensive individual case support to the young people. The program is funded through the Try, Test & Learn Fund, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

The overarching objective of the SVS Project is to generate new insights and empirical evidence into what works to reduce long-term welfare dependence. Youth Insearch is participating in an evaluation of the Project with the University of QLD. Youth Insearch has been applying its peer support model within the project. The program is flexible and allows case workers to provide varied and diverse assistance to the students based on their individual needs.

The pilot program commenced in April 2018 and will run for 15 months. Youth Insearch is delivering this program within Tamworth, Gunnedah, Moree and Narrabri. The aim is to assist 100 young people during that time to obtain one or more outcomes such as completion of studies, maintaining engagement in studies, gaining sustainable employment and/or enrolling in further education.

Current students have provided very positive feedback to Youth Insearch which demonstrates that the student was more than likely to have dropped out of their studies had they not been provided the service. Current students have stated they feel the service has filled a gap when students get very little face-to-face time with teachers. The group work has also been particularly engaging and beneficial because students are able to connect and help each other.

Donna Ryan

Support Adult

“Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you’re going to get on the inside”

I have worked in many fields that have involved supporting people. I started as a nurse and then went into aged care and worked as a Diversional Therapist. I moved from there to working with women and children from domestic violence where I specialised in children. All this was in rural Qld. When I moved to Logan I started working with homeless youth. This is somewhere that I found I could really make a difference.

I myself grew up with a mum who had mental health issues, I come from a broken family; I survived 14 years of domestic violence, and I’m an alcoholic, 12 years dry.

I love working with children, and it was working with one young man that I met this amazing enthusiastic woman called Jennie. She was telling me all about this Youth Insearch. I thought I must know more and find out what this is all about, so I went on a weekend workshop. Wow, what an experience it was. I don’t think I have ever felt so emotional yet so supported. I’ve never felt so much love and friendship in one place. I was so amazed at the strength and resilience and the growth that I saw in young people in one weekend.

I got to see the true value of Youth Insearch and I got to see where Jennie got her spark and her passion.

Not only have I seen growth in young people, but this has also given me the opportunity to have growth in myself. For the first time don’t have blame or shame.

I am committed to not only helping young people, but to helping myself. Where this journey takes me, I don’t know. Life is like a box of chocolates. You try one and don’t like it – try another one. Anyone can make a change.



YOUTH INSEARCH IN THE MEDIA

Youth Insearch has received a great deal of media attention for its work over the last year. Here are some of the main stories.



Faces of Tamworth: Y Aimee Caulfield



Jamieson Murphy

f SHARE TWEET COMMENTS



Aimee Caulfield has made no secret of the domestic violence, bullying, self harm and she overcame her struggles with the help of Youth Insearch. Now she uses her story to show others out of the tunnel. The Leader spoke with her about government funding for Youth Insearch.

Giving a face to region's suicide issue



Jamieson Murphy

Local News

f SHARE TWEET COMMENTS



EXPERIENCE: Aimee Caulfield wants to use her experience to help others struggling with suicidal thoughts, and to show them there is help available. Photo: Gareth Gardner

In November 2018, Youth Insearch General Manager Stephen Lewin spoke with TODAY's Georgie Gardner and University of Sydney Lecturer Dr Garner Clancey about raising the age of criminal culpability from 10 to 16 years. Stephen Lewin shared his story and explained how Youth Insearch, an organisation led by young people, turned his life around. Dr Clancey has worked in the Juvenile Justice system and expressed that rather than incarceration, a more effective response to youth crime is intervention, which can be delivered by programs like Youth Insearch.

Faces of Tamworth: Mal MacPherson



Jacob McArthur

Community

f SHARE

TWEET



COMMENTS



Mal MacPherson

Every year the city honours a local as its top citizen. Mal MacPherson is no stranger to honour, it was his title as the magistrate in the local court. While a lot of his life was dedicated to justice, he also had a passion for reforming disadvantaged youth and mental health. He was happy to use his time as Tamworth's top citizen to trumpet his causes, but there was a bit more to the role than he first anticipated.

Inside Youth Insearch, the camp changing young lives | FEATURE



Jamieson Murphy

Local News

f SHARE

TWEET



COMMENTS



LIVE CHANGING: The program has transformed the lives of thousands of the region's most troubled teens.

Political News

Galston Rotary brings together Julian Leeser and Youth Insearch – two powerful advocates for suicide prevention

Aug 2, 2018

129

f TWEET G+ P



Kate Hornick

Participant



If you want proof leaders aren't born but are developed through a series of challenges and setbacks, look no further than Kate Hornick.

The Dalby girl has overcome a turbulent youth to now be a shining light amongst her peers. Kate was recognised for her incredible turnaround this year, when she completed the Youth Insearch leaders training program.

Youth Insearch is an organisation that helps troubled youth throughout Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Kate has been involved with the program for just over a year.

"We go on weekend programs where we all get together and talk about what's happened and we work out strategies to overcome our problems," Kate said.

"We all get a chance to talk about our problems and meet people that have had the same issues.

"It's changed me totally as a person. It's given me different pathways to change my life and become a better person and the person I want to be."

Kate needed to undertake a certain amount of programs to be able to apply for leadership, she also had to overcome her personal problems which landed her with Youth Insearch in the first place.

Now the 16-year-old Dalby State High School student has her sights firmly set on being a compassionate leader other youth will follow.

"I hope to turn into role model for younger members and peers at high school," she said.

"For me I think to be a good leader you need to be approachable, you need to be someone who people can trust so they will share their problems with you."

Kate also encouraged other teenagers to join Youth Insearch if they need assistance in overcoming some issues.

"You meet people from everywhere and make lifelong friends... it gives you pathways you never thought you'd be able to have. "Hopefully I'm involved with Youth Insearch for a very long time.

"I want to be able to help as many young people as I can get the best outcome in their life."

--- *Courtesy Dalby Times*

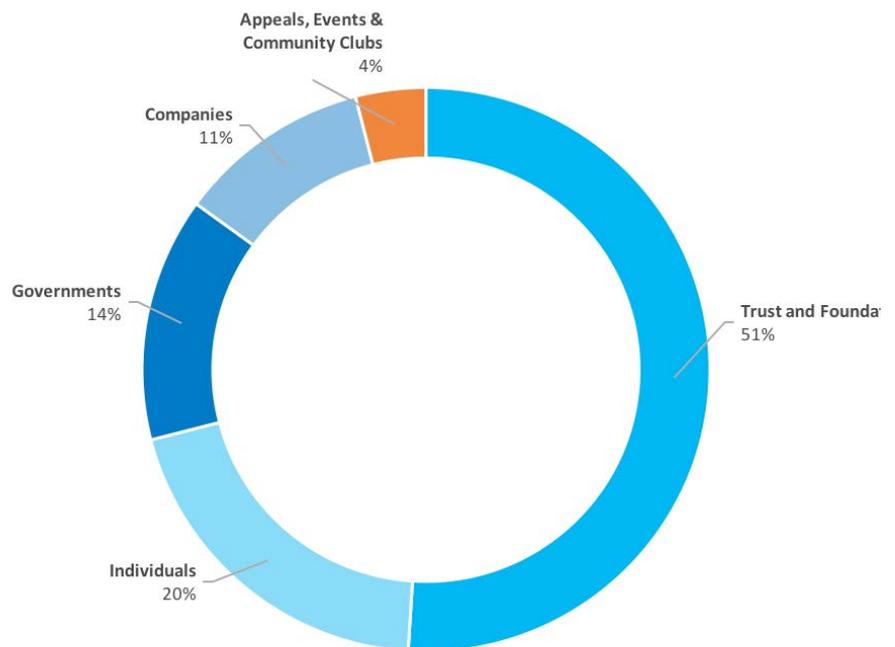
**YOUTH INSEARCH GIVES
ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO
TRULY FEEL LOVED AND
SUPPORTED. THANK YOU
FOR EXISTING.**

JASMIN HUGHES, 18
NEW SOUTH WALES

FUNDRAISING

Our fundraising efforts made up the bulk of our revenues totalling \$1.71 million.

The fundraising sources and results are summarised below. The last page of this report contains a list of all donors in recognition that every contribution played an essential role in enabling Youth Insearch to have the impact it did this year.



THYNE REID FOUNDATION

A notable mention must go to the Thyne Reid Foundation, who since 2016 has provided gap funding to make up the reduction of Federal Government funding. This has enabled Youth Insearch to continue to assist the hundreds of youth that would have missed out on the program without this funding.



Thyne Reid
FOUNDATION

TIM FAIRFAX FAMILY FOUNDATION

A special mention also goes to The Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, who joined Youth Insearch as a significant donor in 2016. The TFFF are providing three-year funding for Youth Insearch to consolidate and expand their program reach into many of Queensland's regional and remote communities and assist 300 young people in these areas over the 3 years.



THE JOHN GRANT FAMILY CHARITABLE TRUST

In July 2018, Youth Insearch was awarded significant funding from the John Grant Family Charitable Trust to expand our Salesforce platform. The funding of \$108,000 will be used in three areas of Salesforce.

1. Introduction of Fundraising Management, enabling us to more efficiently and effectively manage our donor information and donations, streamline grant management processes and improve communication with our supporters
2. Introduction of a Resourcing & Skills for Programs module to provide capacity management, interstate assignment of resources, improve our ability to roster volunteers at weekend workshops, support groups and other public events and provide a visual calendar view of organisation wide in-kind support; enabling increased volunteering opportunities and recognition.
3. Introduction of a Programs Portal, which will be the final piece to a complete self-service solution for individuals engaging with Youth Insearch. The Program Portal will provide an online community for Young People, Youth Leaders, Support Adults, Volunteers, Referring Partners and Staff.

We are thrilled to improve our systems and processes, which will enable us to present our supporters with a higher level of data integrity.

Youth Insearch is extremely grateful to The John Grant Family Trust for the funding received to bring Youth Insearch forward into the future, enabling us to continue our work to rebuild young lives.

ROTARY DISTRICT 9650

Rotary District 9650 has supported Youth Insearch by assisting with transport, coordination of local services, provision of Support Adults, and covering the attendance fees of participants in NSW for over 18 years. We are very grateful for this support that has enabled hundreds of youth to participate in the program over the years.



LIONS DISTRICTS Q3 & Q4

Youth Insearch has had a long partnership with the Lions Districts Q3 and Q4 in QLD extending back around 25 years. The Districts provide the venues, transport and catering for all our weekend workshops in Queensland. These efforts combined are estimated to be worth over \$80,000 per year. Over the 25-year period, this amounts to over \$2 million and around 9,000 young people assisted through about 200 weekend workshops. We are very grateful to these Lions Districts for this level of support over such a long period of time.



Ramona Wynne

Participant

The following is a reproduction of Ramona's speech at the Leader's Graduation Ceremony 2018 on her Youth Insearch journey.

So, I'm here today to talk about my journey throughout Youth Insearch, before, during after the program that has had such a significant impact in my life.

I first attended in March 2013. I was being bullied and was not confident being myself. I was not enjoying just being a kid anymore. This was due to family breakup from domestic violence and isolating myself from everyone because of the bullying at school.

It was really scary and I didn't know anyone but it wasn't long until I made a friend. She came up to me and saw that I was scared. She and I are still really good friends five years later. Attending these programs made me aware of issues that I was avoiding. So after attending 3 or 4 workshops, I was able to be more myself and enjoy just being me. I stopped isolating myself as much and started being a kid again and just enjoying life.

Most of my life I've had ADHD, Asperger's and anxiety, this does impact the way I come across to others and also makes me confused about the way I feel about different situations.

At the start of 2017 I rebegan my Youth Insearch journey, this time all in. I'd been angry at the world and taking the smallest of situations out on those closest to me, and not coping with everyday situations. After church one evening there was a violent encounter with my Mum's partner. This pushed me to come forward about sexual abuse from when I was a little girl. After pursuing all the avenues of coping with this, I said that I wanted to go back to Youth Insearch programs as the only thing that could really help me heal was time. Now going back to this program helped me see that I was right about it just being time and that all I could do was push forward, already knowing that there wasn't anything more that I could do going to these weekend workshops helped me truly see that as it was reinforcing what I already knew.

After attending these workshops, I no longer was angry at the world and was able to start believing in myself it helped me collect my goals and restructure my life and just get everything back on course. I was happy at work and no longer scared to look behind me, I've faced many fears and pushed myself back out of my comfort zone this year taking my brother too tree tips and me doing all the organising, and then doing as much as I could even though I was terrified I figure I've got this, I can do anything I put my mind to.

Now at my journey I am becoming a leader and it is great that I can help provide the comfort to others that this program has given me by getting everyone involved and maybe even giving them a piece of their childhood even if it is just for a weekend, with the help of this program I have been able to structure my long term goals a little better narrowing it down to either starting a fashion design course late next year or studying psychology but to give myself an extra year of just living now that I'm coping better. I am also learning to react to situations that make me anxious better by taking a walk and calming down and just letting it go I no longer pent up the anger and take it all out on people and am more aware of my own feelings.

Youth Insearch has truly helped me rebuild my life into something and someone I am proud to be, and I am going to continue to do this as there are many great things ahead. So before coming to Youth Insearch I was angry confused and very isolated and avoiding many issues, throughout my journey I overcame my obstacles and was able to work towards many of my goals and after this long and adventurous journey I am still working towards accomplishing many more of my dreams and helping others chase theirs.



REBUILDING
YOUNG
LIVES
**YOUTH
INSEARCH**



NATIONAL PROGRAM COUNCIL

The National Program Council (NPC) is the youth representative body of Youth Leaders and Adult Leader mentors drawn from the national Youth Insearch program.

NATIONAL PROGRAM COUNCIL MEMBERS AS AT 30 JUNE 2018

Chair

Chloe Foley, VIC Program Council

Secretary

Rebecca Shaw- NSW Program Council

Youth Leader Representatives

Tiffany Woodward, VIC Program Council

Luke Mitchell, QLD Program Council

Samantha Clayton, QLD Program Council

Aimee Caulfield, NSW Program Council

Adult Leader Representatives

Olivia Masuino, QLD Program Council

Jo Ellis, NSW Program Council

Tracey Hawkins, VIC Program Council

Management Representatives

Heath Ducker, CEO

Jennie Linton, Program Manager

The Council makes decisions on changes to the Youth Insearch program and manages all program leadership related matters. State Councils operate in each state (NSW, QLD, VIC) managing local matters and reporting to the National Council. In total, the Councils engaged 15 youth leaders, 6 adult leaders and management staff together in the management of the Youth Insearch Program.

This year the National Program Council has met over 10 times. The Council has worked in conjunction with State Councils to help improve and maintain the high level of the program we continue to provide to the youth of tomorrow.

TOPICS DISCUSSED BY COUNCIL

- Selecting Leaders - with 21 having just completed the residential phase of training
- Developing the Youth Insearch Strategic Plan with the Youth Insearch Board
- Managing Leaders and making decisions which encourage growth, integrity and retention
- Organising the Leaders' Retreat and agenda, with particular focus on building Leader's skills
- Reviewing the Program Guidelines to maintain its effectiveness and value
- Reviewing program sessions – such as Self Esteem – to ensure we can grow and move into the future

The National Program Council is very proud of its achievements this year and recognises the hard work of all leaders and staff within Youth Insearch; in continuing to empower the young people of the future and we are excited to see what the next year brings.

Chloe Foley

Chair, National Program Council

(written together with all Council Members)

Luke Mitchell

Participant



Luke Mitchell survived years of being bullied mercilessly online and at school and has valuable tips for other young people going through the same ordeal.

Luke Mitchell, now 19, learnt the survival tools from Youth Insearch when he was angry, depressed and in desperate need of help.

Today, he believes their assistance saved his life and he is keen to share his life lessons with other young people trying to cope with bullies.

“Don’t retaliate — often that’s what bullies want,” he said. “Save the evidence — screenshot or save messages and tell someone what’s happening. Report, block, mute and get rid of messages. Remember the problem is with them, not you.”

Mr Mitchell, of Upper Coomera in QLD, said he was bullied about his weight online and in-person every day during primary and high school. This triggered extreme social anxiety and depression.

He believes victims should not physically retaliate and he encourages them to try and understand that the bully may be going through hardships in his or her own life that the victim might not know about.

However, he admitted this was a difficult thing to do.

“I’ve learnt that it’s never about the person being bullied and you shouldn’t let their comments define you,” he said. “You should definitely speak up and don’t be afraid to talk to someone you trust — a family member, friend or a school counsellor. Seek help because help is out there.”

At the age of 14, Mr Mitchell was introduced to Youth Insearch. Mr Mitchell said he was offered practical one-on-one support and peer group rehabilitation, which gave him the opportunity to discuss his feelings and the trauma he was going through, as well as how to believe in himself again.

His tough teenage experience has motivated him to reach out to other young people with similar issues and he runs sessions for Youth Insearch at weekend workshops.

Originally published as ‘How I beat my bullies’ on Gold Coast Bulletin





STAFF & LEADER'S RETREAT



Collaroy on Sydney's North Shore was the venue for the 2018 Staff and Leader's Retreat. The staff attended a defensive driving course on day one. With our coordinators driving many hours on country roads it was well worth the time to make sure we all stay safe. We then travelled to Collaroy. With Salesforce a welcome addition to the organisation, we had Salesforce Training. An opportunity to sharpen our skills to ensure we are working smarter and freeing up time on the ground for young people.

Every year, staff are given the opportunity to do Deep Work and prepare for the year ahead. We all shared our plans and the Deep Work we had done. A perfect way to get us all rewed up for the year ahead with clear direction and excitement. Staff spent time reviewing policies and procedures, shared experiences and knowledge and encouraged each other. What a great opportunity we had for self-reflection and team bonding, all in an environment of learning and encouragement.

The leaders arrived Friday afternoon and we were thrilled to see so many of them there. A photographer came and took professional profile pictures of all the leaders and staff and it was so encouraging to see them posted all over social media. Our Youth Insearch Family is so proud to be a part of this amazing organisation.

The retreat offered opportunities to learn and reflect with sessions on conflict resolution and dealing with aggressive behaviours, update on National Program Council and celebration of the achievements for 2017. Out of the session room leaders enjoyed activities such as surfing, rock climbing and walks on the beach.

Our leaders and staff work so hard and always bring their passion and commitment. It was a privilege to be able to give them the opportunity to sharpen their saw and spend time together.

OUR BOARD



Garry Rothwell
Chair

Garry is the Chair and Founder of Winten Property Group, one of Australia's premier property development companies. Garry has numerous awards, including "Property Person of the Year" in 2011.



Andrew Gregory
Treasurer

Andrew is GM Retail VIC & TAS (Regional) for NAB and a Director and Chair of Audit for a large Private Health Insurer, Peoplecare.



Malcolm McPherson
Secretary

Malcolm McPherson is a Children's Court Magistrate and was NSW Deputy State Coroner for several years.



William Gill
Director

William is a business analyst and consultant and has held many senior management positions.



Jared Goodwin
Director (resigned 29 Nov 2017)

Jared is a past participant in the program and currently Senior Business Development Manager with Maybell Group. He is the winner of Cartus global citizen of the year award.



Alan Kuczynski
Director

Alan was MD and owner of APM Training Institute, a highly regarded business college. Other directorships include the Australian Marketing Institute and Australasian Promotional Marketing Association.



Robert Smith

Director

Bob is owner of Halix Pty Ltd a large property development company in Manly NSW. He was previously President of the Manly Chamber of Commerce and Vice President of the Urban Development Institute.



John Moore

Director (resigned 29 Nov 2017)

John was an Executive Director of ING Bank and responsible for the Commercial Property, Finance, Real Estate Finance and Utilities Infrastructure and Development divisions.



Luisa Pastrello

Director

Luisa was in operations management at Qantas, and Etihad Airways and was a Director at Tourism NSW.

MEETINGS OF DIRECTORS

The number of meetings of the Company's board of directors during the year, and the number of meetings attended by each director were:

Board Member	Meetings Eligible to Attend	Meetings Attended
Garry Rothwell	5	5
Andrew Gregory	5	3
Malcolm McPherson	5	5
William Gill	5	4
Jared Goodwin	2	2
Alan Kuczynski	5	5
Robert Smith	5	4
John Moore	2	2
Luisa Pastrello	5	3

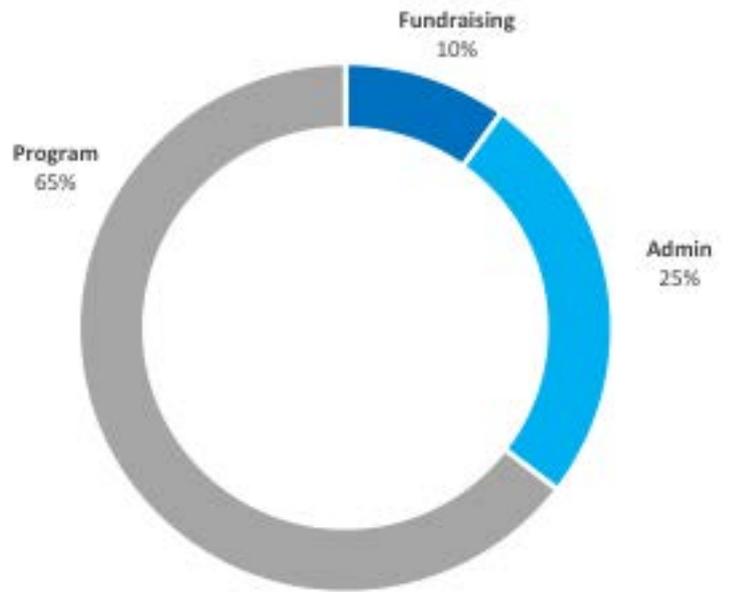
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

FINANCIAL POSITION

Although Youth Insearch shows a deficit for FY2018 of \$111,103, net assets remain steady at \$1,110,902.

Overall revenue increased by 11% compared to the prior year, however expenses increased by 24% due to Youth Insearch engaging external consultants to undertake research to evaluate and measure the outcomes achieved through our program.

REVENUE: \$1,816,255
 EXPENSES: \$1,927,359
 DEFECIT: -\$111,104
 NET ASSETS: \$1,110,902



Revenue Growth by Revenue Stream

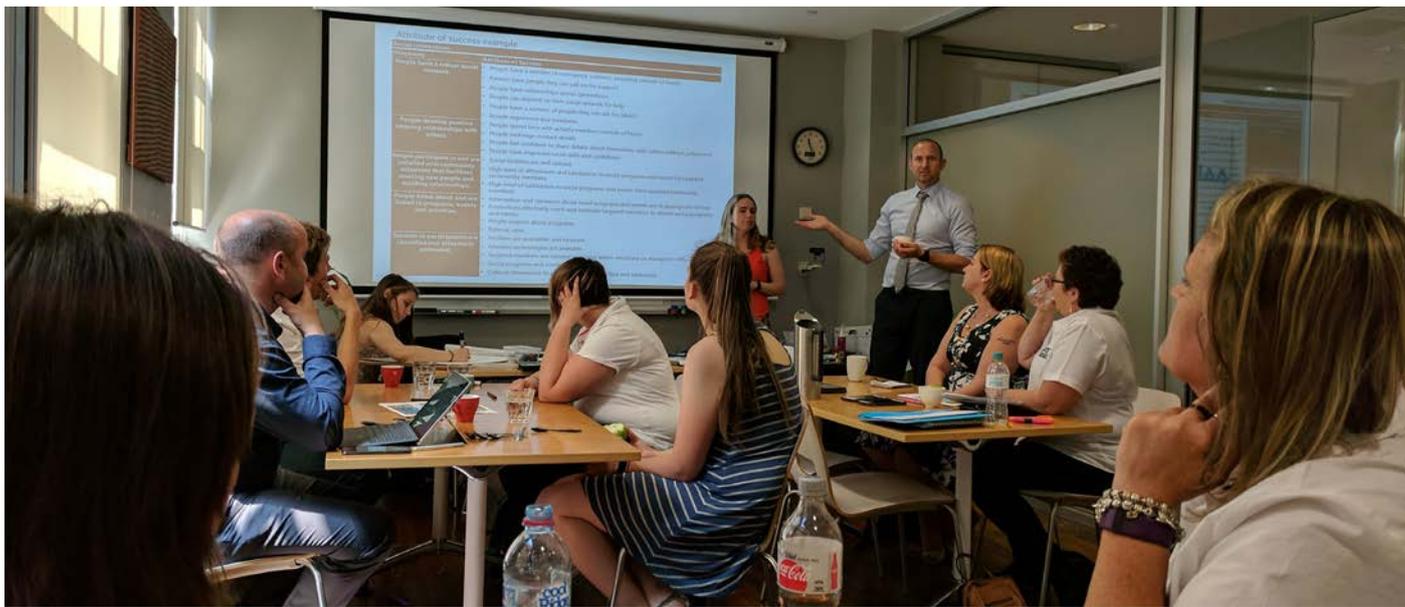


YOUTH REBUILDING
YOUNG
LIVES
INSEARCH



STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2021



Youth Insearch finalised its new Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 in April this year. This exciting document was the culmination of a series of workshops and consultation involving our Youth Leaders, National Program Council, Directors, Executive and Staff.

The Strategic Plan process involved the creation of a refined purpose, “to empower young people to take control of their lives and play a positive role in society”, and vision, “to have the most impact on youth in Australia”.

Together, we also clarified our organisation values, identifying the following four values as core. Working with the staff and volunteer team, these were defined into single sentences.

- **Collaboration** – “we achieve more working humbly together”
- **Love** – “our love and faith in each other is unconditional and we take the time to show it”
- **Growth** – “we fail fast, we value feedback, and we celebrate the small wins everyday”
- **Equality** – “we treat each other with respect independent of background, status or opinion”

The approach to the Strategic Plan was leveraging current assets to consolidate the current growth trajectory and maximise opportunities for future growth and impact. This analysis yielded 3 key goals over the coming three year horizon 2018-2021.

- **Key Goal 1:** Position for and achieve sustainable growth.
- **Key Goal 2:** Improve and evolve our program and offerings to increase impact for individuals and communities.
- **Key Goal 3:** A well run, sustainable organisation.

Sitting under these key goals are 16 objectives and 70 key initiatives to achieve over the 3 years.

Zoey Cumming

Participant

One of our participant Zoey wrote the following testimonial for a school project. We hope you find it as moving as we did.

"Hi, my name is Zoey. I live in Maffra and I'm 17. In November 2017, I started participating in this program called Youth Insearch. This program is all about young people supporting other young people. We have people from all over Victoria coming to this program. We have support groups at a dedicated time and place that goes for at least an hour. Youth Insearch have weekend workshops also known as camps that I go to every two months.

Over this one weekend, everyone gets a chance to speak and share their stories. When I say stories, I don't mean fantasy stories. I mean stories about why they are at camp. Stories about what has happened to them. Some of the topics that we speak about are drugs and alcohol, parent adolescents, grief, sexual assault, abuse, self-esteem, bullying, and more.

Everyone goes for their own reason. I go to let go of my past. My past is very traumatic. If people could see what I have lived and have experienced, they would fully understand why I am trying to let go, and why I go to these camps. The first few camps that I went on were for me. I went to help myself and find some ways of accepting my past, understanding that it wasn't my fault with some of what happened, and moving on and letting it go.

My first camp I was nervous and going through a lot. I ended up surprising myself by speaking, which I'm glad I did. I spoke about only some of my past though.

My second camp, my sister came along for her third or fourth camp. That camp I didn't really speak much and in one of those sessions I had to leave the room because I found out some stuff about my sister that I didn't know about because I didn't live with her and it hurt me, it scared me. I was filled with guilt, anger and pain. I didn't know what to do and I went into a panic attack.

I left the room and couldn't control myself. My heart was racing, I was breathing very fast, I was shaking, I couldn't even walk or talk. After I left the room I had a Leader come out after me. She took me outside and asked me how I was feeling, and

she also asked me to explain to her what made me tick so that she could have a better understanding of how she could help me. After I calmed down we spoke. She explained to me that I couldn't have done anything to change what happened. That it wasn't my fault. That all I can do now is support my sister.

The third camp I spoke about one of my stories that I had only just myself accepted. The reason I spoke about it was because I found something of my sisters in the cabin that I was staying in, and I broke because it reminded me of what happened to her and to me. I had to start letting go. I spoke in one of the sessions. It was really hard to begin with, but then as I spoke I started to accept it more and then I started to let go. Because I spoke, there were two other people that became comfortable enough to share their stories.

Our last camp was a complete flip. My sister was on this camp too. I didn't really speak though. Normally I speak about me, and for me. I didn't end up being there for myself, I was there to support others. I was surprised that when I did speak, it wasn't for me. It was only to answer questions and to give advice to the others who needed it. It felt good to be there supporting others, rather than being there for myself.

Since becoming a part of Youth Insearch, I have met so many wonderful people who are supportive and caring. The show love and encouragement. I have also seen people cry and let go of some things that they have never spoken about, or things that they have had on their minds for a long time.

My first thoughts on Youth Insearch were – "If I don't like it, I ain't going to go back; but if I like it, well, I'll see how I feel about it" Now my thoughts on Youth Insearch are just shocking. It's an amazing place to talk about stuff that you have gone through or are still going through. It is a very supportive place, and I have grown to love this program. It has become, in a way, a sense of home and belonging.

Before Youth Insearch I didn't feel that, but now I want to become a Leader. Having gone through so many things that can relate to almost every session in a way is a bonus because I want to become a Leader, and having experience helps me to understand others. I want to stay part of this family and help those that need it, even if all I am giving to them is just a hug and an "It will be okay". Becoming a Leader at Youth Insearch has become a strong dream/goal of mine that I can feel that I can accomplish."

OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our supporters in YE2018. We simply would not have been able to help so many young people without your support.

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- Brotherhood of St Laurence

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- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Mission Australia in partnership with Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Narrabri Shire Council
- Wellington Shire Council

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- Lions Club of Caloundra
- Lions Club of Clifton
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- Lions Club of Mary Valley

New South Wales

- Canterbury League Club
- Lions Club of Sussex Inlet & District
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- Rotary Club of Nelson Bay
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- Rotary Club Port Macquarie

Victoria

- Heywood Apex Annual Muster
- Rotary Club of Bairnsdale Sunrise
- Rotary Club of Mitchell River

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