

FACING THE CHALLENGE : A MATTER OF ATTITUDE

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I am honoured to address this important symposium on crime. In this Paper I will seek to establish an agenda for further discussion and debate that will encourage a commitment by ordinary citizens in partnership with governments, the business community and community organisations to the implementation of programs that will advance positive responses to the issues that are causative to criminal behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Crime prevention is a topical and difficult subject. Citizens everywhere are raising their voices and demanding "solutions" to what they view as unacceptable crime levels. We are making increasing calls for government, its police and its justice system to "do something about the problem". Our expectation for a government "quick fix" through legislation, more police and harsher penalties for offenders is unrealistic. The empirical data suggests that these historical measures are simply not working. What we are not generally doing is accepting that we, the collective community, are part of the solution. What we are not generally accepting is that there is a clear nexus between social conditions and crime; that issues such as intolerance, racism, sexism, poverty and gender inequity are a greater part to the equation of crime, and that we all have a part to play in changing the attitudes that sustain friction within our communities.

There is hope; there are Programs across the globe that are making a difference - that involve working partnerships between governments, business and the broader community; that involve changing social conditions that are conducive to crime production. This Conference will achieve one of two things; either it will maintain the status quo and we will all choke on the cries for stiffer penalties and more police; or people will leave this place with a healthier attitude about their responsibility to participate and a clearer understanding of their obligation to do so.

The City of Glenorchy and indeed cities throughout Australia might wish to establish Safer Cities strategies based upon the successful models in France (Bonmaisson), the Netherlands and Sweden. Dr. Irwin Waller (University of Ottawa, Canada) suggests that Sweden provides the best model for the future. Whilst there is a National Strategy on Community Safety in that country (and Australia is still negotiating its Strategy [a matter which will be explored in more detail later in the Paper]) the ingredients of the Strategy in Sweden are worthy of consideration. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (BRA) uses;

- . research knowledge as a basis for action;
- . evaluation to refine action;
- . opportunity reduction to reduce occasional offending;
- . social development to reduce the numbers of persistent offenders;
- . understanding of partnerships between agencies at the local level; and
- . a national agency to provide research, development, training and evaluation assistance at the local level (Waller, I., 1992, p.39).

Waller argues that an integrated City Crime Prevention Program utilises the Mayor as its head and involves planning, housing, social services, schools and police. He proposes a strategy that diagnoses the problem (consultation, polling, surveys), proposes remedies or solutions, implements programs of best practice (based upon proven programs elsewhere) in response to the problems diagnosed, evaluates the effectiveness of the Programs and secures national and state support for the further implementation of Programs.

WHY COMMUNITIES SHOULD BECOME MORE ACTIVELY INVOLVED - THE COST OF CRIME

The financial cost of crime Australian taxpayers in maintaining the criminal justice system is calculated at \$4 billion each year with almost 50% of this figure devoted to policing efforts.¹ The cost, in human terms, is unquantifiable - ask any victim, and there are many with whom you can consult. The financial cost translates conservatively to \$1600 for every man, woman and child in this country or \$5200 per household per annum. This constitutes some 7% of GDP or Gross Domestic Product.² For the purpose of comparison the Australian health care system is almost 8% of GDP.³ Whilst many would acknowledge the obvious benefits derived from the maintenance of a health care system at this level of GDP many commentators, and the Australian citizenry in general, are questioning whether there is reasonable value for money in the current expenditure on the historical policing, courts and corrections roles. Australia is not alone in questioning the merits of this expenditure. The United States of America spend approximately \$ 70 billion per year, England and Wales \$ 14 billion and Canada \$ 7 billion (quoted in Waller, I., September, 1993). In all places there is no indication that this expenditure is achieving desirable outcomes. In fact, in the United States (and in spite of the massive expenditure on cops, courts and corrections [with the highest incarceration rate in the world]), approximately 200 American citizens per hour become victims of crime (Lidgard, C. & Hogan, M., September 1993). In 1991, the United States Senate Judiciary Committee concluded from FBI data on violent crime that in 1990 the USA "led the world with its murder, rape and robbery rates" (Weiner, 1991). Obviously expensive repressive measures fail to deter crime (Horner, 1993, p.2).

THE ROLE OF THE POLICE - LAW ENFORCEMENT, CRIME PREVENTION OR BOTH ?

The doubling of police and the quadrupling of private security personnel worldwide in the last 30 years does not seem to have had any significant impact on crime reduction. This is not to say that policing is ineffectual, as it is not, it is simply to say that such measures alone are no longer sufficient if we are to be at all serious about creating safer communities.

We have done our police services across the country a great disservice in requiring them to become crime prevention agents. There is a serious error in adopting the view that crime prevention is a police task. This has become the "trendy" view amongst some police administrators in this country. Projects which have a "problem solving" component have demonstrated two things. Firstly they work (provided there is sufficient resolve) [eg. the Delft Housing Anti-Crime Project in the Netherlands {Borricand, 1992; Graham, 1990}, the Newport News Project {in the United States} and the ACES Program in Montreal {as reported by Waller, I., 1993}] to reduce crime rates in those places. Secondly, these approaches are time-consuming and are often abandoned due to pressures for calls for service by police on other tasks. The concept relies heavily upon analysis of local circumstances to understand what lies behind the crime problem and negotiating a resolution of problems utilising the resources of significant persons within the local community. **This process can, and should, be undertaken by others within the community. We, the community, have become too accustomed to "flicking" our social problems to others, including the police, who are ill-equipped to deal with them. The pressures on members of police services in dealing with their historical mandate is daunting. The implementation of effective crime prevention strategies is, in many cases, outside their ambit of responsibility.** Indeed some aspects of community safety may be incompatible with their primary mission which is the maintenance of order and law enforcement. Programs such as Neighbourhood Watch, Business Watch and Crime Stoppers clearly require a police consultative presence. However neighbourhood mediation, employment initiatives, the development of broader community partnerships and the like are well beyond the administrative scope of the police. These matters require specialised services across a range of other government and community jurisdictions. The attempts to encourage a more community based approach by police without regard to these other government agencies (in contrast with problem solving efforts) have produced only limited success in crime reduction (Skogan, 1992).

THE CORRECTIONS INDUSTRY - THE HORSE HAS BOLTED !

Traditional forms of incarceration, which are also expensive, are failing in their mission to protect the community. Historical approaches to imprisonment throughout most of Australia actually increase the likelihood of further offending as it makes it more difficult for the offender to consolidate family and employment connections that may well be contributory to the avoidance of further crime. This position can be reasonably tested against rates of

reoffence which indicate (from studies throughout the world over sixty years) that between forty and sixty percent of persons released from prison will be reconvicted within three years of the date of an initial release. The other objectives of imprisonment, retribution and deterrence, also appear to have little relevance in the face of escalating crime rates. In fact Professor Douglas Cousineau of Simon Fraser University in Canada in reviewing sentencing practices in that country concluded that "there is little or no evidence to sustain an empirically justified belief in the deterrent efficacy of legal sanctions".⁴

Available information indicates that more than 90% of inmates in Australia are male, almost 50% are in their twenties and the majority come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, approximately a third are illiterate and lacking in social skills. On any given day some 13000 persons are imprisoned throughout Australia.⁵ In general approximately 80% of these offenders will serve sentences of six months or less.⁶ A little over 40% of offenders are imprisoned for violent offences, with some 30% imprisoned for property offences. The balance consists of offences against good order and convictions for drug and driving offences. The 1990 **National Prison Census** indicates that the proportion of unemployed persons at the time of arrest ranges from 41.7% in Queensland to 85% in Western Australia with an average in other States and Territories at 60%. The same survey found that upwards of 80% of inmates in Australia had only partially completed schooling. The rate of reoffence throughout Australia is around 70%. These are important matters for correctional administrators whose historical warehousing function is inadequate within the context of community safety.

In Queensland the community driven Corrective Services Commission is leading the world in addressing offending behaviour having regard to the broader social conditions that have led people into prisons and obliging offenders to understand the consequences of their criminal actions. The move towards a restorative justice model in that system has a broader application in the wider criminal justice system.

The adoption of a justice model that emphasises restitution, out of court settlements and mediation will achieve much more than a system that places a premium on retribution and deterrence. As already suggested these latter principles have failed to achieve their primary task.

The Government of Tasmania, and other jurisdictions across the country, are urged to implement victim/offender mediation services whereby offenders are directly confronted by their victims and the consequences of their actions. Such a process will need to be professionally managed and will benefit the victim, the offender and the community. For the victim it will aid in the settlement of conflict and trauma that otherwise remains unresolved for many years following the victimisation. For the offender, it will shame them, in a highly personalised manner. For the community, and particularly in the case of minor or nuisance offences [usually involving juveniles] it may lead to a reduction in the number of cases congesting our courts.

THE MEDIA - THE AGENTS OF FEAR ?

In many respects it is understandable that we should hold a simplistic view about solving crime - that more police, increased punitive measures and sanctions will provide the panacea to bring about change. This is after all what we have been told for generations. **What we perceive to be the problem with crime, however, is often based upon misperception and distortion.** The "crime problem" has been a convenient construct to justify political and media agendas by a great many. The obsession by the media to overdramatise and sensationalise crime news is a disturbing phenomenon. Violent crime victimisation is a relatively rare occurrence. Our knowledge of such crimes is selectively edited and second-hand with our perception of the issues behind the reports being shaped by uncharacteristic images carried instantly across the globe. This is not meant to trivialise violent crime. It is a criticism of those who appear not to appreciate the fear that these images are creating, and the impact on the quality of life for those who believe that these images are typical.

THE FEAR OF CRIME

The quality of life for ordinary Australians is under threat. Our problem is not crime but our misperception about crime - a misperception that generates fear, which reaches out to every citizen in the community - the fear of becoming the victim of a violent crime, the fear of having freedom curtailed, the fear of having rights and privacy undermined by others within the community who appear uncaring about the consequence of their actions. This misperception is fuelled by media reporting of crime and politicians who opportunistically agitate for more punitive measures and increased static security as a solution

Perceptions of fear are complex with those who are most fearful of crime generally not being members of the groups which experience the highest rates of victimisation. This does not make the consequences of fear any less meaningful to those who experience it - fear is an undesirable emotion for citizens who have little choice but to live in communities with others.

Studies that have questioned Australians about their experience of victimisation have revealed that police statistics only reflect about 40% of all offending taking place.⁷ Here we have a further manifestation of fear - the fear of reporting a crime. This has been a particularly potent fear for women and children who suffer at the hands of men with whom they live. It is clear that the number of offences unknown to police is highly significant and that there is a substantial amount of crime which cannot be countered by police action alone. Of reported crime except for domestic violence and sexual assault (the extent of which is still hidden from official notice) it appears that young, single, unemployed men are at a greater risk of becoming victims of violence. Both victims and offenders that come to the attention of the police come from disadvantaged backgrounds with Aboriginals facing the greatest risk of becoming victims of violence than the rest of the Australian population.⁸

A new approach is needed to deal with crime beyond policing and corrections - one which challenges values and attitudes such as intolerance, the glorification of violence, racism, sexism and those which foster inequalities within the community. These are matters that cannot be dealt with alone by law enforcement agents. We as citizens must begin to collectively participate with our government in criminal justice debate and through the implementation, in partnership with government, of social action strategies that will focus upon the restoration of peaceful relations in society.

This is not to suggest the formation of vigilant groups or the arming of society. This has been the reaction in the United States of America and this approach has only added to the problem. We must get out of the mindset that static security measures alone will reduce crime. Our thinking needs to become far more lateral but, more importantly, we must respond more directly and actively at a local level to redress attitudes that give rise to criminal behaviour.

THE CHANGING GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Australia is not alone in the crisis confronting its population. The problem of crime and the causal factors that generate crime present as a global problem.

The general mood throughout world communities could reasonably be described as one of cynicism and hopelessness. It appears that throughout the industrialised world a chasm has been allowed to develop between those that have access to opportunity and resources and those who do not. Traditional egalitarian concepts of social order that have epitomised civilised Western democracies appear to be disintegrating in the wake of diminishing opportunity for an increasing number of people and an emerging ethos of hedonism. The principles that characterise and drive interactive communities are giving way under extraordinary social pressure.

The conspicuousness of this crisis is evidenced by alarming crime trends, exploitative labour practices, child prostitution, overt hostility towards minority groups (especially in the United States of America), disregard for the elderly of a dozen nations (who are forced to live under makeshift cardboard shelters in the alcoves of buildings) and the indifference by entire communities to respond to the misery of those in desperate need.

There is a significant variation in crime rates between nations. This variation appears to be a function of cultural, economic and other social considerations (or a combination of factors). The rates of violent crime per 100000 in the USA are three to four times those of Canada whose rates are two to three times those of Europe. The average in Europe is three times that of Japan.⁹ An initial observation that Japan has the most buoyant of world economies should not be understated in any analysis that would seek to explain these differences. Clearly the economic situation throughout the world has impacted upon the social fabric of the global community. It is the case that the phenomenal growth in criminal activity throughout the world corresponds with the evolution of world economic recession traced to the 1970s and maintained to a significant degree since that time. Whilst there is no great joy for our colleagues in Europe they are in a much better situation than their counterpart populations in the United States of America and Canada. Certain cultural imperatives in Europe in terms of the advancement of the welfare state, participatory management in industry and so forth may prove to be likely explanators to these differences and may have been contributory to the avoidance of a more profound social disaster on that continent than otherwise is the

case. The adoption and maintenance of the welfare state in this country which seeks to ensure basic health, social security, education and employment training opportunities has substantially reduced the conspicuousness and alienation for our nations poor.

It is evident that Governments and organisations that have ignored the causes of this crisis have become sterile and ineffectual. An intelligent view that doesn't cloister economic and social failure but rather expose and promote measures that aid economic and social reformation would seem to be more desirable.

The choice for the global community in the future and without creative intervention will be chaos and anarchy. With the application of reason and lateral thought we may avert a catastrophe of monumental proportions. I was in Los Angeles at the time of the riots in that place and I must tell you that it wasn't only the poor black, asian and hispanic people who were looting. Middle class Americans were in there as well profiting illegally from the social disorder during this period.

In raising a different approach to the issue of community safety it is important to understand the distinction between situational and Social crime prevention.

Situational crime prevention is the popularly understood approach to crime prevention which comprises measures directed at specific forms of crime and the reduction of opportunity for these crimes to be committed through the management, design or manipulation of the immediate environment in which they occur (Hough et al 1980). It is typified by static measures such as locks, devices and the maintenance of security forces including the police and correctional services. Situational crime prevention measures are reactive and proceed upon the premise that the future commissioning of crime is preventable with the application of punitive sanctions as a deterrent, the widening of police powers to detain and an increased security presence.

Social crime prevention, on the other hand, is a dynamic approach that seeks to explain the social and economic factors that predispose individuals and classes of people to criminal activity and seeks further, to change these circumstances politically, socially and economically.

Unfortunately most discussion on preventative measures in the past have focused substantially on situational interventions. A balance between the approaches needs to be established which will reorient attention to the causation of crime and how to best manage the complex social relations that exist within society.

THE MYTH OF CRIME AND THE PRICE FOR AFFLUENCE

The reporting of crime gives one the impression that there is a crime explosion. There is little empirical evidence to substantiate the position that crime rates are dramatically increasing across the board. It is true that for certain offences recorded rates are increasing, for example, sexual offences and domestic violence issues, however this is more likely to be as a result of greater reporting by victims (and more compassionate dealings with the issue) than any other possibility. Similarly for drug convictions, the higher rates of conviction may be as a result of a larger number of "domestic users" being reported through programs such as "Operation Noah" and "Operation Paradox". This does not mean that the community is any closer to solving the drug problem.

At a recent Conference in Brisbane convened by the Australian Crime Prevention Council it was generally accepted that current drug policies do more harm than good, policies whose negative side-effects outweigh its benefits. One of the Conference resolutions was to "give serious consideration to alternative strategies other than prohibition". It was also noted that drug related crime was one of the most significant causes of social disharmony. Some weeks ago the head of Interpol, Raymond Kendall, said that 60% of his staff time was related to drug-related crime and stated that "There is no evidence at all that the problem is being stopped" (quoted by Wendy Holden in the Daily Telegraph "Traffic in Drugs is 'Unstoppable'", September 6, 1993, p.8, quoted by Fattah, I., September 1993).

There is, however, an emerging problem in the area of property crime. Heiland, Shelley and Katoh (1992) affirm that crime against property is the dominant crime pattern for all countries analysed with this crime accounting for 60% of all criminal acts. They determined a disproportionate rate of growth in theft of motor vehicles and theft from shops and department stores (p.8). They also note that the percentage of violent offences to the total volume of crime in the countries that they had studied had declined in all countries except the United States (p.8). Excluding

the Northern Territory which boasts exceptionally high murder rates, the average murder rate for Australia is below two percent per 100000 (Law Reform Commission of Victoria, 1992). This figure is approximately one half that of Canada and one sixth that of the United States of America.

It is proposed that the reasons for the rise in this form of crime can be substantially attributed to three factors - the expansion of opportunities for such crime (the byproduct of affluence), the escalating rates of unemployment (linked to a ready market to convert stolen goods to cash) and the increase in the use of drugs. The fact that we would prefer to maintain a fundamentally affluent society suggests that we may indeed have to live with crime of one form or another.

It would be difficult to successfully argue that the alleviation of poverty and the attainment of full employment would not lead to less crime and more harmonious relations in society. The low crime rates in Japan (and until recently, West Germany) are, I believe, related to the economic prosperity in those places. The political and economic realities in other countries, including Australia, would suggest that such structural reorientation is unlikely in the short term. This difficulty is heightened by government policy (by all political persuasions) to put in place macro-economic strategies that are designed to constrict the labour market which of itself is contributory to unemployment which in turn may cause increased crime levels.

CRIME - A CASE OF HAVING A BAD ATTITUDE

There are other matters that significantly contribute to our crime problem. These are issues that relate to our individual and collective belief systems.

It is critical to the discussion of this Paper that an appreciation be gained that a great number of crimes could be prevented not by changing people's biological or psychological constitution, but rather by simply changing their attitudes. Crime prevention debate will find greater success if it concentrates upon changing people's attitudes rather than changing people, by altering situations and environments rather than attempting to change social and economic structures (Fattah, E., September, 1993). Many of those matters that would seek to change attitudes have intrinsic worth and are socially desirable in any case, but would nonetheless reduce victimisation and restore peaceful relations in society.

We are in a position to modify expectations and reshape community attitudes on issues such as intolerance, racism, sexism and other such matters that are contributory to friction and tension within the community and may influence crime patterns.

We can, at the same time, be realistic and honest about the consequences of long term unemployment for our young.

It is important that we inform our children that education will not necessarily guarantee employment. It is critical that young people are exposed to productive and non-exploitative options as part of their educational curriculum. We cannot sustain the lie forever that education will provide a window of opportunity for all to enter the work force. Successive generations of school leavers have learnt too late the harsher lessons of unemployment. Educationalists would undoubtedly argue that they have enough to do already in relation to curriculum demands. In fact I am arguing for a fundamental review of existing curricula and abandonment of extraneous material. I am arguing that human relationship aspects of education are inadequate.

Our young people are not "bludgers", they are not "lazy", they do want work - and if it is not available our community must seek out solutions to their boredom and depression and in consultation with them. They deserve better than the negative images constantly projected against them by the adult community. School to work transition programs that provide school based counselling, peer support and job placement assistance to young people and out of school remedial education for youths who drop out of school or need stronger basic academic skills to compete in the labour market are two simple ways to assist unemployed young people. They must also have an active part to play in the management and maintenance of communities. Some would suggest that this will follow with the development of "values". I would prefer to refer to it as basic citizenship whereby collective obligations and responsibilities are understood and responded to. Many within our adult population have a paucity of knowledge on citizenship and are hardly in a position to decry young people in general.

It is important that we reculture our young by implementing schools based programs of community safety. Such programs should commence in pre-school, be augmented in primary and secondary school settings and reinforced in the general community.

The much cited High/Scope Perry Preschool Program from the United States strikingly demonstrates the potential benefits of high quality early childhood programs for disadvantaged children. This longitudinal study (over thirty years) clearly demonstrates that participation in this specific program can increase the proportion of young people who at 19 are literate, employed and enrolled in post secondary education and can reduce the proportion who dropped out of school, were labelled as mentally retarded, had been arrested or were on welfare (Schweinhart, L., 1987). The Program provides a structure in which children are encouraged to plan and then take responsibility for their activities within a structured classroom environment. This is important for any delinquency prevention because active learners will be more community minded and responsible in adolescence. Essential components of the program are:

- . A curriculum based upon child initiated learning;
- . Emphasis on meeting developmental needs;
- . Teachers trained in early childhood development;
- . Administrative support that includes curriculum leadership;
- . Classes with 2 adults and fewer than 20 children;
- . Systematic efforts to involve parents as partners in their children education;
- . Strong staff development program;
- . Continuity with infant and primary programs;
- . Integration with other services.

In the primary school setting approaches that involve the entire student population are showing considerable success. The Yale/New Haven School Development Program in the United States of America focuses upon changing the way schools are managed and ensuring that their management is informed by the principles of child development. It considers the child's behaviour within the wider context of the school as a social system. The operational model consists of a:

- . School Planning and management team
- . Parent participation program
- . Mental health team
- . Academic program.

The most important of these is the planning and management team. Directed by the School Principal it consists of teachers, teacher aides, parents and a mental health professional. Its task is to "interrupt the forces of confusion and conflict and to establish an orderly effective process of education in the school". The purpose of the team is to consider opportunities and problems in a. the school environment and social environment and b. academic curriculum and staff development. The results of the approach in the initial pilot program were staggering. When first assessed in 1969 (preprogram) the students were 18 - 19 months behind grade level in reading and mathematics, with "serious behaviour and attendance problems". Since 1976 this school has been among the top five schools in the city in attendance and "has not had a serious behaviour problem in a decade". By 1979 students were approximately at grade level in reading and mathematics, with staff attendance high and staff turnover the lowest in the city (reported in **Youth Crime Prevention**, Crime Concern, 1993).

Programs such as Crucial Crew that target 9 - 11 year olds are important learning experiences for primary students which at the same time involve broader community participants such as local councils, businesses and community organisations.

Programs in the High School setting such as Youth Action Groups which encourage students themselves to undertake surveys of their school population, isolate the problems of greatest concern and propose solutions provide a powerful citizenship model which is having enormous success in the United Kingdom.

Social Action strategies developed for young people who are outside the education system, homeless and otherwise disadvantaged provide important linkages between this group and others within the community who are in a position to assist in the implementation of "solutions" proposed by the target group.

Effective programs of intervention involve all parts of the community in a non-patronising partnership that is responsive to the various needs expressed by target groups. The attitude shift from a dependence model which assumes that "government" will "solve" the problem to a proactive model wherein communities assume responsibility for local issues can be achieved. Existing structures such as local government, businesses and community organisations can be mobilised to achieve this goal. It requires strategic planning, public acceptance and resolve.

At that same time, processes that address attitudes that fuel disharmony within the community will need to be put in train.

It is imperative that patriarchal and sexist attitudes are challenged and defeated if we are to witness a significant reduction in family violence. No amount of legislative intervention nor court processes will protect women and children against many forms of abuse by men. Feminists have argued for some time that rape is not a crime of sex, but of power. A disturbing study recently conducted by the Domestic Violence Research Centre in Brisbane examined responses by 14 year old males to the issue of whether it is OK for a boy to hold a girl down and force her to have sexual intercourse in a range of circumstances. Consider the following results from that Survey:

- . Where a couple had been dating for some time, 15% of boys believed it was acceptable to force a girl to have sex and a further 15% were unsure;
- . Only 55% of boys believed it was unacceptable to force a girl to have sex if she gets him sexually excited. Of the remaining 45% of boys, 27% thought it was OK and 18% were unsure;
- . If "she's led him on", 33% of boys considered it acceptable to force a girl down to have sexual intercourse. (O'Connor, Domestic Violence Resource Centre, 1992).

In a Study conducted in conjunction with the Domestic Violence Resource Centre, Fowler (1993) recorded a similar pattern of disturbing attitudes. Clearly we have a serious problem about men's attitudes towards women that spans generations, from the ill-informed opinions of some Australian Judges to our children.

A similar disturbing trend towards gay men, transgenderists and lesbians was recorded in studies in Queensland and New South Wales (Cox, Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby's Streetwatch Report, 1990; Ward, Queensland Anti Violence Council, 1993). The Queensland Report noted that typical attacks involved a group of three or four young men, often of school age. The authors argue that the reason for the attack is that the victim is, typically a gay man, and the attackers are motivated by a hatred of this. They suggest that while there usually was not a premeditated motivation to kill the victim, there is such a level of intensity and irrationality in the attack that serious injury often results. Of reports to the Anti Violence Council, 67% involved at least moderate injury, ie. more than just cuts and bruises. 29% needed hospitalisation or other immediate medical attention. One nineteen year old man received permanent brain damage, and one man was killed (Ward, N., September 1993). Our community is clearly homophobic. Gender conformity is encouraged in Australia and peer endorsement of adult views that to be a "poof", a "dyke" and "queer" is a terrible insult continue unchallenged within most Australian educational institutions.

The Australian community is also confronted with unacceptable levels of child abuse. The most recent statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reveal that in 1991 - 92 there were 54146 reports of child abuse. It is not unreasonable to assume that these figures are an underestimate. The fact that in the majority of cases the perpetrator is known to the victim adds a sinister dimension to the problem. The new phraseology of "intergenerational abuse" and "the cycle of violence" was developed in recognition of the linkage, empirically tested, that victimisation is an important factor to offending (note Cathy Widom, Child Abuse, Neglect and Violent Criminal Behaviour, Criminology, 1989, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 251 - 271). The Australian Committee on Violence provides a comprehensive review of the explanations and remedies to the cycle of violence. The United States National Research Council (1993, 391) states that "a more successful strategy for preventing later violence might involve simultaneously targeting the individual and other areas such as school, peers and family factors that are amenable to change".

A disturbing pattern of elder abuse has also recently been investigated by the Women's Health Sector. This has

been a hidden problem in Australia until research in recent years identified its existence in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. The literature on elder abuse indicates that when the perpetrator and the victim live together one (or both) of them are physically, mentally or economically dependent on the other. Research from the United States indicates that abuse is likely to come from a close family member (80% - 90%), and these same findings have been replicated in Australian studies (Roberts, 1993). Whilst the causes of abuse are not generally agreed upon most experienced professional workers attribute abuse and neglect to bad situations and not to bad people (Roberts, 1993). It is impractical to expect all families to have the necessary financial, emotional and social resources to manage the additional burden of elder care (Roberts, 1993). Another theory suggests that this form of abuse is linked to the power dynamics of other forms of family abuse ie. that "a more powerful person takes advantage of a less powerful one" (Finkelhor, 1983, p.19). Ageism relies upon the premise that the old are somehow inferior to the young. Like other prejudices such as sexism and racism, it creates its own self-fulfilling prophecies and promotes lifestyle attitudes that damage individual potential. Whatever motivations create the environment for this form of abuse, the issue will become increasingly more urgent as the Australian population ages. It is calculated that by the year 2031 one in four persons in Queensland will be over 60 years of age. With the steadily declining birth rates throughout this country, this percentage may provide a reasonable approximation for the rest of Australia.

It is time that the Australian community accepted that the traditional nuclear family structure is no longer the norm within this country. The more typical family is a one parent family with one or more children. The extraordinary stresses confronting these families who have little or no extended family support structure demand a reappraisal of child care provisions, pre and after school care, in school activities for young adults, more flexible work and school hours to cater for working parents and a consideration of other options that will assist in making these families more "functional".

Children tend not to have status in most societies. They cannot vote, they do not contribute to the (legitimate) economy. They lack the political organisation to present as a pressure group in their own right. The paucity of their education and (positive social) experience mitigates against their comprehension that their circumstances are not of their construction nor that there are remedies beyond violence and self-abuse. In those places that have social security they generally do not have access to it, where there is none, there is absolute despair.

There is no question that children are being displaced from their homes at earlier ages for a range of reasons including family disharmony, economic necessity and domestic violence. In some cases the decision is voluntary, in others it is forced upon them. Given the lack of opportunity for equitable access by the young to community resources normally available to adults (including social security, health care, emergency housing and the like) it is not surprising that many of these displaced youth become involved in criminal activity. This progression becomes a matter of necessity and survival.

The community of younger citizens in the street or in our schools is a microcosm of the total community - it is reactive, it is optimistic and cynical, its members have specific needs. Should these needs be not met by the collective community, one would expect a degree of animosity to develop between those who have and those who do not have. This conflict cannot be reasonably be resolved by recourse to moral arguments, although this appears to be the general community view (eg. "go home to your parents").

The cost of failed efforts for our youth is measured in our courts, our prisons and in protective services. It is imperative that world communities not be polarised further and that the commendable notions of equity and fairness are put in practice for all classes of citizenry, including our youth. The further development by youth of a subcultural or tribal ethos that promotes aggression, mistrust and disdain is not sustainable and is inconsistent with the expectation for all citizens to live peacefully. Conversely a failure to relieve, in a non patronising manner, the burden of race intolerance, gender inequity and extreme economic disparities (which provide the catalyst for most crime) is opportunistic and mischievous. Any debate that moves society in the direction of escalating punitive measures in dealing with reactive behaviours by juveniles, for example, should be challenged. Rather the debate should promote the creation of systems which effect will be to minimise the potential for these behaviours occurring in the first instance. Most importantly change will not occur without the active support and participation by the affected group. In the past adult administrators have promoted Programs for implementation that have not developed from an understanding of the needs of the group. Both the government and non-government sectors are guilty of attempting to impose their own perception of what is appropriate rather than seek the information directly from consumers. Having built the framework of their own empires they then, patronisingly, assume responsibility

for the Programs with gratuitous input from young people. They feel good, but what of those that they aspire to help.

YOUNG PEOPLE AS THE "PATSY" FOR SERIOUS CRIME

Much of the crime committed by young people is non-violent, opportunistic and is often caused by boredom and lack of access to recreational and social activities.¹⁰ This view is shared by other organisations that are involved in crime prevention strategies overseas. Appendices 1 and 2 are the results of two such Consultations. Readers are invited to consider carefully the information contained in this material and perhaps consider the conduct of a similar exercise within your own community. A process for undertaking such an exercise is developed elsewhere.

Information contained within an unpublished Survey of Banyo (Queensland) juveniles conducted in 1991 involving 341 respondents suggests a similar position.¹¹ The results of this Survey appear as Appendix 3.

In spite of the best information to the contrary young people are perceived as violent and anti-social.

In a Report titled **Youth Crime Prevention - A co-ordinated Approach**, Frank Warburton writes that as many as 90% of juvenile boys (10-16 year olds) commit a delinquent act at some time, although only a small percentage are involved in serious criminal activity and thus become the main responsibility of the police and the courts.¹²

Most jurisdictions recognise that whilst juveniles are significantly over-represented in delinquent or less serious criminal behaviour the vast majority are likely to grow out of delinquent behaviour of their own accord and without official intervention.¹³ There is some evidence to sustain the view, in fact, that inappropriate intervention can increase the tendency for further criminal behaviour, a point recognised in a report produced by a British Government Inter-departmental Group on Crime in 1983 which concluded that all young people go through a difficult period in adolescence and many commit offences of some sort. The great majority grow out of criminality but there is a danger that the wrong sort of reaction to their offences could propel some into further crime.¹⁴ The bulk of juvenile crime consists of offences that are inconvenient however they do not threaten public safety or the fabric of society. Commonplace crime can, nonetheless, seriously reduce the quality of life for other community members and certainly contributes to the level of fear in which people live.

The youth crime problem too often is translated into a youth problem. By virtue of their conspicuousness in groups youths are characterised as threatening and are therefore perceived by adults in the community to be a risk to their safety. In these circumstances the fear of crime is generalised into a fear of young people. The effect of this condition is that communities that are already divided, polarise further.

In considering the development of meaningful crime prevention strategies a distinction needs to be drawn between those who commit crime **occasionally** and those who commit crime **persistently**.¹⁵ Longitudinal studies that have followed a sample of children from birth to adulthood show that while persons from many different social circumstances **occasionally** commit crime there is a small group of disadvantaged youths who **persistently** are involved in a variety of offences over a long period of time - studies in the United States of America and the United Kingdom illustrate the point with 50% of reported crime being committed by a small number of offenders (6% - 8%). In Solihull (United Kingdom) 19 youths are said to be responsible for 65% of all crimes reported to police.¹⁶ The London Home Office suggest that 5% of young people convicted commit 70% of the offences for which a conviction is obtained within their age range.

The behaviour of young people is not created in a vacuum. The relationship (or lack thereof) between juveniles and adults, the response of local agencies to anti-social behaviour, the availability of services and opportunity for the young, the role models presented, social and economic factors are more significant indicators to a persons predisposition to crime than any presumption of personality disorder or maladjustment. Criminal behaviour for all age groupings is manifestly a reaction to a combination of social circumstances.

I will return to the issue of juvenile crime later in the Paper.

THE NATIONAL STRATEGY ON COMMUNITY SAFETY

In November last year 35 of the countries police Ministers, business and civic leaders met with the Federal

Attorney-General and his Federal Justice Office to consider the creation of a National Strategy on Community Safety or Crime Prevention. By the end of that day and following a meeting of the Australian Police Ministers Council the following day, a Communique was released to the effect that a National Community Safety Council would be established in Australia which would be constituted of government, community and corporate sector representatives in partnership to deal with the complex issue of crime prevention. The Federal Justice Office launched its document "Creating a Safer Community Crime Prevention and Community Safety into the 21st. Century".

This is an important Paper that has challenged and which will alter our traditional belief structure on the nature of crime and the way in which we as a community respond to, and participate, in the process of interfering with its causation.

For a year prior to this meeting the Australasian Police Ministers Council had examined the feasibility of a national approach to community safety. The concerns of this Council have been in response to increasing concerns about crime in the community, the shifting emphasis in certain overseas jurisdictions about the issue, and a recognition, prompted by a long period of agitation by organisations such as The Australian Crime Prevention Council that social policy considerations can make an effective difference in the reduction of crime. In July of 1992 a National Strategy was endorsed which recognised that crime is a part of Australian society not something distanced from it, that is to say that a successful crime prevention strategy needs to acknowledge and encompass the economic social and cultural forces that influence criminal activity.

The key objectives of this Strategy are to:

- . Develop effective partnerships between government and non-government agencies, public and private sector groups in community safety and crime prevention.
- . Design, develop and deliver programs which enhance the safety of the community and minimise its exposure to crime.
- . In particular, encourage and support innovative and imaginative approaches to:
 1. social factors which give rise to crime;
 2. the social dynamics of the fear of crime and the consequences of this fear for groups within the community;
 3. managing the risk of crime;
 4. facilitating more effective media participation in community safety and crime prevention;
 5. encouraging positive approaches to issues of individual and community safety, particularly in the commercial arena;
 6. encouraging social awareness of public safety and crime prevention, especially through our education systems; and
 7. developing crime prevention impact statements as an integral part of corporate decision- making.

Further objectives will be to:

- . Ensure evaluation is an integral part of the design of all community safety and crime prevention programs.
- . Ensure that the development of community safety and crime prevention programs throughout Australia takes account of relevant International experience and is consonant with United Nations standards and strategies.

As a forum for the discussion of community safety and crime prevention issues, the roles of the Australian

Community Safety Council are to:

- . identify community safety concerns and opportunities in both urban and rural areas and developing appropriate community safety strategies;
- . endorse national community safety and crime prevention models of best practice;
- . foster policy related research and development in community safety and crime prevention;
- . improve partnerships and linkages between community safety and crime prevention policies, programs and personnel at a National, State, Territory and Local level;
- . encourage local government, as part of its role in integrated local area planning, to undertake the role of effective community consultation with residents, services providers, service users and other key people;
- . encourage broad-based participation in community safety and crime prevention program design and delivery and identify barriers to such participation; and
- . facilitate the implementation and evaluation of practical community safety and crime prevention programs.

The adoption of the principles embodied in this Strategy are consistent with a resolution of the Eighth Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders which met in Havana Cuba in 1990. This Conference focused upon the prevention of urban crime and emphasised that prevention is the concern of all. The Conference resolved that prevention must bring together those with responsibilities for family, health, housing, social services, leisure activities, schools, the police and the justice system in order to deal with the conditions that generate crime.

The Second International Conference on Urban Safety, Drugs and Crime held in Paris, France in 1991 demonstrated through its representation of 1600 delegates including majors, councillors, police executives, social development leaders and government leaders from 65 countries that effective models for action are available: from governments, which have national crime prevention structures; and from individual projects, which have reduced various types of criminal activity. The Seven Steps to make World Communities Safer resolution published from the Paris Conference included the statement that:

Governments must establish national crime prevention structures to recommend improved national policies, undertake research and development, and foster the implementation of effective crime prevention programs, particularly in cities. The current Minister for Justice (a Tasmanian representative) should be encouraged to proceed with the consultations to implement the agreed Strategy.

STATE INITIATIVES

Prior to the resolution last in Melbourne last year some jurisdictions had already commenced strategic planning on crime prevention. In South Australia for example a Ministry of Crime Prevention has been established. The Strategy implemented in that State is explicitly influenced by the local crime prevention councils in France (the Bonmaison approach) which adds to the portfolio of law and order measures through the formal development of community based crime prevention strategies.

In October of 1992 the Queensland Government announced its commitment to a Juvenile Crime Prevention Strategy to combat juvenile crime in that State. In February of this year the New South Wales Government issued its Green Paper "Future Directions for Juvenile Justice in New South Wales".

These strategies are dependent upon the co-operation of various government departments. In the case of the Queensland Strategy, Family Services, Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, Education and Police departments are contributors. The expectation of inter-governmental collaboration designed into this Strategy goes well beyond any other similar undertaking in that State. Furthermore the Strategy is linchpinned for its success to the development of a working partnership between these government agencies and the community.

In the community sector historically disparate organisations are forging closer links to meet the rigours of a future holistic, co-ordinated, and non-competitive relationship to meet the needs for a safer community. An example of

such an undertaking involves The Australian Crime Prevention Council, ACRO Incorporated and the Victims of Crime Association of Queensland. With a common purpose of community safety such coalitions of interest will become an integral part of Australian community relations.

Crime prevention is not solely the responsibility of government and its policing agencies but is a matter of participatory involvement by the whole of society - government, non-government organisations, individuals, corporate entities and particular interest groups or classes within the community - this matter cannot be emphasised enough. The meeting in Melbourne brought together the combined force of governments across the States and territories, the Commonwealth government, entities and organisations representing the Australian Institute of Criminology, various academic institutions involved in criminological investigation, the National Council of Women in Australia, the Australian Council for the Ageing, the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia, the Media Council of Australia, the Australian Youth Policy and Action Coalition, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Business Council of Australia, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the National Child Protection Council, the Insurance Council of Australia, the Australian Local Government Association, The Australian Crime Prevention Council and others. A clear endorsement of the proposed National Strategy was achieved.

Undoubtedly there will be some significant rethinking about relations between normally disparate State jurisdictions and the Federal government, between government departments within each jurisdiction and between government, the business sector and the community and indeed within the community itself. Nonetheless an important - a critical, step towards the creation of an effective partnership that entails more than token ownership of this complex issue has been taken.

JUVENILE CRIME - THE WHY; AND THE WHAT WE CAN DO

As this point I will return to the discussion on juvenile crime because juveniles form a class of citizens for whom economic and social dislocation is penetrating and there are some important world initiatives for youth which find their success in the partnership model between government, community and industry that are worthy of articulation.

The issue of youth crime prevention is of great importance to the welfare of all world communities. Crime is being generated by juveniles at an alarming rate and careers in offending behaviour are being forged as a result. The long-term implication of culturing an offending ethos has been, and will continue to become without intervention, the maintenance of unsafe communities. The popular and irrational world view is that criminal actions are the product of individual maladjustment. A more enlightened position recognises that social and environmental factors are more closely linked to offending behaviour by youth. Initiatives that respond to these factors should be set in place that will positively impact to reduce offending behaviour.

In raising the issue of juvenile justice it is important to differentiate between systems that may be useful for known juvenile offenders and structures that would be useful to minimise criminogenic activity by those at risk within the community. For the purpose of definition known juvenile offenders are characterised as those whose actions have already brought them to the attention of the Criminal Justice System whilst at risk persons are those for whom economic, social and environmental factors are most likely to lead them into conflict with the law. A thesis will be presented that more appropriately defines the latter categorisation.

Background

To anyone who has travelled it is evident that the most vulnerable amongst the poor, the lumpen proletariat of world communities, are the children of poverty and indifference. They are the most conspicuous victims of the tumultuous recessionary decline of the past three decades. They are the grim indictment on a society that has failed to contemporise its view and respond to the changed circumstances of the 1970s, 80s and 90s and the byproduct of this period.

The haunting tragedy of these children begging arms, offering themselves for sex, escaping the reality of their world through drugs or hustling for money is indelibly etched in the psyche of every city in the industrialised world from the most affluent to the least. In a consumerist world these children are disposable and their plight irrelevant. Those older (and, we are told, wiser) play blind, deaf and dumb to the misery of these wretched people.

Whilst it can be argued that the circumstances for the young were not deliberately manufactured and that governments, on the face of it, have enacted various forms of legislation to protect the interests of this class of people (and, less we forget, it remains the popular adult misconception that they are the "responsibility of their parents"), it remains the case that world communities are nonetheless complicit to their ongoing victimisation and exploitation through fundamental inaction at a local level. Older people are satisfied to cloister themselves in the security of their own homes and pontificate in the most general of terms that all youthful persons are basically evil and should be controlled by more police that should be made available "by government". There appears to be no collective will to recognise the particular needs of this class that have arisen in response to the extraordinary social devolution since the 1970s.

Unemployment, Poverty, Inequality and Youth Crime

Various studies into juvenile offending behaviour have consistently correlated poverty with school age pregnancy, poor health, family stress, failure at school and violent crime.¹⁷

In a recent study in the United Kingdom, Simon Fields established a direct correlation between recession, declining consumption levels and rising rates of property crime. He concludes that on the theoretical side, strong evidence has emerged of economic causes of crime. The precise nature of these causes deserves to be further unravelled, and further research in this field could yield evidence of the scope for initiatives and policies designed to mitigate the criminogenic impact of these economic causes.¹⁸

The Vera Institute in New York, in its survey of prison inmates in that city, has suggested that, while certain types of potential offenders may be unaffected by unemployment, most groups will be affected by a lack of quality jobs.

Farrington et. al. in the Cambridge Study in Delinquency Development demonstrates the detrimental effect of relative deprivation during childhood on subsequent offending patterns. In this Study it was demonstrated that crime rates were higher during periods of unemployment (for the 411 boys participating in the research) than during periods of employment, particularly for offences involving material gain at ages 15-16, for the most delinquent youths and for youths who had lower status jobs when they were in employment.¹⁹

Furthermore the work of Wolpin, Levenson and the Vera Institute indicate that juvenile unemployment and deprivation may be significant factors in the development of criminality amongst young people and young men in particular.²⁰ The studies of Steven Box²¹ and Ian Crow²² support these findings.

Mannheim analysed the lineage between crime and unemployment during the 1930s recession, establishing that crime trends correspond closely to fluctuations in unemployment.²³ He raised the warning over forty years ago that long term unemployment may show its effect even many years after being brought to an end and it is capable of changing permanently the whole attitude of a family towards society. A more recent study by Phillips, Votey and Maxwell in 1972 echoed this view suggesting that one of the main outcomes of substantial, long term unemployment is to undermine and destabilise communities and that this, in turn, produces high crime rates.

Other researchers such as Wilkinson (1991) suggest that inequality rather than poverty has the most stressful effects.²⁴ In concurring with Wilkinson, Elliott Currie writes that the trend toward growing inequality, in short, is increasingly international in scope, international in its consequences. And it is deeply implicated in the pattern of crime.²⁵ Currie concludes that "... real social crime prevention - like the prevention of other social ills - is now more than ever dependent on our capacity to build more effective movements for social action and social change. Movements that can effectively challenge those forces - now international in scope - that are ripping apart communities from Harlem to Glasgow to Bogota; that are dimming the life chances of vast numbers of people in the developed and developing worlds. In terms of building organisations committed to the long-range effort to replace a society based increasingly on the least inspiring of human values with one based upon the principles of social solidarity and contributive justice".²⁶

A reasoned youth crime prevention strategy should necessarily include an anti-poverty component. It may be argued that most other risk factors stem from poverty - unwanted, neglected and abused children, failed educational systems, domestic violence and so forth. Complementary government programs that afford good quality schooling, quality family support, occasional and full child care will ease the burden on families that

become dysfunctional as a consequence of poverty.

A social crime prevention strategy must also be cognisant of the relationship between unemployment and crime and include proposals to reduce long term and youth unemployment. Training, particularly during the crucial transitional period between school and employment, is critical.²⁷ Young people should be guaranteed a training place or employment as soon as they leave school. **At the same time the recognition that an apparently permanent underclass of unemployed persons (which substantially includes youth) is inevitable must lead to a position where alternative productive and non-exploitative activity is cultured within the community.**

Municipalities are strategically placed to bring together those who can change the conditions that generate crime, but other levels of government must provide financial and technical support:

- . Comprehensive crime prevention must give priority to partnerships that find better solutions to problems of child poverty, youth, schooling, housing, policing and justice and;
- . Crime prevention must involve long-term action that is responsive to short-term needs.

Government Policy, Juvenile Justice and the Non-Government Sector

The attitude of government, worldwide, to issues in juvenile justice in the past has been to concentrate on either punitive remedies or the development of pre-court diversion schemes which effect is to increase the use of non-custodial sentences for juvenile offenders.

The adult and juvenile correctional systems which have, in the majority of world jurisdictions, the mission of public protection and retribution have failed to deliver either. Escalating crime rates and consistent rates of reoffence by offenders indicate that the promotion of institutional incarceration for adult offenders is not conducive to meaningful crime reduction. The same holds true for the institutionalisation of a majority of juvenile offenders.

In the case of juvenile incarceration the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) advances a compelling argument against the use of institutions:

Little or no difference has been found in terms of the success of institutionalisation as compared to non-institutionalisation. The many adverse influences on an individual that seem unavoidable within any institutional setting evidently cannot be outbalanced by treatment efforts. This is especially the case for juveniles, who are vulnerable to negative influences. Moreover, the negative effects, not only of loss of liberty but also of separation from the usual social environment, are certainly more acute for juveniles than for adults because of their early stage of development (1985, Rule 19).²⁸

The Riyadh Guidelines (United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, 1990) assert, in part, that:

"Emphasis should be placed on preventative policies facilitating the successful socialisation and integration of all children and young persons, in particular through the family, the community, peer groups, schools, vocational training and the world of work, as well as through voluntary organisations. Due respect should be given to the proper personal development of children and young persons, and they should **be accepted as full and equal partners in socialisation and integration processes**" (writers emphasis)²⁹

Whilst measures of a diversionary nature have assisted in the reduction of involvement by youth in the criminal justice system, they have inadvertently moved attention from the primary prevention focus ie. the diversion of young people from crime in the first instance.

In Australia, and not unlike the majority of adult correctional systems, interventions for juvenile offenders have been largely built upon the flawed premise that criminal behaviour is an individual problem not generally referenced to broader social conditions - that a strategy that particularises the maladjustment of the juvenile is the appropriate methodology. The social worker domination within Family Services departments throughout the country places a premium on one-to-one caseload relationships between the client and the professional . This approach militates, in my view, against the implementation of worthwhile crime prevention initiatives. The

approach tends to foster passive non-interactive relationships as opposed to active or participatory relationships. A failure of this model of intervention is evidenced by the graduation of juveniles inevitably into institutions of various forms (either statutorily or socially sanctioned).

Social Action: A Strategy for Intervention

Policies generated for a reduction in criminal behaviour particularly amongst youth should be developed which:

- . incorporates the full range of problems confronting young people which may involve the provision of educational, training, recreational and employment opportunities together with a level of support that may be otherwise absent from their lives. Long term, as opposed to ad hoc, projects which are resourced and co-ordinated should be given the highest priority;
- . recognises that it is not only the attitudes of the young that need to change. Young people have an enormous amount to contribute provided that they are given the forum for contribution and respect afforded. A positive attitude towards youth by the adult community is considered prerequisite to effective crime prevention in dealings with youth;
- . accepts that change is not the unique responsibility for young people - the police and other local agencies (youth services, housing etc.) may also need to modify their approach and/or the way in which they provide services.
- . accepts that youth have ownership of the process for program design and implementation

Participatory Management for Juveniles

A realistic approach to juvenile crime issues must be addressed within the environment in which the problem exists, and should be managed by the class for whom the problem exists. Mohommad must come to the mountain.

An effective Juvenile Crime Prevention Strategy is dependant upon the evolution of an inter-agency group based upon the needs of youth (after consultation with the affected group) rather than the consultation emerging from a group formed for the purpose of consultation. If an interagency group is empowered to control a detached worker and the process of consultation in the first instance, there is a danger that preconceived outcomes by adult inter-agency members may pollute the actual needs exposed by juveniles. In the case of the Banyo survey, the worker in that instance was replaced following the survey period by another who, it is understood, is proceeding with the implementation of a holiday recreational program (camp) that was assessed as lowest priority by the respondents to the survey.

The success of this style of approach can be measured against crime statistics for the regions in which an action strategy has been implemented in various parts of the United Kingdom. In the case of the Junior Youth Project - Milton Keynes (as reported by **Crime Concern**) a significant reduction in crime activity has been registered comparing a pre-program set of data (1986) with 1988 statistics (eg. all auto crime [-18%]; shop theft [-25%]; criminal damage [-7%]; burglary [-36%]; all crime [-25%]).³⁰ In the case of the **Top End Youth Action Group - Paisley** comparing crime statistics for the years 1985 and 1988, the rates of reduction in crime activity is highly significant (Vandalism/Malicious Damage [-22%]; Petty Assault [-32%]; Reckless/Wilful fire-raising [-55%]; **Supply/Possession of Drugs [-100%]**; Total Selected Crimes [-30%]; All Crimes [-5%]).³¹

Juvenile Crime Prevention Strategies that have been successful in the United Kingdom appear to have the same characteristics which may best be summarised as an social action approach involving:

1. discussing problems with young people (consultation);
2. enabling them to identify problems;
3. facilitation (offering options and helping to find solutions);
4. assisting them to bring about change.

Various consultations have occurred throughout the United Kingdom seeking out the views of juveniles from across a range of social and economic backgrounds. The following comments in relation to these surveys are

raised :

- . Most young people perceived themselves as potential victims, rather than potential offenders;
- . Major concerns expressed centred upon physical safety and well being;
- . the most promising crime prevention target is likely to be potential occasional offenders who are capable of being influenced;
- . Generally young people believe that services are imposed upon them rather than viewing themselves as customers of the services;
- . The recurring challenge appears to be to find the ways to involve young people in the **design and execution** of community safety strategies;
- . Young people should be perceived by adults as valuable customers of services rather than victims of them.

In relation to the Banyo Survey, crime was exposed as being the greatest concern amongst the juvenile respondents (28.1%) - particularly from females, with lack of recreational facilities (15.1%) and boredom (13.9%) also presenting as matters of concern. A significant number of respondents isolated community irresponsibility as the major cause of the problem (17.5%) and tended to blame local government for the way in which it is handling its responsibilities. When in need of help respondents indicated that friends provided the usual source of support (24.1%) with only 4% seeking advice from teachers, 6.8% from police, 0.4% from religious workers, with 5.6% not seeking any outside assistance.

A further result indicated that 78.4% of youth were willing to set up some of the initiatives they identified.

EDUCATION INITIATIVES EXPANDED UPON

Experience throughout the world has shown that it is difficult, if not impossible to rehabilitate frequent offenders once they have reached mid to late adolescence.

The advancement of strategies at primary and secondary school levels to instil socially acceptable patterns of behaviour is essential if a crime prevention strategy is to find success and reduce criminal activity in later life. Issues such as personal safety for primary students and grounding in the dual concepts of obligations and responsibilities for secondary students (coupled with an action strategy for implementation with open and honest access to information) will significantly redress current inadequacies in the education system.³⁸

Crucial Crew - Targeting 9 - 11 year olds³²

Originating from a study by Joe Lynch and his colleagues in the United Kingdom (Greenwich Junior Citizens Award), **Crucial Crew** evolved as a response to a concern at the lack of effectiveness of traditional crime prevention work in schools. The showing of videos such as **Never Go with Strangers** and general talks with students didn't appear to be taken seriously by students.³³

Lynch et.al. came up with the idea of letting children experience and participate in a range of realistic situations which were potentially life threatening or which simulated crimes taking place which were preventable. The scheme is based upon the view that;

- . **children learn by doing**
- . **crime prevention and personal safety education can be challenging and exciting**
- . **everyone is concerned about crime prevention and personal safety**
- . **the most effective way of tackling crime prevention and personal safety is a partnership approach.**³⁴

Throughout the United Kingdom Crucial Crew Programs have been launched. An average of fifteen different

organisations work together in each area giving the scheme its own local characteristics. Typical organisations include the police, probation, fire services, ambulance services, coastguards, British Gas, Education Departments, British Rail, Transport Police, Social Services, Electricity Boards and British Telecom.

The aims of the crew are to provide an enjoyable way of teaching children to

- . become more aware of personal safety
- . learn how to react to dangerous situations
- . make a contribution to crime prevention
- . avoid becoming the victims of crime
- . know what role the emergency services play
- . foster good citizenship.³⁵

The scheme consists of real life role plays (known as sets) which are arranged in the form of a course. The sets are organised on a self-contained site large enough to accommodate all the sets and include roads and buildings. The children set out on the course in groups of three or four. At each set the children are presented with a number of tasks and problems and are assessed on their responses. If they are unsure on how to respond and make a mistake they will be advised of the most appropriate and sensible course of action.

The scheme is aimed at children nine to eleven years who are at an age when they are becoming more independent. A central theme is realism which is appealing to this age group. Police and schools that have participated with the scheme believe that this is a highly effective method of preventing children becoming the victims of crime and suffering personal injury.

Whilst not forming part of the exposed agendas for the Project, an important outcome of Crucial Crew is that it requires, to be successful, a co-operative approach involving a range of community organisations and services. This group could form the nub of further community safety initiatives within regions.

Highschool Educative Initiative

In 1991 Staff of the Queensland Corrective Services Commission developed a Program designed for presentation within schools titled **Youth, Education, Responsibility, Awareness Program**.

In the introduction to their Program Woodroffe-Hill, Matthews and Rowley infer that offending behaviour amongst juveniles is fundamentally resultant from dysfunctional socialisation processes :

"During the stages of a young persons life when they are susceptible to socialisation an emphasis appears to be placed on their conforming to the desires of others, to be what others may wish them to be. The issue of relevance at this stage, particularly when considering caring for the young, is the degree of autonomy and personal responsibility promoted within the child during the process of socialisation. Socialisation of the young is influenced by those with whom they are associated, for example children are modelled initially by their parents then by teachers and peers after entering the school arena. In many instances the influences upon the child are not always conducive to an optimum life-style and in many cases this is caused by unknowing or unthinking role models".³⁷

The presentation of relevant information on a range of criminal justice, crime prevention and human relationship issues by credible role models **outside the educational context** with a view to recommending transportable options for behaviour **beyond the school room** should underpin the logic of any crime prevention Program introduced into secondary schools. Unlike similar educational programs primarily designed to change attitudes about the prisoner class, the Woodroffe-Hill et. al. Project is more concerned about active behaviour change through participation. Minimal modification to this Program would be necessary to introduce it into the school system.

Students in mainstream educational facilities, also form part of the broader juvenile pool within the community. The information on responsibilities and obligations learnt from a Program within the school environment should prove invaluable at another time when the juvenile steering committee (discussed earlier) is formed. The information will flow outside the educational system to others within the community in a train the trainer mode , with information assimilated passing from one group of juveniles to another - at a peer level. As part of a general logic which moves responsibility for juvenile community based programs **to juveniles**, the tools for operationalising the strategy,

through an **Education, Responsibility Awareness** Program, could achieve considerable savings in training time for the steering committee.

The Woodroffe-Hill et al Program is designed for presentation by correctional personnel or other experts in criminal justice, requires two, two hour sessions with the overall Program outcomes evaluated through questionnaires.

At the conclusion of the Program participants should have sufficient information to enable them to:

- . Understand factors which contribute to offending
- . Comprehend the consequences of offending
- . Understand the power of peer influence
- . Accept responsibility for their own behaviour
- . Know the importance of maintaining self-esteem while providing methods of legitimately doing so
- . Understand the importance of making the right choices and provide them with some basic decision making tools
- . Be able to set long and short term goals and understand the need for doing so.

The Program has been trialled in several Queensland High Schools including Kelvin Grove, Everton Park, Nashville, Runcorn, The Gap and Mackay and has been well received at these venues.

Post Program Strategy - Schools based, Youth Action Groups

The information acquired from the beforementioned Program must have relevance. It should provide the impetus for the development of an action strategy beyond the Program itself. A particularly successful vehicle is this instance is the **schools based, Youth Action Groups**.

There are over 250 such panels operating in England and Wales. Youth Action Groups provide the forum for young people to:

- . consider crime and the way it affects other young people, schools and communities
- . identify the problems which they consider most important
- . develop their own responses to these problems
- . take action to tackle other local problems.

Crime Concern UK have developed an **Action Pack** for youth wishing to establish an Action Group in their school. Developed through consultation with juveniles the Pack systematically shows how to set up and run an Action Group and to develop a work program.

Some examples of school based crime prevention panels include;

.A program in Blackburn, Lancashire where the panel developed a School Watch project in response to a concern about graffiti and vandalism at the school. The Panel researched the problem, identified others that could contribute to long term success of the initiative and encouraged those who attend the school to take responsibility and ownership of the problem. Their activity contributed to the development of strong school pride, a sense of belonging and ultimately an interest by the community and students in discouraging behaviour that would affect the positive image of the school.³⁸

.In Northamptonshire the Panel at that school decided to investigate shop theft by using a questionnaire technique which encouraged students to present solutions to the problem. A Report, **Hands Off**, was subsequently published and distributed to shop owners recommending advice on staff training, store layout, the display of goods and the use of visible deterrents. It also provided tips on how to prevent shop theft.³⁹

.The Norden Youth Crime Prevention Council was concerned about the level of alcohol abuse by students. They compiled a questionnaire for fourth and fifth year pupils asking about their drinking habits. The Report published as a result of the survey, **How much, How Often, A Study of Alcohol consumption by the Under Sixteens**, established that drinking alcohol seemed to be the accepted norm for young people between the ages of 13 and 16. Various reasons were put forward for this, the main one being that there was little else for young people to do

in the area. The results of the Survey were published by the Panel to Brewery heads and local youth workers.⁴⁰

Other projects undertaken by these panels include studies on bullying, drink driving, racism, sexual harassment, the elderly, peer influences and many more.

Clearly School based Youth Action Groups are a powerful tool in teaching, through practice, ways of isolating issues of concern for students and resolving these problems **through participation**. The Panels are owned by the students, facilitated in the first instance by an **outside education** agency to which invited significant others (headmaster, teachers, community representatives) are co-opted for advice, resources and support.

Having observed the relationship between principals, teachers, parents and students at close quarters, it is evident that many of the topics that are likely to be raised by the students (particularly on human relationships issues) may not be palatable to some of these groups of adults.

Indeed a degree of hostility by adults (directly and peripheral to the school system) is to be anticipated. This matter will need to be carefully managed, nonetheless, as the positive outcomes of such a model (through the powerful medium of information) outweigh the moral quirks of others for whom the information is already available.

SUMMARY

Our current faith in traditional criminal justice responses as a conduit to community safety is fundamentally flawed. Victimization of the young, the elderly, those confronted by gender preference bigotry, those with ethnic and race differences that set them apart from the mainstream community, those for whom sexist attitudes make them vulnerable in domestic and dating relationships; these are not all matters that may not even come to the attention of the police nor the courts. These are issues that can only be resolved by people changing their attitudes. These are the issues, fellow citizens, the resolution of which will create the greater difference to our quality of life.

In your city you have an opportunity to forge meaningful partnerships between local and State governments, the business community to strike at the **causes** of crime or you can remain indifferent and pay the price of escalating crime rates. I believe that your presence here today indicates your preparedness to accept your responsibility as citizens. A Safer Cities Strategy can be established which draws upon the many and varied talents within your community to target problem areas, research and consider local solutions to the problems within these areas and create the processes whereby these problems are resolved. Remember to actively involve those for whom the problem is most acute. In the case of juveniles, don't patronise - give them access to responsibility and participation in a meaningful way beyond tokenism. The young are capable and willing to work with you to establish a safer community.

I wish you well, and hope that when I return to this wonderful city I will experience the fruits of your labour.

YOUTH2

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*(Rikers Island is located in New York and consists of ten prisons which accommodate some 22000 inmates, who are under the care of the Commissioner for Corrective Services, New York - the majority [in the high ninetieth percentile] are black and illiterate)

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Appendix 1 : Consultation Summary

(Reproduced in full from the Conference Proceedings of the International Conference on Urban Drugs and Crime Prevention - Theme 2, Young People at Risk - Preventative Strategies, Paris, November 18 - 20, 1991.

This Report is a Summary of a number of consultations with young people conducted in the City of Birmingham, the Boroughs of Solihull and Brent. The Report also draws heavily upon the results of a consultation during 1991 with 800 young people across England and Wales and material from the Youth Commission of the city of Turin and from the city authorities of Barcelona. The following questions were put at meetings in schools, youth clubs, church groups, young offender establishments, special needs groups and high crime residential areas:

- . What are the main risks to which you feel exposed ?;
- . What are the causes of crime ?;
- . What do you think needs to be done to reduce the risk of young people becoming involved in criminal activity either as offenders or victims?;
- . What do you think you and your friends can do to help the development of safer communities for everyone ?.

Crime and Young People

Most young people responded to questions about crime and the risks to which they are exposed from the perspective of potential victims rather than as offenders or potential offenders.

The key issues which the consultation highlight are as follows:

- . Physical safety is the main worry. In Solihull, 70% of the young people consulted had been assaulted during the previous year. In Turin, 25% of the young people surveyed feared being beaten up and getting involved in brawls.
- . All the consultations revealed that young women are particularly concerned about the threat of sexual assaults, rape and harassment. In one group in Brent, six of the eleven girls in the group had recently been sexually harassed near school premises.
- . Young men are more anxious about the possibility of being beaten up by groups of older youths and many avoided certain locations where such groups were known to operate.
- . Young people expressed very serious worries about the abuse of drugs and alcohol. Many are anxious about how they can avoid getting involved themselves. Equally, however, young people are concerned about how they can help friends and acquaintances whose lives are already being messed up through substance abuse.
- . Most young people said they knew where to get hold of drugs, had friends who used drugs and knew someone who was in serious trouble with drugs.
- . In Birmingham, the groups consulted articulated very serious worries about taking and driving cars. Other young men drive "knocked-off" cars round the neighbourhood, showing off by doing "wheelies", jumping pavements and driving directly at pedestrians to see who will "chicken out" first.

Other crimes to feature in the responses included:

- . vandalism and graffiti because it spoiled the neighbourhood.
- . Stealing from shops and how to avoid getting involved with other young people in stealing activities.
- . Racism and racial crimes featured in many groups, and not just in the areas with high minority ethnic populations.
- . In some groups young people felt that one of the crimes which impinged upon their lives most seriously was industrial pollution.

Causes of Youth Involvement in Crime

A range of reasons exploring why so many young people get into trouble were expressed. These included :

- . lack of discipline in home and school
- . lack of parental/family support
- . need for money or consumer items

- . no jobs
- . boredom
- . drink
- . drugs
- . poverty
- . excitement/thrills/risk and the need to experiment.

The Turin Study suggests that young people identify a range of contributory causal factors:

. deprivation - economic, cultural		23%
. primary social groups - family, peer groups and neighbourhood	33%	
. general - government, social organisations		14%
. personal - weak character	30%	
. drugs - dependence		5%

In Brent young people added two dimensions:

- . the absence of respectable role models - more honest, successful, hard working people would go some way to offset the "yardie/badman" image that young people want to follow;
- . poor educational opportunities.

All the consultations, however, cite peer pressure as the factor which tips the balance between offending and non-offending behaviour. Pressure from friends, loyalty to the group, fears about being excluded, not wanting to appear "chicken" or different, needing to prove something to associates describe how peer pressure works.

Services to Young People

The Turin Survey subdivided the organisations serving young people as follows:

- . organisations which bring young people together - youth and sports clubs
- . social services - community housing, drug dependence visits, health services
- . education - schools, colleges
- . law and order - police, magistracy
- . information - television, radio, newspapers.

Those young people who use the youth services seem reasonably satisfied with the clubs they attend and speak well of the youth workers in terms of being able to respond individually when young people have a problem. Young people often look to youth workers for guidance, support and advice on a wide range of issues eg. pregnancy, domestic problems.

Very few young people expressed confidence in the formal "helping" agencies - social services and probation. Where these are known, they are viewed with some mistrust as being "part of the system". There was a concern that confiding problems to them would lead to more pressure and turn the issue into a crisis.

Some teachers were viewed as being helpful. But there was a widely held view that only a few could be trusted to deal with a problem confidentially. Too often teachers called in parents which made matters more difficult for young people with the problem.

Many young people felt they were sold short by their schools. Some believe they are just not being adequately prepared for adult life. Others that the schools just did not respond to some of the serious crime and social issues, like bullying and sexual harassment, which come up in the life of the school. Some consultations reported that they wanted to spend more hours in school.

There was a general view that much leisure and recreation provision by city and town councils failed because :

- . it was simply too expensive
- . not welcoming to young people
- . not sufficient services available
- . problem of expensive transport to facilities.

Turning to training and jobs, young people expressed very strong opinion about the poor quality of job training schemes. Many felt they were being exploited and that the training leads nowhere.

Strong views were also expressed about the police. Distinctions were made between the police officers which young people met in the neighbourhood or in the course of schools liaison work. However, contact with the police out in the wider community

was more problematic. Complaints included:

- . being treated with distrust and suspicion
- . racism and sexist language and behaviour
- . being stopped and asked for information.

There is, particularly with the young people from the minority ethnic groups, a deep gulf between them and the police.

Young people are confused and ill-informed about who to turn to when facing difficulties. Agencies which offer helping services are not seen as helping agencies by young people.

The police have much to do to win the confidence of young people - community police officers have made some considerable progress in this direction.

What can be done to create safer communities?

Young people responded with a large shopping list of action points which should be taken to make our communities safer. These include:

- . better sports facilities
- . more places to meet
- . better training and access to jobs
- . quality education
- . cheaper and better recreational facilities
- . friendlier schools
- . reduced opportunities for crime
- . crime prevention groups in schools
- . men to be taught to treat women better
- . more social education
- . better support for young single mothers
- . greater understanding of racism.

The consultation indicated that young people wanted more help to:

- . provide advice and help to friends who had problems. Friends are the first people young people turn to when in trouble.
- . gain the confidence to say "no" to trouble.

All consultations pointed to the fact that young people want to be more involved in decision-making about the issues which affect their lives. Young people feel excluded from adult life and want the adult world to open up the access to influence and -making. Young people believe that they have an important contribution to make to preventing other young people and themselves from getting into trouble with the law and, as importantly, helping to make safe communities.

Finally, young people expressed great concern that agencies did not respond to some of the issues and problems which young people face eg. bullying and sexual harassment, racial attacks in the community, drug pushing to youth clubs.

Workshop Resources - Adult Helpers in Crime Prevention

We asked young people to create a charter for adult workers on youth crime prevention projects. This is what the young people suggested.

DO'S

Try to make it interesting
Get involved
Share ideas
Be enthusiastic
Consult with us on decisions
Give us time
Give straight answers
LISTEN!
Be reliable
Trust us

DON'T'S

don't patronise us
Forget us
Dominate
Assume
Manipulate us
Ignore our contributions
Overwork us
Don't be too serious
Don't nag

Encouragement

APPENDIX 2: CONSULTATION SUMMARY

This Youth Consultation is part of a National Youth Campaign conducted by Crime Concern in the United Kingdom with the support of Barclays Bank PLC.

Why a youth consultation?

Crime is a serious problem and despite enormous expenditure on the criminal justice system - the police, courts and penal system - crime rates have continued to climb. Sadly, young people make a significant contribution, both as victims and offenders, to the rising crime problem.

- . Young men under 21 are responsible for about half of all recorded crimes.
- . One third of all people convicted of criminal offences are under 17 years.
- . Children under 12 are responsible for much neighbourhood vandalism.
- . Young men and women are the most frequent victims of a whole range of crimes.

Some adults may say we already know many of the reasons for youth crime and now we need practical action. We believe that any truly relevant and successful youth crime prevention strategy must involve young people in identifying the problems and in developing the solutions. This means taking the time to meet with them to learn about their experiences. It is for this reason Crime Concern organised the national youth consultation.

What is the campaign?

Much is being done to prevent crime. But not enough is being done to prevent offending. There are far too few facilities and opportunities for young people in the areas that most need them and little chance for young people to get involved in the solutions. Few areas have a comprehensive youth strategy. A campaign to address these issues is long overdue.

The focus of the campaign will be:

- . to increase awareness and response by local and central agencies and organisations to the need for youth crime prevention
- . to increase funds from local and central government and other organisations to encourage and empower young people to develop community safety initiatives
- . to develop model community safety strategies for young people at city and town level
- . to identify a number of locations in which model community safety programs can be implemented, tested and evaluated
- . to develop community safety strategies for schools and youth clubs and promote their adoption as widely as possible
- . to develop a range of innovative, effective and exciting youth crime prevention projects
- . to secure funds to develop a training program for professional workers

This campaign will involve a broad coalition of organisations and agencies concerned with youth crime prevention and youth policy development.

How was the consultation carried out?

Meetings were organised with small groups of young people throughout England and Wales. They were asked to discuss their experiences and perceptions of crime related problems and to suggest ways of reducing youth involvement in crime. In total over 800 young people were consulted in this way.

Making contact with a broad cross-section of the population was a priority. Meetings were held in urban and rural areas; care was taken to involve young men and women; and ethnic minorities were also included. This was greatly facilitated by working through a range of youth-serving organisations including youth clubs, probation services, church groups, youth crime prevention panels, schools, recreation centres, young people in care, residential homes, YM-YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, Scout and Guide groups, social services, clubs catering to ethnic minorities and job training schemes.

What was young people's reaction?

"This is a fantastic opportunity to say what we really feel about the issues which affect us".

"You're finally asking us!"

"It's taken adults so long to realise that what we think is important".

The response was encouraging and the demand for consultations greater than that which could be met. Both the leaders of youth serving-organisations and participants themselves enthusiastically welcomed the opportunity to tell us about their views. Initially, concern was expressed about why we wanted this information and if what they had to say would be seriously considered. Once it was clear we wanted their ideas and views to form the basis for a national youth campaign, they had a great deal to say.

What did they tell us?

Five key areas of concern were identified repeatedly.

- . **peer pressure** to join in and how to respond to it
- . **personal safety** and the threat of violence, bullying and racism
- . **drugs**: its temptations, the dangers and how to say NO!
- . **environmental problems** linked to vandalism, graffiti, urban decay and pollution
- . **property crime** including theft, burglary, shop theft and car crime

What was remarkable about the results was their consistency. Irrespective of gender, location, or ethnic origin, the same concerns emerged over and over again.

Peer pressure

Peer pressure was consistently identified as a strong influence on individual behaviour and was repeatedly given as one of the main reasons for participating in a whole range of criminal and anti-social activity.

Even adults often feel the pressure to conform but it was overwhelmingly apparent that this pressure is doubly strong during adolescence. The wish to be "part of the group", "be cool like my friends", and "to avoid being laughed at", took priority over their normal behaviour. As one young man put it,

"I don't always act the fool; it depends on who I'm with. If your friends are acting up, you do it so you can be part of the group. Afterwards, I just go home and try not to think about what I did".

Drugs

"Everyone knows someone who is on drugs".

"It starts as fun but it doesn't end that way".

"If you have money, you buy illegal drugs, but if you don't there are other things we can afford like solvents".

"Substance abuse", identified as the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, smoking and solvents, came up as a worrying theme over and over again. There was debate about tougher sentences; better, more accessible treatment; more education; the legalisation of soft drugs; learning how to say no; or limiting the supply; but the one unanimous conclusion reached in all workshops was that drugs are becoming a serious problem among the youth population.

Initial debates lead to the need to focus energy on providing opportunities for young people to develop self-esteem and self-reliance so when faced with drugs, they have the skills and confidence to make their own choice. Again discussions were lengthy about peer pressure, fitting in and learning how to make your own decisions.

Personal safety

There was much discussion about feeling safe, fearing violent attacks, especially among young women, and being "picked on" by bullies, "yobs" and being subjected to racially motivated harassment and assault.

Both young men and women felt that violence was a real threat in their lives and readily acknowledged, that if victimised, it was usually by another young person.

Racism was identified as a problem that goes hand in hand with picking on others who are different from the aggressor. Similarities were pointed out between picking on someone for racist reasons and someone who is made fun of because of physical appearance, disability or personal traits. But all felt racism is a much deeper problem that requires special attention. All bullying was put down to a lack of understanding, lack of firm or consistent action by those in authority, and little respect for others.

"I could just say "yobs" cause all the problems, but when I'm out with my mates, some people probably call me a "yob" because we can get carried away".

"Bullies and racists hardly ever get challenged. I don't know how to help without getting picked on myself. When there's no actions taken it just makes their behaviour ok".

"There needs to be a way to get involved discreetly".

"Peer pressure that says it's not ok, - it's not acceptable to pick on others - is important".

Environmental problems

Vandalism was identified as a major problem and one to which many participants admitted making a regular contribution.

"You're often just fooling around with little thought to what you're doing when you damage something".

"When something is already wrecked, it doesn't seem a crime or problem to make it worse. Maybe than someone will fix it up or tear it down".

"When everywhere looks a mess, I don't care about it and get fed up".

"I hate it when there is rubbish everywhere, things are so dirty. How can you feel good about a place if it's ugly?"

"I think we all need to be made more aware of what vandalism and graffiti cost - not just in terms of what it costs but how it can lead to more serious consequences. I usually only think about what I did with little thought to how it all adds up".

This was considered to be a problem that young people can do a lot about. Taking pride in your community or school was thought to be very important and relatively easy to organise. Yet, there was a sense of helplessness and frustration expressed by their lack of control over more serious environmental crimes like pollution and illegal waste disposal. The point was made,

"If we set up an effective way to get young people involved in reducing vandalism and cleaning up graffiti, will big business do their part to make the air cleaner and save our environment?"

Property crime

Due to the age range of the participants, few of them had substantial possessions so their discussion focused primarily on young people as offenders as opposed to victims of this crime.

A number of reasons were put forward to explain such crime, including wanting what was stolen for personal use; excitement

or kicks; cash; and lack of respect for other's property. Many cited examples of burglaries where little is stolen but the risk is exciting. Participants who had experienced loss, either personal or through their families, expressed fear and talked about the sense of invasion and helplessness.

Discussions about developing respect for other people and their property and resisting the dares by friends and peers were common. Lack of exciting alternatives, supporting growing drug habits, never having enough money, and lack of employment were also identified as issues that must be addressed.

Key Issues

Regardless of the problem being discussed, a number of key issues emerged that clearly impact upon young people.

a) Little understanding of where to get help

Most young people are unaware of services available to assist and help them. Many complained of no safe or confidential place to discuss problems. There was little trust in the professionals young people have regular contact with, like teachers, because typically parents are informed of the contact, sometimes even before discussing details with the young person involved.

Where do they get help and advice: The unanimous response was from their friends whether or not they have any first hand experience of the problem.

b) Learning how to resist pressure

Peer pressure, usually of a negative kind, was cited as a major contributing factor to a whole range of behaviour including that which leads to crime. Participants wanted to learn more about making individual choices and dealing with conflict, especially in situations where others aggressively try to persuade them to behave in a certain way.

c) Providing the opportunities

There was widespread enthusiasm for greater opportunity to be involved in addressing serious community problems that significantly affect young people. They had great confidence in their ability to identify solutions but they expressed disappointment about the lack of genuine opportunities to take part in decision-making and planning processes.

A common complaint,

"Some adults ask us what we think and that's great - but we want to know if anyone considers and acts on that, we want to be part of the action as well".

d) Nothing to do

Complaints were frequent about the lack of engaging activities whether recreational, social or job training. Many young people felt social and recreational activities were not offered at convenient times. Their suggestions were often ignored and they felt they have little opportunity to influence rules and regulations.

e) Involving others in positions of influence

Participants talked at length about developing ways to involve parents or other key people in the process of problem-solving. As one young woman said,

"When you are helping a young person find their way, when they need help with problems - isn't it likely the parents might need to learn about the problem and need to know how to work with their kid, instead of just getting angry"/

Many expressed a wish to get help for themselves but also for parents. Parents need to recognise how they can get help so they better understand problems and learn how to work together towards solutions.

What can be done?

The young people consulted believe that action is urgently needed if we are to find ways to prevent youth involvement in crime. More specifically, they made the following five requests.

Help us to grow in confidence

The need to build confidence, self-esteem and to understand others appeared to be at the root of many problems. To resist peer pressure, participants asked for programs and help in developing skills to handle situations that called for courageous personal choices. All emphasised that this type of learning needed to start at an early stage and continue throughout adolescence with the subject matter developing accordingly.

Schools were identified as the most appropriate place for this type of education but all emphasised that would mean making the classroom a less intimidating, more comfortable and equal place. If this were part of everyday education, then anti-social behaviour and negative peer pressure could be more easily challenged and positive peer pressure would have a chance to grow.

Provide us with a chance to get involved

"Give us a chance to feed into local decision-making".

All the participants were interested in learning about ways to get more involved in the community. One young man summed up the situation,

"We want to get involved but there is a price. If you really want us to help, our suggestions have to be taken seriously. It's really annoying when people ask and either ignore us or act like they are doing us a favour by asking at all. We have a right to have a say".

Focus on underlying problems

"The price of sport today is that we wither stay in debt or stay on the street".

"Let us run a place of our own. We know what will compete with pubs and nightclubs for kids who can't legally go to those places. Let us set the rules and operate a club by those rules".

Participants want the underlying problems addressed including boredom, unemployment, lack of engaging training opportunities, little affordable recreation, few positive, non-institutional places to meet. They did not feel they could tackle these on their own but felt they had a lot to offer in developing solutions that will work.

"Half the problem is activities are designed by adults for young people. No offence, but not many adults know what we want. Things change".

Make sure services are delivered to all young people

Many of the participants felt youth services, probation and social services were only available to help if you had been identified by the system as needing help. Few felt they had easy access to any professional services for advice and assistance.

"I needed help before I committed a crime, before I started taking drugs. But nobody wants to know until you've been arrested."

Almost all participants expressed knowledge about the police role but were not sure they had the time, responsibility, training and resources to help young people. There were examples provided about police officers who had given young people a break and tried to help them identify where to get help. But the police, like most services, were defined as inaccessible, a bit of a mystery and too formal to approach.

Provide young people with the skills to help each other

"I would rather talk to a young person that understands the problems and treats me like an equal. Is there a way to give us the options so we can help our friends?"

There was great support and enthusiasm for the concept of "youth helping youth" and providing the skills and training so young people can support each other.

"If I had a safe place to go where I could discuss my worries, I would be happier. Too many adults think I'm over-reacting and don't realise how difficult things can be".

What should the role of young people be?

All the participants were enthusiastic about what they could contribute. The following quotes speak for themselves,

"We should be consulted, we want to help and have a say."

"What about youth parliaments or councils? We can help provide the solutions."

"We know best what will be listened to by our mates. We just need **real** opportunities."

"I would be happy to do the work needed to prepare for a youth forum. I think we can help and this would also improve relations between young people and adults."

"It's hard to go to a meeting with a room full of adults - if possible meet us on our own territory. Some meetings could be at the youth club, others at the local council. We want to be represented and treated like equals."

"If you want us to help, we have to get something back, you've got to deliver by taking us seriously."

"I want to learn so when my friends want help, I have the information."

"Peer pressure is string, we need help to learn how to make it ok to make your own choice."

APPENDIX 3 : RESULTS OF THE BANYO AND DISTRICTS YOUTH RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

A questionnaire addressing the profile of youth was constructed and distributed in the Banyo and surrounding districts. The number of completed surveys amounted to 341 and covered the 12 to 17 age range.

Venue	Number	Percent
School	312	91.5
CES/DSS	1	0.3
Street	15	4.4
Holiday Program	10	2.9
Scouts	3	0.9
TOTAL	341	100.00

Figure 1 Point of survey distribution

The majority of the questionnaires were completed by school students (91.5%). A majority of responses, from young people on the street (4.4%) is significant because, although within the prescribed age range, they didn't usually attend school. Their responses exhibited a marked difference. In comparison, they experienced even more boredom, resorted more readily to alcohol and drugs and held little hope for the future.

School	Number	Percent
Banyo State School	82	24.8
Wavell Heights State High	144	43.5
Corpus Christi	23	6.9
Virginia State Primary	17	5.2
St Pius Primary	20	6.0
Nudgee State Primary	20	6.0
St Johns Nudgee	8	2.5
Northgate State	15	4.5
Other	2	0.6
TOTAL	331	100.0

Figure 2 Schools

The questionnaires were not uniformly distributed. It depended upon local school reaction and co-operation. Some schools preferred to only distribute a few while others were willing to provide a broader sample group.

Wavell heights High School completed the largest proportion of surveys (43.5%), followed by Banyo High School (24.8%). Although, the high schools both private and state completed 75.2% of the total number. The combined state primary schools figure came to 15.7% and the remainder, the private primary schools, 8.5%.

1. Age

Age	Number	Percent
12	85	24.9
13	77	22.6
14	55	16.1
15	49	14.4
16	40	11.7
17	35	10.3
TOTAL	341	100.0

Figure 3 Age

The age groups were collapsed into three categories: 12 to 13 year olds (47.5%), 14 to 15 year olds (30.5%), 16 to 17 year olds (22.0%0).

2. Male or Female

Gender	Number	Percent
Female	184	54.0
Male	157	46.0
TOTAL	341	100.0

Figure 4 Gender

Females accounted for 54% of the sample and males, 46%.

3. Which suburb do you live in?

Suburb	Number	Percent
Nudgee Beach	7	2.1
Nudgee	39	11.4
Banyo	131	38.4
Virginia	38	11.1
Northgate	52	15.3
Nundah	65	19.1
Toombul	9	2.6
TOTAL	341	100.0

Figure 5 Suburb of residence

When asked for their suburb of residence, the majority of respondents (38.4%) indicated they lived in Banyo, followed by 19.1% who resided in Nundah. Later in the report, for the purposes of displaying the results graphically, suburbs were grouped: Banyo, Nudgee and Nudgee Beach were combined and labelled the **Banyo** end of the north/south spectrum (51.9%), while Virginia, Northgate, Nundah and Toombul were categorised as **Nundah** (48.1%).

4. How long have you lived in that suburb?

Years	Number	Percent
Less than one	29	8.5
One to five	103	30.3
More than five	208	61.2
TOTAL	340	100.0

Figure 6 Duration: length of residency

The results indicate a relatively stable area in comparison to the greater Brisbane region with 61.2% of young people having lived in their residence for more than five years. However, a significant minority (38.8%) have moved into the area in the past five years.

5. What do you do in an average day during the week?

Activity	Number	Percent
State High	217	63.6
Private High	23	6.7
State Primary	62	18.2
Private Primary	28	8.2
Unemployed	4	1.2
Work	2	0.6
Other	5	1.5
TOTAL	341	100.0

Figure 7 Average daily activities

Those who attended school as their major activity during the day numbered 330 persons (96.7%).

6. Do you live with ...

Family type	Number	Percent
Two parents	254	74.4
One parent	68	19.9
Alone	2	0.6
Friends	1	0.3
Relations	6	1.8
Parent & new partner	5	1.5
Other	5	1.5
TOTAL	341	100.0

Figure 8 Who youth live with

The vast majority of young people live with two parents (74.4%). There is also a significant number who don't live in the traditional household situation - 25.6%. Of those, sole parent households account for 19.9%. The remaining 5.7% lived with/without a variety of people: friends, relatives, hostel supervisor, youth worker, changing family situation (mother changes partner frequently), sole parent leaves Brisbane for up to a month without informing son.

The table shows that most youth live with two parents while one in five live with just one parent. It may be of some concern that 4.2% of 12 to 17 year olds don't live with any parents.

7. Three things I do in my spare time are ...

Activity	Number	Percent
Team sport	65	6.6
Individual sport	60	6.1
Water sport	36	3.7
Other outdoor	117	11.9
Commercial recreation	88	8.9
Social	148	15.0
Work/study	60	6.1
Home active	171	17.4
Home passive	188	19.1
Other	51	5.2
TOTAL no of choices	984	100.00

Figure 9 Spare time activity

The open-ended question inquiring into young people's spare time activity allowed for three responses. The most common activity engaged in was home-based. Typical answers included: "watch TV, listening to radio, sleep, watch videos, 'veg', sit in

my room and do nothing.

The next most prominent category, 'Home active', catered for 17.4% of the responses. Typical answers: "play with computer, fix bikes, slot cars, read, play with pets, make things, have sex, play games, play musical instrument."

'Other Outdoor' activities engage 11.9% of young people and included: "bike riding, kick footy, fishing, break and enter, sit around train station, swimming, playing in park, joy rides, watching sport, horse riding, flying kite, looking for golf balls".

'Social activities' comprise 15% of the responses. Typical answers: "go to friends' places, go out, do to dad's/mum's, hand out on Banyo train station, dancing/discos, talk on phone, spend time with boy/girl friend, drink, look for a good time".

Other categories: "Various sports' included individual and water sports (16.4%); 'Commercial recreation' comprised: "shopping at Toombul, movies and video games at Toombul, go to town"; 'Study/Work' (6.1%).

It appears that most young people surveyed occupy themselves in their spare time at home or with friends and show an overall disinterest in traditional sports. Or it might also be an indication that sport/recreational facilities are not adequate or diverse enough.

Figure 10 Spare time use - non-participants

A significant number don't participate in highly organised or disciplined activities and instead opt for casual or loosely structured forms of social recreation.

Figure 11 Spare time use - females and males

The 'spare time use' figures show trends in activities as young people grow older. Both females and males spend less time being active at home and in playing team sport. Instead, the social dimension takes on greater prominence especially among the 16 to 17 year olds. For males in this age group, the role of commercial recreation appears to diminish significantly unlike the females.

8. Who mostly organises these things you like to do?

Who	Number	Percent
Self	270	80.1
Other	44	13.1
Both	23	6.8
TOTAL	337	100.0

Figure 12 Who organises the things youth do?

The majority of young people organise their own leisure activities (80.1%). There appears to be amongst them a high level of self-reliance for their choice of recreational pursuits. Unfortunately it appears from the former figures that their choices are not very informed or creative in outlook.

Perhaps youth require a greater awareness of recreational ideas, alternatives and possibilities. Also of note is the existence of numerous sporting and recreational facilities eg sporting fields, tennis courts, that are not being utilised much.

9. Three things I LIKE most about my suburb are ...

Feature	Number	Percent
Physical environment	203	26.1
Social environment	182	23.4

Recreational facilities	13	1.7
Commercial facilities	147	18.9
Sporting/other clubs	27	3.5
Public Services/facils.	184	23.7
Other	21	2.7
TOTAL	777	100.0

Figure 13 What youth like about their suburb

In addressing what young people most like about their suburb, the physical environment scored well (26.1%). The high regard they have for it centred around the following: "wildlife, beach, streets, lovely creeks, bushland, open spaces, quiet streets, parks".

Another favourable feature was the 'Social environment': "people are friendly, fair number of young people, friends live close, the girls, know everyone, parties, not very dangerous, a rage of a place".

'Commercial' ("Toombul shopping town, shops, movies") and 'Public facilities' ("close to transport, bike track convenient, close to school, library, ovals"0 were highly regarded as well.

Figure 14 What youth like about their suburb

The low 'sport' and 'recreational facilities' percentages (3.5%, 1.7%) indicate a gross dissatisfaction with these features. Amongst 16 to 17 years olds 'recreational facilities' failed to even register. The features of the physical environment also grows less important for this age group.

10. Three things I DISLIKE most about my suburb are ...
(3 responses possible)

Feature	Number	Percent
Industrial/environmental effects	53	7.9
Road/transport related issues	75	11.2
Social problems/issues	77	11.5
Social annoyances	88	13.2
Inadeq. recreatn/govt. facilities	78	11.6
Inadequate commercial facilities	39	5.8
Boredom	93	13.9
Work/education concerns	6	0.9
Crime/protection concerns	76	11.4
Other	84	12.6
TOTAL	669	100.0

Figure 15 What youth dislike about their suburb

The aspects of their suburb that are disliked are indicated on the above table. What young people most dislike is the issue of boredom and nothing to do (13.9%). Typical responses: "boring, nothing for young people to do at night, everything is dead, no organised entertainment."

Responses relating to social concerns were of grave concern to 35.1% of young people:-

- a) 'Social problems/issues; (11.5%) included: "neighbourhood hoons, Banyo Tavern drunks and noise, domestic fights, at night gangs hang around station, not enough focus on youth, crazy drivers, public harassment, drugs, street gangs, too many foreign people";
- b) 'Social annoyances' (13.2%)
- c) 'Crime/protection concerns' (11.4%) included; "break and enters, crime rate, no safe hang outs, vandalism, it's not safe, Nundah train station subway, robberies, graffiti, not enough cops".

According to age, it appears that the younger of the youths are the most concerned about the impact of the 'physical environment on them: noise from major roads and transport as well as industrial and environmental pollution. As the age increases they become more unconcerned about the 'physical environment' and less complacent about their social environment. Issues of boredom and crime become paramount.

11. In my opinion, 3 problems young people are most CONCERNED about in my suburb are ...
(3 responses possible)

Problem	Number	Percent
Personal/relational issues	52	8.4
Environmental degradation	77	12.4
Inadeq. recreation facilities	94	15.1
Drug Abuse	57	9.1
Public/govt. services	45	7.2
Future (work/education)	18	2.9
Social Prob/disturbances	59	9.5
Crime/protection	175	28.1
Welfare issues	16	2.6
Other	29	4.7
TOTAL	622	100.0

Figure 17 Problems youth are most concerned about

The table above, Concerns of Youth, clearly demonstrates that 'crime' was by far the greatest concern amongst the group of young people surveyed (28.1%). This was particularly the case with females both in the Banyo and Nundah areas.

Typical responses: "theft, vandalism, violent attacks, bullies, flogging clothes, gangs break into houses and shops, police give us hard time, unsafe public toilets".

The lack of 'Recreational facilities' was the next most significant concern (15.1%) followed by 'Environmental degradation' (12.4%) and 'Social problems' (9.5%). Young people were also worried about drug and alcohol abuse (9.1%). Responses included: "pressure to take drugs, underage drinking, drugs in school, smoking".

Figure 18 Concerns of youth

While females were generally more concerned about 'Environmental degradation, males were more concerned with their relationships and other personal issues including: "stress, sex, personal likes, rules set by older people, boy/girl friends, peer pressure, girls".

Banyo youth were more worried by drug and alcohol problems while **Nundah** youth expressed greater dissatisfaction over 'Public services'.

12. I think these problems are CAUSED by ...
(3 responses possible)

Problem	Number	Percent
Industrial/environmental abuse	38	7.4
Road/transport issued	36	7.0
Domestic situation	54	10.5
Social behaviour/problems	90	17.5
Inadequate facilities	71	13.8
Poor government	38	7.4
Economic/educational factors	37	7.1
Crime	17	3.3
Inadequate security/protection	21	4.0
Other	112	22.0
TOTAL	514	100.0

Figure 19 Causes of youth problems

As to the causes of what young people perceived as problems, there was a very broad range of responses as can be seen by the 'Other' category (22.0%). However, community irresponsibility ('Social behaviours/problems') was seen as the major cause of their problems (17.5%).

Typical responses for this category included: "conflict between people, veging too much, people having bad attitudes to

teenagers, teenagers living on their own, people being destructive, alcohol, dirty old men, people ignoring kids, delinquents, peer group pressure, drug dealers, children have no rights in Nudgee - old people take over, lack of communication, too much videos shown, lack of support".

Many young people also blames 'Inadequate recreational/public facilities' (13.9%) and their domestic situation (10.6%) as contributing to their problems.

Typical responses to the latter included: "lack of discipline by parents, not having any money because got kicked out of home, people running away from home, family problems, working parents, parents too strict, not loved, living on the street, young homeless/bored children, mums and dads who don't care, no parents".

Subgroups

Figure 20 Causes of youth problems by sex and locale

Youth from **Banyo** more than those from **Nundah** regarded 'Economic/educational factors' and 'Inadequate recreation/public facilities' as causes of their problems. Females in **Nundah** also appear to be in greater need of facilities than males in the area.

Females have laid the greatest blame at the feet of the community and called it irresponsible behaviours, while the males especially from **Banyo** have accused local government and civic services of being irresponsible and seen it as the greatest contributor to the causes of their problems.

Figure 21 Causes of youth problems by age and sex

The information pertaining to causes of youth problems indicates a unanimous concern across the ages and gender for the way local government is handling its responsibilities.

It also suggests that the older youth become, the less they regard their domestic situations and community irresponsibility ('Social factors') to be the causes of their problems. Instead there seems to be a drastic increase in the number of young people drawing connections between the lack of suitable recreational facilities and the problems they are experiencing.

13. If you have a problem who do you go to for help? (3 responses possible)

Person	Number	Percent
Self	41	5.7
Parents	123	17.0
'Mum'	148	20.5
Neighbour	17	2.4
Friends	174	24.1
Relatives	103	14.2
Religious workers	3	0.4
Teacher/counsellor	29	4.0
Police	49	6.8
Telephone counsellor	22	3.0
Other	14	1.9
TOTAL	723	100.0

When young people have a problem they tend to go to a 'Friend', the most common source of help and support (24.1%). They are next most likely to go to their 'Mum' (20.5%) or 'Parents' (17.0%). A 'Relative' or another member of the family provides support for 14.2% of youth, 'Police' are called upon in 6.8% of the cases and a significant number (5.6%) don't seek any outside assistance.

Of the latter category, apart from the solace they find from 'self', the following are found helpful: "my journal, Bart poster, 'piss', up my tree, garden, my radio, dog".

It would appear that, apart from police (who deal with crime-related problems) youth prefer to go to people with whom they have some relationship. This is shown by the small numbers who go to a teacher (4.0%), a telephone counsellor (3.0%), a neighbour (2.4%) or a religious worker (0.4%).

Figure 23 Sources of help by age and gender

As males grow older there is a trend toward growing independence and reliance on self and/or friends, and a marked drop in relating to the mother as supporter/helper. Also, in the 16 to 17 year old bracket there is an increase in numbers of youth who see both parents as able to provide support.

Females on the contrary reliance on self is almost non-existent which demonstrates their desire for inter-dependency. Friends in particular provide the bulk of the solace needed by them and this reliance of peers appears to increase with age. 'Mum' seems to play a more diminishing role as females grow up.

14. What personal problems or concerns would you like more information about?
(3 responses possible)

Problem	Number	Percent
Personal/relationship issues	53	18.5
Environmental/global issues	45	15.7
Recreation	15	5.2
Local govt/other facilities	25	8.7
Future/education/work	18	6.3
Social problems	40	13.9
Health Issues	23	8.0
Drug/alcohol abuse	60	20.9
Legal problems	3	1.1
Other	5	1.7
TOTAL	287	100.0

Figure 24 Youth information needs

Knowledge concerning drugs and alcohol abuse was the most requested type of information (20.9%). The responses highlighted the need to know how to handle the pressures drugs create.

Concerning 'Personal and relational issues' 18.5% of young people wanted information on the following: "why are we going to die?, dieting, teenage sex, growing up, shy mum left, Kids/ Help Line, divorce, pregnancy help, boy/girl relationships, dealing with family problems, contraception, peer pressure, pooftas".

Information to do with environmental issues both local and global was keenly sought after (15.7%). Responses included: "Are factories going up?; What's coming out of Boral's chimneys?; What does into the creek from pipes?; recycling, noise/air pollution; ozone layer; What's happening to world conservation?; logging of trees, nuclear disarmament".

It appear heartening that these young people show a trend toward developing an increased awareness of their personal relationships, their society and its problems and also the issues of the wider world.

15. What do you think your future holds for you? Please describe.

View	Number	Percent
Optimistic	164	48.1
Pessimistic	49	14.4
Unsure	70	20.5
No response	58	17.0
TOTAL	341	100.0

Figure 25 Youths' views on future

This table shows that the majority of youth surveyed (51.9%) didn't have a positive view of the future. A significant number were unsure what the future held (20.5%) and 14.4% were outrightly pessimistic. A number (17.0%) failed to respond to the question.

Perception	Number	Percent
Positive Educat. experience	15	7.7

Successful life	42	21.6
Difficult life	12	6.2
Professional employment	52	26.8
Trade/certificate/other	17	8.8
General employment	24	12.4
Influence of suburb	15	7.7
Influence of environ/global	11	5.7
Other	6	3.1
TOTAL	194	100.0

Figure 26 Youth ambitions

This table shows that 26.8% of youth hope to gain professional employment and 21.6% predicted a successful future existence.

16. In your opinion, what would be some good things to set up for young people in your suburb?
(3 responses possible)

Initiative	Number	Percent
Recreational Facilities	193	29.1
Sporting Facilities	37	5.6
Clubs	54	8.2
Environmental initiatives	47	7.1
Meeting/entert. place	80	12.1
Commercial entertainment	73	11.0
Commercial food/shops	64	9.7
Recreational programs	33	5.0
Public entertainment	38	5.7
Youth & Community service	20	3.0
Youth protection	4	0.6
Centres for education	11	1.7
Public services/facilities	8	1.2
TOTAL	662	100.0

Figure 27 Young people's desired facilities

By far the greatest response to this question was that youth wanted more recreational facilities (29.1%). Those who desired a meeting/entertainment place amounted to 12.1%; those for some kind of commercial entertainment, 11.0% and those for more clubs, 8.2%. Only 5.6% wanted more sporting facilities.

The need for more appropriate recreational facilities is highlighted as it was in questions 9 and 11. The need for environmental initiatives was also mentioned. This concern for the environment was also apparent in several other question.

17. Would you be willing to participate in setting it up?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	254	78.4
No	61	18.8
Unsure	9	2.8
TOTAL	324	100.0

Figure 28 Youth willingness to set something up

Most young people are willing to set up some of the initiatives they identified (78.4%). It appears as if there is a high level of loyalty and commitment from youth to their local area.

18. In one word, how would you describe your suburb?

Response	Number	Percent
Positive	93	32.5

Negative	132	46.2
Average	61	21.3
TOTAL	286	100.0

Figure 29 Description of suburb

There were 72 different words or phrases young people used to describe their suburb. It is encouraging that while many youth are not happy with their suburb (46.2%), they are loyal to their community and want to participate in its improvement.

THINGS TO SET UP - TOP TEN IDEAS

	SCORE	AGE
1. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES Swimming Pool, skating ramp/bowl, ice skating rink, bike track	107	47* 44* 16
2. CENTRES FOR MEETING Youth community centre, youth warehouse, recreational centre	70	17 38* 15
3. COMMERCIAL ENTERTAINMENT Games, video arcade, video hire shop, cinema	62	23* 16 23*
4. ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES More parks, bushwalking track clean creeks	38	17* 10 11
5. CLUBS Bike, baseball, rowing	34	14* 11* 9
6. SPORTING FACILITIES Gym, Basketball court, tennis court	32	10* 12* 10*
7. PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT Blue Light discos, carnival, Freeeps, music concert	29	14* 8 7
8. COMMERCIAL FOOD/DRINK 7 Eleven, restaurant, coffee shop, fast food chains	25	7 7 11*
9. COMMERCIAL SHOPS Large Shopping Centre, cheaper shops	24	12* 8 4
10. RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS After school / weekend activities, holiday recreational program	24	10* 11* 3

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

There is a high percentage of youth in the Banyo and surrounding areas. In recent years the level of delinquent behaviour has risen sharply. This has been exhibited through such activities as truancy, "break and enters", drug and alcohol abuse, vandalism, acts of violence, car theft.

A recent youth survey targeted 350 12-17 year olds in Banyo and surrounding districts concluded the following:

- . "Nothing to do" and "Nowhere to go" were common responses.
- . In their spare time 50% of 12-13 year olds and 40% of 16-17 year olds hung around their home and only 18% were involved in individual or team sport. There was an alarmingly high non-participation rate in any type of sport or outdoor activity.
- . When asked who organises their spare time activities, 80% responded with "self".
- . Amongst the major causes of youth problems were : lack of recreational facilities, poor government response, crime.
- . The two greatest concerns amongst youth were : crime/protection and inadequate recreational facilities.
- . Amongst 14-17 year olds the greatest dislikes included : boredom, crime and social annoyances; amongst the 12-13 year olds: pollution and inadequate recreational facilities.
- . Relative to age, the major things youth would like set up include:
 - 12-15 year olds recreation facilities (swimming pool, skating ramp, bike track);
 - 15-17 year olds commercial entertainment (games, video arcade);
 - 16-17 year olds central meeting place (youth community centre, youth warehouse).
- . When asked if they'd participate in setting it up, 78% indicated they would.

The findings reflect that especially amongst the 12-15 year olds, the plea is for recreational facilities to relieve boredom. The longer this need is left unmet, the higher the probability that these youth will fall into unhealthy "recreational" habits.

Note : Graphs included with this Summary and Report have not been included and some text altered accordingly.